

INSPECTION REPORT

BALIOL SCHOOL

Sedbergh

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121780

Headteacher: Mr D Anderson

Reporting inspector: Mrs R Eaton
15173

Dates of inspection: 30th June – 3rd July 2003

Inspection number: 249399

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community special
Age range of pupils: 10 to 16 years
Gender of pupils: Male

School address: Cautley Road
Sedbergh

Postcode: LA10 5LQ

Telephone number: 01539 620232

Fax number: 01539 621275

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs A Wright

Date of previous inspection: 15th January 2001

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15173	Mrs R Eaton	Registered inspector	Art and design Citizenship Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13462	Mrs R Mothersdale	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?
14691	Mrs J Hall	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Modern foreign languages Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21666	Mr A Margerison	Team inspector	English Geography History	
23549	Mrs H Eadington	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Educational inclusion, including race equality Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Ltd
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Baliol is a school for boys aged 10 to 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently, 30 are on roll, six Year 11 pupils having recently left. Only one pupil is in Year 6. When they join the school, the attainment of most pupils is well below average. They all have statements of special educational needs. In addition to emotional and behavioural difficulties, four boys have autistic spectrum disorders. Almost all pupils are white, with only a very small number from mixed ethnic backgrounds. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups. The school offers residential provision and is open for one weekend in two, during term time. Only four boys are not boarders. The homes of all but two of the boys are in North Yorkshire, with several from as far away as Scarborough. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher was absent, as a result of an injury.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Baliol is a good school. Pupils achieve well in a number of subjects, most going on to gain GCSE passes at the end of Year 11. They behave well and their personal development is very good. The quality of teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The school provides very well for their personal development and they make very good progress, becoming increasingly responsible.
- Pupils who need extra help in order to learn are given good quality support.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Staff are committed to helping the boys make the best of their time in school.
- The headteacher has ensured that the school has moved forward well and that its core values are seen very clearly in its work.
- A significant proportion of teaching is very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils do not achieve well enough in design and technology and physical education.
- In several subjects, pupils do not benefit from good enough learning opportunities.
- Teachers do not have agreed methods of handling the small number of boys whose behaviour is particularly challenging.
- The school's plan to guide next year's developments is not yet complete.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in January 2001 and was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since then, good progress has been made and these serious weaknesses are no longer evident. Pupils now achieve better, particularly in English, but also in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The quality of teaching has also improved well and so has pupils' personal development. Their good behaviour has been sustained. The issues identified in the previous report have been tackled systematically and good progress made in nearly all of them. There has been satisfactory improvement in the curriculum, but weaknesses still remain in several subjects. These are mostly linked to teachers' lack of expertise or deficiencies in the accommodation.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 11	Key	
speaking and listening	A	very good	A
reading	B	good	B
writing	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A		

* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

The school sets challenging targets for Year 11 pupils to achieve in GCSE examinations. The target was met in 2002 and pupils did much better than the average for those in similar schools. Pupils across the school achieve well in English, mathematics, science, geography and religious education. Those in Years 6 to 9 do well in history and, in Years 10 and 11, achievement is good in art and design. When their special educational needs are considered, the boys with autistic spectrum disorders or who need additional support in literacy or numeracy achieve as well as other pupils. In design and technology and physical education, achievement is unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils generally enjoy coming to school and taking part in activities during lessons and in the evenings.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Mostly, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their behaviour is very good when they are on visits – for example, to college or to take part in outdoor pursuits.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and for a variety of jobs and tasks around school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Many pupils have a history of poor attendance, but most succeed in attending regularly.

Pupils are willing to accept help in order to improve their learning. When motivated, they work very hard, persevere and are keen to do well.

After previous poor attendance and behaviour, most pupils look smart, gain qualifications and go into further education or employment.

The youngest boys are still learning how to learn and are less inclined to get on with their work and behave well.

Bullying does occur, but the school works very hard to eliminate it.

A few pupils are persistent non-attenders, despite the school's efforts.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good

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

English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education are taught well, as are the skills of communication, including literacy and numeracy. Teachers usually structure lessons well, with plenty of short and relevant activities that keep pupils interested and working hard. In most cases, pupils' behaviour is managed very well but occasionally teachers struggle to maintain the attention of all pupils. As a rule, the needs of all pupils are met well – for example, by the good quality learning extension programme. However, pupils' literacy and numeracy targets are not used when planning work in every subject. Teaching assistants and care staff usually make strong contributions to teaching and learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Although most subjects, including English, mathematics and science, are well planned, there are weaknesses in others, especially design and technology and physical education.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' personal development is given high priority during the school day and in the residential unit. The school provides particularly well for their moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils' safety and wellbeing are taken very seriously. Staff are committed to supporting and guiding each one, so they are able to benefit as much as possible from their time at the school.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The long distances between school and many pupils' homes make it hard for parents to visit or contribute to their children's learning.

Work experience and college courses are very effective in helping pupils learn about the world of work, but there is no planned careers education programme.

Pupils have growing opportunities to have their work accredited, up to GCSE level. This year, a small number of Year 9 pupils have not been taught music or French.

There are very good arrangements to encourage pupils to behave well. For example, lunch and break-times are organised very carefully, so there are few opportunities for pupils to misbehave.

Ways of measuring pupils' progress have not been established in several subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads the school well, with valuable support from the senior staff. The school's key values are seen very clearly in its work.
How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive and aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher has an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The funds available are used efficiently in order to support pupils' personal development and academic achievement.

The school is well staffed and learning resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory, but the facilities for physical education are inadequate.

The principles of best value are applied well. Because the school has not yet been informed about this year's budget, the improvement plan lacks the necessary detail to guide the school's work effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of only a few parents are represented.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their sons like school. • They have made good progress. • Parents appreciate receiving each week the summary of the grades their sons have achieved. • Care staff keep parents well informed. 	No relevant issues were raised.

The inspectors agree with these parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When they enter the school, most pupils are working at levels that are well below average. This is usually because their education has been severely disrupted, with long periods of absence and often several changes of school. They achieve well at Baliol so that, by the end of Year 11, most boys gain a number of GCSE passes. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection, when achievement was satisfactory overall.
2. The school set a challenging target for Year 11 pupils to achieve in 2002. Eighty-four per cent of the boys gained one or more GCSE pass within the range of A* to G, thus achieving the target. This was much higher than the average for boys in similar schools (57.7 per cent). The average number of points scored was 8.7, compared with the average of 5.5. Significantly, the subjects for which pupils enter GCSE examinations include the very important core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
3. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, geography and religious education. In Years 6 to 9, achievement is also good in history. In art and design, pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well, up to GCSE standard and achievement is satisfactory in Years 6 to 9. Most of these younger pupils also achieve satisfactorily in French and music. Achievement in information and communication technology is satisfactory in all years. Lack of evidence makes it difficult to judge achievement in citizenship, but it is certainly at least satisfactory. In design and technology and physical education, achievement is unsatisfactory because of weaknesses in the curriculum for both subjects.
4. In English, a particular strength is achievement in speaking and listening. This is because discussions feature prominently in lessons in all subjects and throughout the day and, in the residential unit, pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to others and express their opinions. In reading and writing, achievement is good. Pupils are taught well by a specialist teacher who makes sure they get a thorough grounding in the basic skills and then structured opportunities to build on these as they move up through the school. Mathematics teaching is also good overall, but pupils' learning really takes off in Year 8, when they start getting lessons from the subject co-ordinator, whose own teaching is very good. Additionally, pupils now have more time allowed for learning English and mathematics than at the time of the previous inspection and this enables them to consolidate their skills, knowledge and understanding. Again, teachers in other subjects provide good opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills, although more use could be made of pupils' individual targets, in order to match the work better to their needs.
5. A range of tests is used with pupils who join the school, in order to establish precisely the levels at which they are working in English and mathematics. This information is used well by the special educational needs co-ordinator to identify those who need additional support, either because their ability is low or because they need a boost to make up for lost time. The extended learning opportunities provided for them are proving to have a marked impact on these pupils' achievement, mainly in English and mathematics but also in other subjects and on their self-esteem.

6. Achievement in science has also improved well since the previous inspection, as a result of good quality teaching and better facilities. In other subjects, pupils' achievement is generally closely matched to the quality of teaching. However, in design and technology and physical education, achievement is unsatisfactory but teaching is satisfactory or good respectively. In these subjects, the narrow curriculum offered means that pupils do not have opportunities to be successful in the full range of either subject and so their achievement is restricted. Anomalies in the curriculum, due to staffing difficulties, mean that achievement in music and French has also been less than satisfactory for a small minority of pupils in Years 8 and 9.
7. Overall, achievement in information and communication technology is satisfactory now because pupils are receiving timetabled lessons. However, their progress is hindered somewhat by the inconsistent opportunities for them to practise and apply their learning during lessons in other subjects.
8. Staff are very aware of the problems and needs of the small number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Although none of these pupils requires a modified learning environment, relevant targets within their individual education plans, the firm structure within the school day and residential unit, and opportunities for pupils to choose whether or not to be involved in leisure activities, all help to enable these boys to learn as well as other pupils. The school's ability to respond flexibly to most pupils' individual needs, whether educational or behavioural, has meant that, for example, a very small number of boys who were previously non-attenders are now beginning to learn and make progress. Similarly, the school makes special arrangements for pupils who are achieving particularly well – for instance, a Year 11 boy who joined a mainstream school for GCSE work, going on to gain five passes last year. There is no difference in the achievement of the very small number of pupils from mixed ethnic backgrounds.
9. The very good progress boys make in their behaviour and personal development is also a significant factor in their good academic achievement. They are able to benefit from the good quality teaching provided, apply themselves during lessons and complete examination courses, all of which contribute to their success.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are usually good. 'This school is mint', one of the boys said when asked his opinion, and all of his companions agreed. Pupils appreciate and readily accept the help available to them in areas of learning that they find difficult. For example, lower attaining pupils enjoy working on a one-to-one basis to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils like the many activities and opportunities that are open to them during lessons and in the evenings. In a canoeing lesson on the Lancaster canal, Year 9 pupils persevered with skills that they found difficult and understood exactly what they needed to do in order to achieve the next level of their canoeing certification. However, pupils' attitudes will frequently change during a lesson. For example, in an art and design lesson, where Year 10 pupils had expressed no desire at all to draw the objects offered to them, their imagination was suddenly fired by the task and the atmosphere in the lesson changed in a matter of minutes from disinterest to engagement. The attitudes of the Years 6 and 7 pupils are not always as focused on their work, especially when they have first returned to school from a weekend at home. Often they take time to settle into lessons and can be quickly distracted by their classmates. They are still learning how to learn effectively. However, when interested in a task – such as preparing pasta dishes during a personal development day - they worked very hard to follow instructions and

were keen to create a high quality dish. Pupils enjoy their time in the residential unit and do not hesitate to participate fully at every opportunity. They change quickly after school to get out to the playing field or go swimming at a nearby school. A few pupils, who do not attend school regularly, by inference, do not have positive attitudes. However, the school works hard to re-involve and re-integrate these pupils, and is rewarded when enthusiasm for learning is demonstrated by pupils who previously refused resolutely to attend.

11. Behaviour is good overall, although on occasions it can be unpredictable and a small number of boys are particularly challenging. Last year, there were 18 fixed-period exclusions, which was eight more than in the year preceding the previous inspection. Up to the date of the current inspection, near the end of the school year, there have only been 12 exclusions. At college, and when on work experience placements, pupils behave very well. Reports from employers speak highly of their conduct and good behaviour. When discussing bullying, pupils accept the almost routine name-calling, threats and teasing. These occasionally result in physical retribution when a pupil feels under pressure or their self-esteem is threatened. In lessons, where teaching has not caught pupils' attention and the pace is slow, their attention is lost and their behaviour can deteriorate. At other times, a comment can send them into a frenzy of destruction – for example, when a constructive remark about a piece of artwork resulted in the drawing being screwed up and thrown into the bin. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons and take care of resources. Overall, pupils make very good progress in learning to manage their own behaviour. Older pupils look at younger ones and see how far they have come, in comparison to the often volatile nature of the youngest boys. A Year 10 pupil said that when discussing grades for behaviour, 'I get bored listening to all the others getting low grades for behaviour, because there is never anything to talk about with mine – but there was a year or so ago'.
12. Pupils' personal development and the quality of relationships are very good. During the inspection, a Year 11 pupil rang the school. He had just had a successful interview and got a job that would make good use of the qualifications he had gained at school. His first thought had been to tell the school and thank the staff for their support. Many pupils have a long history of poor attendance and behaviour. They are to be praised for the successful efforts they make to attend school, look smart and presentable (the most purchased reward for behaviour and achievement points is hair gel), gain qualifications, complete work experience placements, improve their skills and get to know and live with people outside of their families. All this represents very significant achievement. In the residential unit, pupils take responsibility for getting themselves up, or ready for bed in the evening, and keeping their bedroom area tidy and presentable. They have rotas for jobs – for example, helping with drying up the dishes for tea – and they make snacks in the evening. Relationships with residential staff are especially good and make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Residential and teaching staff eat meals with pupils, and the family settings, at tables set out with table cloths, are appreciated by pupils who respond well to the civilised and sociable arrangements in the dining room. A number of pupils regularly consult with the school cook to review school menus and are pleased that their ideas for more fruit and a vegetarian option have been taken up. Pupils often have hard adjustments to make when they return to their home areas after being in a residential school, 'It's difficult to get back in with your mates and make friends when you are away at boarding school'. They value the friendships that they form in school.
13. Attendance is satisfactory and above average for a school of this type. Over the last complete school year, there have been a number of pupils whose attendance has been unsatisfactory or non-existent. However, the school has, as part of its

determination to provide equally well for all pupils, formulated alternative timetables that permit part-time attendance or work-related learning activities for individuals. This has enjoyed a degree of success and the school is delighted that a number of non-attenders are now back in school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall. In particular, the proportion of very good and excellent teaching is double what it was before. Effective systems are now in place to enable the headteacher to maintain an overview of each teacher's work. Where weaknesses are observed, sensitive but strong action is taken, in order to bring about improvement. Additionally, more general support has been provided and advice followed. For example, the guidance offered through the Key Stage 3 Strategy has been adopted, leading directly to improvements in the way teachers of most subjects contribute to pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. Lessons are now longer, enabling teachers to plan confidently for each lesson to have a distinct beginning and end, knowing there will be time to carry out the plans.
15. This structure – introduction, main activity and rounding-up session – is a characteristic of all the good and very good lessons. Teachers make sure pupils know the purpose of what they are going to do and how their work builds on what they have learned already. At the end of the lesson, they check that everyone has understood and moved forward. Often, the main part of the lesson is made up of several shorter activities, so pupils remain alert and interested throughout. For example, in an English lesson with Year 9 pupils, starting their GCSE work, the teacher carried out an assessment of their speaking and listening skills, linking the work to their reading of a short story, 'Examination Day'. At the end of the first phase of the exercise, pupils were praised briefly for the quality of their narration and the teacher quickly reviewed what they had achieved, referring to a list on the whiteboard. Then, straight into the next stage – giving an ordered, factual account of the plot. This meant that the boys did not have time to get bored or restless and they lived up to the teacher's very high expectations of them.
16. In this lesson, as in the majority, pupils' behaviour was managed very effectively. Most of the teachers are able to achieve high standards of discipline during lessons, handling behaviour firmly but unobtrusively, so it appears effortless. In these teachers' lessons, any tendency to misbehave is nipped firmly in the bud. In fact, they use strategies to prevent problems – for example, instructing pupils to 'Look at me', during discussions, keeping them totally focused on their work. Where teachers are less skilled and confident, they occasionally struggle to maintain order and may accept standards of behaviour that are too low – for instance, tolerating rudeness. Quite rightly, a supply teacher refused to begin a design and technology lesson until the Years 6 and 7 pupils were settled enough to enter the workshop safely. All pupils have precise targets for their behaviour within their individual education and care plans, and in the residential units there are agreed strategies for handling particular pupils when they challenge the authority of staff. However, teachers do not routinely make use of these consistent approaches – for instance, to respond to a pupil who refuses to do as he is asked. As a result, a very small minority of boys occasionally go from lesson to lesson, trying to distract other pupils and claiming a disproportionate amount of the teacher's time and attention. Agreeing how these very few boys are dealt with is the one action that would have most impact on further raising the quality of teaching and learning.

17. Pupils are less likely to misbehave when they are engrossed in what they are doing. When teachers have chosen activities which are relevant and challenging, pupils become thoroughly involved and are not interested in being silly or awkward. For instance, in an excellent mathematics lesson, Year 10 pupils responded very well to the teacher's quick-fire questions to test their knowledge of the nine-times table and their ability to round-up and estimate. Later, they worked, largely independently, at individual learning programmes, very closely matched to each pupil's needs as reflected in their individual education plans. These tasks required pupils to make just the right amount of effort. As a result, a lower attaining pupil was particularly pleased with what he achieved (drawing three-dimensional shapes and writing down their properties), saying, 'I didn't think I could do that'. All the boys learned extremely well, working at an impressive rate. The teacher stood back and encouraged them to think problems through for themselves, giving quiet praise for specific behaviour – 'You stopped calling out. Well done'. Where lessons are not particularly interesting or are conducted at a more pedestrian pace, pupils' efforts are similarly lacklustre and they take advantage of opportunities to waste time or behave badly.
18. Generally, teaching assistants – and care staff – make strong contributions to teaching and pupils' progress. Three of the teaching assistants take responsibility for providing individual pupils with extended learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy. For example, during one very good session, a teaching assistant worked with a Year 7 pupil to follow an individual literacy programme, working through exercises on the computer. The pupil was supported very effectively. He was not told the answer when he experienced difficulty in reading a particular word. Instead, he was helped to use his knowledge of the sounds made by letters, in order to build up the word and achieve success. On other occasions, teaching assistants provide support during lessons, often working in close partnership with the teachers. Rarely, their presence is less helpful, especially when they do too much for pupils. This means that pupils' achievement is restricted – they do not have enough opportunities to practise skills and solve problems for themselves. This happens particularly during lessons in science and design and technology.
19. As a rule, teachers make sure that the work they set meets the needs of all pupils. Since the previous inspection, the school has established good procedures for assessing the levels at which pupils are working in a number of subjects, notably English and mathematics. However, full use is not always made of this information in lessons across the curriculum. In mathematics, particularly, the specialist teacher uses the available data very well, carefully planning the work for pupils in Years 8 to 11. In other lessons, teachers rely more on less effective methods of enabling pupils to take part in activities and work at suitable levels. For example, teaching assistants may be asked to work with individual pupils or pupils might finish the same work quickly or more slowly, finding it easy or very difficult. This is especially noticeable when teachers set written tasks – frequently, all the pupils are given the same work, regardless of their levels of literacy. As a result, because pupils are either not having to think hard enough or are frustrated because they are struggling to complete the work, their behaviour occasionally deteriorates.

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

20. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are unsatisfactory because there are weaknesses in several subjects. Although there have been good improvements since the previous inspection, the governing body has not ensured that all pupils receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. Significant

weaknesses remain in the programme for design and technology. Currently, pupils are not given a wide enough range of materials to use, and there is not enough emphasis on the design aspect of the subject. The range of learning opportunities provided for physical education is unsatisfactory, too narrow and does not meet statutory requirements. Optional opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming are not planned and co-ordinated well enough as part of the overall taught physical education programme. Opportunities in Years 7 to 9 to learn French are limited to one 50-minute lesson each fortnight. For a few Year 9 pupils, French has only been taught for part of the year, and only after school. This short and infrequent time allocation is not enough for pupils to improve their listening, reading and memory skills well enough, nor to improve the accuracy of their speaking and writing in French. There is also not enough time for pupils to appreciate the culture and traditions of French people. One class of Year 9 pupils has not received their entitlement to music because the subject has only recently been provided for only two of the three classes in Years 6 to 9. The school has plans to remedy this situation in September.

21. The range of external accreditation available to pupils in Years 10 and 11 has been widened since the previous inspection. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils gaining the type of certificates and awards that they would in mainstream school. Additionally, alternative approaches to planning learning opportunities for these pupils, in preparation for leaving school, are developing well. Aspects of work-related education are very good. Pupils learn about work very effectively through very well-planned work experience placements, carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. Pupils also take part in a very effective range of vocational courses at college – for example, plumbing, bricklaying, joinery, welding and food hygiene. There are strong and effective links with the Cumbria Connexions service for personal and careers guidance arising from the annual reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs in Years 9 to 11. There is, however, a significant gap in the school's own contribution to preparing for work. There is no planning or co-ordination of a complementary careers education programme. As a result, there is no established place on the timetable for pupils to develop the skills they will need to seek employment – such as writing job applications, attending interviews and producing curriculum vitae. Incidental support is provided, but this is not substantial enough to prepare all pupils adequately for leaving school.
22. In contrast to the situation at the time of the previous inspection, there is a good allocation of teaching time for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These subjects are well planned and pupils achieve well. Planning for English has improved significantly. Good opportunities are provided in English lessons and in other subjects for pupils to develop and use their literacy skills. Similarly good opportunities are provided in mathematics lessons and in other subjects, for example science, geography and physical education, for pupils to use their numeracy skills.
23. Opportunities to learn information and communication technology have improved well. The school now has an above average supply of computers and other hardware and software, giving pupils more regular access to information and communication technology. All pupils now have lessons in this subject, and pupils have opportunities for external accreditation in Years 10 and 11. Increasingly, computers are used in other subjects to support learning. However, there are not always enough opportunities provided and pupils do not learn to control events and devices using information and communication technology.

24. The good provision for pupils with additional special educational needs helps to remove barriers to learning and enables pupils to participate fully in lessons and other activities with increasing independence. Pupils' additional learning needs are identified through very good initial assessment procedures, and individual education plans are drawn up which include targets for behaviour, learning and personal development. The learning targets in these plans have improved very well since the previous inspection. They are specific and measurable and are used well when devising individual work programmes in literacy and numeracy. Learning support sessions benefit a large proportion of pupils and frequently include the use of computer software, which motivates them well. Support is given on a one-to-one basis or within the classroom setting, and sessions are carefully organised to avoid pupils missing the same lessons each week. The teaching assistants involved provide high quality support which promotes pupils' basic skills and confidence very effectively. For pupils thought by the school to demonstrate features of autism, the emphasis on developing their social and communication skills and offering a clear daily structure, enables them to be included and take an active part in group work. The one Year 6 boy is taught appropriately in a class of Year 7 pupils.
25. A diverse range of good quality day and evening activities contributes very well to pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The school plans well to ensure that pupils receive appropriate sex and relationships education and drugs education. Extra-curricular, enrichment and alternative learning programmes – such as work placements, college courses, links with other special schools for sport, use of public leisure facilities, visits to places of interest like Jodrell Bank, camping, outdoor pursuits and special events like a recent art week – all make valuable contributions to pupils' personal, social, academic or physical development. One day a fortnight is set aside for optional personal development activities. Individual activities, ranging from cooking, caving, canoeing and kite flying, for example, are interesting and motivating and develop pupils' personal skills well. However, the setting of individual targets, and the planning and co-ordination of these activities for each pupil is not rigorous enough for individual progress to be properly measured. When appropriate, individual pupils have the opportunity to work in mainstream schools. Staff are very aware, however, how important it is for pupils to experience success in such placements, and consequently these are relatively few in number. The small number of boys who do not board are given suitable opportunities to take part in evening activities, such as swimming. There is a very relevant emphasis in all of the school's work on providing for pupils' individual and most pressing needs. Teachers, learning support assistants and care staff all work to a high standard to fulfil the school's mission and put pupils' personal development, as well as their academic development, at the heart of all their work.
26. Considered as a whole, the provision offered for pupils' personal development is very good. Opportunities for spiritual development are satisfactory. Assemblies make good contributions – for example, by helping pupils to interpret parables. Pupils are regularly asked to reflect on the day's events and to 'take credit for themselves'. In a number of subjects, pupils are regularly required to think hard and describe their feelings about events and situations. For instance, in an English lesson, Year 9 pupils expressed their shock at a story involving tragic news communicated via a telephone call. During a dispersal meeting at the end of the school day, the head of care encouraged pupils to consider the concept of forgiveness in a wide range of contexts, from teamwork on the sports field, to apartheid and the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation.

27. The arrangements for moral and social development remain very good. Pupils are taught to appreciate the cause and effect of their actions – for example, when Year 9 pupils discussed the outcomes of crimes. They are required to accept the sanctions set out in the ‘Sanctions Ladder’, when they themselves step outside of the school’s required standard of behaviour. Personal and social education lessons let pupils face difficult topics such as bullying and standing up for what you believe. In one lesson, Year 8 pupils gradually had to think harder about prejudices and stereotypical views, and whether they could be defended or not. The fortnightly personal development day provides many opportunities for pupils to accept physical and personal challenges and practise teamwork and responsibility. The school has a programme of residential visits and camps to improve pupils’ social skills, and pupils enjoy contributing to the planning required for such trips. Pupils are encouraged to make a positive contribution to charitable causes and they have, for example, contributed to Children in Need, helped with a coffee morning to raise funds for the local senior citizens’ Christmas lunch and supported many local causes. Year 11 pupils are provided with very detailed planning and support when adjusting to the range of domestic, economic and practical skills necessary to living in the Independence Unit, preparing them well for their future lives. College courses give Years 10 and 11 pupils the opportunity to practise suitable social skills when dressing for college and having meals in the refectory.
28. The provision for pupils’ cultural development is effective and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The annual art week focuses pupils on working together on a range of projects, and visits to local art galleries and exhibitions are regular features of the art curriculum. Recently, the school invited a rap poet into school to broaden pupils’ perceptions of the multicultural nature of life in Britain, and their enthusiasm for this form of poetic expression makes exciting and stimulating reading. A library service audit of books in the school, and a sensitive response to what pupils want to read, has led to a broadening of multicultural books in the school library. For example, black sporting icons are celebrated in autobiographies such as that of Mohammed Ali. Popular culture, such as the artwork involved in the filming of ‘The Lord of the Rings’, inspires and fascinates pupils and encourages their further interest in literacy. The school does little to celebrate religious festivals other than those of Christianity and this remains an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. Procedures for child protection are good. The school liaises closely with area child protection services both for Cumbria and North Yorkshire, and all staff have received basic training in child protection procedures. The recent inspection by the National Care Standards Commission judged the care arrangements of the residential provision to be good and a suitable action plan has been written to deal with the issues raised.
30. The school takes the safety and wellbeing of all pupils very seriously. For example, it has recently sought the advice of the local education authority’s school health and safety risk management service over governors’ concerns regarding the keeping of pets on site. The resultant recommendations for full risk assessments, protocol for pupils and staff, and the unacceptability of dogs, under any circumstances, being allowed free access to communal or catering areas, are being implemented. Generic risk assessments have been written for outside activities, but the school has yet to complete other detailed risk assessments – for example, for staff working alone with pupils either in the school or on outside activities, and for curriculum areas.

31. There are developing links with a primary health trust in order to improve the arrangements for the medical care of pupils and access to health professionals – for instance, to help refine medical care plans and the procedures for administering medication. There are regular checks of the site by members of the school's health and safety committee (an improvement since the previous inspection) and formal routes of notification for health and safety concerns. A strong emphasis is placed on providing healthy food for pupils at mealtimes and food is plentiful and high quality. Following a recommendation by the National Care Standards Commission, accidents and incidents are now recorded separately. Useful telephone numbers for pupils who have worries or concerns are not displayed prominently and securely by each of the telephones available to pupils, but they are printed in pupil handbooks.
32. The personal support and guidance offered to pupils is good. A new head of care has recently been appointed and he is working with the well-established deputy head of care to ensure a high quality of residential care and provision for pupils. From the early morning 'rise' at the start of the school day, pupils are with staff all the time, and this leads to staff knowing pupils very well and being able to build up a good working relationship that underpins any necessary disciplinary action and adds credence to any rewards. The personal development day, arrangements for pupils to attend a youth club and go into Sedbergh, for personal shopping or on curriculum-related activities, all support their ability to mix in with their local community. Awards presented at weekly 'praise' assemblies recognise and reward social and behavioural, as well as academic, achievements. Pupils' diaries, containing the grades awarded after every lesson and activity, are discussed in the residential units each day after school, offering pupils greater insights into their actions. The procedures for passing information about pupils between residential units and teaching staff are very well organised. The practice of having a member of the unit staff present in the last lesson of the day extends further their knowledge of the boys. Fortnightly tutorials for pupils and their key workers give pupils another opportunity to talk through any matters that concern them or express their opinions about school life. For this reason, although a school council has not yet been set up, pupils feel that they have opportunities to make their views known and that they are regularly consulted on matters that are pertinent to them.
33. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are satisfactory. The school's main focus is at the start of the week when pupils arrive in the residential unit. Staff phone homes if boys are absent. Procedures for marking registers were inconsistent at the start of the inspection, but rapidly came in line with statutory requirements once the regulations were explained. A member of the teaching staff makes home visits to the families of any pupils who are not regular attenders and these have had a very beneficial effect on several pupils, especially where individual timetables and programmes of work, or work experience, have been introduced. Pupils' presence is not entered in a register of attendance in the residential unit at the end of the school day, but a count up of all pupils and staff sleeping in the unit is made and recorded at night for fire safety precautions.
34. The arrangements to monitor and promote good behaviour are very good, as are those to eliminate bullying and oppressive behaviour. The school maintains detailed records of any incident, major or minor, and analyses them in order to set targets for pupils' behaviour and make risk assessments on behavioural grounds. The tracking of pupils' behaviour is systematic. All staff are required to use an approved method of restraint and have received training in this procedure. On each occasion where handling strategies are used, the restraint incident is recorded. There are points of the day, such as break and lunchtimes, which are identified as being particularly difficult

times for pupils to manage their behaviour. The school structures and supervises this time – for example, with lunchtime activities – very tightly so that there are fewer opportunities for inappropriate behaviour to occur. All bullying incidents are monitored and the information used to ensure that individual pupils who are victims of bullying are identified, and that support is available for both the victim and perpetrator of these incidents. The major incident report forms offer a chance for pupils to make their own comments on any sanctions or restraint that have taken place and gives them an insight into why an incident occurred. Currently, strategies to influence the behaviour of individual pupils are used more effectively in the residential unit than similar attempts to manage extreme behaviour in lessons.

35. The provision for academic assessment has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is satisfactory with a number of good features. Initial or 'baseline' assessment procedures are now well established and the information gained is used well to identify pupils' additional special educational needs. There are clear and productive links between the work of the co-ordinators for assessment and special educational needs. A sound policy for assessment has been developed but has not been fully implemented in all subjects. This is restricting the development of assessment across the curriculum. Pupils' individual learning targets are not routinely used to inform planning in every subject. Tracking of pupils' achievement and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is well organised. Information from National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the age of 14 is analysed and used to inform plans for English, mathematics and science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Parents' views of the school are generally positive. Due to the distance between the school and most boys' homes, and the fact that only a few parental questionnaires were returned, parents' views were difficult to ascertain at first. However, by phoning a cross section of parents and carers, a wide range of viewpoints were sought which were virtually all positive and very supportive of the school. Parents feel that their children make good progress and there is the perception that the school has had a calming effect on them. 'It's been the making of him', one parent said. Many parents admitted that their children had had difficulty in settling into a residential school, especially when their history of school attendance was poor. However, all praised the role of the residential staff in dealing with their children, the very good relationships in the school and approachability of staff and how much progress their children had made in literacy and numeracy. 'I hear regularly from the residential unit', one parent said, 'both for good news and when things are not going so well'. Generally, parents appreciate how staff deal with pupils and the positive encouragement and feedback that they give to their children. They feel that this helps them to like school and has increased their children's self-esteem. The regular contacts built up with the school's administrative team help parents to feel comfortable about phoning the school with any worries or concerns.
37. The information provided for parents is satisfactory. Each week, the school sends parents a copy of the summary from their son's diary and contacts them by telephone when it feels that information needs an explanation. The information in written annual reports to parents does not meet statutory requirements (nor did it at the time of the previous inspection) as they do not include separate comments on achievements in history, geography, religious education and citizenship, or information and communication technology and design and technology. The school is already addressing this issue with a new format for annual written reports. By contrast with these rather brief communications, the half-termly reports sent from the residential

unit are detailed and personal and very much appreciated by parents. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents now meet statutory requirements. Newsletters are sent out on a termly basis and parents have been consulted as to the proposed building projects to be undertaken by the school.

38. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents, despite its very best efforts, is only satisfactory. Because of the long distances many pupils have to travel to school, no parents are involved in the school on a day-to-day basis. As a rule, few of them attend school events, although a good number did come to the recent summer gala. Annual review meetings are well organised. Parents are always invited and, despite the difficulties posed by travel arrangements, approximately 50 per cent attend.
39. There is little evidence of parents' contribution to their children's education. No homework is set. The school appreciates where parents have become parent governors. The majority of parents have their son ready for the school transport, but a few have not supported the school by ensuring that they attend regularly.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. Overall, the school is well led and managed. This represents very good progress since the previous Ofsted inspection, when the need to improve leadership and management was a major issue. Following the inspection, the current headteacher was appointed. His effective leadership has been a key factor in the good progress the school has made, both towards the issues identified in the inspection report and in improving the overall quality of education and pupils' achievements. A particular strength of the school is the way in which the school's key values and principles are reflected clearly in all aspects of its work. Staff throughout the school demonstrate their strong commitment to promoting each pupil's academic and personal development. The local education authority has provided a programme of intensive support, combined with frequent visits to check on the school's progress. The resulting reports express justified confidence in the headteacher, governors and staff.
41. The headteacher has been prepared to take difficult decisions, sometimes resulting in changes to working practices, which have not been universally popular. Systems of communication continue to develop. A significant step forward has been achieved through changes to the arrangements for transporting pupils to school on alternate Mondays. These have enabled the whole staff to meet together, ensuring that they all receive the same information and contributing to consistent expectations and procedures.
42. In the previous report, a major weakness identified was the acting headteacher's inability to delegate leadership and management tasks. Particularly good progress has been made in this area, especially in the establishment of a new tier of teachers with management responsibilities. This move has been very effective, both in moving forward aspects such as assessment and the provision for special educational needs, and in developing staff's expertise in managing change. The deputy headteacher fulfils substantial responsibilities – for example, for the day-to-day running of the school. All teachers have responsibility for one or more areas of the curriculum. The quality of their leadership and management ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, but is good overall. This also represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. As tasks are completed and staff develop, roles and responsibilities continue to change, with clarification needed in a few areas – for example, the leadership of personal, social, health and citizenship education and the position of outdoor education within personal development and physical education. At

present, the headteacher shares responsibility for several areas, such as oversight of the curriculum. Appropriately, tasks are increasingly being delegated to other staff. Leadership of the residential provision has been secured and recently changed with the appointment of a new head of care. With very strong support from the deputy head of care, he is ensuring that this aspect of the school runs smoothly and continues to move forward, implementing the action plan produced in response to the recent National Care Standards Commission inspection. The head of care is a member of the senior management team, as is the administrative officer, ensuring that all staff groups are represented.

43. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's performance, in preparation for the current Ofsted inspection, was overly generous in the judgements regarding several aspects of the school. However, the evidence to support his evaluation demonstrated his keen awareness of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each area – for example, the curriculum and pupils' achievements. This knowledge has been accrued through both formal and informal means, often at first-hand. For example, there are particularly good arrangements for checking the quality of teaching. Local education authority advisers have made important contributions to this work, but the headteacher also observes each teacher on a regular basis. As a result, he has a very accurate view of where teaching is strong and what needs to be improved. This analysis, and the support provided, has already had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and there are suitable plans to build on this work – for example, by increasing the involvement of subject co-ordinators. Additionally, observations linked to formal performance management procedures are also contributing to the headteacher's overview. The system introduced initially was found to be too demanding on staff resources and has been modified to make it manageable but still capable of supporting the professional development of all staff groups. The effective work of the two teachers who share responsibility for developing assessment procedures has led directly to the collection of reliable information about pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science. The school has begun to analyse this data and to compare itself with other schools in the local education authority, but not yet with similar schools nationally.
44. The analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses has previously been used well to produce an annual plan to guide developments. This has not been possible this year, because the local education authority has not yet provided information about the budget the school is to receive. As a consequence, a stop-gap plan has been written, in order to keep the school moving forward until a full plan can be constructed, informed by accurate spending decisions and consultation with all staff and governors. Until very recently, external forces have dictated the school's agenda. The headteacher is fully aware of the need to incorporate action plans for subjects and other aspects of the school, plus needs identified through performance management, into the main plan.
45. The governing body is small in size and its composition has changed significantly in recent years. However, for the first time for some while, it is complete and has very recently been able to establish committees to oversee, for instance, the curriculum and finances. Governors are still relatively inexperienced and, apart from the chair and vice chair, they are not able to visit the school very often, other than for scheduled meetings. Nevertheless, governors are very supportive and are clear in their determination to 'give every pupil what they need'. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, they know that a priority has been to improve the curriculum and teaching, and hence pupils' achievements, in English, mathematics and science and that other subjects are now lagging behind, with a

number of statutory requirements not met. Governing body minutes indicate clearly that governors ask questions and discuss decisions thoroughly. They are truly critical friends of the school and very keen to do a good job for the pupils.

46. The school is efficient in its strategic use of resources, although this year's delay in receiving budget information is hampering its efforts. The procedures for ensuring effective financial control are very good. Administrative staff and those who lead each area of the school, including catering and residential care, keep a very close eye on spending. Information and communication technology is used well, ensuring that the school runs efficiently on a daily basis. The local education authority's most recent financial audit report only highlighted a few minor areas for improvement, all of which have been addressed effectively. The headteacher effectively exercises day-to-day financial control within agreed limits. The governing body discusses the school's budget proposals and, after careful examination and evaluation, approves the full budget recommendations. The spending is reviewed regularly, although the finance committee has not yet met regularly due to lack of numbers. However, a particular strength of the school's financial arrangements is its constant search for achieving its services at the best possible cost. For example, after exploring several different options, the school itself now maintains the grounds for most of the year, buying in specialist service teams to prune and maintain the trees and shrubs annually. This efficiency represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection and has resulted in a considerable saving on the former contract arrangements.
47. The school has a good number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. Teaching staff are well deployed so, in most cases, they teach their specialist subject to all pupils except to those in Years 6 and 7. There is a lack of expertise in design and technology and the music teacher is also not a specialist. The availability of the French teacher is dependent on the timetable of a mainstream school. The number of teaching assistants has increased since the previous inspection and is now adequate. However, three of them are temporary. The staffing in the residential unit is generous, because one of the units is not in use at present, now the Year 11 boys have left.
48. Significant improvements have been made in the residential accommodation since the previous inspection and in a number of aspects of the teaching accommodation. For example, there is now a well-equipped science laboratory, a small library and a room for individual learning support. However, the accommodation for teaching physical education remains inadequate and prevents the full range of the National Curriculum requirements from being taught. The school has applied for permission to build a new indoor facility. Resources for teaching have improved well since the previous inspection and are now good overall. Resources for teaching food technology are unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in design and technology and physical education by:
 - a) Improving design and technology teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. Ensuring planning for the subject shows how pupils' learning will be structured in all aspects of the subject. Improving the resources for food technology.
 - b) Ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are met in physical education. Improving the planning for outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming.
- (2) Further improve the curriculum by:
 - a) Increasing the opportunities for pupils in Years 7 to 9 to learn French;
 - b) Establishing a taught programme of careers education.
 - c) Ensuring that pupils have planned opportunities to use computer skills in lessons across the curriculum.
 - d) Clarifying how pupils are to learn about citizenship in the coming year.
- (3) Develop specific strategies and responses for teachers and teaching assistants to use when individual boys present particularly challenging behaviour.
- (4) When the school's budget is known, produce a detailed, costed improvement plan for the current year. This should take account of the planned actions for each subject and aspect of the school, together with the outcomes of performance management, and have a clear link to staff development.

In addition, the following issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- Ensure that every subject has a suitable system for measuring and recording pupils' progress.
- In lessons across the curriculum, make more use of the literacy and numeracy targets in pupils' individual education plans.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	16	15	1	0	0
Percentage	2	30	34	32	2	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	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	30*
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	30*

* The six Year 11 pupils had left by the time the inspection took place.

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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

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 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Total
	2001-02	6	6

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standards specified	Boys	0	0	5
	Total	0	0	5
Percentage of pupils achieving the standards specified	School	0	0	84

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	8.7 (2.6)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
33	18	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y6 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.1
Average class size	6

Education support staff: Y6 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	771

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-03
	£
Total income	1,188,792
Total expenditure	1,160,397
Expenditure per pupil	29,754
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,661
Balance carried forward to next year	59,056

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4
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	36
Number of questionnaires returned	4

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents believe that their sons like school and that they are making good progress. They appreciate receiving each week the summary of the grades their sons have achieved. They consider that the care staff keep them well informed about how their son is getting on.

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

ENGLISH

Regardless of their ability, pupils achieve well as they move up through the school. This is because they are taught well.

Key strengths

- Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in developing their speaking and listening skills.
- At the end of Year 11, pupils have opportunities to achieve success in GCSE examinations.
- Pupils with particular difficulties with literacy are provided with good individual support as part of a structured programme.
- The subject is very well led and managed. As a result, teaching and learning have improved very well since the previous inspection.

Areas for improvement

- The targets in pupils' individual education plans are not used sufficiently in English lessons and in other subjects in order to match work to their needs and stage of development.
- Pupils do not use computers enough to help them learn.

50. By the end of Year 9, all pupils listen very well to each other and their teachers. They respond appropriately to questions and higher attaining pupils ask good questions of their own in order to clarify what is being discussed or to seek further information. Lower attaining pupils are more reticent and less articulate when they are speaking, but listen attentively. When asked direct questions by a teacher, they give relevant and appropriate answers. In reading, higher attaining pupils read fluently with little hesitation and have a secure understanding of what they have read. However, most pupils' reading lacks expression and their understanding of what they have read is at a basic level. They struggle to draw conclusions about the characters and events in stories they have read. Pupils develop very positive attitudes to the subject and take a pride in their work so the quality of the presentation is generally good, with dates and headings carefully underlined. The quality of their handwriting develops well. Letters are correctly formed and most pupils write in a legible joined-up style. Although lower attaining pupils still make errors in their use of capital letters and full stops, most pupils are beginning to use speech marks and other punctuation correctly in their work. Higher attaining pupils are starting to organise their work into paragraphs.
51. During Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to make good progress. They make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Most willingly discuss the subject of the lessons and get very involved in these discussions. Lower attaining pupils need prompting by the teacher but, when challenged to think about and explain their ideas, they try very hard to use appropriate language and to refer to the book they are reading. They write extended pieces of work and have a good understanding of the books, plays and poems they have read. Consequently, pupils are on course to achieve levels appropriate to their ability in their GCSE examinations. For example, one boy has written several interesting pieces of work about 'Twelfth Night', discussing the relationships between the different characters and showing a secure understanding of how their personalities affect their actions and how they respond to events. Last year, three boys gained GCSE passes within the range of grades B to E.

52. The co-ordinator of English teaches all classes, which ensures a consistent approach to the subject. She has a very secure subject knowledge and so pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the subject. However, in the lower years of the school, there is a very strong and appropriate focus on developing pupils' basic literacy skills. This provides a very firm foundation for the good progress pupils make in Years 10 and 11 and the standards they achieve by the time they leave the school. Major strengths of the teaching are the way in which lessons move on quickly and the teacher's very clear and consistent expectations of behaviour and performance. These characteristics ensure that pupils generally concentrate hard and behave very well. Lessons are carefully planned, with a good balance between discussion and written work. They are made up of a series of short tasks that require pupils to use different skills and this strategy maintains their attention well. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, after a short discussion recapping on what they had learnt the previous day, each pupil took a spoken part in a play. All took part willingly, including the lower attaining pupils who needed help from the teaching assistant in order to be fully involved. This activity was followed by a short written task that reinforced pupils' understanding of the events in the play and helped them make a simple prediction of what might happen next. However, although discussions are very well managed and the teacher uses questions very well to challenge all pupils to use their knowledge and understanding, written activities are not consistently varied enough to fully stretch all pupils, particularly the higher attainers. In addition, although older pupils use information and communication technology to present their GCSE coursework, overall not enough use is made of computers during lessons.
53. Where pupils with particular learning needs in literacy are withdrawn to work with teaching assistants on individual projects linked to the targets in their individual plans, they are taught well and make good progress. However, not enough use is made of their individual plans to plan activities in English lessons that reinforce and build on the work done in these sessions. Consequently, these pupils tend to do similar work to the rest of the class, supported by the teaching assistant.
54. The subject is very well led and managed. Since the previous inspection, very good progress has been made in addressing the areas for improvement that were identified. The curriculum has improved well and the broad range of resources used in lessons, such as traditional Native-American stories, develops pupils' cultural awareness effectively. The co-ordinator, with the help of the local education authority adviser, has implemented a whole-school approach to promoting pupils' literacy skills. The steps she took to develop this included classroom observations and examining samples of work. Consequently, in other subjects – for example, geography and history – teachers usually place a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils understand key vocabulary and have sufficient opportunities to record their own views and opinions through their writing. However, the targets in their individual education plans are not used enough when planning these tasks. The school has also developed good procedures to check how well pupils are learning and is beginning to use this information well to track the achievement of individual pupils.

MATHEMATICS

Pupils of all abilities achieve well as a result of teaching which is good overall, often very good and, on occasion, excellent.

Key strengths

- A significant minority, particularly in Years 10 and 11, make very good progress.
- Year 11 pupils are successful in GCSE examinations.
- Information about how well pupils have learned is used very effectively by teachers in order to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Those who need additional support are provided for well.
- Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise numeracy skills in other subjects.

Areas for improvement

- The pace of learning is often slower in Years 6 and 7.
- Computers are not used enough to help pupils to learn.

55. The time allocated to mathematics lessons for older pupils has been increased since the previous inspection, and this has contributed to the good improvement in their achievement. Pupils enter the school with much ground to make up in mathematics. Teachers make very good use of information from assessment procedures in order to set specific learning targets and plan work which ensures that all pupils are challenged to succeed. The school has effectively implemented elements of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, and these are having a significant impact on improving pupils' numeracy skills, particularly in mental calculation. The brisk oral sessions which begin all lessons make a valuable contribution towards improving pupils' speed and accuracy.
56. Between Years 6 and 9, pupils make good progress in using the four rules of number so that, by the time they are 14, most understand the principles of place value and apply these when working with decimal numbers. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in presenting and interpreting data in a range of forms, including bar charts, pie charts and graphs and in using simple algebraic formulae. The language of mathematics is promoted very effectively which encourages pupils to use the correct vocabulary when discussing their work. This enabled a lower attaining boy in Year 9 to describe how he classified two-dimensional shapes by their different attributes. In most lessons, teachers provide a high level of encouragement and motivation, pupils are challenged by the tasks and they receive clear instructions on how to proceed and improve their work. Occasionally, during lessons with the youngest pupils, work is not consistently challenging and the pace of learning slows. Pupils then lose interest and misbehave, thus achieving less than they could.
57. During Years 10 and 11, pupils make very good progress in lessons that prepare them for GCSE examinations. Last year, five boys gained GCSE passes within the range of D to F. Pupils are given very constructive feedback as they complete assignments. This helps to focus their attention and encourages them to play an active part in lessons. They continue to build systematically on their earlier learning, particularly in relation to their verbal reasoning skills and data handling.
58. Pupils of all ages who require additional help are supported well through the learning extension system. Following initial assessments, they receive regular well-focused programmes, including the use of information and communication technology, which make a significant contribution towards improving their basic mathematical skills. The teaching assistants who lead these sessions provide teachers with good quality information which enables them to plan more effectively to meet a range of learning needs. Overall, more use could be made of computers to help pupils to learn. A

strength of the mathematics provision is the way in which teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills during lessons in other subjects. This is particularly good in science, where pupils record and analyse data, such as temperatures. However, pupils' individual mathematics targets are not used enough to ensure that the tasks are matched precisely to their individual needs. The school benefits from the mathematics co-ordinator's subject expertise and enthusiasm. He leads and manages the subject very well. Assessment and planning procedures have improved well since the previous inspection, and priorities for future development have been identified. However, the co-ordinator does not have opportunities to observe the teaching and learning of mathematics during colleagues' lessons, in order to promote further progress. The well-managed discussions and the success pupils achieve in mathematics lessons ensure that the subject makes a valuable contribution to their personal and social development.

SCIENCE

Pupils achieve well across the breadth of National Curriculum science because they want to learn, the subject is planned thoroughly, there is good quality specialist teaching and specialist facilities have improved.

Key strengths

- Pupils make good use of computers to support their learning in science.
- Pupils' progress over time is tracked effectively because there are good assessment procedures.
- Most pupils behave sensibly in the laboratory and are careful with equipment.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- The oldest pupils are successful in GCSE single science examinations.

Areas for improvement

- The youngest pupils are not learning as well as other pupils because they have non-specialist science teaching in a classroom rather than in the laboratory.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to write at length about their science work, especially in Years 10 and 11.

59. The achievement of pupils in Years 6 and 7 is satisfactory. Achievement is good in Years 8 and 9, with the pupils reaching National Curriculum levels that are comparable with similar schools nationally. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11 and achieve well at Entry Level and in GCSE single science, with grades in the range C to D. Pupils with additional special educational needs, for example Aspergers syndrome or autism, make good progress and play a full part in lessons. Pupils have good access to computers in the laboratory so that they can log results manually and with electronic equipment. A recent change to a different examination syllabus is resulting in pupils having more limited opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing.
60. Pupils in Years 8 to 11 have science lessons in the laboratory. They want to learn, they respect the teaching and support staff and treat the specialist facilities well. Pupils make good progress developing practical and enquiry skills. They improve their skills of predicting, planning, fair testing, obtaining and recording results, analysing results and evaluating the methods used. This is an improvement since the previous inspection because specialist teaching has improved, there is a good new laboratory and better resources. In GCSE single science, Year 10 boys, for example, investigate the insulation properties of wet and dry clothes. They plot graphs to show the cooling

curves of hot water which is in glass tubes variously covered with wet or dry fabric. They understand the need for a 'control' and include in their enquiry a tube of hot water which has no fabric covering. Good quality assessment records enable the teacher to keep track of pupils' progress over time and to note where individuals need more support. At times, there is too much intervention by learning support staff, preventing pupils from becoming more independent learners.

61. The youngest pupils, taught in a classroom, are considerably less mature than pupils in Year 8 and above. They are still keen to learn and do practical work but lack the discipline required for the safe use of resources and for thoughtful responses to link cause and effect, in work on electrical circuits, for example. Additionally, in the lesson observed, non-specialist teaching led to lower attaining pupils struggling to cope with the same learning objectives as the higher attaining pupils. Pupils were not managed securely and excitedly played with batteries, bulbs, motors, buzzers and wires. Their lack of discipline, however, resulted in too little independent written work to record the results of their experiments. Also, pupils did not think enough about the reasons for their results because they wasted time and would not listen properly. Their thinking was not good enough to explain, for example, why increasing the number of batteries makes a bulb brighter, a buzzer louder and a motor faster or why adding extra bulbs to a circuit makes the bulbs dimmer.
62. The subject is well led and managed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

ART AND DESIGN

Pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, achieve well. The provision is good. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils in Years 6 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. The co-ordinator and principal teacher was absent for the period of the inspection.

Key strengths

- Pupils in Year 11 achieve success in GCSE examinations.
- An annual art week provides good opportunities for large-scale and collaborative work.
- Information and communication technology is used well by pupils in Years 10 and 11.

Area for improvement

- The co-ordinator has not yet observed lessons taught by other teachers.
- There is no system to assess and record pupils' learning in Years 6 to 9.

63. During Years 6 to 9, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning a suitable range of techniques, such as drawing, painting, collage and sculpture. Teachers choose activities that motivate pupils. They present the work in such a way that pupils are not threatened and so they are willing to have a go. For example, pupils in Years 6 and 7 started their lesson in an excitable frame of mind, but most of them became interested in creating land or seascapes from found materials and they worked hard. By producing stimulating resources such as pieces of slate, the teacher quietly encouraged them to experiment. The boys had clear ideas about what they wanted to represent and they selected resources carefully, with this in mind. This lesson built effectively on previous work about landscape – for example, involving collage and abstract paintings.

64. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a course leading to GCSE. Last year, grades E and F were achieved by two boys. More pupils have completed the course this year and higher grades are predicted for a few of them. Pupils are taught well. Their work shows that their skills and creativity develop well and they are influenced by studying a variety of artists, such as Bridget Riley, Lisa Milroy and Roy Lichtenstein, as well as ideas taken from advertising or film. A particular strength is the use pupils make of information and communication technology – to carry out research or manipulate images, for example. The use of computers is satisfactory in Years 6 to 9. Pupils use sketchbooks extensively to practise drawing but do not habitually collect ideas or samples that inspire them and that they might incorporate into future work.
65. Leadership and management of art and design are satisfactory and have led to satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Standards have been maintained and external accreditation introduced. The co-ordinator has not yet observed lessons taught by the other teachers and a way of assessing pupils' progress has not been developed. The curriculum for Years 6 to 9 is still being refined. An annual art week provides good opportunities for all pupils to work with students from a local art college, to produce exciting outcomes, such as huge insects made from papier mâché.

CITIZENSHIP

The school provides a variety of good opportunities for pupils of all abilities to learn about citizenship. They have not been learning the subject for long, but their achievement is at least satisfactory. No lessons were observed, so a firm judgement about teaching cannot be made.

Key strengths

- The religious education co-ordinator has carried out a thorough investigation into how each subject contributes to pupils' learning in citizenship.
- An accredited course has been introduced in Years 6 to 9.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn by taking part in practical activities.

Areas for improvement

- Responsibility for the subject is not clear.
- The place of citizenship on next year's timetables for Years 10 and 11 is not yet guaranteed.
- Ways of recording what and how well pupils have learned have not been devised.

66. During the year just ending, pupils learned about citizenship in a variety of ways. Throughout the school, the majority of subjects make effective contributions – for example, in English, pupils have used the recent outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome as a starting point for their writing. During Years 6 to 9, they have embarked on a certificated course in personal, social and health education, which includes citizenship, often taught in practical ways. As a result, pupils become increasingly able to take part responsibly in activities. For example, those in Year 9 have contributed to improving the local environment by clearing a lay-by of litter and removing a three-piece suite from a canal. There are plans to introduce a similar scheme in Years 10 and 11. Additionally, in Years 6 to 11, citizenship has been taught alongside religious education, following a published scheme and national guidance materials. Pupils have studied a wide range of topics, including rules and laws and about racism and refugees, helping them to become informed citizens.

67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, religious education co-ordinator and other teachers have worked hard to establish the subject. For example, the religious education co-ordinator has conducted a thorough audit of what was already taught in each subject and through the residential provision. However, roles and responsibilities need to be clarified as does how the subject is to be taught next year. There is particular uncertainty about citizenship in Years 10 and 11. There is no method of assessing pupils' achievements. Digital cameras are used to record pupils' involvement in activities, but there is scope for more use of information and communication technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The curriculum is unsatisfactory as is pupils' achievement. Within the narrow range of activities, teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, lessons in resistant materials technology were taught by a supply teacher, following the co-ordinator's plans.

Key strengths

- Food technology has very recently been introduced and the teacher is enthusiastic.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils do not learn about all the necessary aspects of the subject.
- There is no system to measure how well pupils are learning.
- Teachers do not have enough knowledge of the subject.
- Adults tend to do too much for pupils.

68. Throughout the school, pupils follow a course that essentially involves them using wood to make items of their own choice. Very occasionally, their work includes plastics or metal. There is almost no attempt to teach pupils the skills involved in designing and planning. This is very much the same as the situation at the time of the previous inspection. There are a few signs that matters are improving. For example, the co-ordinator has begun to produce a programme of work, intended to be introduced during the next academic year, which offers more varied and structured opportunities. Again, an area for food technology teaching is being developed and two classes of the youngest pupils have started to have lessons. However, all these initiatives are in the very early stages.
69. During Years 6 to 9, pupils produce items such as boxes and bowls, made from wood. In Years 10 and 11, they continue this work, becoming more competent. There is no accreditation available to pupils. The things they make are solid and functional but show little originality or evidence that pupils have developed skills other than those linked with the use of tools to work with wood.
70. One lesson, with pupils in Years 7 and 8, demonstrated pupils' lack of knowledge of designing but showed that they are capable of being motivated by tasks that involve more than woodworking. The supply teacher introduced the project – designing a clock – effectively and enthusiastically, showing that she thought the task was worthwhile. As a result, pupils began to offer thoughts about a clock that would appeal to young children – for instance, incorporating Winnie the Pooh's honey pot. They went on to sketch their initial ideas – an egg cup clock, a footballer, an eye – and began to think about the materials they might use. The teacher used questions very well to help them extend their thinking. She encouraged them to carry out research, by looking at catalogues, for example, and to consider who would use the clock and whether it would be wall mounted or free standing. After making good progress for 15 minutes or so, pupils were allowed to continue with their woodworking projects. They confidently

use hand tools and a belt sander and electric drill, but too much of their work is led by or done by adults. For example, when a higher attaining boy was asked how he intended to join two pieces of wood on his model boat, he replied that he would ask the teaching assistant to do it. Later, when the pupil was cutting out fabric to make a sail, the teaching assistant took it away from him and trimmed it more neatly. There was no attempt to teach him to make and use a paper template, which would have equipped him with a skill to use in the future. These pupils, and those in Years 6 and 7, have had only two or three lessons in food technology, but they are beginning to learn a broad range of skills – such as designing a salad or stir-fry.

71. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and, as a result, leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Neither of the teachers are subject specialists. The school has sought advice from the local education authority, but this has not yet made much difference to what is happening in the workshop. There is no method of recording what pupils have learned. Unsatisfactory use is made of computers to help pupils to learn. Resources for food technology are inadequate.

GEOGRAPHY

Regardless of their ability, pupils achieve well as they move up through the school, due to good teaching. The strengths of the subject have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Key strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge so pupils learn basic geography skills well.
- The planned opportunities for pupils to develop these skills are good.

Areas for improvement

- Computers are not used enough to help pupils in Years 6 to 9 to learn.
- Teachers do not take account of pupils' different literacy needs when planning activities.
- Specific methods of dealing with pupils' challenging behaviour have not been agreed.

72. At the basis of the good progress pupils make are the comprehensive and meticulously planned range of opportunities the co-ordinator has developed. The range of topics focuses on all aspects of the subject, including physical geography – for example, the formation of rivers, weathering and erosion and how these processes shape the environment. Pupils develop a secure grasp of these basic ideas. The topics develop this knowledge by giving pupils good opportunities to learn how peoples' lives are affected by the place in which they live and how human activity affects the environment at a local and a world level. For example, pupils in Year 8 have looked at the problems of litter and pollution in the local area. These activities also effectively help develop pupils' understanding of their responsibility to the environment. Older pupils in Year 10 have carried out a major survey on traffic and visitor patterns to Sedbergh by surveying the cars parked in the town at different times of the year. This gives them a firm understanding of how Sedbergh is both a place where people live, but also a destination for people from further afield to visit and explore.
73. Teachers have good subject knowledge and place a strong emphasis on teaching pupils the basic skills of map reading, using grid references to find places on maps and the key vocabulary in each topic – such as the different types of weathering and

erosion. This links well with the whole-school emphasis on promoting pupils' literacy skills through all subjects. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work so they develop pride in their work. They also have high expectations of behaviour and make it clear to pupils how they expect them to behave. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and, as a result, most pupils respond well to this positive approach and behave well for most of the time. However, on the few occasions when a pupil does not behave appropriately, and does not respond to encouragement, teachers do not have strategies for managing this behaviour that are carefully matched to what that individual pupil responds to. This means that such behaviour is not always effectively dealt with and carries through to the following lesson.

74. In Years 8 and 9, pupils' attention and concentration are maintained well because the teacher provides a broad range of short activities that include much discussion. Pupils take part willingly in discussions but their attitude to writing is not as good, so most inappropriate behaviour tends to occur when these tasks are introduced. However, writing activities are not varied enough, so as to fully challenge pupils of all abilities, especially the higher attainers. This is particularly the case for the youngest pupils in the school, who do not always have enough opportunities to develop and extend their understanding, to write for themselves or to undertake research and investigation. In contrast, in Years 10 and 11, the teacher places a very strong emphasis on pupils conducting investigations and recording their own findings and conclusions. The use of information and communication technology was identified as a weakness by the previous inspection and limited progress has been made in addressing this throughout the school. Although it is used well in Years 10 and 11, insufficient use is made of computers in classrooms in other years – for instance, to present pupils' work or to research the topics they are working on.
75. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management and has developed a sophisticated method of planning topics and for assessing how pupils are doing in Years 10 and 11. This approach is currently being extended to other classes.

HISTORY

In Years 6 to 9, pupils of all abilities achieve well, in line with the quality of teaching. The school has only just begun teaching history again to the older pupils.

Key strengths

- History makes an effective contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development and their understanding of citizenship.
- The local environment is used well to help pupils learn.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers do not have agreed methods to handle individual pupils' challenging behaviour.
- Computers are not used enough to help pupils to learn.
- Written tasks are usually not matched closely to pupils' levels of literacy.

76. The range of opportunities enables pupils to develop their basic skills in the subject. Consequently, pupils are good at looking at different sorts of evidence, such as photographs, pictures and written texts, to draw some conclusions about the past and how people lived. For example, during a very good lesson about Queen Elizabeth I,

pupils in Years 6 and 7 showed very clearly that they understood that photographs are more valuable sources of evidence than paintings. They used their observational skills well to identify tiny details in pictures and displayed a secure understanding of the use of symbols in paintings, appreciating that they were used to put across messages to the people. Through a good range of topics, they develop a secure understanding of life in Britain and how it changed through developments in industry and transport during the 17th and 18th centuries. As part of this work, pupils learn how the slave trade was organised and the part it played in Britain's economic development during that period. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use these events effectively to show pupils how the modern world has developed and how the past continues to affect the world today. For example, they learn about the black African influence on modern American society. During the inspection, Year 10 pupils learned about social conditions in Victorian England, in particular, about child labour. In a very well-prepared lesson, pupils acted out roles – for example, cleaning chimneys or scavenging for cotton waste under machinery. They were very interested and made very good progress, learning, for instance, why children today are physically different to Victorian children and so unsuited to the jobs they did. However, the written tasks were the same for all pupils, some finding them easier than others. Because of the attention paid to making the work relevant to pupils' own lives, history makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development. Good use is also made of the local area, so pupils learn how the environment has changed over time through, for example, surveys of buildings and road patterns in Kendal.

77. A lesson about slavery interested Year 8 pupils and they were very attentive and involved during a discussion. However, the written task that followed was not matched to their varying levels of literacy. One pupil was reluctant to attempt this work and moved round the room, resisting the teacher's attempts to encourage him. Teachers do not have agreed strategies to deal with pupils who do not respond to the more general approaches used to manage behaviour, and this has an adverse effect on learning. In lessons with the youngest pupils, commercial worksheets are used too much. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop and extend their understanding, to write for themselves or to undertake research and investigation. There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use computers during history lessons.
78. Leadership and management are satisfactory and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory, whatever their ability. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. During the present inspection, lessons were taught well by the headteacher, in the absence of the co-ordinator.

Key strengths

- Pupils enjoy using data-logging equipment, digital cameras, scanners, keyboards, electronic mail and websites because tasks are interesting and relevant.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to using computers and other hardware, and treat equipment with great respect.
- Pupils develop good personal and communication skills in information and communication technology lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils are not yet learning how to control events and devices because this work has not been planned.
- It is not possible to check if individual pupils are making good enough progress because assessment and record-keeping systems are not well developed.
- Overall, pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to use computers to support their learning in other subjects.

79. On entry, pupils can browse websites, control the mouse, and they have one-fingered wordprocessing skills. They know how to play computer games. By Year 9, they use digital cameras and download pictures onto the computer screen, for example, and become skilful in the use of hardware, like scanners. In Years 10 and 11, they achieve units towards information and communication technology qualifications, including Entry Level and ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) certificates.
80. Pupils have timetabled lessons, in addition to opportunities provided through other subjects. In a very good Year 10 lesson, boys made very good progress working as a group and using digital cameras to create a video of their own version of the television programme 'Top Gear'. They use a number of search engines to locate websites with appropriate images of the car they want to promote. They load the digital video into a computer to watch and evaluate the quality of their work and learn what needs to be done to improve the quality of their film, when they do a re-take. The teacher is very skilful in assigning the roles of director, cameramen, presenters, reporters, and researchers to best promote pupils' individual personal and communication skills as well as their information and communication technology skills. Pupils with special educational needs and communication difficulties, for example, are supported very well, and are included very effectively in the lesson. They have to discuss then write their own auto-cues, rehearse before filming then introduce and present the programme. This gives them a high profile role in the production, raises their self-esteem and promotes very good progress in their communication skills. On viewing the film at the end of the lesson, they evaluate their presentation skills very well and confidently tell the class what they will do on the retake to improve their performances. Pupils are very ably supported by a skilful technician.
81. Subject co-ordinators are increasingly planning for the use of computers to support learning in their subjects but, at present, there are many missed opportunities. Pupils make good use of computers in science. They use data-logging equipment, spreadsheets and construct bar graphs. Computer programs are used well in English and mathematics to support lower attaining pupils. In geography, pupils have access to an electronic weather station. Data from this station supports work in GCSE mathematics, for example, to investigate the correlation between wind direction and rainfall. In art and design, digital imaging is used, and higher attaining pupils learn to scan in their paintings and then make changes to the background and borders on screen. In the residential unit, pupils use electronic mail independently to request resources and books from the staff. At college, Year 10 pupils assemble text and graphics to produce a newsletter.
82. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the availability of computers and software and the ratio of computers to pupils is better than in similar schools. The use of computers to control events and devices is not well developed. There is little recorded evidence of pupils' progress because assessment procedures are not well enough developed.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

The achievement of pupils in Years 6 to 8 is broadly satisfactory in the limited time available for teaching and learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Key strengths

- Pupils are keen to speak French because interesting activities are planned.
- Relationships are good and so pupils have the confidence to speak French.
- An extra-curricular French café is fun and helps pupils to use their French vocabulary.

Areas for improvement

- A small number of Year 9 pupils have not been receiving their full entitlement to French.
- Pupils do not have a broad enough range of learning opportunities, because there is a shortage of time for this subject.
- Too much English was spoken in the French lesson observed.

83. Only one French lesson was taught during the inspection, to pupils in Years 6 and 7. Teaching and learning were satisfactory. Although the boys enjoy learning French, they are immature and difficult to manage. They do not listen well enough, and often call out, not giving themselves a chance to think. They know numbers to 20, and enjoy a game of lotto to re-enforce their knowledge of numbers. They can name some foods and drinks served in cafés, with accents that are very approximate. A higher attaining boy persevered to read a menu. Pupils enjoy role play in a 'French café', ordering baguette, croissant and fromage, for example.
84. Leadership and management of French are satisfactory. The co-ordinator does her best but is only in school for one lesson a week. Two classes have one lesson on alternate weeks, a third class of Year 9 pupils does not currently have a French lesson. The very short amount of time for French is not enough to cover in any depth what is planned. The infrequency of lessons is detrimental to progress in learning accurately to speak, read and write in French. There is also not enough time to learn adequately about the culture and traditions of French people. There are no displays of French vocabulary or artefacts to support learning. The subject has now been provided for over two years so provision has improved since the previous inspection, but further development is still required. No French is available for pupils in Years 10 and 11.

MUSIC

The provision, including the quality of teaching, is satisfactory for those pupils in Years 6 to 9 who receive music lessons. Their achievement is satisfactory overall.

Key strengths

- The use of a commercial scheme ensures that pupils learn about the necessary aspects of music.
- Pupils throughout the school benefit from regular visits by professional musicians.

Areas for improvement

- The teacher's subject knowledge is very limited.
- This year, not all pupils in Year 9 have been taught music.

85. Music was not taught at the time of the previous inspection and was only introduced into the curriculum at the beginning of the current school year. The provision overall has improved since the previous inspection. However, a minority of Year 9 pupils have had no music lessons during the year. These pupils have therefore not received their National Curriculum entitlement to the subject.
86. During the inspection, the teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in a Years 6 and 7 lesson because the strategies used to manage the pupils were insufficiently focused to settle their exceptionally challenging behaviour. As a result, the pupils were off task for a significant proportion of the lesson time and consequently little learning took place. In another lesson, the progress of Year 8 pupils was satisfactory. By this stage, most pupils follow instructions carefully and recognise and move to the pulse in music of varying tempos. They understand that not every pulse is represented by a sound. Pupils concentrate well to keep to their individual parts in 'round' songs and they identify most instruments as they listen to an excerpt from 'Oliver'.
87. Pupils of all abilities throughout the school benefit from regular visits by professional musicians, including a jazz group and a pianist. The boys contribute well to discussion and are keen to participate in composition and performance. Many express opinions on their likes and dislikes and can give reasons for their views. Music is used well to promote a reflective atmosphere during assemblies; pupils benefit from attending concerts and music festivals in the locality and a very small number receive instrumental tuition.
88. Teaching is supported by the use of an appropriate commercial scheme and pupils are introduced to a range of music in varying styles and from different cultures, including folk songs, jazz, pop and classical music. Resources are chosen to interest the pupils and extend their musical understanding. However, the teacher's planning does not closely identify the skills to be taught and assessment is in the early stages of development. Since music was introduced into the school's curriculum, the co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the provision. However, she is not a music specialist and would benefit from the opportunity to extend her own subject expertise.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Achievement across the breadth of National Curriculum physical education is unsatisfactory because unsatisfactory facilities restrict pupils' progress. They make good progress in athletic activities because they are taught well.

Key strengths

- The pupils have good attitudes in physical education classes.
- The small number of boys who opt for canoeing make very good progress because they receive very good tuition.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities, including links with other special schools for competitive games, is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this helps pupils to develop good personal and social skills during physical education lessons, outdoor pursuits and during lunchtime and after-school sporting activities.

Areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory physical education facilities prevent the teaching of gymnastic activities, dance or indoor games. As a consequence, the programme for physical education is too narrow to meet the statutory requirement for the subject.
- The showering facilities remain poor.
- Outdoor pursuits and swimming are optional. They are not planned well enough as part of the physical education curriculum.

throwing a cricket ball. Higher attaining pupils help lower attainers to improve their throwing techniques. Pupils who are reluctant to engage in physical activity make good progress in personal and social skills by, for example, changing for physical education and taking responsibility for timing the races. There are no targets, however, to help reluctant pupils make small steps towards improving their physical skills.

90. Lower attaining pupils in Years 8 and 9 improve their sprint starts, sprint times and discus-throwing techniques because they are very well taught. They listen to instructions carefully and observe demonstrations closely. They are not discouraged by observing pupils who achieve higher levels of skill. Relationships are excellent and higher attaining pupils respect the efforts of the lower attaining boys. During a personal development day, three Year 9 boys learned canoeing skills very well, especially the difficult task of canoeing backwards in a straight line. They listened attentively to instructions. At the end of the lesson, they evaluated what they needed to do to improve, with a view to achieving canoeing certificates. The teaching of canoeing is very skilful and boys are made very aware of health and safety matters.
91. In Year 10, pupils with additional special educational needs play a full part in sprinting and long jump, and other boys respect their efforts. All the boys are very keen to improve their long jump distances but unfortunately, during the inspection, they chose to ignore instructions when the time came to stop jumping and to evaluate what they have learned. This wasted time but eventually they realised that they were being unfair to the teacher and apologised.
92. There are good links with other special schools, enabling pupils to participate in competitive football games. A game of indoor hockey at lunchtime was severely restricted by the very small size of the gymnasium – three-a-side results in overcrowding. The school has applied for planning permission to improve the physical education facilities for indoor teaching. There has, however, been no change as yet to the facilities since the previous inspection. Improvement is therefore unsatisfactory.
93. Leadership and management of games, athletic activities and extra-curricular sport are good. The teaching of the optional outdoor pursuits is very effective, promoting pupils' personal and physical skills very well but long- and medium-term planning for this programme, which also includes activities such as caving and climbing, is unsatisfactory. The school does not provide each pupil with an overall physical education/outdoor education programme that is tailored to develop their individual physical and personal development needs. Not all of the boys have learned to swim, for example, but swimming is only provided as an extra-curricular activity and is therefore optional.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision, including the quality of teaching, is good. Consequently, in Years 6 to 11, pupils of all abilities achieve well.

Key strengths

- Pupils make especially good progress in their ability to discuss religious issues.
- They learn from religion, as well as about it, considering difficult and sensitive areas.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development and their knowledge of citizenship.

Areas for improvement

- Not enough time is allowed for pupils to study faiths other than Christianity.

pupils' interest and widens their understanding. Discussions are very well managed. Questions are adapted or repeated to ensure that pupils of all abilities understand what is meant. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and each other and, even when they are keen to contribute, they take turns sensibly. They are challenged to explain their views and to recognise that sometimes these are contradictory. For example, one boy stated that he celebrated Christmas but did not believe that Jesus lived.

95. Years 6 to 9 pupils learn about the early days of the Christian church and how Christianity came to Britain through the work of missionaries such as St Columba and St Augustine. They consider the everyday implications of living by Christian beliefs and values, including being helpful and kind. They have a growing appreciation of the need for rules and laws and recognise that apparently similar crimes vary in severity and in their impact on victims and perpetrators. Considering such issues contributes very well to pupils' knowledge of citizenship. The very good relationships between staff and pupils enable the boys to express their ideas honestly, without any concerns about failure or criticism.
96. Good progress continues in Years 10 and 11, when pupils are encouraged to explore ideas and express opinions on complex issues. This was seen when they considered the dilemma faced by Henry VIII in choosing between his need for a son and the demands of church law in relation to divorce, leading to the split from the Roman Catholic church and the formation of many Protestant branches. Pupils extend their understanding of the different Christian churches through visits to church buildings in the area. They handle artefacts, such as rosary beads and a St Bridget's cross, respectfully. Pupils know that there are other major world faiths and that, for instance, the Qur'an is a holy book in Islam just as the Bible is in Christianity. However, insufficient attention is paid overall to the study of faiths other than Christianity and this restricts pupils' preparation for life in a multicultural society.
97. The subject is well led and managed. The school benefits from the co-ordinator's subject expertise, particularly in relation to the Christian elements of the programme of work. The good provision identified during the previous inspection has been well maintained. Assessment procedures are being further developed. The programme of work meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Information and communication technology is used well to create visual images of, for example, church buildings and different crosses, and for wordprocessing. Religious education is effectively promoted during whole-school assemblies, which provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on aspects of Christian beliefs and values. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and a satisfactory contribution to their cultural development.