

INSPECTION REPORT

CROSTHWAITE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crosthwaite, Kendal

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112317

Headteacher: Miss P Warren

Lead inspector: Mr David Carrington

Dates of inspection: 1st – 2nd March 2004

Inspection number: 255931

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	36
School address:	Crosthwaite Kendal Cumbria
Postcode:	LA8 8HT
Telephone number:	01539 568471
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Matthews
Date of previous inspection:	15 th April 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Crosthwaite Church of England Primary School is a small village school located about six miles south east of Windermere in Cumbria. The 22 boys and 14 girls live in Crosthwaite and the surrounding parish. Children have broadly average levels of skill and knowledge when they start school. All pupils speak English as their first language. There is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high proportion of pupils with statements. These statements are for emotional and behavioural needs and autism. There is an average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school is registered for out-of-school provision of twenty hours per week. It is part of the *Windermere Consortium* and the *Small Schools Collaborative Group*; the school was awarded the *Football Charter Mark* in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15414	Mr David Carrington	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education and special educational needs.
9188	Mrs Jane McHugh	Lay inspector	
30144	Mr Edgar Hastings	Team inspector	English, art and design, design and technology, music, areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage and English as an additional language.

The inspection contractor was:

TRIO INSPECTIONS LTD
 University of Warwick Science Park
 Unit 2
 Barclays Venture Centre
 Sir William Lyons Road
 Coventry
 CV4 7EZ

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Crosthwaite Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School provides a **sound** education for its pupils. During the last two years there have been significant changes in the leadership of the school which have resulted in a much more effective education for the pupils. The new headteacher is leading the school with very clear aims and has already made substantial changes to teaching and learning and the curriculum in order to raise standards and boost achievement. In this work she has built on the good foundations set by the acting headteacher who was responsible for the school between June 2002 and December 2003. The school no longer has the serious weaknesses identified in April 2002 and the quality of education is satisfactory, standards are average and pupils achieve soundly. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The school gives **satisfactory** value for money and has good capacity to sustain improvements.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards have been improved well since the previous inspection and are now average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory through the school.
- Pupils' attitudes are good, they behave well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The headteacher gives a strong steer to the school and has very clear priorities for improvement. The school is governed effectively and management processes work well.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and there are strengths in these aspects.
- The quality of learning could be improved. In particular, the learning of some boys, the fostering of independence and responsibility in pupils' work and the self-assessment of achievement by pupils require strengthening.
- Pupils are well looked after and are safe and secure in school.
- Procedures for assessment, target setting and tracking and monitoring and evaluation are not consistent or rigorous enough.
- The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and for children in the reception year is good.
- The school works well with parents, the community and other schools and colleges to enhance the quality of learning.

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in April 2002 and the serious weaknesses identified then in standards, teaching and leadership and management have been eliminated. There is now satisfactory provision for all pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Caution has to be taken when interpreting the results in school because of the small number of pupils in each year group. The variations from year-to-year in standards are often because just one pupil did or did not reach a particular level. The 2003 SATs¹ results in Year 2 were below the national average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. As shown in the table below, standards in Year 6 last year were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Boys have frequently achieved less well than girls in the past, often to a greater degree than found nationally. The rate of improvement to standards has been broadly similar to the national trend since 1999.

¹ Standardised Assessment Tests

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	D	E	E
Mathematics	E	A	D	D
Science	E	A	D	D

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2

Overall, achievement is **satisfactory**.

- Children in reception started with average attainment and are achieving well. They are likely to reach their targets before the end of the school year.
- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily too. Standards vary from year to year because of the different background of pupils in each class. Standards are average overall in Year 6.
- Attendance levels are very good, and pupils are punctual for school. Pupils show good interest in their work, they behave well, relationships are good and they develop as mature and sensible learners.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**.

- Teaching quality is **satisfactory**, though there are strengths. Teaching during the inspection was good overall. However, in the longer term, as shown by the scrutiny of work, it has been satisfactory. The effective use of resources, insistence on high standards of behaviour and the contribution of teaching assistants are strengths. The pace of a few lessons and expectations of some pupils require improvement.
- Pupils learn soundly. They are well motivated and work productively. Pupils could be given more opportunities to work independently and collaboratively on research, investigation and problem solving tasks. Some boys can be restless in lessons, though the staff deal soundly with this.
- Assessment is satisfactory. The school has sound systems of assessment for English and mathematics and for children in reception, but improvement is needed in other subjects. Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to evaluate for themselves what they have learned.
- The curriculum is satisfactory. The aspects of investigation and problem solving especially in mathematics and science require further development. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through visits, visitors and extra curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is a good partnership with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. This benefits the pupils well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership, management and governance is **good**.

- The headteacher provides effective leadership and has very good understanding of what needs improvement.
- The school is well governed. The governors have good understanding of the school's performance and ensure that it follows the principles of best value well.
- School self-evaluation and monitoring systems and the target setting and tracking process require strengthening.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold positive views of the school.

Parents welcome the small size of the school and its family, Christian traditions. Behaviour, the information provided about progress and homework are of some concern to parents. The inspection team judges that behaviour is good and homework and the information provided are of satisfactory quality. The pupils like their school and are keen to share their views with visitors. The school takes their opinions seriously and works to take them into account when making changes and improvements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Continue to raise standards.
- Work to enhance the systems of assessment, target setting and tracking and monitoring and evaluation to ensure all pupils achieve as well as possible.
- Further develop learning to make sure boys are as well motivated as the girls at all times, there is enough time for pupils to self evaluate their work, and independence and collaboration are promoted through more investigation, problem solving and research, especially in mathematics, science and ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **average** and achievement is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made good improvement to standards and achievement.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are average in Year 6.
- Standards are also average in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Year 2.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory through the school.
- Children in reception started with average attainment and are achieving well. They are likely to reach their targets before the end of the school year.
- Boys have frequently achieved less well than girls in the national tests, often to a greater degree than found nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve steadily.

Commentary

1. Caution. It is important to remember that the small number of pupils in each year group in school may mean that the broad evaluation of standards is misleading. This is because one more or one less pupil achieving a given level will have a profound impact on the results for that year group.
2. The school has made good improvement to standards and achievement since its previous inspection. This has been the result of higher expectations, more detailed analysis of school performance and improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching. The former acting headteacher moved all these things ahead well. The current headteacher has built well on the secure improvement that she inherited. All the staff and the governors are committed to continual improvement and are working effectively to ensure pupils do as well as they are capable.
3. In Year 2 last year, results in the SATs² were below average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. This is summarised in the table below. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was above average in reading and mathematics but well below average in writing. There was significant difference in the attainment of boys in reading and writing compared to girls in 2003. The boys under performed, though the trend was similar to national picture. The trend overall in improvement to standards in Year 2 from 1999 to 2003 was similar to the national picture. This year, standards are average in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Year 2.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (19.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 6 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

² Standardised Assessment Tests

4. Standards in Year 6 last year were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The next table shows this data. The proportion achieving the higher level 5 was above average in mathematics, average in science and below average in English. Year 6 boys have frequently achieved less well in the SATs than girls in the past, often to a greater degree than found nationally. The rate of improvement to standards has been broadly similar to the national trend since 1999. However, the value added to pupils' attainment between the Year 2 SATs and those in Year 6 has been well below average. This year, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are average in Year 6.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.4 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.5 (29.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.1 (30.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. In general, pupils' achievement is satisfactory through the school. This year, the children in reception started with average levels of attainment and are achieving well. They are likely to reach the targets in their six areas of learning before the end of the school year. Provision for reception aged pupils is good and support is well focused on their needs. This enables them to settle quickly in school and to build skills and knowledge effectively.
6. As indicated above, boys have frequently achieved less well in the SATs than girls in the past, often to a greater degree than found nationally. During the inspection, boys were sometimes observed to find concentration and listening harder than the girls. One or two boys are also more prone to talk out-of-turn. The learning of these boys is clearly more successful when the work is practical or individually, rather than class, focused.
7. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is well tailored to their individual education plans and teaching assistants do a good job in helping these pupils to achieve steadily. At present, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the mixed age Year 3/4 class is high. Most of these needs are for learning difficulties and this is impacting on the overall standards in the class. However, these pupils are building knowledge and skills as soundly as the other pupils in the class.
8. The challenge provided for higher attaining pupils is appropriate and this enables them to achieve satisfactorily. In science, geography and history there is an over-use of worksheets, which has the effect of capping achievement as the higher attaining pupils have to conform to the same work and ways of presenting it as the other pupils. There are, at present, no formal procedures to identify gifted and talented pupils.
9. Middle attaining pupils also achieve soundly. In English and mathematics the work set is rather different for each attainment group, though the theme is the same. This is successful in ensuring a closer match of work to need and ensures that middle achievers are not overlooked in the provision of appropriately focused work.
10. In order to continue to raise standards and boost achievement, there is now a need for the school to enhance the systems of assessment, target setting and tracking and monitoring and evaluation. This is a key issue arising from this inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal qualities are all **good**. Attendance is **above average**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance levels are very good, and pupils arrive punctually for school.
- Pupils show good interest in their work, they behave well, relationships are good.
- They develop as mature and sensible learners.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- The personal, social and emotional development of children in reception is good.

Commentary

11. Attendance is well above the national average, as shown in the following table. There is little unauthorised absence and pupils arrive punctually for school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.1	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

12. Behaviour has been improved well since the previous inspection. There are much firmer expectations of behaviour and most pupils know and abide by these. Whilst the behaviour of a few pupils is occasionally less good than expected, staff are insistent on good standards of conduct and give clear and effective messages about this to the pupils. Thus, the overall standard of behaviour is good. This applies to lessons and other times of day; it also applies to outside as well as in school. For example, lunch times are pleasant occasions when pupils mix well and behave responsibly. There have been no exclusions from school in the last year.
13. Pupils are interested in their work. Most try hard and work productively. Concentration is often good and pupils' listening skills are well developed in the main. As indicated in the previous section, there are occasions when some boys are not as attentive, but the frequency of this is clearly much less than was the case formerly. When talking to inspectors, the pupils said they enjoyed coming to school and that the work was interesting and often fun.
14. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is of good quality. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered well. Assemblies are a time of reflection. During the inspection, the school was presented by the church congregation with a wooden cross to serve as the focus for worship. This was set beside a large pot of daffodils and both were admired by the pupils for their simplicity and beauty. Pupils were seen to show awe during the second assembly observed, when the headteacher showed a collection of fossils and rocks.
15. Moral development is also good. As discussed above, behaviour has improved well. There is a good system of rewards that focus on the development of a good personal moral code. Achievement is celebrated well and pupils know right from wrong. There is good companionship in the playground that enables pupils to support those in need and the small size of the school is an advantage in that older pupils know the younger ones and look out for their needs well. This assists the process of building skills in personal, social and emotional

aspects for reception children. Provision in this area is good and the children meet their targets quickly.

16. The school develops pupils' social skills well. Relationships with adults and other pupils are good and this enables them all to work well together. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility for their own work and to collaborate when required. Opportunities for these things could be extended, particularly through additional provision for research, problem solving and investigation work. However, most pupils develop as mature and sensible learners, regardless of academic background.
17. Cultural development is well advanced through links with parents, the community and other schools. There is some fine artwork on display about the school and pupils have good opportunities to celebrate the work of artists, musicians and writers from western and other cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, as are assessment and the curriculum. Enrichment activities are effective in improving provision for the pupils. Care, health and welfare for pupils are good and there is a good partnership with parents, the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Recent improvements to teaching are evident. There are strengths in both teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching quality is satisfactory. Teaching during the inspection was good overall. However, over the longer term, as shown by the scrutiny of work, it has been satisfactory.
- Pupils learn soundly. They are well motivated and work productively.
- Assessment is satisfactory. The school has sound systems of assessment for English and mathematics but improvement is needed in other subjects.
- The effective use of resources, insistence on high standards of behaviour and the contribution of teaching assistants are strengths.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.
- Teaching is good for children in reception.
- The pace of a few lessons and expectations of some pupils require improvement.
- Pupils could be given more opportunities to work independently and collaboratively on research, investigation and problem solving tasks.
- Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to self-evaluate what they have learned.

Commentary

18. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. It has been improved well since the previous inspection and there are some important strengths. As the following table shows, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed this time, which is different from 2002, when there was a high proportion of weak teaching. The amount of teaching that is good has also risen over this period:

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	17	7	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

19. During the two days of the inspection, teaching was of good quality. The evidence from pupils' past work shows the quality to be satisfactory over the longer term. The over-use of worksheets and completion of work that is exactly the same for every pupil, regardless of academic background are two areas that need improvement on the evidence of the scrutiny. The pace of some teaching and the expectations of work and effort were not consistently good enough in some of the lessons observed.
20. The effective use of resources is a strength. In particular, ICT is well used to strengthen the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and art and design. Another strength is teachers' and teaching assistants' insistence on good behaviour. Their work with pupils with emotional and behavioural needs, as part of their special educational needs is particularly effective. Thirdly, the overall contribution of teaching assistants is good. This is an essential part of the good teaching for children in reception and for pupils with special educational needs.
21. Learning is satisfactory. The pupils work hard, complete the work set and generally, presentation is neat. They are able to take responsibility for their own learning and to work collaboratively when asked. However, opportunities to develop such skills could be enhanced through the provision of more research, problem solving and investigation work in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
22. Assessment procedures have been strengthened well since the previous inspection. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics, where there are some effective assessment procedures. The assessment of children in reception and of pupils with special educational need is also good. Assessment is currently being improved in science and the next focus for improvement is ICT. Assessment in other subjects is not yet rigorous or consistent enough.
23. One key area for improvement to assessment concerns the opportunities pupils are given to take stock of their own learning. Rarely did pupils have time in lessons to evaluate their own learning, even though the aims for this had been shared clearly at the start of the session. Some marking identifies the critical next steps in learning for individual pupils, but this practice is not consistent. Pupils have individual target books in the junior class, which they review every half term. This is a useful introduction though the practice is not consistent through the school.
24. The improvement to teaching, and hence to learning, is one of the main reasons why serious weaknesses have been eliminated in school. School managers recognise that to maintain this advance, the focus has now to be more on learning than teaching.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory**, broad and balanced curriculum that is enriched by a **good** range of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Curriculum development is good.
- The school provides well for learning outside the school day, and for participation in the arts and sport.
- There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum.

Commentary

25. The school teaches all the subjects of the national curriculum, and religious education. The national strategies of literacy and numeracy have been implemented and are enabling most pupils to attain standards in line with the national average. Writing, although improving, continues to be an area for improvement. The provision for lower attaining pupils is met well through the use of additional literacy work. Since the previous inspection good attention has been paid to the key issues for the improvement of speaking and listening skills, standards in ICT, art and design and music. The school library has recently been reorganised into a functional learning centre to enable pupils to use it for browsing and to carry out independent research. The aspects of investigation and problem solving especially in mathematics and science require further development. Physical education provision is good despite the lack of indoor facilities within the school building. Gymnastics and dance are taught in the village hall. Achievement of the FA Charter Mark has had a positive effect upon standards in games. Good provision in swimming ensures all pupils reach the required standard. The curriculum for pupils in the reception class meets their needs and covers appropriately the six areas of learning.
26. The curriculum is beginning to be organised in a more innovative way so that clear links can be made between subjects through a more cross-curricular approach. Planning tends to be carried out separately for reception in literacy and numeracy, but linked with Year 1 and Year 2 for all other subject areas. For the juniors, planning in most of the non-core subjects is over a four-year cycle to take account of the mixed age classes. ICT is used well to support other curriculum areas in a variety of ways. A suitable programme of personal social and health education is in place. Currently, the school is focusing on a healthy eating initiative.
27. There is a good programme of extra curricular activities that successfully adds breadth and enrichment to the curriculum, through activities including the arts, music and sport. Visitors talk to pupils on a range of subjects including puppet making, Antarctica and energy sources. Pupils visit Abbot Hall art gallery to see the paintings of Graham Sutherland, and then take part in workshop activities, which effectively increases their cultural awareness as well as their art and design skills. A regular programme of homework supports learning well, by linking in with class work, and is well supported by parents.
28. There is a good match of teachers to support the curriculum, with a very favourable ratio of teachers to pupils enabling small class sizes for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The support assistants have particular skills in supporting pupils with special educational needs, and the children aged under five. There is adequate provision of resources to support the teaching of the curriculum. The accommodation, although it lacks a main hall space, is adequate for the number of pupils currently on roll. The outdoor environment is good, and offers a range of areas for pupils to play and engage in sporting activities, including a grassed area, an adventure playground and a wildlife area.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. They receive **good** support, advice and guidance on an individual basis within a supportive ethos.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a caring and supportive ethos for all pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and with staff are good.
- There is good support for pupils with additional educational needs.

Commentary

29. Relationships in the school are good. This is a happy, caring community in which pupils trust staff and enjoy a rapport, which is friendly, and for most of the time respectful. Pupils at this school have a very high level of confidence and self esteem which occasionally can lead to "overstepping" the mark by their insistence on having the last word. Staff deal with such behaviour in a calm and consistent way setting clear guidelines of appropriate behaviour expected at school.
30. Arrangements for child protection, and other aspects of care, are good although there is no appropriate place for the treatment of ill or injured children. Shortcomings in the school's health and safety systems, at the time of the last inspection, have been rectified with risk assessments regularly done for all activities and visits that pupils participate in.
31. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support. Since January these pupils are regularly taught in small groups withdrawn from the class. This has assisted greatly the process of meeting their needs, particularly for pupils with social, emotional or behavioural needs. The teaching assistants give good counsel to their pupils and this enables them to make steady progress in their work. Relationships are good in these sessions and the pupils work hard.
32. When talking to inspectors the pupils said that they are in no doubt that there is an adult in school they can talk to if they have a problem or are worried about anything. Pupils spoken to feel confident this helps the school to deal effectively with individual cases of bullying which, they say, are extremely rare. Younger pupils emphasise the help and care given to them by all staff and older pupils. This family ethos plays a key role in the care system.
33. Staff and pupils, in this small school, constantly talk with each other and pupils are responsible for writing positive comments about other pupils on a wall chart for the "star of the week" and decide which charities should benefit from their fundraising efforts. Pupils are confident that their suggestions are shared with staff, listened to and, if appropriate, acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold positive views of the school.
- Links with other schools and the community support pupils' learning well.
- Opportunities to seek the views of parents are taken informally but are insufficiently wide-ranging or systematic.
- Information parents receive about their child's progress is satisfactory overall, although the quality varies between classes.

Commentary

34. Pupils and parents are satisfied with their school, and consider it to be a happy and caring community. The partnership between school and home helps maintain the schools standards of behaviour and high expectations of pupils' achievements.
35. Parental support is readily given in a variety of ways, with good attendance at parents' evenings and events hosted by the school in the local community hall. Parents receive a satisfactory amount of helpful information through regular newsletters and a governors' annual report. A recently developed information leaflet aimed at parents of pupils joining the school is good, attractively presented and gives just the right information parents need.
36. In the pre inspection questionnaire to parents they did indicate they would like communications with school to be improved. Although there is no formal system for eliciting parents' opinion or suggestions, verbal communication with parents is good. Parents have daily opportunities to speak to staff about issues that may be causing them concern. The heavy teaching commitment of staff means there is no one to answer the telephone or deal with parents that may turn up during the day; the procedure is well established with few phone calls being received during teaching hours. Written reports about pupils' progress are satisfactory overall and fulfil legal requirements but vary in quality between classes and year groups. They are good at telling parents what pupils have covered during the year but not all subject reports clearly tell parents what their pupil can understand and do, where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie, how they can improve in that subject or whether their progress is sufficient.
37. Good links with the local community and other schools broaden pupils' learning experience well. Every opportunity to benefit from contact with other schools and community groups is taken, for example, the *Lakes Ensemble* visit enabled pupils to see and hear at first hand the instruments and music involved in Roma culture; pupils regularly raise funds for children's charities, helping to develop an awareness of other children not so fortunate as themselves.
38. These strong and wide ranging links, together with the good array of trips and visits that take place, are of mutual benefit in all areas of the curriculum and contribute positively to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are now **good** overall. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. The governance of the school is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management have overcome the weaknesses identified at the last inspection.
- There is strong commitment to improvement by the school's leaders.
- There is good leadership of the curriculum.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluation are not yet securely in place.
- Senior staff are good role models for other staff and pupils.
- Governance is good.

Commentary

39. Due to efforts of the previous acting headteacher, the governors and the newly appointed headteacher leadership and management are no longer areas for concern, as the weaknesses previously identified have now been eliminated. All have shown their unified commitment towards school improvement, and have given the school clear direction through its action plan and school development plan. The new headteacher has since made a number of changes to promote effectiveness, and has built upon the good teamwork that exists between all staff. She has a clear view of where she wants the school to be in the future, and what needs to be done to raise standards. She is fully supported by the hard working staff, both teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and governors.
40. The headteacher effectively manages to juxtapose an almost full time teaching commitment with her leadership and management roles. She does this effectively, and shares some of the responsibilities through delegation to key staff. Initiatives for developing improvements in the curriculum currently are in the embryonic stage, but they indicate her intention to make learning more cohesive for pupils and to nurture an ethos where all pupils and their work are valued. There is good commitment to inclusion of all groups of pupils, and equality of opportunity. Both she and her senior staff provide good role models for other staff and pupils through the good quality of their teaching and their high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour.
41. The school is well managed. Systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress through target setting, tracking and assessment, although developing well, are not yet at the stage where they are having a full impact upon standards of attainment. The use and analysis of performance data is planned as part of this process. There are informal procedures for monitoring teaching and learning, and these are being used satisfactorily to provide appropriate support where it is needed using the performance management model. Some effective professional development opportunities have been identified as a consequence and include both teaching and non-teaching staff. Performance management arrangements are already planned into the school calendar. The school development plan is in place and is being used as a working document to focus on school improvements. Good deployment of staff ensures best use is made of staff abilities so that pupils' needs are being met in the drive to raise standards.
42. The governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well, and have been very supportive through the difficult times over the last few years. They have contributed to the School Improvement Plan that has been instrumental in addressing the key issues of the previous inspection. Governors understand the areas that need improvement and are influential in pursuing these. They have monitored behaviour and report it, accurately, as improving. They now see the stability of staffing and the impact of the headteacher as strengths to build on in the future. Each governor has a curriculum responsibility and so they are well informed about curriculum matters. There are good procedures in place to ensure that best value principles are applied throughout the school, and much of the credit for this can be attributed to the governors.
43. The school handles its delegated funding efficiently. Financial procedures are well managed and in place. The school has made the necessary improvements to eliminate its serious weaknesses and now provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	153 543
Total expenditure	148 016
Expenditure per pupil	3 216

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	4 005
Balance carried forward to the next	1 522

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Provision for the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is good. Children start in the reception class in the September before they are five. Their attainment on entry to school is broadly average. As there is only a very small number of children admitted each year they are taught as a single group in the mornings and most afternoons join with Year 1 and Year 2. They achieve well because the teaching is good, and the curriculum offers a broad range of experiences that are well matched to their needs. Their progress is carefully monitored.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because of the good teaching, and are in line to achieve the early learning goals before the end of the year.
- The children are well supported, feel secure and are confident.
- The opportunity to interact with other children in the school increases their social awareness and independence.

Commentary

45. The children join with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils at the start of each session, and participate in the sharing of news. This helps to build their confidence and self esteem well. They are familiar with the daily routines, and know, for example, that they must hang their coats up on arrival and when they have been outside for physical activities. For assemblies they line up with the other children and sit quietly, listen and participate. Children collaborate well and take turns in a range of activities and when using the computer. Relationships are good and they mix happily with their peers. At the end of activities they join in tidying up and putting equipment away.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good speaking and listening skills.
- Good teaching is ensuring children's knowledge of letters and sounds is developing well.
- Good opportunities are provided to develop children's English skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

46. When the children enter school their speaking and listening skills are at average level. Teachers and teaching assistants use every opportunity to engage them in conversation, and to develop their skills through imaginative games and role-play. The children are very confident and discuss how it feels to squeeze and press when they put their hands in the 'sludge tub'. There is good support of language development through the singing of rhymes and songs. Basic literacy skills are taught systematically through the use of interesting resources and enjoyable games. In this way, good progress is made in the learning of initial sounds, and through careful listening they can identify simple rhyming words e.g. car/star, frog/log, etc. Children share books with the teaching assistant, listen carefully and show interest. The assistant makes the story interesting, and the children join in with making the sounds of the animals and pointing to key words in the text. Writing skills are at an early stage, but the

children can write their names and other letters with confidence. Evidence of their achievement indicates that they will all reach the early learning goals before the end of the school year.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show confidence in their knowledge of number and counting skills.
- Good progress is made in this area of learning.
- Teaching of number skills is good.

Commentary

47. Children have sound understanding of number and are starting to use these skills in everyday situations. All can count to ten fluently and with confidence. They are able to count on and backwards from a given number, and recognise the numerals as well as the value of the dots on dice. When using numbered mats in the playground, children show clear understanding of the use of positional language, 'before, after, more than, less than,' and respond to instructions appropriately. They have a good awareness of the sequence of numbers to twenty and can join them accurately in dot-to-dot activities. It is likely that they will have achieved the early learning goals before entry to Year 1, and may well have exceeded them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development

There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on how well children are achieving in these areas of learning, but a scrutiny of planning and photographic evidence indicates that it is likely that provision is soundly based.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A detailed programme for each area of learning is provided to make learning enjoyable.

Commentary

48. Through the range of activities provided, children have appropriate chances to mix with their older peers, to explore their work, and to talk about it. They enjoy the activities and participating in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world, whether looking at maps to find the country of origin of the teacher's bag of groceries, or squeezing an ice cube to see how it might change. In the outdoor area children follow instructions to travel in different ways around the adventure playground in an enjoyable manner. The teaching assistant engages them in imaginary play and creative development and the climbing frame becomes a pirate ship surrounded by sharks. The children become fully involved and respond well thinking of imaginative ways of developing the story that clearly demonstrated their enjoyment in learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English have improved since the last inspection, especially in writing.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils have good oral language skills.
- Teaching quality is satisfactory overall but has some strengths.
- Target setting and tracking processes require strengthening.
- Leadership and management are helping to improve standards.

Commentary

49. The school leaders have worked hard since the previous inspection to bring about improvement. Rightly, the focus has been on the development of writing, and on presentation skills. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that there has been some success, and standards in both reading and writing are now judged to be average by Year 2 and by Year 6. This represents good improvement in writing. Overall, achievement in English is satisfactory when compared with pupils' broadly average attainment levels on entry. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they also achieve at a satisfactory level.
50. Overall standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils are confident speakers who can express their points of view on current issues of concern to them including aspects of protecting the environment. They can put forward their opinion and ideas orally and this helps them in their writing. Good opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs to engage in structured speaking and listening activities and to learn the conventions of being a good listener.
51. Reading standards by Year 2 are average overall. By Year 6 standards are also average overall but with a small number of pupils reading at an above average level. In general, pupils read expressively, pay good attention to punctuation and show good understanding of the text. Year 6 pupils read a wide range of contemporary literature including some classic novels. Pupils are familiar with the use of the library for research purposes, although they have limited opportunities carry out any independent research. Writing standards are also average by Year 2 and Year 6. This represents some improvement since the previous inspection. The school has worked hard to bring about this rise in standards. In Year 6 pupils express ideas clearly and in a lively way, and write for a wide range of audiences. Handwriting is joined and of a fluent legible style. Punctuation is used accurately in most cases.
52. Teaching quality is satisfactory, though there are strengths. Teaching during the inspection was good overall. However, in the longer term, as shown by the scrutiny of work, it has been satisfactory. The effective use of resources, insistence on high standards of behaviour and the contribution of teaching assistants are strengths. ICT is used effectively to support reading and writing. The pace of a few lessons and expectations of higher attaining pupils require improvement. Pupils learn soundly. They are well motivated and work productively. Pupils could be given more opportunities to work independently and collaboratively on research activities. Assessment is satisfactory although target setting and tracking procedures are not yet strong enough.
53. The subject leaders have been influential in raising standards in English and are ensuring through their planning to aim to raise standards further. The systematic monitoring of planning

is not yet fully developed, but good teamwork exists. The library is being developed so that pupils will have access to it as a learning centre.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Speaking and listening skills are effectively developed in other subjects. While writing skills are soundly developed, some opportunities are missed for more extended writing in science, geography and history because of the extensive use of worksheets. ICT is used regularly to support English and this is impacting well on the improvement of skills and knowledge.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory.
- Mathematics is well led and managed and provision has been improved well.
- Provision for numeracy is good.
- There is some good use of ICT in mathematics.
- Target setting and tracking require improvement.
- Problem solving and investigation work in mathematics are not consistent.

Commentary

55. Last year's Year 2 SATs results were well above average in mathematics. However, they were below average in Year 6. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels 3 and 5 in the SATs was above average in 2003. The difference between the overall result in Year 2 and that in Year 6 was due to the different make-up of the two year groups. Since each year group has few pupils, overall results can, and do, vary from year to year. Thus, this year, standards are average in mathematics in Years 2 and 6, but below average in Years 3 and 4, because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. In the main, all pupils are achieving satisfactorily, in that they are building skills, knowledge and understanding at the expected rate.
56. Mathematics is taught soundly. As in other subjects, the quality of teaching was good during the inspection but the evidence from pupils' past work shows it to be satisfactory over time. Planning is satisfactory, as is the pace of work. Whilst expectations have improved much since the previous inspection, there is still work to do to ensure that they are consistent. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in mathematics is a strength as the work is firmly focused on their individual learning targets. The insistence on good behaviour, expertise of staff, especially in the teaching of numeracy, and the reinforcement of knowledge and skills are all good.
57. The curriculum for mathematics is satisfactory. There are good links to ICT and mathematics skills and knowledge are well promoted across the curriculum. Work on investigations and problem solving could be strengthened. Most of the work is currently focused on numeracy, measures and data handling, but the sometimes heavy use of worksheets restricts the development of skills of independent work that enhances pupils' initiative. This is especially the case for higher attaining pupils.
58. Assessment has been developed well so far in mathematics. The school uses a range of assessment material to gauge the performance of the pupils. The resulting data is recorded in detail and evaluated to show how well the pupils have worked. The setting of targets and sharing them with pupils is less well developed. A start was made to this for some pupils at the beginning of the school year but the initiative has fizzled out. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils in some lessons but the review and evaluation of learning could be more

frequent. The headteacher recognises that target setting and tracking is a key issue for improvement in mathematics.

59. Mathematics is a well led and managed subject. The improvement over the last two years is clear testament to this. There is good understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and work to maintain improvement is effectively shared between all the staff.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. The links between mathematics and other subjects are often good, such as in science where pupils represent their data in graphical and tabular formats. Measurement skills are promoted well in science, and also in design and technology. The links between mathematics and ICT have been improved with the provision of additional and enhanced technology. During the inspection, pupils began work on a new interactive program to help them learn the complex skills of angle measurement with a protractor. They were enthusiastic to do this, and the ICT made a good contribution to the effective learning and good achievement in the lesson.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory.
- Science is well led and managed and improvement has been effective since 2002.
- Good links with the community, especially industry and technology, enhance the curriculum well.
- Assessment and target setting and tracking are not fully developed and are inconsistent.
- Opportunities for investigation and problem solving in science are inconsistent.

Commentary

61. Provision in science is satisfactory overall. There are aspects where improvement has been good since the previous inspection in 2002 but there remain some areas for further improvement. Standards are average in Years 2 and 6 and achievement is satisfactory through the school.
62. The curriculum for science has improved well. It is well planned and covers the different aspects of science effectively. There is some good enrichment of science, for example from the science week activities and involvement of visitors from industry and technology. However, in one key area, improvement is required. Some good practical investigation and problem solving activities were observed during the inspection, but provision in this area is inconsistent and there has been an over-use of worksheets that has discouraged the maximum development of independence, responsibility and collaboration in learning. Year 6 pupils were seen to undertake an enthusiastic investigation of different rocks and Year 2 pupils were observed as they set up an investigation into the changing state of water, chocolate and marshmallow depending on the surrounding temperature. In both these examples, pupils suggested how the investigation could be constructed, they predicted what might happen and they checked the results carefully. The older pupils made careful observational drawings of each sample and began to research and write-up the origins and location of their rocks.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have appropriate subject expertise, planning is sound and the insistence on good behaviour is effective. Teaching assistants work well with their groups, as observed in the Class 1 lesson where the reception children and Year 1 pupils worked with the assistant as the Year 2 pupils worked with the teacher. This sort of collaboration between staff is a strength of science.

64. Assessment is another aspect for improvement. Work to introduce a systematic procedure for assessment in science has been started, though later than for English and mathematics and so assessment procedures are more dependent on individual teachers than they are based on a standard approach. Target setting and tracking also requires development. The marking of work flags where improvement is required on some occasions but not others. Pupils' self-assessment of their progress is not as frequent as it could be.
65. Science is well led and managed and performance in the subject is well known to staff. There are good prospects for further improvement to the subject because of the commitment, hard work and higher expectations of all staff.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average and achievement satisfactory.
- Leadership and management of ICT are good.
- Resources have been improved well.
- Assessment is not rigorous enough and is inconsistent.
- The cross-curricular use of ICT is improving well.

Commentary

66. During the inspection, no lessons in ICT were observed, though there was ample opportunity to see ICT used across the curriculum. It is evident from such observations, but also from the scrutiny of pupils' past work, that there is a well planned curriculum for ICT, that resources have been improved well and that skills and knowledge are built successfully. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are average and it is clear that as the subject is improved further, there is potential for them to rise. In some work, such as the use of spreadsheets, standards attained are above average. Overall, achievement is satisfactory through the school.
67. ICT is a well led and managed subject. There is firm commitment to improvement and all staff work hard to use ICT to advance standards in other subjects. There is good, shared knowledge and understanding of the strengths and aspects for improvement. This has been channelled into the production of a clear plan of improvement for the subject. The school has sufficient resources to give appropriate learning experiences in all aspects of the subject and the recently purchased projector is being used well to teach skills and knowledge, as observed in the Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson on the measurement of angles.
68. Assessment remains an area for improvement. At present it is largely left to the individual teacher within general guidelines. The tracking of skills and knowledge development lacks rigour and consistency. There is however, strong commitment to make the necessary changes to produce an assessment system that contributes fully to the knowledge and understanding of pupils' achievement.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. As for other subjects, some good teaching was observed during the inspection. Over the longer term, teaching and learning have been satisfactory. Recent changes augur well for the future quality of education in ICT. The school has adopted a sensible course in focusing improvements on the cross curricular use of the technology.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The strength of ICT is the use of computers and other equipment in other subjects. Cross-curricular use is, therefore, good. Inspectors saw good use of computers in lessons and the work sample in English, mathematics, science, geography and history. Data handling, design and art work and the editing and improvement of writing are particularly successful uses of ICT that have a good impact on the development of skills and knowledge in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

71. Religious education will be inspected separately, as the school is voluntary aided. Inspectors saw insufficient evidence for history and geography to report on them fully.
72. In Year 2 in **geography**, teachers make good use of resources to relate grocery items to their countries of origin, and to determine the method of transport used to bring them to the United Kingdom. In other parts of the school good use is made of maps to develop pupils' knowledge of world geography. In **history**, the Year 3 to 6 pupils have studied the Tudors and they are familiar with some of the key events and people of that time and use dates accurately to show the chronology of the period. The curriculum for history and geography is satisfactory. There tends to be too much use of worksheets in some classes and this caps achievement, especially for higher attaining pupils, and does not encourage the development of independence and responsibility in learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Over the two days of the inspection, one lesson was observed in each of music and art and design. There were no lessons for **design and technology** or **physical education**. Planning and school timetables show that all of these subjects are taught regularly and that the curriculum for each is appropriate.
74. The **music** session observed for Years 3 to 6 was strongly linked to science and there were elements of design and technology. The pupils were reviewing work on sound completed previously in science and explaining the design and manufacture of their percussion instruments. The pupils sang well and clapped rhythms accurately. They talked knowledgeably about the different sounds made by drum membranes of different type. Singing in assembly is also tuneful and enjoyable. Pupils in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class also enjoyed singing rhymes and songs during the final session of Monday afternoon. Musicians from the county music service support the music curriculum effectively.
75. The **art and design** lesson observed focused on making and decorating elaborate headwear using a collage technique. Pupils produced some intricate designs using tones of colour effectively. Rolls of paper were used to make a strong framework 'cap' to support the headgear. Pupils' design and production skills were developed soundly and achievement was satisfactory in this lesson. It is evident from the displays of pupils' art and design work around the school that pupils are being provided with varied experiences using a range of different media. The sample of pupils' work shows appropriate development of skills and knowledge. This also shows some good cultural development and the programme of visits and visitors, such as that to the local art gallery to study the animal pictures of Graham Sutherland, make a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

76. Pupils' personal, social and health education is good. One lesson devoted to the personal development of pupils was observed during the inspection and other evidence of such work was seen during registration periods and assemblies. Pupils develop as mature and sensible

children who are confident and willing to work together and to talk to visitors. Relationships are good and pupils cooperate and collaborate effectively when given the opportunity. This is something the school could promote more. There is need to ensure that there is enough time for pupils to self evaluate their work, and to enhance independence and collaboration during investigation, problem solving and research work, especially in mathematics, science and ICT.

77. The observed lesson in Year 3 and 4, which was focused on social talk for pupils with special educational needs, was of good quality. The teaching assistant promoted skills and knowledge well because of her thorough explanations, careful questioning and provision of ample time for pupils to speak and listen to each other. There were good opportunities for pupils to take part in structured speaking activities and to learn the advantages of being a good listener and to take turns.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).