

INSPECTION REPORT

BRAMPTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Brampton

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112405

Headteacher: Mr Ian Johnston

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th September 2002

Inspection number: 247221

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sawmill Lane Brampton Cumbria
Postcode:	CA8 1BZ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Hannah
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21596	Andrew Clark	Registered inspector	Science; art and design; music; English as an additional language	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils and students taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9306	Barbara Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents.
21585	Tony Kingston	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; design and technology; physical education; equal opportunities	
2893	John Manning	Team inspector	English; geography; history; religious education; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brampton Junior is in the small rural town of Brampton, Cumbria. There are 204 boys and girls on roll aged between seven and 11. Families are from a range of occupations and the majority is in owner occupied properties and an area of local authority rented accommodation. Approximately six per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is below average. The large majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. There are 15 per cent of pupils on the schools register of special educational needs with moderate learning and physical difficulties, including autism. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Over 50 per cent of pupils in Year 6 did not start their junior education in Brampton Junior school and 20 per cent did not enter the school until their final year. This is a common pattern as a result of housing developments and because approximately 15 per cent of families are from the local RAF base and regularly move school. This means that, although attainment on entry to the school from the local infants is generally average, the range is very different by Year 6. The leadership of the school changed for the first time in 23 years with the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards are average in English and above in many other subjects. However, they are not high enough in mathematics. Teaching and learning is good and pupils are very enthusiastic as a result. The school is well led and managed and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards of pupils' work are very good in information and communication technology and good in science, art and design, design and technology, drama and physical education.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils work hard with interest.
- Pupils' attitudes and relationships are excellent as a result of the schools' provision for their personal development.
- The partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics.
- Pupils' writing at length.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sound improvement since the last inspection in February 1998. Overall standards have improved as well as they have nationally. However, those for mathematics are not high enough, although pupils' achievement from entry to the school is satisfactory. The curriculum planning has improved and is good in many subjects. The subject leaders have clear strategies for improvement and now implement these well.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	D
mathematics	D	D	E	D
science	C	D	D	D

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

Although pupils have taken tests in 2002, no comparative figures were available at the time of the inspection. The comparisons for similar schools do not reflect the significant turnover in pupils, especially in their last two years of education. A high percentage of pupils in Year 6 in 2001 and 2002 were on the register of special educational needs and they achieve well. From the standards that pupils show when they start the school, their achievement in English and science is at least satisfactory and often better. However, in mathematics the higher attaining pupils do not achieve enough.

Standards in English and science have improved at least as well as they have nationally over the last four years. In mathematics they have declined over the last two years. By Year 6 pupils' attainment in English was in line with the national average in 2001. The most recent results for 2002 are below those for 2001 because, although they raised the percentage of pupils who attained the average level and met their target, the number of higher attainers was lower.

Since the last inspection there has been a decline in standards in mathematics. The test results for 2001 show that pupils' attainment in mathematics is well below that expected for 11 year olds nationally and that of similar schools. There is an improvement in the results for 2002. In science, the results for 2001 are depressed because fewer than average attained the higher levels. There are significant improvements in the results for science in 2002 for all abilities.

In the work seen, standards of speaking and listening are good. Standards of reading are at least satisfactory. Pupils' factual writing is good. However, although stories often start well, many pupils can not maintain an interesting and lively style. Most pupils attain average levels but few go beyond this because they do not often have work set to write at length. Handwriting is consistently good and spelling and punctuation are sound.

In mathematics, the main weakness is that pupils, especially the more able, are not sufficiently challenged to think for themselves and use quick methods of written calculation. They spend too long practising methods that they do not need. However, the pupils' progress in shape and measure is good because of the effective use of these skills in many other subjects such as design and technology and science. Data handling is good.

Standards in science are above expected levels. Pupils have good investigating and recording skills and sound knowledge and understanding.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are very good. Pupils' word processing and graphics skills are particularly high. Standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education are good. In geography, history, music and religious education standards are average. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into all lessons and make good progress. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

The school is making sound progress towards challenging targets set for all abilities. There is strong commitment from all staff and a clear and appropriate sense of direction.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils love coming to school and enjoy their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite, friendly and considerate towards each other.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Staff and pupils respect each other.
Attendance	Above average. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.

The pupils respond well to the warm and inspiring environment the school provides.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

Teaching and learning is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and over a quarter of lessons was judged to be very good or better. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are also generally well taught. However, sometimes teachers do not expect enough of the most able pupils in mathematics or allow them enough independence to use and evaluate the quickest methods of calculation. Teaching in ICT is very good. In all subjects, lessons are well planned with a clear purpose that is explained well to pupils. There are very good relationships, which allow teachers to treat pupils with maturity and understanding. As a result pupils apply themselves well and take an interest in their work. Sometimes this leads to a lack of urgency in lessons such as mathematics and pupils are not challenged enough because the time to complete a task is not made clear enough. Teachers provide many good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical first hand experience and to use their skills from other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught because individual education plans guide teaching well and they are involved in all lessons. Work is regularly and supportively marked but does not indicate how pupils could improve their work often enough. The school makes good use of homework.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to inspire pupils. Planning for most subjects is good but there is some unnecessary repetition in mathematics and science. There is a very good range of sporting and creative clubs for all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' progress is carefully and effectively monitored so that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable at this time.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and be involved in school life. Excellent collective acts of worship stimulate pupils to be reflective and spiritually aware. Residential and local visits develop their cultural awareness very well. The pupils' excellent annual Shakespeare production contributes to social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is good. The school makes satisfactory use of assessment procedures to develop learning. Procedures to support pupils' welfare and health and safety are very good.

The partnership with parents is very good. They are well informed and support the school in all of its work. They have very positive views of the school. The school is very thorough in ensuring that pupils work in a safe and healthy environment and this is closely linked to promoting pupils' personal development. The school has a satisfactory range of assessment procedures, however, detailed analysis of the outcomes to support future learning is at an early stage of development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher provides a very clear direction for future improvement and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and subject leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They are knowledgeable and involved. They receive good information on progress towards school improvement from the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is sound. The school makes good use of the views of the whole school community to plan for the future. Detailed analysis of data such as national tests is at an early stage and is now beginning to have a significant impact on target setting.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The use of teachers' specialist skills contributes to standards in several subjects. Very good use is made of ICT resources.

The new headteacher is building on the strengths of the school through more refined target setting and school improvement planning. The teaching assistants are well deployed and effective. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. The governing body makes sure the school gives best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and management. • The quality of teaching is good. • Pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. • Children are happy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework.

The inspection team fully supports the positive views which were expressed by a high proportion of parents. Homework makes a good contribution to learning in many subjects and the team disagrees with the view expressed by a few parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Overall, the trend of improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory for English and science. There has been a decline in mathematics in the last few years, largely because not enough pupils are working at the higher levels. There have been variations year-on-year because of the significant proportion of pupils who start their schooling at Brampton well into the junior years. Overall, pupils' achievement from the time they start the school is at least satisfactory and is often good.
- 2 There is a strong trend of pupils starting at Brampton Junior School after Year 3 because of the impact of families stationed at the local RAF base, families moving school to be near to preferred secondary and recent housing developments. In the current Year 6 less than 50 per cent of pupils started in Year 3 and 15 per cent joined in the final year. Over 20 per cent of the 2001 intake did not start in the school until Year 6. Far fewer pupils leave the school over this time. This makes it very difficult for the school to set targets for future attainment, particularly as it is not always easy to obtain reliable information on the standards of pupils' work prior to starting the school. What is apparent from the schools' tracking information is that the attainment of pupils in Year 6 in 2001 and 2002 was overall below average at the infant stage and this is reflected in the National Test results overall.
- 3 Overall, standards in English have been similar to the national average for all abilities. They were lower in 2002 because fewer pupils attained the higher levels. They are slightly below the comparison for similar schools. Standards for the current Year 6 pupils are also similar to national expectations. They are good for speaking and listening and sound for reading and, overall, for writing. However, the pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and develop narrative ideas. Standards of drama are good by Year 6.
- 4 Standards in mathematics in 2001 were well below average. They were above the 2001 average in 2002 although still below expected levels. The current Year 6 pupils are working at similar levels to the previous year because although the majority of pupils are at the level generally expected for their age, not many pupils are working above that level. This is because too much time is given to practising extended methods of calculations rather than using shorter processes. There is also a lack of pace in movement through the curriculum for older pupils.
- 5 Standards in science are now good. The results for 2002 are above the average for 2001. There has been a good trend of improvement since the last inspection. The work seen for the current pupils is also good. In particular, pupils are good at conducting and recording investigations. They make good use of their mathematical skills in science.
- 6 There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls. The curriculum is stimulating for all pupils.
- 7 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are fully included into all subjects and targets set for their achievement are challenging but manageable. The quality of teaching and management of provision makes a good contribution to the achievement of these pupils.

- 8 Standards in ICT are very good. Pupils make excellent use of the word processing skills in many subjects. For example, they use them in 'PowerPoint' presentations in science and in design and making their costumes for the Year 6 production. The standards of work in art and design, design and technology and physical education are good. Standards in all other subjects are similar to normally expected levels.
- 9 Overall, standards are satisfactory. The school is well placed to address the weaknesses in mathematics and to raise attainment further in other subjects. There are now effective procedures in place to set appropriate targets. The school met its targets for English in 2002, but fell slightly below those for mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 Since the last inspection report pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for their school have improved, they are excellent and are a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to participate in school activities and the day to day life of the school. They are particularly enthusiastic about the annual play produced at the end of the academic year by the Year 6 pupils. Already Year 3 pupils are asking what play will they be doing when they reach Year 6. This enthusiasm for school is reflected in the very good behaviour. Pupils behave very well in and around school. Pupils are courteous and polite and very welcoming to visitors. Pupils form excellent relationships with one another and with adults and this is a strength of the school. Those with special educational needs are well integrated into the school and show equally positive attitudes to their peers.
- 11 Staff, led by the headteacher, set an excellent example in their relationships with one another and with the pupils. They are very good role models; this is reflected in the way pupils relate to one another, without any apparent aggression. A strong feature of the school is the high degree of harmony that exists between the pupils. At break time and lunchtime they form small social groups, chatting or playing together very amicably. The school has a clear programme to develop personal, social and health education and through this pupils develop an awareness of the impact of their actions on the lives of others. They understand about bullying and know what to do should bullying take place.
- 12 The personal development of pupils is very good. This is enhanced by their active involvement in the school council. The council meets weekly, and deals with such issues as the purchase of playground equipment for which they were allocated a budget of £200.00. The very good range of extra curricular activities, especially the residential visits, gives many opportunities for personal development. The opportunities for residential visits start early in a pupils' school life, during their first term in Year 3, through this a strong bonding develops between children and adults where mutual respect flourishes alongside their friendly relationships. Assemblies are a clear example of this mutual respect, where children are encouraged to join in, and every child is valued. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school. Social inclusion is a clear priority in the day to day life of the school.
- 13 Attendance levels at the school are very good and are well above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start promptly. Through the daily life of the school, pupils' understanding and respect for others reflects the strong ethos of the school and its expanding links within the community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 14 The quality of teaching and learning is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection and over a quarter of lessons were very good, including a small percentage of excellent teaching. However, where lessons were satisfactory the teaching could be more challenging, particularly for higher attainers.
- 15 The quality of teaching in English is good and literacy skills are taught well through the curriculum. The teachers plan regular literacy hours well, which contribute well to their understanding of the subject. Literacy skills are taught well. In particular, the teaching of handwriting and grammar is very good. However, teachers do not make enough links between English and other subjects to enable pupils to think about new ideas and apply them in extended writing. However, the effective teaching of basic skills makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning as they can work with pride, presenting work in many subjects such as science, neatly and accurately.
- 16 The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and numeracy is good and pupils often make good gains in their learning. Most mathematics lessons engage and motivate the pupils and challenge them to think and use their numeracy skills. However, some of the planning places too much emphasis on the need to practise calculations and strategies that pupils don't need and the format of some lessons is not flexible enough to challenge the most able pupils and allow them to think for themselves. A strength in the teaching of mathematics is that teachers allow pupils to use their skills in other subjects. For example, through accurate measurement and in science and design and technology and in the use of graphs and data handling.
- 17 A strength of teaching throughout the school is in the excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers show respect for the pupils' work and ideas and receive high standards in return. There is a calm and reflective atmosphere combined with humour and thoroughness. As a result pupils are generally conscientious workers who are happy to work collaboratively with others or independently. Sometimes, however, in the satisfactory lessons the teachers do not provide enough of a sense of urgency to spur on some pupils. For example, in these lessons the teachers do not make it clear how long pupils have got to complete a task, resulting in them completing less work than planned.
- 18 The quality of teaching and learning in ICT is very good and often excellent. The teachers inspire the pupils through their excellent subject knowledge and imaginative lesson content. New skills are successfully taught and then applied in imaginative and real situations. Teachers make good use of technology in many subjects. As a result, pupils make good use of ICT in their learning through research and word processing. The school makes good use of specialist teaching in ICT, music and science.
- 19 Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. The support staff are well trained and very sensitive to the pupils' needs. They often follow individual pupils through from the infant school. The special educational needs co-ordinator guides the development of individual education plans, which set realistic, small steps for pupils to attain, and links these closely to appropriate activities. Pupils are rarely withdrawn from the class for additional support because of the skilful way work is planned for them. For example, in science the teachers provide simple frameworks for less able pupils and those with special educational needs to record their experiments so that they can concentrate on the main features of the lesson.

- 20 The quality of the teachers' questions is good and this makes an important contribution to pupils' good speaking and listening skills. They encourage pupils to express their own ideas and give opinions. For example, in music pupils make positive and helpful comments on the singing and composition of others.
- 21 Pupils' work is regularly marked and this is often supportive. However, comments do not often give pupils a clear enough indication of how they might improve their work. There are some good comments, which encourage pupils to think, but these are not always specific to the subject they are studying.
- 22 The school makes effective use of homework in improving basic skills such as reading and spelling, although this is not always effective in improving pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. The pupils often undertake extended research at home or find this out for the next lesson.
- 23 Overall, the good quality of teaching makes an important contribution to pupils' learning.

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

- 24 There have been satisfactory improvements in the key issues identified in the previous inspection. The weaknesses in planning across the different age groups have been eradicated with teachers now taking care to plan work together. Policies reflect national guidance and co-ordinators have had time to observe teaching and learning in their subjects and to report on them. Feed back to teachers is helpful although guidance for improvement is not always clear enough to lead to a strategy for improvement. There is good planning of work for pupils of different abilities in most lessons and the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are much sharper, having clear and simple targets. This was a weakness reported previously.
- 25 The quality and range of learning opportunities are good with numerous opportunities for pupils to gain experience outside school on field trips in history, art and geography. There are many visitors also who bring fresh insights into topics, such as artists and writers. All statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is broad, balanced and very relevant to the needs of the pupils, especially in the good provision for drama at the end of the summer term. This gives them good intellectual challenges. The production of plays and musicals are of a very high order, including large numbers of pupils and promoting their social and cultural education very well.
- 26 The implementation of the literacy strategy is satisfactory. The teaching of basic skills, handwriting and using ICT is good. The literacy sessions are planned carefully to help pupils to concentrate on reading and speaking and listening but there is too little time for them to think about how to vary their writing styles and to develop stories and poems with greater interest for a real audience. The numeracy strategy is also satisfactory. Pupils apply their knowledge of number in a variety of other lessons such as in English, where they had to measure pieces of card in the construction of a toy windmill from an instruction sheet. There are some weaknesses in the planning of mathematics, which limit the progress of middle ability pupils.
- 27 There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. They arrive at the school at different times of the year but provision is very good. Teaching assistants are well qualified and trained and they are flexible in the way that they support pupils in

classrooms. The assessment of progress by boys and girls with special educational needs is good and leads to relevant plans and targets, which help them to gain confidence as their skills improve.

- 28 All pupils are treated equally well and there is no significant difference in their progress. Pupils get on very well together and morale and teamwork in the school are very good. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Both girls and boys do very well in football, rugby and netball and provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. The school provides a rich variety of opportunities for drama, music, sport and foreign travel, all of which give a broader dimension to pupils' experiences. Most clubs after school are very well attended.
- 29 There is a good programme for personal, social and health education. The school has made a very good start to introducing pupils to ideas of democracy and citizenship through the school's council. They are encouraged to discuss issues and make decisions. They are responsible for casting the annual Shakespeare production in Year 6. In history pupils show a good knowledge of how governments are elected and how they might eventually be involved in the process. This all contributes significantly to pupils' social, cultural and moral education. There are well-organised lessons on raising awareness of the dangers of drugs. Sex education is sensitively taught throughout the school, as is health education.
- 30 Community links are good. The school choir performs for members of the town in local centres and there are good links with the local church. Pupils study the history and geography of the area and are supported by local historians and farmers. The liaison with the local infant and secondary school is good, especially in passing on records of pupils with special educational needs. There is a thriving cluster group of local primary schools and some links with businesses in Carlisle have been formed.
- 31 The very good provision for pupils' personal development has been sustained since the previous inspection. It represents one of the major strengths of the school. Daily assemblies give pupils good opportunities for reflection and they develop a very good sense of community in a calm atmosphere. Collective worship fulfils statutory requirements. Spiritual education is very good. Pupils are aware of the beauty in the works of artists such as Monet and Mondrian. Some of their own representations of Monet's landscapes are very good. They are inspired by the stories excellently related by the headteacher in assemblies. The many visits provide pupils with rich experiences that add to their understanding of the curriculum and give them the chance to mix with adults and with other children out of school. Social and moral education is excellent. The staff set an excellent example of harmony and this is reflected in a calm and all-welcoming atmosphere in the school. Everyone looks after each other and visitors are made to feel a part of the family. Cultural development is good. There are good links with Canada, and pupils study Judaism and Buddhism in religious education. However, there is not a great deal of evidence of non-western cultures in other subjects or celebrated in displays and in the books around school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 32 Since the last inspection report the school has improved its support for ensuring pupils' welfare, which is very good and is a strength of the school. Staff know and understand the pupils very well. They know the procedures to be followed to ensure that pupils are well protected and the level of welfare is very good. Effective procedures are in place to promote all the related matters of health, first aid, safety

and security to a very high level. Parents appreciate the way staff care for their children.

- 33 Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory. Through assemblies and the programme for PSHE the school have established very good personal support and guidance for pupils. This is developed through the teachers' knowledge of the pupils; and is a strength of the school. Staff work hard to ensure that everyone in the school community is valued. There is a consistent approach throughout the school that ensures the good behaviour of pupils and the elimination of oppressive behaviour. Social inclusion is a strong feature in the life of the school. This effective support makes a positive contribution to pupils' well being, and enables them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
- 34 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 do non-statutory national tests. However, only recently have these results been analysed sufficiently well to provide appropriate information, which helps teachers to monitor progress from year to year and to guide curricular planning. This process of tracking the progress of pupils has not been in place long enough for it to have had a positive impact on the progress pupils make and to have raised their standard of attainment, especially in mathematics and English. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and conscientiously. However, the quality of the marking does not make pupils aware of their own learning or to understand how they can improve their own standards of attainment. In English, teachers have implemented a simple system of target setting which helps pupils to understand where they are and what they need to do to move forward, but this too is in the early stages of development and has not had time to have had a positive influence on pupils' attainment. In mathematics teachers pay insufficient attention to their day to day assessments of pupils' attainments. This results in the average and higher attaining pupils making insufficient progress because too little is expected of them and the work set is often undemanding.
- 35 The procedures and use of assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers know their pupils well and set work which is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Class teachers draw up individual education plans and the special educational needs co-ordinator monitors progress very closely. Realistic and manageable targets are set for pupils and reviewed each term. To enable pupils to reach their targets good, well-focused support is provided by very competent and confident learning support assistants and teaching assistants. Careful records are kept of pupils' progress, which are monitored by the co-ordinator. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive their full entitlement of support.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 36 The school has maintained its very good relationship with parents. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents they expressed very positive views about the school and these were confirmed in discussion with parents during the inspection. Of the returned questionnaires, 100 per cent of parents felt the school was well led and managed and that the teaching was good. A very high percentage of parents also thought the school was helping their children to become mature and responsible. They also say that their children like school and are happy and secure.
- 37 The school has very good links with parents to consolidate and extend children's learning. Parents are involved with the many extra-curricular activities and residential

visits. Many of the parents spoken to during the inspection said they appreciated their involvement with the school plays, where their expertise was sought to help with such things as hairdressing and costumes. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is greatly valued and is a strength of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs stressed their appreciation of the time and support which was made available to them. The staff, led by the headteacher, are always helpful and very supportive. Parents feel the school listens to them and helps their children to come to terms with any problems they may have.

- 38 The quality of information for parents is good. Home-school agreements are in place. Pupils' reports are very detailed and give a clear indication of their progress. However, they would be improved with the addition of targets to show what pupils should do next to improve further. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents give a clear indication of the life of the school. Newsletters are clear and helpful. All the staff in the school are very welcoming, providing parents with opportunities to share in the life of the school.
- 39 In addition to the very good support parents give to their children's learning at home and at school, they support the school's fund raising committee. The school is hoping to develop this work even further to include both social and fundraising events, which will enhance the life of the pupils in the school. Through this and events such as entertaining the elderly in the town and their work for charity, the school will remain firmly placed as a hub of life in the community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 40 The new headteacher leads the school well. He gives a very clear direction for improvement which has already had a positive impact on the way in which the governors and subject leaders work. The good ethos of the school, which was evident at the time of the last inspection, has been maintained and in many areas improved. Although standards in mathematics and some aspects of English need further improvement, these areas are already a significant priority in the school improvement planning and strong steps taken to begin to address them.
- 41 The headteacher provides an analytical and focused overview of the work of the school. He has restructured the systems for tracking pupils' attainment and put in place reliable data to set future targets for pupils' learning. This is evident in the most recent school improvement plans where there are clear numerical targets for pupils to achieve at all ages based on their past performance. There is still room to develop this further to target individual groups, such as high attaining pupils, more carefully. The headteacher communicates information on standards very effectively to the governing body through reports that evaluate, rather than describe, the outcomes. This is important because, although data has always been available, it has not consistently been put into context against national and other comparisons. The good practice of data analysis is now a stronger feature in the work of the literacy and numeracy subject leaders.
- 42 The headteacher's analytical approach is backed up by his positive contribution to teaching and learning and the ethos of the school. His own manner in assemblies and around the school supports the stimulating, humorous and reflective ethos, which is evident amongst all staff and pupils. He receives good support from the deputy headteacher and other senior staff who are all good role models. There is a strong commitment to success. There is now more time for subject leaders, particularly literacy and numeracy, to monitor the work of the school and there are further

improvements planned for this year. The headteacher's own monitoring of teaching and learning is a good standard. He identifies strengths and makes focused suggestions for improvement. This is linked to good procedures to manage the professional development of the staff. They now have clear targets for development which are closely linked to their training needs. The process supports school improvement planning well by raising levels of performance through empowering teachers to take fuller control of their own development.

- 43 The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements well and has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The strengths have been maintained since the last inspection and their use of analytical data has improved. The governors linked to literacy and numeracy have a clear picture of standards and progress and are monitoring the impact of additional release time for subject leaders closely. They feel it has a positive impact. There are effective committees to manage the promotion of school policies. These are effectively timetabled and managed. The headteacher's reports cross-reference information to the school improvement plan so that they can check progress. The governing body are making good use of their involvement in 'Investors in People' to develop procedures for full staff involvement in driving the school forward.
- 44 The management of special educational needs is very good. There are very thorough checks to make sure pupils make the best progress. The school aims to include pupils of all ability, race and gender in the full curriculum and is very successful in this. The grants for special educational needs are used effectively. Individual education plans provide good guidance for teachers and support staff for working with pupils in all subjects.
- 45 The governors make good use of their knowledge of the school to ensure they give best value. They follow the local education authority's requirements for any major purchases. They seek the views of parents and other members of the community in order to make certain they are meeting their needs. The school is well resourced in most areas and particularly so for ICT. They have made very good use of local specialist skills in this subject and this has a significant impact on standards. The teachers are experienced and enthusiastic. Considerable thought went into the appointment of the headteacher to ensure that he would maintain the ethos and refine the educational direction. They have been very successful in this.
- 46 The quality of accommodation is good. The school has developed the library facilities since the last inspection. However, the ICT suite has since replaced the library. Work is beginning on a new library area and new office space. The playground space has also significantly improved. The governors are very active in chasing up quotations and ensuring there is value for money. Financial management is very good overall and administrative staff give very good support. The use of ICT in managing the school is sound.
- 47 The school is well placed to build on its many strengths and address the weaknesses that there are in some standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 48 In order to raise standards the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Refine the long and medium term planning in mathematics to make sure there is no undue repetition and that progress in strategies for calculation is clear. (Paragraphs: 4, 16, 26, 58, 63)
- (2) Make it clear to pupils how long they have to complete a task to introduce a greater sense of urgency, particularly for the more able. (Paragraphs: 4, 16, 17, 53)
- (3) Provide more opportunities for pupils to write creatively at length. (Paragraphs: 3, 15, 26, 53)

In addition to the Key Issues, the school should consider the following, lesser issue, for inclusion in the action plan:

- Use marking in all subjects to inform pupils what they need to do to improve the standards of their work. (Paragraphs: 21, 55, 65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	9	16	15	0	0	0
Percentage	5	21	38	36	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	31	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	15	26
	Girls	25	17	27
	Total	44	32	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (73)	52 (67)	85 (73)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	23
	Girls	22	19	25
	Total	39	37	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (75)	62 (67)	80 (71)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
202	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
1	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
1	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	25.5

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
	£
Total income	567,217
Total expenditure	557,255
Expenditure per pupil	2,533
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,726
Balance carried forward to next year	18,688

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0

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	204
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	34	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	47	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	45	17	2	2
The teaching is good.	71	29	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	43	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	19	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	47	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	80	20	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	31	9	2	1

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

- 49 By Year 6 pupils' attainment in English was in line with the national average in 2001. Compared with similar schools standards were broadly average. The most recent results for 2002 are below those for 2001 because, although they raised the percentage of pupils who attained the average level and met their target, the number of higher attainers was lower. The attainment of pupils when they came to the school was average and so most had made satisfactory progress by the time they left. A large number of changes occurred in the year groups between the start and end of the year. Pupils with special educational needs achieved well with many making gains in their levels of attainment over time. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. In recent year's results in English, tests show a rise in line with national figures. They are higher in English than in mathematics.
- 50 During the inspection standards seen were average overall but with differences between age groups. More of the younger pupils showed the capacity to reach higher levels than the older pupils. This corresponded to the number of pupils with special educational needs in the different year groups. By the age of 11 the majority of pupils have made satisfactory progress in the four years they have been at the school. The pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress, thanks to the carefully planned work and help from support teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated into lessons for most of the time and only withdrawn for specific purposes such as extra support for aspects of reading and writing. Boys and girls achieve equally well in reading, and in speaking and listening but girls do better in gaining higher levels in writing.
- 51 Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils with special educational needs are always well-integrated into discussions during the introduction to the literacy hour. Teachers phrase questions carefully and help them to shape their answers. There is good co-operation between pupils and it is common to see more able pupils helping those who have been away or are in difficulties. A good example of this occurred in Year 5 when some pupils found the task of following instructions to construct a toy windmill quite difficult. When pupils are given the opportunity to speak at length they show a confidence and ability to develop a reasoned argument. For instance, they could see that using imperative verbs was the best and most economical way to write guidance material. They could also discuss how to improve the information given to a reader. Teachers are sometimes rather reluctant to give pupils time to think for themselves. They give them clues when they do not need them and questions are occasionally too limiting.
- 52 Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in reading in most classes. In Year 3 there were examples of excellent reading by the more able pupils. After composing their own dialogues based on incidents from the Beatrix Potter stories, they performed them fluently and with verve, reading different parts themselves or taking parts in turn. They were able to do this because the teacher had allowed them to build on their understanding of speech marks and given them a very good framework in which to compose their stories. When talking about their reading, pupils show great enthusiasm and read extracts from their current books. They talk about characters in the stories and how some were adapted for films. There is no school library at the moment, but teachers compensate for this in their classrooms where the supply and

range of books are satisfactory. Reading records show that parents are involved in their children's regular reading and that most pupils make good progress over time. Most pupils can find their way around books and use them sensibly in their research when doing topic work in history and geography, for example.

- 53 The standards in writing are below average in narrative but considerably better in many aspects of non-narrative writing. Pupils show that they understand the needs of readers and adapt their presentation to suit the demands of the task. They use bullet points in articles on Shakespeare's plays and import illustrations to add to the clarity of the message. Most are skilled users of ICT and this often makes their work more attractive. Handwriting is good, with teachers insisting on the use of a cursive style from Year 3. There are weaknesses in spelling which are not always picked up and discussed in the marking or in class. In pupils' creative writing they introduce interesting phrases such as opening a story with "Many, many moons ago" or including succinct and telling short sentences. "It was a once in a lifetime experience." However, few pupils can sustain an extended piece of writing to develop character and plot. Although most pupils achieve average levels of attainment not many go beyond this. In lessons teachers are skilled at ensuring pupils know about language and structure but little time is devoted to the act of writing at length. Pupils sometimes are slow to settle to their written work but pick up the pace gradually. They are rarely given a specific task in a set time so that they know what is expected of them precisely.
- 54 Teachers plan the literacy hour well in most classes. The teaching of handwriting and of grammar is very good. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to use word processors at the proper time. Pupils have a sound grasp of the technical language of many subjects and know what alliteration is, for example, from an early age. They produce their own glossaries in different subjects to help their spelling and understanding. There are not enough direct links between English and other subjects such as history, geography and religious education to help pupils to practise their writing regularly at greater length. This means that they do not often have a chance to think about the new ideas they have learned or to apply them in situations of their own. There are some good examples of imaginative writing in history when pupils write letters home from Hadrian's Wall, but this is not widespread.
- 55 The quality of teaching is good overall and helps pupils to gain a good understanding in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good planning that goes into teaching them. There are very good relationships in the classroom and resources are used well such as posters and photographs, computers and overhead projectors. The best lessons provide pupils with a real desire to learn and excitement in their writing. Teachers use word banks and ideas produced by pupils to generate high-level discussion and they seize the right moment to set them off on their own. The tasks are practical and often can be tried out on the rest of the class in a final brief reading session. Marking is regular and supportive but does not give pupils a clear enough indication of how they might improve their style or raise their attainment.
- 56 The co-ordinator for English is new but the planning and vision for the subject are very good. Standards have been largely maintained since the last inspection although the weaknesses in writing still remain. There is an extremely clear plan to set targets that pupils and parents understand and to co-ordinate the teaching of writing across the curriculum. It is important that this plan is now more widely adopted.

MATHEMATICS

- 57 Since the last inspection there has been a decline in standards. The national test results for 2001 show that pupils' attainment is well below that expected for 11 year olds nationally and that of similar schools. Current inspection evidence indicates a slight improvement over the past year with standards of attainment now being average in Year 3 and Year 4 and below average in Year 5 and Year 6. However, pupils' achievement from the time they start school is at least satisfactory and often good.
- 58 In Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils are set for mathematics. Pupils in the higher attaining sets are working at levels expected for their age but most Year 5 and 6 pupils in the lower attaining sets are working at levels well below national expectations. Very few pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age. Consequently there is some underachievement. Therefore, despite the fact that standards of attainment are showing signs of improvement, the school does not expect enough of higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are very well supported by teaching assistants who work with them and adapt the teaching programme to suit their needs. There is no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
- 59 The school has adopted and implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. Under this scheme pupils undertake a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. A particularly strong feature of the mathematics curriculum is the work on measures, data handling and graphs. These aspects of mathematics are used extremely well across the curriculum but especially in:
- design and technology – measures, shape and nets
 - geography – the use of scale
 - and science – graph work and data handling.
- 60 Throughout the school pupils' knowledge of place value is good and they have an effective repertoire of strategies with which they can perform mental calculations. However, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, the school's scheme is limiting the progress and attainment of the average and higher attainers. This is because too much time is devoted to practising and carrying out a range of protracted methods of written calculations rather than mastering shorter written methods of which they are capable.
- 61 This results in:
- an inappropriate match of work to pupil ability, especially the average and higher attainers
 - low teacher expectations of pupil attainment
 - too many average and higher attaining pupils spending too much time writing out lengthy calculations which can be done more quickly yet with equal accuracy
 - a lack of urgency and pace to move pupils through the National Curriculum programme of study at Level 4 and Level 5.
- 62 Year 3 pupils have good knowledge of their 2, 5 and 10 times tables and know their number bonds to 20 well. They can count in tens and higher attaining pupils are able to double numbers such as 39 and 125 quickly and accurately. During a good discussion and question and answer lesson based on money and change, most pupils were able to make set amounts such as £4.32 using the least number of coins. Higher attaining pupils used a range of mental strategies to calculate how much change they would have from £5.00 if they spent, for example, £3.64. They could

explain their methods of calculation clearly and confidently and transfer them successfully to informal written methods to calculate much more difficult problems such as adding together £4.66, £7.88 and £3.42.

- 63 Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of complementary numbers and can use this knowledge to solve number problems. However, a significant number of pupils are ready for short standard methods of calculations with larger numbers. This situation is reflected in Year 5 where again, pupils' understanding of place value and informal methods of calculation are satisfactory but the higher attainers are still adding numbers together by partitioning. In Year 6, pupils in the higher attaining set are achieving at or near expectations for their age; however, there is limited evidence of pupils achieving above the expected levels when explaining place value and the impact of moving digits one place to the left or right. Pupils' knowledge of times tables is poor overall, few can recall multiplication tables with speed and accuracy. The overall attainment, that is the percentage of pupils in Year 6 likely to achieve the appropriate level or above in the annual assessment tests, is below the national expectations for their age.
- 64 The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the most effective lessons pupils make good gains in their learning. There is high quality direct teaching to the whole class or groups of pupils, which inject pace and urgency, providing a challenge which moves the pupils forward relative to their abilities. Good quality questioning engages, motivates, challenges and advances pupils' knowledge and understanding. They ensure that pupils pay appropriate attention, use correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology and provide good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods of calculation. Almost all pupils respond extremely well to their teachers and work together without the need for constant teacher intervention. Teachers follow the recommended numeracy lesson format very closely and with enthusiasm. Most plan lessons satisfactorily, provide a good range of resources and use praise well. However, weaknesses within the structure of the mathematics curriculum throughout the school prevent pupils progressing through the National Curriculum at a pace appropriate to their abilities. This seriously restricts their standard of attainment. The curriculum is insufficiently systematically structured to allow teachers to clearly identify the next steps to learning as pupils progress through the mathematics curriculum. This results in some work, for example partitioning methods in addition and multiplication, being unnecessarily repeated in Years 4, 5 and 6. This lack of structure is a significant contributory factor to the low standards of attainment in mathematics.
- 65 The marking of pupils' work contains some good examples of teachers explaining where pupils have made a mistake and what they need to do to improve. However, this practice is inconsistently applied. Consequently teachers' marking does not make it clear to all pupils what has been done well, what needs to be improved and how that improvement is to be achieved. Homework is set regularly. It is relevant to what the pupils do in their lessons and makes an effective contribution to their learning.
- 66 The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and through the support of the new headteacher, now has a good understanding of standards in the subject and has formulated clear ideas where improvements in the quality of pupils' learning can be made. In addition, the subject co-ordinator has introduced new tracking procedures which, although in the early stages of development, have already had a positive impact on, for example, setting targets for individual pupils. The co-ordinator has also analysed the past year's test results and

the information gained from this exercise is beginning to positively influence the structure of the mathematics curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 67 By Year 6 standards are above average and the pupils' achievement is good. The quality of teaching is good and the subject is well led. Pupils of all abilities make particularly good progress in investigating and recording. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- 68 The pupils' knowledge and understanding is good by Year 6. There is a good balance between teacher instruction, personal research and first hand experience throughout the school. Pupils' understanding of life and living processes is particularly good. This makes an effective contribution to their personal and social development through studies of the human body and growth. Pupils have a good knowledge of plants and plant dispersal and prepare and make very good 'power point' presentations on the computers. Pupils use a good vocabulary in their work accurately defining terms such as 'ovule' in their own words. Throughout Year 6, they compile a glossary of key terms with illustrations which helps in preparing for tests. They have a wide knowledge of physical processes and materials. For example, they know that a beam of light travels in a straight line and is refracted in water.
- 69 By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of physical processes. In Year 5 they understand many of the properties of sound and conduct a range of experiments to discover how different objects vibrate. The pupils understand that light travels in straight lines and can be reflected and refracted. Less able pupils in Year 5, learning about transparent, translucent and opaque materials, make good progress because the teacher provides an effective template for recording their experiments. There is consistently good support for pupils with special educational needs through good support and teaching by ability in Year 5 and 6. In Year 6 the pupils have a secure understanding of the effects of friction on vehicles they have made in design and technology. They make good use of their knowledge of multiplication and measures to calculate speed in their experiments. They make use of a good vocabulary.
- 70 Throughout the school the standards of recording are good. Work is well-presented and pupils use both formal and informal methods to make written records of their work. The pupils have a good understanding of how to set up a fair test and ensure the variables are considered. They sometimes make predictions leading to a hypothesis, however, there is a tendency to write experiments up after the event rather than keep notes or start recording before the work. There are good elements of common practice in methods of recording which allow pupils to progress through school. Although pupils write their own commentary on their experiments, they do not often decide how they will record their work. For example, they usually make the same sort of graph or chart and present methods in similar ways. Overall, however, the pupils' independence in their work is good.
- 71 Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. They find the activities motivating and interesting and apply themselves with enthusiasm. They take a pride in the final presentation of their work. The quality of diagrams is good. They are accurately drawn and pertinent to the experiment.
- 72 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and the purpose of the lesson is explained clearly to the pupils. There is usually a good pace to these lessons and a good length of time is given to science in the week. The

specialist teaching of the subject leader makes a good contribution to the pupils' increasing success in the subject. The teachers have high expectations for pupils to work both collaboratively and independently as appropriate. There is some use of ICT in word processing and data handling, although this is not extensive. Teachers make full use of the good resources for the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

- 73 By Year 6 standards are above average. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both with the same age group, so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence is from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 74 In Year 6, pupils of all abilities are confident to produce a range of work with little support. They have a good range of previous experiences to draw upon and make good decisions about the most appropriate painting and drawing resources to use. In the lessons observed, the teachers had high expectations for pupils to undertake research for their calligraphy and illuminated letters project and translate this into their own designs. The designs they produced on illuminated letters were often intricate and thoughtful. They have a good ability to reflect on their own life and experiences and express this in their work. This contributes well to their personal and social development. The pupils work well with both large and small-scale projects. The majority of pupils show a good sense of proportion in their work and use the full scope of the paper available to them.
- 75 Pupils make good progress across all aspects of the art curriculum. For example, they develop a good range of techniques for using watercolours and pastels through exercises and extended projects. They blend colours well to work in the style of the impressionist artists or use strong primary colours to create pictures reflecting Andy Warhol screen prints. They make good use in most classes of their sketchbooks to experiment with shading and blending techniques. Skills in observational art, from drawings and sketches based on their work on Beatrix Potter in Years 3 and 4 to still life drawings using pencils and charcoals in Years 5 and 6, are well developed. The imaginary flowers designed following a visit to a country garden are stimulating and thoughtful. For all age groups there are many examples, of work of a high standard from individuals. For example, single colour pictures in the style of Monet and poppies based on the work of Georgia O'Keefe would grace any art gallery. Pupils use interesting methods to improve their observational powers such as completing black and white and colour photographs.
- 76 Work in textiles also shows good progress. In Year 3 and 4 pupils work collaboratively on a farmyard collage using a range of sewing and sticking techniques well. They produce tie-dye designs and decorate these with sequins. Older pupils produce prints on fabrics using mono-blocs and other techniques in their studies of William Morris and Kashmir prints in gold using string printing blocks. Pupils use many different techniques in their artwork such as wax-resist and batiks. There is a satisfactory range of three-dimensional work such as Egyptian mummies using mod roc and large-scale work in wood undertaken on residential visits. However, this area is not as strongly developed as other aspects of the subject. There is sound use of ICT in wallpaper designs, work in the style of Jackson Pollock and pattern and design making.

- 77 Pupils learn to appreciate art in many forms because it is closely linked to the work of established and local artists without being imitative. This is because teachers plan projects carefully to use the material as a stimulus for further work. There is a good link between art and other subjects that contributes to pupils' cultural development. This is very strong for the local culture, but also adds significantly to pupils' understanding of a multi-cultural society.
- 78 In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Lessons are well planned and teachers' expectations are high. Pupils settle to their work and concentrate hard. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through careful questioning to help them decide on the best approach and they are generally as confident to tackle work as their peers are. The teaching provides good challenge for the more able overall because they are often given the opportunity to make choices and experiment. This is balanced with an emphasis on care and accuracy when appropriate. Pupils enjoy their work in art and discuss past efforts with pride. They respect the good range of resources.
- 79 The subject leader influences the quality of work throughout the school through the very high standard of display and maintenance of portfolios of pupils' work. There is no formal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, but effective systems to share ideas and support each other. Close links with other subjects, such as history, English, design and technology and mathematics makes the work more meaningful to the pupils. Links with music are not evident. There is a good emphasis on extended project work allowing pupils the opportunity to work collaboratively and practise their skills. Pupils' attitudes are enhanced by the good use of the local environment; work with other artists and a school art club.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 80 Only two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection however, a scrutiny of the samples of work on display throughout the school and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils undertake a good range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above national expectations. This is better than at the time of the last inspection when attainment was satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school, successfully building each year on what has been learned previously.
- 81 There are strong and very effective links with many areas of the curriculum. Year 3 pupils design and make animals with moving parts as part of their topic on 'Food and Farming' whilst Year 4 pupils, with the help of parents and classroom assistants, weigh and mix together the ingredients ready for baking biscuits. These pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of food safety and hygiene procedures. Year 3 pupils learn how to measure, mark out, cut, shape and assemble a range of materials. For example they make model Celtic and Roman houses from neatly made wooden cuboid frames, strengthened with triangular corner supports. These skills are developed further in Year 4 where, once again they make wooden frameworks, but then use 'real' materials such as small bricks and mortar and install electric circuits and switches to provide their models with lights. In Year 5 pupils extend their design and making skills through a range of exciting and purposeful activities. For example, following their own research of textiles and slipper design they put together their own portfolio of designs and then make their own slippers. The pupils' design and making skills are of a very high standard and demonstrate a good understanding of fitness for purpose, how products can be improved and the

marketing of products for different age groups. They also design and make their own interiors to rooms such as cafés. This work, because of the emphasis on scale, is linked well to mathematics. Year 6 pupils design and make digital clocks from old CDs and create attractive presentation boxes using their knowledge and understanding of nets gained from their mathematics lessons. To support the school's annual production of a Shakespeare play, Year 6 pupils design and, with the help of parents, make their own reversible costumes. This aspect of design and technology is linked very effectively to the National Literacy Strategy and history. Pupils research Tudor costume and prepare portfolios of costume design based on what people of all social classes would have worn in that period. The quality of the portfolios and the making of the costumes are excellent. There is also evidence of pupils using simple computer-aided design software to improve the appearance of the stage sets.

- 82 From the two lessons that were observed during the inspection, discussion with teachers and an analysis of pupils' work, the quality of teaching is judged to be good because it focuses on developing pupils' skills consistently from year to year, with an equal emphasis on designing and evaluation as there is on making. Teachers make good use of national guidance to plan lessons which are interesting and stimulating. It is evident from the pupils' portfolios and designs that teachers encourage pupils to discuss and evaluate their work and to offer suggestions how it might be improved.
- 83 In the lessons observed, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning were very good. They maintained concentration well and listened carefully to all instructions. The teachers moved learning on at a good pace and reminded pupils to work with care and not to waste resources. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent.
- 84 The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. He is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a clear understanding of how to develop the subject further. The policy, scheme of work and range of activities are well planned. They link together well and provide good opportunities for pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding to develop in a systematic and structured way.

GEOGRAPHY

- 85 From a small number of lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and by talking to them and their teachers, standards are judged to match those expected nationally. The plans for the subject are clear and show good coverage of the National Curriculum. Pupils have a reasonable grasp of skills such as reading and interpreting different types of maps and aerial photographs. They produce their own plans of routes to school. Young pupils remember major towns in the British Isles and can locate them on maps if given the initial letter. Most have a good understanding of geographical vocabulary. Their knowledge of direction is secure and older pupils can map out a route to places such as Australia, suggesting stop off points and describing the climate of these places. They are less clear about how some countries have different time zones although they do understand the way that points of longitude relate to time. Year 6 pupils can discuss aspects of social, cultural and moral importance such as pollution and conservation. They talk at length about the dangers of global warming and draw sensible conclusions about what an "ozone layer" is.
- 86 In lessons in Year 4 teachers use resources well to show pupils different types of farming and the way that farmers use the land. Teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the lessons and they support

the teacher by helping other pupils who find certain aspects of the work difficult. The teaching of geography is extended by many field trips and visits to places of local interest. There are good links between history and geography.

- 87 Older pupils use a range of clues from photographs and atlases to locate different settlements such as market towns, large cities and ports. They are able to explain some of the reasons for the development of these places. Progress in lessons is satisfactory but some pupils lack a sense of urgency in their writing because they do not always work towards a clear deadline.
- 88 The scrutiny of work reveals that most pupils have a good general knowledge about the geography of their own area. They can compare it to different places such as towns in Canada. There are very good links with this country through a teacher exchange scheme, and displays to show similarities and differences are clear and helpful. Some of the writing is very good when pupils are stimulated by the topic. For instance, a higher attaining pupil had produced a very good local guidebook which was well researched and used ICT to good effect.
- 89 At this early stage of the term standards are not as high as seen in the last inspection but the coverage of topics over the year looks good. The leadership and management of the subject are sound with well-planned use of the environment and visual materials. The teaching observed was satisfactory. Pupils do not write in much detail about aspects of geography even though they can talk intelligently about them. They prefer to answer briefly on most worksheets.

HISTORY

- 90 Standards are in line with expectations as reported in the last inspection. All pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and in their written work. The teaching seen was satisfactory overall with several good features. Teachers have an enthusiasm for history and a good knowledge of the subject. They use resources imaginatively. For instance, a role-play to show Year 6 pupils what happened in Victorian schools was greatly improved because the teacher provided clothes and artefacts of the period. This gave the pupils more idea of what it might feel like to live in such a regime. Some boys were a little over-excited and did not get the full benefit of the experience but the large majority of pupils left the room with a clear understanding of the changes that had occurred since then.
- 91 The good display of photographs and pictures of recent visits to museums and castles help pupils to gain a good idea of the dress and houses of the Tudor period. Their grasp of chronology is reinforced by the construction of time lines around the classroom. The reference books that are available to pupils support them in their homework. Visits to a nearby Roman Fort also add to pupils' interest and knowledge. One such visit had resulted in a sensitively written letter from a Roman soldier to his parents at home in which the pupil had captured the feelings of homesickness and isolation during a tour of duty to Hadrian's Wall.
- 92 In classes where pupils are clear about the objectives of the lesson they tend to make better progress. Some pupils are slow to start and they do not always have that sense of urgency until the teacher imposes a clear structure for the tasks. Many pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to the subject and are well supported by clear and helpful worksheets. More able pupils work well independently and produce good accounts, for example of the progress of the Tudor line. However, a significant proportion of pupils in the middle ability range are easily satisfied and do

not go beyond the limited task of the one-word answer that several worksheets demanded. Pupils are alert orally and engage willingly in discussions about the voting system. Teachers use opportunities in history lessons to involve pupils in exploration of citizenship and other aspects of living in a democracy.

- 93 The leadership and management of history are sound with good planning to ensure that the National Curriculum is fully covered. The resources used are very good and, with the opportunities for pupils to go on field trips, add greatly to pupils' understanding and appreciation of history. The subject makes a good contribution to their social and cultural education, and brings pupils into close contact with their own community.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 94 By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is well above what is expected for this age in using computers to communicate information and ideas and in operating a variety of associated equipment to monitor and control events. This is far better than at the time of the last inspection when attainment was in line with the national expectation. This is a direct result of:
- the development and very effective use of a well resourced computer suite;
 - the investment of new computers and carefully selected software;
 - the development of a well structured programme of study that pupils follow as they move through the school;
 - specialist teaching being provided by the subject co-ordinator throughout the whole school.
- 95 Specialist teaching provides pupils with the benefit of being taught specific skills which are built upon very effectively as they move through the school. In Year 3 pupils are starting to develop an awareness of where letters are situated on the keyboard. They have a sound knowledge of different forms of information storage and ways in which ICT is used in everyday activities. They log on and locate their own folders in which they store their work such as colourful posters advertising topics of their own choice. These show a real awareness of sense of audience, colour and text. Higher attainers incorporate text wrapping to add balance and shape to their work. They are beginning to design simple multimedia presentations using 'Textease' which demonstrate confidence and skill in the way they work with drop down menus to access specific techniques such as 'cropping' photographs of themselves and scaling up and down graphics selected from clip art folders. Control and monitoring are developing features in the school's provision and pupils are gaining necessary skills through the use of programmable toys.
- 96 In Year 4 pupils achieved well as they used previously stored images using the 'Paint' program to create repeating patterns for wrapping paper. Each pupil drew their own imaginative graphic and set the pattern of repeats in columns or rows with variations of colour and size. Pupils' ability to recognise the importance of design in the making of wrapping paper and to experiment with different ideas was very impressive. The very good teaching enabled pupils to demonstrate the different screen icons to be used and this enabled all pupils to recall their previous work and build on it.
- 97 In Year 5 pupils use their well-developed word processing and graphic skills to produce poems in which the text reflects the theme. For example, one pupil selected the theme of cutting the grass and incorporated graphics and enhanced the fun of the presentation by decreasing letter size with each sweep of the lawnmower! In their use of 'Logo' programs, pupils apply their mathematical knowledge of angles and shape well to produce exciting patterns using sequences of instructions which

incorporate repeat commands and the changing of parameters. They also produce high quality and high interest children's magazine pages of sport and television programmes and personalities. This activity links well to literacy where pupils initially carry out their own research of magazines and adopt the style very successfully using colour, text, graphics and photographs with considerable skill to capture the interest of the target audience.

- 98 By the end of Year 6 pupils can use a wide range of ICT skills to support their learning across a range of subjects and have the skills, knowledge and competence to combine information and effects from different sources to create outstanding multimedia presentations. These incorporate hyperlinks, static and animated visual images, static and moving text, music, sounds and voice. Year 6 pupils show a growing confidence and ability in monitoring and control technology. They use sensors to monitor and record light, temperature and sound and can formulate instructions to replicate the sequence of traffic lights.
- 99 In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was never less than very good and was, on occasions, excellent. Lessons were carefully planned with clear objectives which were shared with the pupils so that they knew exactly what they had to do. This gives a clear focus to lessons and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Ongoing assessment is used well by the teacher as information about pupils' performance is used to guide the teaching and the planning of the next steps in learning. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge was used well as he ensured that his questioning and clear demonstrations enabled all pupils to use different functions and commands. There is a very good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to develop and practise new skills. An interventionist approach was adopted once pupils had started on their own work. This was very successful in maintaining pupils' confidence in their own skills, helping to consolidate the understanding of the lower attainers and to challenge the higher attainers. The enthusiasm of the teacher and the sense that all learning is fun was, at times, inspirational.
- 100 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards ICT. They are keen to talk about their work and are enthusiastic in their discussions about what they have done. Behaviour is very good and pupils work together and help each other.
- 101 The school's policy for ICT offers good support and guidance. National guidance has been adapted to meet the needs of the school and to form a comprehensive and helpful scheme of work. The subject is very well managed by the co-ordinator. He is enthusiastic, has very good subject knowledge and recognises that the next stage in the development of ICT is to continue to improve pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of monitoring and control.

MUSIC

- 102 By Year 6, standards in music are typical for their age overall. The achievement of pupils of all abilities is at least satisfactory. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Standards of singing, both in lessons and in collective worship, are good. Pupils' attitudes to music are good, but the lessons, at over an hour, are too long to maintain a high standard throughout. However, the quality of teaching in the lessons observed was good and there is effective use of specialist teaching with the older pupils. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

- 103 Pupils have a good sense of rhythm by Year 6. They can maintain a constant beat for other pupils to follow. Some pupils show a high standard in this and are confident to keep the beat while other pupils perform to it. They use a good range of percussion and untuned instruments well, although they are unsure about the names of some of them. Pupils make good progress because lessons are planned with a good emphasis of practice and performance. They have a reasonable understanding of written notation to guide their musical activities and describe how they compose their own instrumental pieces.
- 104 Standards of singing are good and pupils make good progress. This is because of good role models from teachers and emphasis given to practising vocal techniques in lessons. For example, the teacher will sing a phrase for pupils to repeat or answer and expects the tune to be accurate. In the lessons observed, the teachers gave the pupils good techniques to help them improve their singing, such as how to sit up so that they can control their breathing. In Year 6, the pupils are encouraged to listen to different groups within the class and make suggestions as to how they can improve. For example, one pupil commented that, 'They are tuneful, but the volume is too low'; another described how 'their voices fit together well'. Pupils sing well in a three-part round.
- 105 All pupils learn to play a musical instrument, a recorder, during their time in school. They are making an effective start to this in Year 4 and are very eager to play. They show a good understanding of basic notation at this early stage and the notes they have learned are played accurately, although perhaps too much enthusiasm in the blowing. The teacher manages the class well and involves all pupils, including those with special educational needs. A significant proportion of pupils learn to play other instruments during their time in school and this enhances their learning.
- 106 The pupils learn to appreciate many different styles of music. For example, the Year 4 pupils discuss meaningfully the work of the group 'Pink Floyd' in their space project. The Year 6 Shakespeare production incorporates contemporary music well into the production as well as good songs composed by the school staff. These are performed to a high standard.
- 107 The teachers make good use of ICT in the lessons. For example, they record the singing throughout the lesson so that pupils can identify the progress they make. They use radio broadcasts and CDs effectively to motivate pupils and extend their learning. In the lessons seen, the teaching was well planned and relationships were very good throughout. However, in both lessons the pupils had to concentrate on listening and performing activities for over an hour. They maintained very good behaviour throughout, but it was clear that towards the end the pupils were not as enthusiastic as they had been and standards dropped.
- 108 The subject leader has been working abroad for the last year and is re-assessing timetabling and reviewing the curriculum. There are no formal systems to measure pupils' progress in music. However, there are many opportunities for pupils to perform for others to observe. From the evidence of one short observation, the pupils learning musical instruments receive good tuition. The teacher knows pupils well and work is matched effectively to the standard they have reached. The lesson was lively and upbeat with an appropriate balance between the development of theory and technique. There are very good opportunities for these pupils to work with older pupils at the local secondary at a regular weekly band session.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 109 Standards of attainment in physical education are above national expectations by Year 6. This is better than at the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be average. No lessons were observed in gymnastics, dance or swimming although it is evident that the majority of pupils attain the expected standard in swimming by the end of the key stage. In the lessons observed, where the main thrust of the work seen was on football and rugby skills, attainment was good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this results in good progress being made.
- 110 The high level of attainment reflects the pupils' own keenness, the good quality of teaching and the range of experiences the school is able to offer in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- 111 Pupils throughout the school have a good understanding of the benefits of a suitable warm up period at the start of a physical activity. These sessions are well organised and become increasingly more vigorous as they lead up to the main activity. The cooling down activity is used effectively to revise what has been learned. In all classes pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their performances by taking part in well constructed skill's practices designed to challenge and improve their throwing, catching, passing, dribbling and kicking skills. Skills are practised in twos and threes and then applied to small games situations where co-operation, tactics and positional play are essential components. Pupils try hard to take these into account and apply tactics and basic principles suitable for attacking and defending and this, over time, has a very beneficial effect on the standard and quality of their team performances. They apply rules fairly in the sports they play and show a good awareness of space as they move around the playing field when practising their passing skills in rugby and football.
- 112 Pupils' progress is good and, by the end of each lesson, the majority had raised the levels of achievement. They show very high levels of co-operation, keen competitive spirit, good levels of co-ordination and an appreciation of the skills of others. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and analyse their own performance and that of others and to identify how they could improve it. Demonstrations by the teacher and pupils are used very effectively with the teacher focusing pupils' attention on particular features by skilful questioning. This is a significant contributory factor to the good progress pupils make.
- 113 Teaching is mainly good and never less than satisfactory. Lessons are well organised and brisk, with well timed sessions which allow the pupils to be continually involved in physical activity rather than standing around. By the end of the lessons pupils are tired. Teachers give clear directions and instructions and set clear boundaries in which groups of pupils are to work. Teachers are quick to see where pupils need help and intervene with constructive and encouraging comments. High expectations of appropriate behaviour ensure a very high level of concentration and pupils are given plenty of time in which to practise and refine their skills.
- 114 Pupils thoroughly enjoy their physical education lessons and respond extremely well. The amount of enjoyment they gain is reflected in the very high percentage of boys and girls (47 per cent) who during the week of the inspection attended the after school football practices. Excellent relationships and a strong sense of social harmony are very positive features of all lessons. They show a keen competitive spirit and an excellent appreciation of the importance of rules, fair play and sportsmanship.

- 115 The school is strong in its wide provision of sporting activities which in addition to those normally found in a junior school include volleyball, skiing, table tennis, unihoc, short tennis and a week's residential visit to Hawse End near Derwentwater where they can experience canoeing, scrambling, climbing and caving. The school also ensures that its pupils have opportunities to take part in competitive district sports events such as cross country running, football and athletics.
- 116 Resources are plentiful and of good quality and range. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. He is knowledgeable and has a clear grasp of what is needed to improve the subject further. A simple but effective assessment strategy has been implemented and which, although in its early stages of development, is having a positive impact on the progress pupils make.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 117 Standards observed in lessons show that pupils are attaining standards in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. Pupils make steady progress in lessons. Those with special educational needs are helped to understand some of the difficult aspects of the subject by specially produced worksheets. Pupils are encouraged to think about moral issues such as taking care of the environment. Teachers relate a study of the country code to the topic work on a famous local character, Beatrix Potter. Pupils have a good understanding of issues near to them and can take part in simple discussions about right and wrong. In another lesson, most pupils gained a basic knowledge of aspects of Judaism because the teacher used good, clear photographs to familiarise the class with new ideas. Though the words were difficult for them they did try to explain the main features of the Jewish faith in their own terms. They described family occasions such as a birthday or wedding anniversary and were articulate and clear in their descriptions. Occasionally, the teacher cut short discussions when pupils posed broader but pertinent questions about the history of the Jews. Some of these questions were picked up later but the moment of greatest interest was missed.
- 118 Year 4 pupils are helped to understand the meanings of parables and miracles through drama and visual stimulus. They respond well to the opportunity to act out their ideas and the teacher creates spiritual awareness that gives rise to interesting speculation about the possibilities of miracles occurring and their real meaning. Other examples of moral and spiritual education are evident in the thoughtful way that pupils produce their own prayers and commandments. These show that they have a sense of morality and know what are important elements in living a good life. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with chances to participate fully in all activities, often using ICT to express their ideas.
- 119 Older pupils respond well orally to artefacts that tell them more about different faiths but are less inclined to describe these facts in writing. Teachers do not challenge those of average ability and above to develop their thinking in words but limit them somewhat by asking only for illustrations or pictures. Much good work is done orally and pupils gain very good social, moral, cultural and spiritual insights in religious education. They also learn about different faiths, beliefs and values but they are vague in relating what they have learned because they have not had enough chances to plan written accounts in any detail.
- 120 The co-ordinator has provided a very good bank of resources including artefacts and video programmes to support the teaching of religious education. There is good

coverage of the curriculum following the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. The teaching in the subject is satisfactory and could be improved by extending the range of writing that pupils are asked to attempt. Religious education lessons are important in establishing the very good moral tone of the school.