

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DISTINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Workington

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 133264

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Cannon

Reporting inspector: Mr Robert Robinson  
21024

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 249026

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Road  
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Workington

Postcode: Cumbria  
CA14 5TE

Telephone number: 01946 830 526

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sara Lamb

Date of previous inspection: Not applicable

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21024	Mr Robert Robinson Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Provision for children in the foundation stage.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
1234	Mrs Tina Bradley 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?
29426	Mr David Grimwood Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32138	Mr Tim Plant Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Distington Community School was formed in 2001 through the amalgamation of the local infant and junior schools. The new primary school is smaller than average having 46 boys and 68 girls on roll. Fourteen children attend the nursery each day. A high proportion of pupils live in a socially and economically disadvantaged area, which is part of a Health Action Zone. No pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils are learning English as an additional language. Twenty-five pupils (21 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs which is about average nationally and six pupils have a statement of special educational needs which is above the national average. Most of the pupils with special educational needs have mainly moderate, speech or specific learning difficulties and some have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about 33 per cent which is above the national average. There have been significant changes of staff since the school opened. The school is part of the West Cumbria Excellence Cluster. A Community Development Centre is within the school building.

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

Distington Community School provides a sound education for its pupils. A firm foundation has been established for the school's future development because the leadership and management are good. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory; however, standards, although improving by the end of Year 2, are well below average, by the end of Year 6, in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with particular strengths in Years 1 to 3. Parents hold the school in high regard. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher and other senior teachers lead and manage the school well.
- The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 3 is good resulting in pupils making good progress.
- The use of information and communication technology to market the school and to promote teaching and learning is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour, personal development and relationships with one another and adults are good.
- The social development of pupils is very effective.
- The pastoral care of pupils is good.
- The partnership with parents, the community and other schools and colleges is very good.

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

- Standards, by the end of Year 6, are well below average in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards, by the end of Year 6, are below average in design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.
- The planning of lessons in the nursery, reception and Years 4 to 6 does not take sufficient account of pupils' previous learning.
- The development of reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics in other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is below average.

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

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	*	*	E*	E
mathematics	*	*	E*	E
science	*	*	E*	E

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

very low (lowest five per cent nationally)    E\*

*These results are not available, as the school did not open until September 2001.*

- Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 are well below average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement on the very low (lowest five per cent nationally) standards for the group of pupils who took the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002. In art and design and information and communication technology, standards are typical for pupils' ages. In all other subjects, standards are below average.
- Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 2 are likely, by the end of this academic year, to be in line with national expectations in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education but well below average in speaking and listening, and below average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education.
- Children, by the end of the reception year, make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and achieve well, though are still on course to be below expected standards. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, the children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to be well below expected standards by the end of the reception year. Standards in physical and creative development are likely to be below average by the end of the reception year, although the children achieve satisfactorily.
- The overall achievement of pupils from entry to the school in September 2001 is satisfactory. Improvements in pupils' progress are now apparent in Years 1 to 3 because of the good quality of teaching.
- The school's targets for the proportion of pupils likely to reach the levels expected nationally and above are very demanding and are unlikely to be achieved, particularly at the higher level.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning when the work is interesting and challenging.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in classrooms, around school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils take on responsibilities willingly. They have positive relationships with others, respect their teachers and understand the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance levels are below the national average and this has a negative impact on pupils' progress and the standards attained.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is satisfactory overall, including that for English, literacy, mathematics and numeracy. In the nursery and reception class, the teaching of personal, social and emotional development is effective; the children enjoy coming to school, are interested in learning and behave well. The teaching of music and information and communication technology is good in Years 1 to 6 and pupils develop skills in these subjects well. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well and the pupils have good relationships with teachers. Teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs, when working independently or in small groups. The best teaching is in Years 1 to 3 and, as a result, pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education. In the nursery, reception and Years 4 to 6, teachers do not use information about pupils' prior attainments sufficiently well in order to quicken pupils' progress. The school meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides an interesting curriculum for its pupils that meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is enriched by the school's use of the local community and the facilities in the Community Development Centre and through positive links with other schools and colleges. A very good range of extra-curricular activities supplements pupils' learning well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Members of staff provide appropriate help for these pupils. Individual education plans are clear, detailed and helpful. Teachers' daily lesson plans rarely identify specific work for pupils who have special educational needs though the help teaching assistants provide for them is a significant factor in their satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' social development is very good and that for pupils' moral development is good. Occasions to study the cultural diversity of British society are limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral care of pupils is good. The procedures for checking pupils' progress are good in Years 1 to 6 but underdeveloped in the nursery and reception class where insufficient use is made of the information to hasten pupils' progress. The systems in place for improving attendance are satisfactory and attendance rates are slowly improving.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and other senior managers lead and manage the school well. The school development plan facilitates the school's aims and aspirations very well resulting in much being achieved since the school opened. Subject co-ordinators understand their responsibilities, and their roles are developing well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors have gained a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Statutory duties are carried out appropriately and governors are beginning to work with senior staff to plan the future direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Systems for checking and improving teaching through analysis of pupils' work are satisfactory. The senior managers track pupils' progress well in English and mathematics, though monitoring of pupils' progress in most other subjects is at an early stage of development.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are used satisfactorily. Information and communication technology provides very effective help to staff and governors as well as being used to present high quality information for parents. The governors apply the principles of obtaining 'best value' satisfactorily.



## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school because the school informs and involves parents in their children's learning very well.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children enjoy school and make good progress because the teaching is good.</li><li>• Children are expected to work hard and the school helps them to become more mature and responsible.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents and they find the staff approachable.</li><li>• There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• They are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• The leadership and management of the school are good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents expressed no significant concerns.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents, although teaching, overall, and their children's rate of progress are satisfactory rather than good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The good leadership and management of the recently established school are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Already, pupils are achieving well because of good teaching in the Years 1 to 3; standards in these classes are closer to the national average than in other age groups. It is likely that standards of the present group of pupils by the end of Year 2 will still be below the national average, though this an improvement on the previous year's well below average performance.

2. Standards, by the end of Year 6 in the national tests in 2002 were very low (lowest five per cent nationally) in English, mathematics and science. The present group of pupils in Year 6 are on course to be well below average in these subjects. The improvement reflects the success of initiatives taken by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to identify areas for development through the regular checking of pupils' work and the monitoring of the quality of teaching.

3. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening have not improved in Years 1 to 3 to the same extent as those of reading and writing and are well below average, as is the case for pupils in the rest of the school. This is mainly because insufficient emphasis is placed on planning to develop pupils' learning in this aspect of English.

4. In the national tests at the end of Year 2, pupils were well below the average of pupils in similar schools in mathematics whereas standards in reading and writing were in line with the average of pupils in similar schools. The leadership of the school took steps to improve attainment in mathematics successfully by analysing pupils' answers in the test papers, seeking advice from a local education authority consultant and implementing changes in the teaching of the subject.

5. In the nursery, reception and Years 4 to 6, standards are well below average overall. This is because lesson planning does not build well enough on what pupils can already do. The work for higher and lower attaining pupils is often similar to that provided for average attainers in most subjects. This means that higher attainers are not being challenged sufficiently whilst lower attainers are struggling with work that is often too hard for them and require much support from teachers and teaching assistants to make satisfactory progress. Children in the nursery and reception class achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development because the teaching is good.

6. The below average attendance of pupils is a significant factor in pupils' overall well below average standard of attainment. The school is very aware of the effect of unsatisfactory attendance on standards and has instigated appropriate procedures to ensure that absence from school is for genuine reasons. The recent appointment of learning mentors is beginning to have a positive effect on the attendance of the small number of pupils who are reluctant to attend school.

7. Pupils achieve well in art and design and in information and communication technology and meet national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of good teaching and effective guidance for teachers to help them plan lessons. In both subjects, pupils benefit from the schools links with other organisations. In art and design, visiting artists arranged through the school's membership of the West Cumbria Excellence Cluster enriches pupils' experiences and teaching. In information and communication technology,

the use of the facilities and expertise of staff from the Community Development Centre helps pupils to make good progress in their learning. In addition, skills in information and communication technology are practised and used well in other subjects.

8. In music, pupils achieve well resulting in pupils reaching national expectations in Year 2 and being close to average in Year 6 because of good quality teaching throughout the school which builds well on children's good progress in music in the nursery and reception. In design and technology and in physical education, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and are on course to meet the national expectations by the end of Year 2 because the teaching of these subjects is good. In Year 3 to Year 6 the sound teaching means that pupils make satisfactory progress though attainment by the end of Year 6 remains below average.

9. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but progress varies from class to class, depending on the quality of teaching. Individual education plans for these pupils are appropriate and are followed satisfactorily by teachers and teaching assistants; however, few teachers plan specifically for their needs in lessons, to increase the rate of pupils' progress further.

10. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education, although standards are on course to be below average by the end of Year 6. Reading, writing, speaking and listening and numeracy skills are not exploited sufficiently to enable pupils to make better progress in order to raise standards further.

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

11. The pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and behave well. They want to please their teachers by behaving appropriately in the classroom and out on the school playground. Children in the nursery and reception class settle well into the school's daily routines and are happy to come to school. In a music lesson; for example, the nursery children demonstrated maturity beyond their years when they played claves, drums, and cymbals with the highest level of control and concentration. The pleasure these young children derived from their own success brought a spiritual dimension to the lesson which made a very good contribution to their personal development. Older pupils have good attitudes to learning but a few pupils appear tired and find difficulty maintaining an interest in their lessons; however most pupils concentrate and co-operate with each other.

12. Pupils' behaviour is good because pupils are keen to maintain good relationships with their teachers and make a positive contribution to the school community. Pupils who have the potential to disrupt lessons through a lack of maturity make every effort to concentrate and produce their best work. Pupils handle their relationships with each other and their teachers with respect. When seriously unacceptable behaviour occurs, the head teacher will exclude pupils from school; this happened on one occasion in the last academic year for valid reasons.

13. Pupils enhance their own personal development through their willingness to take responsibilities in school, such as becoming elected members of the school council or by supporting their friends who are school councillors; for example, council members were proud to present a play tunnel to the nursery and reception children. The youngest children were amazed and delighted to accept the new tunnel and the council members took pride in giving. This informal ceremony was a very good example of how pupils are developing both spiritually and socially in school.

14. Pupils are keen to attend all the extra-curricular activities available to them in school. They take part in a wealth of educational visits which promote an appreciation of nature and culture. Activities, such as the art club and a newspaper group, are well attended. Participation in these events makes a positive contribution to the personal, social and cultural development of pupils as they progress through the school.

15. Relationships are good. Pupils respond well to the help they receive from their teachers and other staff. They demonstrate warm friendships when working or playing together; for example, Year 6 pupils worked alongside the youngest children during a school assembly. In doing so, the older pupils were able to assist the younger children and give them an opportunity to build friendships with pupils outside their own classrooms.

16. Attendance rates are below the national average. Most absences are because of illness; however the high rates of absence of some pupils have a negative impact on the progress they make in school and the standards they achieve.

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

17. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good in the nursery and reception. This provides a good start to the children's education and prepares them well for future learning.

18. The main strengths in teaching are in Years 1 to 3. The teachers, who are all members of the senior management team, provide good role models for other staff. The planning of lessons builds up on what has been learnt before and is based on what pupils already know, understand and can do. The teaching ensures pupils develop skills in literacy and numeracy at a brisk pace; for example, in Year 3, pupils learnt the rule for plural endings for words such as 'boy' and 'baby'. The teacher then gave pupils a set time to practise writing other plural words. Pupils worked hard with a partner to complete a good number of plurals of words within the allotted time.

19. In Year 2, the questioning of individual pupils according to their level of attainment helped move pupils' learning on and enabled the teacher to assess pupils' understanding; for example, in one lesson the teacher asked challenging questioning, such as, 'Why is a circle not a sphere?', and 'What is the difference between a rectangle and a square?' moved learning on at a brisk pace.

20. Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well in Years 1 to 3 because the teaching stimulates their interest; for example, in an art lesson in Year 3, the teaching was very well planned to develop artistic skills alongside the fostering of pupils' personal and social education. Information and communication technology helped learning very effectively. The initial discussion between teacher and pupils provided a real purpose to the learning which was enhanced by the use of digitally produced photographs of pairs of pupils. Pupils were very interested and concentrated hard to draw in pencil features to reflect the relationships between each group. They gained skills in shading and using charcoal pencils as well as finally using a felt-tipped pen to highlight certain outlines. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work were positive. They were proud of their achievements and very supportive of their partners demonstrated constructively by discussing their artwork and celebrating effective features as well as suggesting how the drawings could be improved.

21. Strengths throughout the teaching are in teachers' good management of lessons and of pupils' behaviour which encourages pupils to relate well to each other and the teachers. This has a positive impact on learning; for example, in a science lesson in Year 6, the teacher's good rapport with pupils, and the organisation of the pupils according to their level

of attainment, helped them to gain a better understanding of ways to plan an investigation to find out how the number of bulbs in an electrical circuit affected the brightness of the bulb.

22. A general weakness in the teaching in the nursery, reception and Years 4 to 6 is the lack of detail in teachers' planning for specific lessons, relative to pupils' level of attainment; for example, in the nursery and reception, the planning was very brief and did not identify clearly the work for particular children or groups of children to move their learning on at a faster pace. Similarly, in Years 4 to 6, the information teachers had of pupils' attainment was not used well enough resulting in lessons being taught at an inappropriate level for lower and higher attaining pupils; for example, in a religious education lesson in a joint Year 4 and 5 class, the planning was extremely brief and gave no details of work for pupils of different levels of attainment or ages resulting in bland teaching and many pupils lacking interest in the learning. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons, although the teachers in Years 4 to 5 seldom plan specific activities for them. Nevertheless, these pupils are given good help from capable teaching assistants, which enables them to make satisfactory progress in their learning.

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

23. The school has quickly established a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum with appropriate teaching of all the subjects in the National Curriculum, and of religious education. The guidance for teachers, which consists of combinations of nationally recognised material and commercial schemes, has been developed for each subject, although in some cases these are still being adapted to ensure that material has a particular relevance to the pupils. The provision for the teaching of information and communication technology is good resulting in pupils achieving well. Computers are used effectively to assist learning in other subjects, particularly art and design and science. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception is satisfactory and follows the national guidelines. The national strategies for the teaching of numeracy and literacy have been fully implemented and are beginning to have an impact on learning, particularly that of pupils in Years 1 to 3 where standards, although still below average, have improved since last year.

24. The school makes considerable efforts to ensure the inclusion of pupils in all activities; for example, the energetic efforts of parents and friends in raising considerable amounts of money mean that the school is able to subsidise substantially the cost of residential trips, so that pupils are not disadvantaged for financial reasons. Teachers know the pupils well and those who have special educational needs are quickly identified and supported. Individual education plans contain clear and achievable targets for progress. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive the help indicated in their statements. The school is at pains to identify talent in all its pupils and so, for example, pupils with special educational needs were able to take leading roles in a school production.

25. The provision for activities outside school hours is very good considering the size of the school. The school provides a good range of clubs and these help to support the curriculum. The pupils are enthusiastic about their clubs; for example, about half the school attends, at various times.

26. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Lessons are designed to give pupils the opportunity to think about a range of issues and, although no pressure is put on individuals to speak, everybody is given the opportunity. Teachers take considerable care to create an encouraging, non-threatening, atmosphere in which pupils' opinions will be valued. The school has yet to formulate its policy on sex education but the programme on the use and misuse of drugs is comprehensive and wide

ranging, involving links with schools in America and relies, in part, on considerable support from the local police. This helps to impress upon the pupils the significance of the subject.

27. The school has very good links with the community and these make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. The contribution of the Community Development Centre in the financing of a computer suite, sited at the school, has been a major influence in the good progress that pupils make in information and communication technology. Members of a local women's organisation offer individual help to pupils, particularly in work involving textiles; for example, in the variety of good quality wall hangings on display in the school. The police play a significant part in the programme for personal, social and health education. Use of a field near to the school, owned by a national charity, helps pupils' development in games and sports. The school's links with local businesses and associations not only enriches curricular provision but also helps financially through sponsorship. An unusual link, but one which brings extra significance to the occasion, is the use of a barn, in a relatively isolated spot, as a venue for the school's harvest festival service.

28. The school has also quickly developed very productive links with other schools and colleges. Its membership of the local excellence cluster has already had a positive influence, most obviously in art and design. Links with the local sports technology college mean that pupils have been able to benefit from expert tuition in a range of sporting activities. The school's use of the facilities and staff at the local secondary school has also enriched the provision for both science and design and technology.

29. The school's good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is founded upon the creation of a happy and caring community. Parents state that the school is helping their children to develop in a mature and responsible manner.

30. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are well planned and offer opportunities for prayer and periods of reflection. Care is taken to choose suitable music to create a tranquil atmosphere in which pupils enter the hall. Pupils respond to this with quiet and respectful behaviour. Individual lessons are designed to assist pupils to consider their emotions. Year 3 pupils are urged to 'concentrate on that happy feeling deep inside.' The local vicar asks pupils to quietly reflect, with head bowed, on how they might help others. History lessons provide opportunities for spiritual development when pupils study particular topics such as Remembrance Day: some Year 2 pupils noted that they shared a surname with soldiers who had fallen.

31. The school's efforts to promote pupils' moral development are good. Stories in assemblies have a strong moral theme which teachers explain sensitively. The school has deliberately chosen to have a limited number of rules but these stress how one's personal behaviour can affect others and they are strongly emphasised through the home-school agreement and through lessons when pupils discuss moral issues. There are high expectations of good behaviour in classroom and playground. Relationships among pupils, and between pupils and staff, are good. Adults in school, led by the headteacher, provide good role models.

32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Representatives from each class are democratically chosen to be members of the school council. The representatives report back to their classes the proceedings of the meetings. The school awards the council funds but it has already been successful in generating its own funds through working with a local housing association and local industry. The school council has provided apparatus for play activities for use during breaks. Supervision of this apparatus by older pupils and their efforts to help younger ones use it has already brought about an appreciable improvement in behaviour at breaktimes. An effective, symbolic



gesture, as to the equal importance of everybody is offered by the mosaic of the school symbol in the entrance hall created by each pupil affixing a piece. The good range of trips, including residential visits for the older pupils, provides useful opportunities for pupils to mix together in the wider community. Whole school productions allow the pupils to work together on a joint venture. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves through their good support for charities.

33. Cultural provision at the school is satisfactory. Pupils gain an appropriate understanding of their cultural heritage through their work in history and the good range of visits they make to local museums, historical buildings and places of interest. Pupils study the work of a range of artists from Warhol to Monet in art and design lessons. Theatre trips are arranged to see productions as diverse as puppet shows and performances of Shakespeare's plays which are adapted for a young audience. Other visits allow pupils to investigate the work of poets, such as Wordsworth. Although pupils make a satisfactory study of other faiths in their work in religious education and are offered some insight into other cultures, opportunities for studying the cultural diversity of British society are not as well developed as other areas.

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

34. Pastoral care is a priority in the school's provision for its pupils. The school cares well for its pupils and has implemented good quality policies to promote the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff. It provides an appropriate environment in which its pupils can work and play.

35. A named teacher and a governor have taken responsibility for overseeing child protection issues in school and have received training for this area of work. The rest of the staff is kept up to-date with new legislation and guidance.

36. Good systems are in place to encourage pupils to behave well and to minimise all types of anti-social behaviour, such as bullying, sexism and racism. The headteacher has introduced a procedure to assist and monitor pupils who find self-discipline difficult. This system records incidences of unacceptable behaviour and helps pupils through counselling. It, ultimately, includes the use of a report card which is signed by adults throughout the day and shared with parents each evening. Already, the procedures are having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour.

37. Procedures have been put in place recently for gathering the information needed to check the academic progress of pupils. Using these systems, teachers are able to check pupils' progress through the National Curriculum in order to identify what should be taught next. However, because the system is relatively new, only a few teachers are using the information effectively to plan lessons and assist the learning of individuals or groups of pupils. In the nursery and reception, the attainments of children are checked and recorded for individual activities but no succinct records are kept of children's progress in meeting the nationally recognised small steps of learning for children of this age. The information gained from the checking of children's learning is not used sufficiently by teachers in the nursery and reception when they plan lessons in order to increase the rate of progress the children make in their learning.

38. Appropriate procedures are in place to encourage and monitor how pupils are developing personally. One impressive example of how the school is encouraging pupils to develop both personally and academically can be found in its new termly report to parents. These reports comment on behaviour and attendance and identify those subjects where pupils have placed their greatest efforts to learn and achieve. The reports identify pupils'

current levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science and encourage them to improve their personal and academic achievements.

39. Gifted and talented pupils receive encouragement to pursue their interests and are supported to do so by their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with additional assistance to help them learn and progress appropriately. The establishment of a school council is a positive example of how the pupils are encouraged to use their own initiative and grow in self-confidence and offer their views on the running of the school.

40. The school has satisfactory procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance; however attendance rates are still below average. The attendance registers are kept well and meet statutory requirements. The close checking of pupils' attendance has begun to show some improvement in attendance and punctuality, especially with regard to unauthorised absences; however, the attendance rates in this academic year are below average in nearly all classes with well below average rates of absence in some classes. The school works closely with its educational welfare officer and its learning mentors to promote full attendance. Learning mentors make a positive contribution by helping pupils to concentrate and behave well in lessons and by building positive relationships with those pupils who normally do not attend school regularly. Learning mentors are aware of the need, on the first day of pupils' absence, to contact parents of pupils who are often absent to find out the reason for the non-attendance.

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

41. Parents perceive the school to be very good and are supportive of it. They work closely with the school to assist their children in their personal development and take an interest in the work their children do in school.

42. The school's effective links with parents is a strength because of its successful communication with parents. Parents have been given opportunities to present their views of the school through regular and effective questionnaires. They are encouraged to come into school and to become involved in their children's education.

43. Despite the newness of the school, the involvement of parents is already making an impact on pupils' learning. Parents and friends within the community are working together to raise funds and contribute by providing extra resources and opportunities to enrich learning for their children. Parents take part in educational workshops run by school and the Community Development Centre. Their interest in the workshops, such as glass painting and information and communication technology, provides good social opportunities as well as an involvement in the work of the school.

44. The quality of information provided for parents is very good and is a particular strength in the school's communication with them. Extremely high quality leaflets have been produced, using the school's computer equipment very well, which cover all aspects of the National Curriculum and areas of school life. These leaflets entitled 'Our Guide to....' offer in clear and simple terms information about subjects, homework, the management of pupils' behaviour, support of gifted and talented pupils and the responses to latest parental questionnaires; in fact, these leaflets inform parents about almost every aspect of school life and encourage parents to ask for leaflets on areas which may have been missed. The Governors' Annual Report to parents tells parents all they need to know about the school, and the school prospectus is reader friendly.

45. Parents receive annual and termly reports of their children's progress. The annual reports meet statutory requirements and tell parents all about the work their children have

done in school; however, there is an inconsistency in the way teachers use targets to identify what pupils should be doing to improve their learning. The school works closely with parents of pupils who have special educational needs and invites them to take part and authorise the educational programmes devised for their children.

46. A few parents come into school, regularly, to hear pupils read and they, along with those parents who are supporting their children with their reading and homework, are making a good contribution to learning at school and at home. Some parental help with sporting activities within the school day and in after-school clubs benefits pupils greatly.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

47. The headteacher and senior management team provide good leadership. Much has been achieved since the school opened. The headteacher has a clear vision for all pupils to achieve the highest possible standards. The headteacher and governors recognise that standards are too low and priorities have been identified very well, particularly to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. A strong commitment to improve pupil's opportunities and achievements has been established and this is being reflected in the work of the school. The senior management team work well together and set good role models for everyone else through the quality of their teaching and leadership and management of subjects. Policy documents and teaching guidance have been agreed to make the school's expectations quite clear, in order to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of the curriculum throughout the school.

48. The roles of the curriculum co-ordinator are being developed well. The consistent approach of all subject coordination is based firmly on improving standards of pupils' performance in order to achieve the school's main aim of 'creating the environment and opportunities for each pupil to achieve the highest standards of learning of which they are capable'. Already, the subject co-ordination of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology and music are good and beginning to impact positively on standards.

49. The co-ordination of special educational needs and assessment is developing well; however, the co-ordinator does not have written details of the roles and responsibilities of the posts. Pupils with special educational needs are being correctly identified and the co-ordinator ensures that appropriate individual education plans are in place and reviewed each term. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 and data is analysed carefully and the information is beginning to be used to set realistic, but challenging, targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. The tracking of children's progress in the nursery and reception is underdeveloped and does not link sufficiently into the good systems established in the rest of the school.

50. The school's involvement with the West Cumbria Excellence Cluster is co-ordinated very well by the assistant headteacher. The membership of this grouping of schools and colleges benefits pupils, particularly, through the provision of learning mentors to assist individuals and groups of pupils who are reluctant to attend school, as well as providing funding to help enhance the teaching in art and design and music.

51. The governing body has strong links with the senior management team and there is effective communication between them. The governors are committed to improving pupils' achievements and opportunities and fulfil their duties and responsibilities satisfactorily. They have an effective committee structure that covers all aspects of the school's work.

52. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development. They have helped the senior managers to produce the school development plan which is a very comprehensive document giving full details of improvements that are being pursued. Action plans give detailed targets, time-scales, costs involved, success criteria and responsibilities. Governors and staff have made strenuous efforts to involve parents in their children's education. Parents report, rightly, that the school is well led and managed.

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

53. The headteacher, staff and governors should take the following action:

- improve standards in English, mathematics and science  
(paragraphs: 1, 2, 4, 64, 66, 67, 75, 79)
- improve standards in design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education  
(paragraphs: 10, 88, 92, 97, 107, 113, 118)
- plan lessons in all classes to take account of pupils' previous learning  
(paragraphs: 3, 5, 9, 22, 37, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 74, 77, 78, 81, 120, 121)
- create opportunities to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics in other subjects  
(paragraphs: 3, 10, 65, 71, 75, 95, 121)
- improve pupils' attendance  
(paragraphs: 6, 16, 40)

The following less important areas for development should be included in the action plan:

- the development and implementation of procedures to track children's progress in all their areas of learning in the nursery and reception  
(paragraphs: 37, 49, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63)
- the raising of pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of British society  
(paragraphs: 33, 85)

*\*Staff and governors have identified these areas for improvement already.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	23	19	0	0	0
Percentage	0	14	47	39	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	7	121
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	25

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	9	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	17	19	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (n/a)	86 (n/a)	77 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (n/a)	68 (n/a)	82 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	13	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	8	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (n/a)	40 (n/a)	50 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	11	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (n/a)	55 (n/a)	50 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

\* Numbers omitted where the number of boys and girls is below 11.



**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	107	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	24.2

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

**Financial information**

Financial year	1-9-2001 – 31-3-2002
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	£
Total income	218784
Total expenditure	203145
Expenditure per pupil	1539
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	15639

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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	128
Number of questionnaires returned	55

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	54	34	4	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	48	4	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	11	4	2
The teaching is good.	56	35	5	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	33	5	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	29	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	34	9	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	33	4	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	39	5	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	34	5	0	7

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

54. Children enter the school with well below average attainment in personal and social development, in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In communication, language and literacy, boys' attainment on entry is lower than that of girls. In creative and physical development, children's attainment on entry is below average.

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

55. Children in the nursery and reception class make good progress and achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, although they are still likely to be below expected levels by the end of the reception year.

56. The quality of teaching is good. Children come into school happily. Members of staff greet the children and their parents warmly. The children know the class routine of taking their name card in order to register their selection of an activity. They behave well and share resources with others willingly, such as toys in the toy box. When the whole class is taught together, they settle appropriately and listen to their teachers. The children are able to concentrate satisfactorily because they find the learning interesting; for example, the nursery children sat in a circle and enjoyed discussing the special qualities of a member of their class, though several children were restless when they were awaiting their turn to speak. Older children in the reception group talked interestingly about a story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', although, a few children found taking turns difficult when speaking and needed reminders from the teacher.

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

57. Children are likely to be well below the expected standards by the end of the reception year in this area of learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the children make sound progress in their learning.

58. The speaking skills of children in the nursery are limited with about one in four children not having the confidence to talk in front of others. The members of staff plan activities satisfactorily to develop children's speaking and listening skills and work hard to engage them in discussion. The time set aside for children to discuss together in a group with an adult is used productively, as children have good opportunities to air their views and to listen to the thoughts of others. Some children have difficulty communicating and the teachers take time to find out what they mean through helpful questioning.

59. The planning of lessons to develop children's skills in reading and writing is very brief and does not build sufficiently on children's prior attainments. Limited succinct records are kept of their progress to help teachers to decide what to teach next. In practice, the teaching is satisfactory as members of staff know the children well and organise appropriate activities to move children's learning on at a steady pace; for example, lower attainers acted out a story they had listened to and gained a better understanding through good questioning by the teaching assistant; however, the resources for the activity were limited. Higher attainers wrote a string of words to retell the story. They read simple words in familiar stories by their understanding of the sounds letters make. They use clues from illustrations to read

unfamiliar text. Most children talk about pictures in books and respond to familiar stories and rhymes with enjoyment. About half of the children can write their names clearly, though the quality of the letter shapes is variable.

### **Mathematical development**

60. By the end of the reception year, children are likely to be well below expected levels. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the children make sound progress in their learning. Younger children learn to estimate the number in a group; for example, lower attainers enjoyed playing with sweets and attempted to count them. Most children counted out correctly groups of one, two or three sweets whilst higher attainers recognised the numbers in the groups without counting. Teachers encourage the children to learn and sing rhymes to develop their understanding of number and counting skills, such as when children acted out the rhyme 'Five Green Bottles'. Older children sang about 'Ten Cheeky Monkeys' to encourage them to count on and back to ten with help from the teacher who counted with them. Most reception age children recognise and name numbers from zero to five and, through games begin to order numbers between six and ten. Members of staff help lower attaining children and those children with special educational needs satisfactorily; however, their needs are rarely identified in planning and few records are kept of their progress.

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

61. The children are likely to be well below the standards expected nationally at the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching and children's progress is satisfactory. Teachers develop children's interest in the world around them satisfactorily; for example, the children are encouraged to investigate objects such as herbs, spices and soap. Younger children and those with special educational needs examined the texture of these materials. Older children compared the materials using all their senses. Children develop a greater understanding of other cultures as teachers use the local community very well; for example, a local resident explained the significance of the Chinese New Year. The children compared similarities with English traditions, such as the family gathering together at both the Chinese New Year and at Christmas. They studied Chinese writing and were given an opportunity to copy some writing and to speak a Chinese phrase. The children compared Christmas cards with Chinese New Year cards. The children made satisfactory progress in the lesson; however, the teaching missed opportunities to enhance children's learning further as there was limited planning for the lesson, and opportunities to assess children's learning were not considered.

### **Physical development**

62. The children are likely to be below the national expectations by the end of the reception class. They make satisfactory progress, as the teaching is sound. Younger pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to develop their skills in an outdoor environment. Children are given responsibility for getting out and replacing equipment and have a good range of wheeled vehicles to steer, including tricycles and carts. Lower attaining children are rather passive and need encouragement from the staff to use the equipment. Higher attainers ride tricycles confidently. The planning of lessons lacks detail and specific challenge for groups or individuals based on their level of attainment. Older children need plenty of direction when taking part in physical education lessons; however, they respond with enjoyment, though some children tend to call out and interrupt the teaching. Teaching assistants help children with special educational needs well to join in activities with others; for example, they responded in movement to the music of Holst's 'Mars'. Girls' attainment was higher than boys because they were far more responsive than the boys to the teacher's suggestions of how to improve their performance. Children have ample opportunities to develop their skills

in cutting, such as when they cut out satisfactorily symmetrical patterns as part of their study of the Chinese New Year. Members of staff encourage children to use computers to assist their learning and this helps children to improve their skills at controlling the 'mouse' effectively.

### **Creative development**

63. Children achieve satisfactorily, helped by the overall sound quality of teaching, although, are likely to be below the national expectations by the end of the reception class. Children have a broad range of experiences during their time in the nursery and reception class; however, the planning of lessons and recording of children's progress are insufficient. They weave in 'hot' colours, and higher attainers translate their designs into computer representations. They make interesting collages using pasta and cereals. They make sculptures from different fruits and vegetables. Teachers plan exciting ways to develop painting; for example, painting to music. Younger children painted a picture whilst older pupils responded pictorially to the tempo of the music. Higher attainers depicted how the music made them feel. The teaching of the musical aspect of creative development is very good and children achieve very well and are on course to reach average standards. In the best lessons, the co-operation of the children of reception age is outstanding. They respond with maturity beyond their years and take pleasure in their learning. They know a range of songs; for example, they sing the words of 'I am a music man' and play their percussion instruments in a controlled manner.

### **ENGLISH**

64. Standards are well below average in all aspects of English in Year 6 though higher than last year. In Year 2, standards are below average in reading and writing, and well below average in speaking and listening. Generally, girls are performing slightly better than boys in English which reflects the differences in attainment of boys and girls on entry to the school. The subject co-ordinator has identified the differences of attainment of boys and girls and additional help is given to lower attaining boys and girls to speed up their progress. There are some early signs that standards are beginning to improve in Years 1 to 3 because pupils achieve well but improvements in Years 4 to 6 are less marked.

65. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and this brings about a good rate of progress. Pupils know what they have to learn, as this is shared with them at the beginning of lessons and reviewed at the end. Whole class discussion times are used well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding by the use of a good range of questions at different levels of difficulty. Pupils are given sufficient time to think and answer, though many pupils do not speak very clearly and have a limited vocabulary. A majority of their answers are short; for example, answers such as 'Eat it' and 'When the mouse comes' by themselves do not make a great deal of sense. The teaching effectively picks up incidental teaching points, for example, when reading together with the teacher, the word 'gnawing' was studied to exemplify silent initial letters in words. Pupils are managed well and their behaviour is good; and any minor misbehaviour is dealt with effectively without any undue fuss so no time is lost. Teachers mark work regularly and suitable comments are given about how it might be improved; for instance, 'Next time, remember that people's names begin with a capital letter'. There are differences in the tasks being set for pupils of different abilities and the level of help they are being given.

66. For all pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, a good range of tasks develops reading and writing skills well. The teaching sets high expectations for writing; most Year 2 pupils print legibly and higher attainers are able to use capital letters and full stops in the correct places. The teaching uses computers effectively to assist and develop pupils' written work. Whilst above

average pupils read accurately and with some expression, other pupils lack expression and often do not notice punctuation. Pupils know and use a good range of strategies to decipher unknown words, including looking at pictures in addition to using their understanding of letter sounds in words. Below average pupils tend to be over reliant on memorising the text.

67. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 4 to 6 with some better teaching in Year 3. Teachers give clear instructions; for example, 'Stop now, pencils down and look at the board', so that pupils know exactly what to do. Teachers' planning is based on national guidance for English; however, teachers' lesson plans do not always take sufficient account of pupils' levels of attainment and this is one reason why the rate of pupils' progress, though sound overall, is not as fast as in Years 1 to 3.

68. In Year 6, most pupils' writing is joined and legible. Some lower attaining pupils in Year 6 have written good descriptive writing with adult support; for example, 'Hurling along we suddenly saw a flash outside'. Independently, an above average pupil was able to write, 'I rushed through the double doors into the dark, icy corridor'. Work completed by Year 6 pupils over a longer period of time shows that they have tackled an appropriate range of writing tasks and that some of these are being varied to meet the needs of different pupils effectively.

69. In Year 6, texts are not always matched carefully enough to pupils' needs and abilities. Some texts are too hard or too easy and not at a challenging, instructional level for pupils. Year 6 pupils have some knowledge of non-fiction texts and reading for information; although they are able to use an index quite well to identify page references in a book, they are not able to scan pages sufficiently to locate information. Pupils have a suitable range of strategies to decode unknown words and can use a dictionary if they are unsure about meaning.

70. A general weakness throughout the school is that teachers do not keep sufficient records of what pupils have read and current levels of reading. Continuous records of reading are kept in reading logs or homework diaries that are used to communicate between home and school; however, problems arise when pupils forget their book or, worse still, lose it, leaving no back up information about pupils' progress. Entries in some reading records do not give sufficient information; for instance in one pupil's book it said, 'Read for twenty minutes', with no indication of what had been read or how well.

71. Generally, there are not enough planned opportunities, throughout the school, to develop speaking and listening in other subjects; for example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson, the planning did not identify the development of speaking skills during discussion times. Pupils listened but many were reluctant to participate in the discussion, particularly the boys. Some pupils mumbled when answering and did not speak clearly and pupils were not challenged by the teacher to improve the clarity of speech.

72. Information and communication technology is being used well by pupils in Years 3 to 6 to assist their learning in English; for example, Year 3 pupils used an art program and speech bubbles to explore characters in stories in order to suggest what they might say, pupils in Years 4 and 5 word processed to draft and re-draft a piece of writing, and Year 6 pupils analysed verb tenses and made on-screen changes to these.

73. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 to 3 and satisfactory progress in Years 4 to 6 because of the help they receive from the class teacher and teaching assistants.

74. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator is well informed and is also taking a leading role in developing the subject and this is beginning to have a positive impact in classrooms by setting targets for improvement after the checking of teaching and learning. The school

improvement plan for the subject is most appropriate, detailing initiatives to drive up standards. Good procedures are used across the school to check pupils' progress. Test scores and other details are recorded to help to identify the weaker areas which need attention. The quality of marking and information about pupils' attainments are not having sufficient impact on the planning of lessons in Years 4 to 6. The good training of staff by the subject co-ordinator in the effective implementation of the literacy strategy are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' achievements.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. Standards, in Year 2, are below average and, in Year 6, are well below average. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and, satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. In the short time the pupils have attended the school, pupils have made good progress in Years 1 to 3 and satisfactory progress in Years 4 to 6; overall their achievement is sound. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well in Years 1 to 3 but not as successfully in Years 4 to 6. Too often, particularly in Years 4 and 5, pupils have worked through exercises from books, and limited attention has been given to ensuring that the planning of work builds on pupils' attainment. As a result, though sound, the progress has not been as marked as in Years 1 to 3. The development and practice of numeracy skills are not planned sufficiently in other subjects. In contrast, information and communication technology is used well to assist pupils' learning in mathematics.

76. The pace of pupils' learning is brisk in Years 1, 2 and 3, because the teaching is good. The teaching is based firmly on an effective understanding of the national guidance and this results in pupils' building up their skills and understanding of numeracy well. The planning of lessons is detailed and enables pupils to hasten their progress both in mathematics and in other subjects; for example, in Year 3, higher attaining pupils identified objects on a map and wrote down the grid reference; most pupils used a computer program to give them plenty of practice in using two-digit co-ordinates to locate features on an Ordnance Survey map whilst lower attainers worked with an adult to identify the co-ordinates of various objects on a simple matrix. In these year groups, teachers organise pupils well and pupils work hard and behave well. Learning resources are used effectively; for example good use of individual white boards was made in Year 2 to enable the pupils to record answers to questions to show to teachers to help them check pupils' understanding of different types of shapes, such as, 'triangle', 'rectangle', 'square', 'pentagon' and 'octagon'. Members of staff encourage pupils with severe learning difficulties to participate in lessons through very effective questioning and praise of their achievements.

77. In Years 4 to 6, the teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best teaching in Year 6, the teacher's planning was very well thought out and linked very well to pupils' level of attainment. The preliminary mental practice focussed on addition and subtraction within 180, which helped pupils with necessary calculations of angles in a triangle in work later on in the lesson. Very good use was made of information and communication technology by projecting a computer program on to a large screen to enable all pupils to work with the teacher in order to consolidate their understanding of acute, obtuse and reflex angles. Most pupils recognised an angle was acute if less than 45 degrees but had difficulty realising that angles just less than 90 degrees were also acute and not obtuse angles. Pupils worked productively in small groups according to their level of attainment because they understood their tasks. Towards the end of the lesson, pupils explained what they had learnt, though several lacked confidence in speaking in front of others and needed much help and patient guidance from the teacher. Weaknesses in teaching seen in Year 6 resulted from too rigid adherence to nationally suggested lesson plans, which were not tailored by the school to meet the needs of the varying levels of attainment of the pupils.



78. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Thorough systems have been developed recently to check the quality of teaching and pupils' work resulting in improvements in pupils' progress. Good systems have been introduced to track pupils' attainment; however, insufficient use is made of the information by teachers to plan suitable work for all pupils in order to quicken their progress. The priorities detailed in the school development plan are very appropriate and the school is very well placed to improve standards rapidly.

## **SCIENCE**

79. Standards have improved slightly but are still well below the national average in Year 6 and below average in Year 2. Nevertheless, pupils make satisfactory progress overall in relation to their previous levels of attainment and this includes pupils with special educational needs. This progress is not entirely consistent however, and is better for pupils in Year 1 and 2 where progress is good. The better progress of pupils in Year 1 and 2 is a direct result of good teaching.

80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The main feature of the good teaching in Years 1 and 2 is the good planning and preparation for lessons; for example, in a lesson concerned with how exercise affects the human body, different activities are planned for the two age groups of pupils in the class and for the different ability levels within those age groups. This allows virtually all pupils in the class to make good progress from their previous levels of learning. This good planning also allows for the use of computers to give relevance and interest to the pupils' learning. It also means that the teacher is able to circulate among the pupils, challenging and assessing their learning with skilful questioning. Preparation is very thorough, and goes some way to limiting the adverse effects of the pupils' low literacy levels on their learning in science; for example, titles and learning objectives are listed at the start of each piece of work. Very good use is made of photographs, taken with the digital camera; for example, photographs of eggs in three stages of being fried were stuck in pupils' workbooks and then questions, written by the teacher, about the changes taking place in the eggs were added under the photographs. Photographs of pupils demonstrating twisting, bending, squashing and stretching actions illustrated work on forces; this helped to consolidate learning and also built up pupils' self esteem. The work was supplemented with appropriate worksheets, including investigations concerning matters like the rate of the melting of ice cubes. There were extension activities for high attaining pupils. Although pupils' low levels of literacy skills dictated this approach, there was still sufficient emphasis on developing these skills. Short but individual written answers were almost invariably required of pupils. Work was marked well with encouraging remarks, and, on occasions, dialogue develops between teacher and pupil. 'What happens to steam when it cools?' asks the teacher. 'It goes to normal,' replies the pupil. 'What is normal?' writes the teacher, not satisfied with this reply. 'Water,' adds the pupil. The good marking was supplemented with written assessment tasks at intervals.

81. This good level of progress of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 is not yet carrying through to Years 3 to 6 and the levels of understanding of some pupils in Year 6 still remain low. 'Why do we use symbols when we are drawing electric circuits?' asks a teacher. 'You have to have a symbol to light it,' replies the pupil. Another pupil is unable to identify weighing scales when attempting to conduct an experiment. Planning is not so thorough in some of the junior classes, and, so, pupils in the Year 4 and Year 5 class often attempt similar work. The marking of pupils' work is more variable than in the infant classes. There are good examples of teachers challenging pupils' thinking; for example, a Year 3 pupil was asked, after he had completed an experiment on floating and sinking, how, if metal sinks, a car ferry,

made of metal, is able to float. On the other hand, a Year 6 pupil's statement that, 'The force field of a magnet is the distance around it,' goes unchallenged.

82. There is a good emphasis on investigative work in science but the impact of this is often limited because teachers do not explain sufficiently clearly what is to be investigated or make appropriate suggestions about how pupils might approach the task. The effectiveness is also limited by the pupils' lack of understanding of basic ideas and their efforts at recording results, handicapped by low literacy levels. Pupils' attitudes are not always helpful to improving their learning so, for example, Year 4 and Year 5 pupils set to find, in groups, how the various features of the strings of a guitar affect their pitch, spend a good deal of the lesson merely strumming the guitar and not co-operating very well with other members of their group. A consequence of this is that, at the end of the lesson pupils are still confusing pitch and loudness; however, such occasions are relatively rare and a combination of good class management techniques and sensible timing of activities usually ensures that pupils concentrate on their tasks. Occasionally, the lack of suitable apparatus handicaps progress, so, when Year 6 pupils are asked to weigh small amounts of material, they are provided with inappropriately calibrated scales. There is an emphasis in investigations on important features like the importance of fair testing. Higher attaining Year 3 pupils use terms like 'variable' confidently and, by the time they are in Year 6, a majority of pupils has a clear idea of what constitutes a fair test and is able to apply this idea in a practical situation; however, not all pupils are fully confident and one pupil, tried to get equal amounts of materials to compare absorbency rates, attempted to weigh both materials on the same scale at the same time. A positive feature of the teaching is the good use teachers make of computers to support learning in science; for example, higher attaining Year 6 pupils, set the task of designing a planning sheet for an investigation, worked individually at computers and completed the task well.

83. The leadership of the subject is good. Procedures to check pupils' progress, using a mixture of nationally agreed material and ideas devised by the school, have been put in place and are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Pupils' responses to national tests have been analysed so that areas of weakness can be identified and this information used to plan pupils' work in the future. Pupils' workbooks have been scrutinized and written feedback given to teachers; this is useful for teachers, although judgements are occasionally slightly generous. The school has gone to some expense to provide good quality material for pupils' homework assignments. This, particularly in Year 6, supports and consolidates work that the pupils have done in school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Standards are average for pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils generally make good progress and this includes pupils with special educational needs.

85. Pupils' good progress is directly linked to good teaching of the subject. A feature of this good teaching is effective planning, for termly activities, as well as for individual lessons. It ensures that teachers have a clear idea of what they want the pupils to achieve and that there is a good range of interesting activities for the pupils, designed to help them achieve these targets. So, for example, pupils in Year 2, looking at portrait making, draw self-portraits, firstly from memory, then using mirrors. They then create Hockney style pictures from photographs of themselves. Using a digital camera they photograph themselves and then try to copy this using a computer program. They make further use of the computer to create good portraits in the manner of Picasso and use clay to create interesting three-dimensional depictions of heads. Planning for individual lessons is also good. The teacher of a Year 3 class, using the school's guidance for teachers as a basis, planned activities designed to develop pupils' drawing and montage skills. At the end of the lesson, the

teaching consolidated ideas developed in the lesson and checked learning by good questioning of the pupils. Teachers make good use of computers to assist learning in art and design. Year 2 pupils use the Internet to search for information about artists, such as Georgia O'Keefe. Year 6 pupils produce multiple images, which they use to create the idea of movements on backgrounds which they draw themselves. Teachers cleverly use art to support the programme for personal development. Year 3 pupils are presented with a variety of painting by well known artists; for example, Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Percy by David Hockney or The Last of England by Ford Madox Brown, and are then asked to consider the relationships between the characters portrayed in the picture. Through their research, using the pictures of well-known artists and their efforts to reproduce features of their work, pupils have developed a good understanding of the work of a variety of artists. Year 6 pupils are able to name artists ranging from Andy Warhol to Monet and to discuss features of their lives and paintings. Most of the work discussed is that of Western artists and the dissemination of the work of artists from other cultural backgrounds is underdeveloped.

86. The good teaching leads to good attitudes towards the subject among the pupils. Year 6 pupils, working from their own design for headdresses, were engrossed in their efforts and this allowed the teacher to work with individual pupils, challenging them with skilful questioning to think more deeply about their task. Good attitudes to the subject were also enhanced by the care with which pupils' work is displayed. This, on occasions, involved framing individual pieces of work. This not only enhanced the self-esteem of pupils but also raised the status of the subject.

87. Visiting artists who work with groups of pupils enrich the teaching of the subject. Models of dragons and dolphins made from willow strand, tissue paper and card by Year 6 pupils provide spectacular examples of pupils' efforts when they worked with an artist.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. Standards are on course to be average by the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their previous levels of learning although progress is good in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory.

89. In Years 1 and 2, very good preparation by the teacher limits the negative effect of the low literacy levels of pupils on their learning in design and technology but at the same time helps to promote their standards of literacy through activities like making lists of equipment and materials. Activities are designed for pupils of different ages and abilities so that virtually all pupils are able to make good progress. In their work to design and make a version of 'Joseph's Coat', Year 1 pupils worked well in groups. Higher attaining pupils made symmetrical designs. Year 2 pupils produced individual finished articles, choosing and evaluating a variety of methods of joining different parts of the coat. They used computers well to copy and repeat patterns and designs. The marking of pupils' work is of good quality. It encourages and challenges pupils to evaluate and improve their work. Good marking of pupils' work is not confined to Year 1 and 2; in a Year 3 class, for example, a lower attaining pupil attempted to explain what she had done in making a picture frame. The teacher suggested that she try again but list her actions in numbered stages. The pupil did this to good effect.

90. Pupils in Year 6 make and design delicate scale models of bridges. There are some good individual examples from higher attainers but the approach is not sufficiently rigorous and many are not finished in the allotted time which makes evaluation difficult. Evaluations, which are made, are concerned with pupils' reactions, such as 'My favourite part was sticking everything together because I got all messy,' rather than concentrating on whether

they have met design criteria. The work in design and technology is pertinent but involves a certain amount of colouring-in and single word answers. Nevertheless, Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of some basic features; for example, that the triangle is the strongest shape; however, they could not recall the term 'prototype' and have had little experience of using construction kits.

91. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and is in a position to bring about improvements in the subject. The co-ordinator has assisted teachers by undertaking a scrutiny of pupils' work, pointing out areas for development. The programme for design and technology has been enriched by support from outside agencies. Year 6 pupils visit the local secondary school to work with plastic. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 receive individual help with sewing techniques from members of a national women's organisation and make good progress in this aspect of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

92. Standards are on course to be below expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2 and Year 6, only above average pupils are attaining the levels expected. Pupils who have special educational needs are given suitable adult help, sometimes being given different tasks to the rest of the class, and making satisfactory progress.

93. Management and development of the subject is at an early stage and has been identified as an area for development particularly the effective monitoring of teaching and learning. The policy and guidance for teachers on what should be taught follows national guidelines and is used by all teachers to plan their lessons; however, the work in Years 4 to 6 does not follow the guidance closely enough to make sure that geographical skills are being fully developed. The recording of pupils' progress is at an early stage of development.

94. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 experience a satisfactory range of activities to develop their geographical skills; for example, they study the travels of pupils and teachers, to extend their knowledge and understanding of distant places. Pupils draw and write about different locations and imagine what it is like to live in these places. They are introduced to a map of the world and a globe and are able to locate other countries and places, with adult help. Pupils are told about the local weather in different places around the world and write weather reports and 'pack a suitcase' of suitable clothing for a visit.

95. In Year 6, pupils investigated coastlines. The teaching used good questions and prompts to get pupils to talk about an exciting set of rock climbing pictures, which they did quite well. The teacher had organised three group activities with different tasks for each one. Some of this work was directly linked to developing geographical skills. With the help of the teacher, two groups of pupils successfully used an index and grid references to locate a named feature and calculated the distance to it from the school; however other tasks involving Internet research and writing about rock climbing proved not to have enough geographical content and the work produced was too general. Pupils had previously studied coastal erosion and knew about cliffs, sea-stacks and arches and this knowledge was not used to make more effective links to rock climbing. No time was left for pupils to report back to the class, and opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills were lost.

96. In a Year 3 lesson, the teaching was planned well to make effective links between a study of the local village, aerial photographs and large-scale maps. Pupils responded well and could identify and name key features in their village; some were able to compare the oblique and vertical views on the photographs and maps. At the end of the lesson, pupils

were able to answer questions such as, 'Which buildings were easiest to find?' and gave suitable reasons for their answers.

## **HISTORY**

97. Standards in history are below those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6; however, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in Years 1 and 2 and are set work at an appropriate level of difficulty. In Years 3 to 6, the tasks that are given to this group of pupils do not always match their ability levels closely enough. Management and development of history is at an early stage.

98. The policy and guidance for teachers on what should be taught is satisfactory and is adjusted to take account of mixed-age classes to prevent repetition of work. The checking of pupils' progress and recording of their levels of attainment are at an early stage of development.

99. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils developed their sense of chronology when the teacher used a simple time-line effectively when studying the life of Florence Nightingale. A map of Europe helped pupils to identify key locations in Florence's life. Group activities were well matched to pupils' abilities. In Year 2, above average pupils used computers to word process information but they did not use the teacher's word-bank well enough and made lots of spelling mistakes in their writing; for example, writing 'caynd' for kind and 'igrd' for injured. Another group wrote labels for a large map and were able to locate places on the map successfully by the end of the lesson. In a well-planned lesson in Year 6, pupils compared the ancient and modern Olympic games. Class management was good and pupils were well focused on the task. Pupils' previous learning was not a strong point and they had difficulty remembering details of earlier lessons. Pupils had good opportunities to research this topic and were given a suitable range of good quality books to work with enabling them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils co-operated well and helped each other.

100. Generally, for pupils in Years 4 to 6, work is not marked consistently well, much of pupils' work being just ticked, although, recently, some written comments have been added. Pupils have few opportunities to decide for themselves how to communicate their findings in different ways.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

101. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to be in line with national expectations. Pupils achieve well relative to their prior attainment because the quality of teaching is good.

102. The teaching is of good quality and develops pupils' skills well because of the effective use of the facilities in the Community Development Centre. The expertise of the manager of the centre benefits pupils' learning very well when employed, in a different capacity as a teaching assistant; for example, lower attainers in Year 6 gained a much better understanding of spreadsheets by following the clear instructions of the teaching assistant. The lesson was kept at a brisk pace and most pupils wrote formulae to construct a spreadsheet to calculate the profit on the sales of pencils; however, the timing of the lesson was insufficient to enable the pupils to see the effect of altering data such as the number of sales or selling price of the pencils.

103. In Year 5, pupils make good progress in controlling a model using a computer program. The teacher explained and questioned pupils well to help them understand how to

control a motor to make a model roundabout rotate at different speeds and periods of time, and another motor to change the tilt of the fairground ride, as well as to operate sensors on the model. The pupils were fascinated and quickly became confident in programming the construction.

104. In Year 2, good use was made of digital photographs to develop an understanding of the interpretation of data. Pupils with special educational needs were actively involved and other pupils worked sensitively with them. The pupils were very enthusiastic and gained good practice in sorting objects to a specific criteria.

105. Information and communication technology is used well to assist learning in other subjects; for example, in science, pupils recorded temperature using a sensor and showed the results graphically using a computer program. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 produced charts to show different sources of rubbish. In Year 2, pupils produced very detailed representation in the style of Picasso, using a graphics program.

106. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The plans for future improvements are clearly detailed and appropriate. Members of staff are very committed and are capable to develop further standards. The school acknowledges that procedures for checking pupils' progress are areas for improvement. The expertise of staff and learning resources are good, having a positive impact on pupils' good rate of progress.

## **MUSIC**

107. Very good teaching from a specialist music teacher, supported by the good knowledge and confidence of the class teacher, means that, in Year 2, pupils make good progress and reach the standards expected at that age. Because teachers of older pupils are not so musically confident and the specialist music teacher has not been in post long enough to have had a full impact on learning, the standards of pupils in Year 6 are below average. Nevertheless, these pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Indeed, music is seen as a way of boosting the confidence and self esteem of pupils with special educational needs, and individuals have made particularly good progress, especially in singing.

108. Teaching is never less than good and, on occasions, very good. An emphasis on correct technique and terminology means that standards in singing are generally good. Pupils in Year 2 know the way to hold the torso so that the movement of the diaphragm will not be restricted. They can distinguish between the pitch of notes although lower attaining pupils still confuse pitch and loudness. Younger pupils sing enthusiastically, largely in tune in two parts. The quality of singing is further encouraged through lessons for small groups of the more talented singers of the older pupils. Here high quality tuition, aimed at individuals, leads to good standards. Singing is largely confined to music lessons and, because of the lack of a confident pianist, opportunities to sing in occasions like assemblies are more limited; however, pupils are given the opportunity to perform in front of an audience in whole school musical productions.

109. The very good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator means that the pupils are introduced directly to a range of instruments and this stimulates interest and learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen awestruck to the playing of a cello and they immediately recognise the violin when they hear it on a recording. Year 5 pupils know about relatively obscure instruments like the mandola, an early form of the mandolin which is a particular favourite of the music co-ordinator. The school has a wide range of good quality instruments which encourages pupils to develop their interest. Year 6 pupils are able to compose and perform simple tunes using tuned percussion. Year 5 pupils can illustrate simple echo arrangements

and Year 2 pupils can play in different tempos, using a range of percussion instruments. A small number of pupils has the opportunity to learn to play brass instruments, tutored by a specialist teacher.

110. Good class management skills, coupled with the use of the school hall for lessons, allow a physical and well-balanced approach, combining singing, listening, working in groups with instruments and physical activity. This is helpful in maintaining pupils' interest and concentration, particularly important with the younger pupils, who are often quite tired towards the end of the school day when music lessons occur. The organisation of the lessons also helps the teacher to quickly assess the extent of pupils' learning; for example, when younger pupils indicated whether a note was higher or lower than the previous one.

111. Music appreciation is not so well developed or integrated as other areas of the subject. Year 5 pupils can recognise different styles of music, like folk or jazz, but only one pupil, amongst a group of Year 6 pupils, could name a composer though could say nothing about his work. Opportunities to introduce pupils to various styles of music and the work of individual composers at times, like assemblies, are sometimes missed.

112. The co-ordinator of the subject, who teaches music to each class in the school, has the ability and opportunity to bring about steady improvements in pupils' learning. Being free of class teaching responsibilities gives the opportunity to assess the standard and progress of individual pupils at a detailed level. Little use is made of computers to help learning in music

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

113. Standards are on course to be in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expected levels at the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to swim at a local pool, but last year only a third of the pupils could swim twenty-five metres or more by the end of Year 6.

114. Management and development of the subject is at an early stage and, as in other curriculum areas, co-ordinator training has been identified as a priority. National guidance on what should be taught has very recently been supplemented with other appropriate guidance; however, the school has allocated insufficient time for teaching the subject to fulfil the requirements of the new advice effectively.

115. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning are good. Pupils understand the need to warm up muscles properly before taking exercise and this is emphasised by the teacher. Pupils listen to instructions well and enjoy their lesson. In an effective lesson, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress and there was a high level of involvement and interest. Pupils knew the difference between point and patch balances and could identify these. The teacher prepared reference cards, showing a selection of balances for pupils to try for themselves, and these were used effectively during the lesson. Pupils of varying abilities demonstrated their balance and the teacher commented on the quality of performance and made suggestions for improvement. By using the teaching assistant well to work with Year 2 pupils, the teacher focussed on Year 1 pupils and set tasks at different levels of difficulty for them.

116. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 6, the teacher led the warm-up activity and pupils participated well; however, there was too much talking by the teacher and pupils were inactive for quite long periods. The main focus of this lesson was also balances but much of the content was the same as that seen in an earlier lesson with much younger pupils. Pupils worked in pairs on mats and co-operated well with each other; some pupils were able to

develop an interesting series of synchronised movements and balances. Pupils could describe balances and movements demonstrated by other pupils quite accurately.

117. There is a good range of extra curricular activities for older pupils to take part in; for example, boys and girls attended the netball club and were seen improving their passing and tactical skills during a game of skittle-ball. There is plenty of playground space but no field on site, though this has been partly resolved by developing good links with other schools and organisations that are prepared to allow the school to use their facilities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

118. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is below the expectations of the local education authority's syllabus; pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are appropriate. The checking of pupils' work and the quality of teaching is insufficient to move pupils' learning on at a faster pace.

119. Strengths in the teaching are most apparent in Years 1 to 3. The effective use of local clergy enhances pupils' understanding of the Christian faith; for example, in Year 2 pupils talked about the disciples and knew the names of some of them. They could identify a baptismal font. Higher attainers knew that Zacchaeus was reputed to have climbed a tree to see Jesus. Teachers make good use of song to consolidate learning, such as 'I will make you fishers of men'. The pupils enjoyed taking on the roles of biblical characters. In Year 3, pupils gained a better understanding of the meaning of parables by studying the story of the Good Samaritan. Teachers were careful that pupils understood unfamiliar language, such as 'inn', to enable pupils to understand fully the story.

120. Weaknesses in lessons are apparent when teachers' lesson plans lack detail and stimulating ideas to interest pupils; for example, the planning of a lesson to enable pupils to understand rules and why God gave Moses 'the Ten Commandments' was not thought out well enough resulting in many pupils misbehaving because the content of the lesson did not capture their interest and they did not see the relevance to their lives.

121. Planning rarely identifies opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening or match work for pupils at different levels of attainment. Skills in information and communication technology are used beneficially to enhance learning in religious education; for example, in Year 6 pupils used a 'search engine' to find out more about Islam, and in particular about the Qua'ran.