

INSPECTION REPORT

EGREMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wallasey

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105035

Headteacher: Mr G J Lester

Lead inspector: Mr S Bywater

Dates of inspection: 17th - 20th May 2004

Inspection number: 256042

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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 SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	435
School address:	Church Street Wallasey Merseyside
Postcode:	CH44 8AF
Telephone number:	0151 6385406
Fax number:	0151 6390122
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Owens
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large Primary School serves a catchment area of considerable social disadvantage in an urban community in the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral. There are 394 pupils on the full-time roll and a further 41 children attend part-time in the nursery. Children enter the nursery class with a very limited range of educational experiences and poorly developed skills, especially in their language, communication and literacy, numeracy and also in their personal, social and emotional skills. Analysis by the Basic Skills Agency shows that the children entering the school are in the lowest five per cent category in their literacy and numeracy skills which is clearly very low. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (58 per cent) is over three times the national average. There are around 20 pupils from ethnic minority groups and no pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. At the time of the inspection, there were 135 pupils with special educational needs - a proportion of pupils which is well above that found in most schools. The majority of these pupils have learning difficulties; a significant number have emotional and behavioural needs and a small number have physical and other needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational need; this is below the usual figure in this size of school. Pupils regularly join and leave school at various times throughout the year. Of the Year 6 group in 2003, less than half had been in the school in Year 1. The school holds Basic Skills Quality Mark awards, is part of Excellence in Cities and the ASPIRE Education Action Zone, is supported by Sure Start and Children's Fund initiatives and also involved in a Behaviour Improvement Programme.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Mr Steve Bywater	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Music
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
11368	Mrs Kate Lee	Lay inspector	
23375	Mr John Hicks	Team inspector	English
			History
			Geography
			Physical education
02041	Mrs Val Reid	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Science
			Religious education
			Art
			Design and technology

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited
 14 Enterprise House
 Kingsway
 Team Valley
 Gateshead
 Tyne & Wear
 NE11 0SR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. Teaching and learning are good and most pupils achieve satisfactorily from a very low base. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are well below the national expectations in English and mathematics but those pupils who can achieve well are helped to do so. Pupils are very well cared for. Most pupils behave well and relationships throughout the school are good. The school has good systems for ensuring that pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skill. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction. The school provides satisfactory value for money

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall but occasionally work is not well matched to pupils' needs.
- Children get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The headteacher is a good leader and is determined to raise standards.
- Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Attendance is well below the national average.
- The quality of care is very good.

The school has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection. The school successfully restructured the leadership and management roles and responsibilities, and this aspect is now good. Pupils are now encouraged to think for themselves, although this is sometimes difficult in those classes with a large number of pupils with behavioural difficulties. There is still improvement needed in standards in all subjects but generally, all pupils who want to succeed do so and the school works tirelessly to support and encourage a huge number of pupils who find learning difficult.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	B
mathematics	E	E	E	D
science	E	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well, as do pupils with special educational needs. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement has been hindered by staffing difficulties, mobility issues and poor attendance. The work seen during the inspection indicates that by the end of their time in the reception classes, despite good teaching, pupils are well below the standards expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They are below the levels expected in personal, social, emotional development and physical development. Standards are well below average in English and mathematics and below expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are hindered in ICT because building work has reduced their opportunities to use the computer suite, but also because the computers are now very slow and unreliable. In science, pupils achieve well and their standards are in line with national expectations.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and their moral development is very good. As a result, although

pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory, their behaviour and relationships are all good. They achieve satisfactorily in their personal development. Attendance is well below the national average and unsatisfactory, but most pupils are punctual to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching and learning are particularly effective in the nursery and reception classes and children achieve well. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage them very well. They help to raise pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. In Years 1 to 6, most pupils are keen to learn and are clear about what is expected of them. A good range of assessment strategies gives teachers a suitable overview of pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, but these procedures are not always effectively used to plan work which is suitably matched to different abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported very effectively. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but teachers do not always plan sufficient opportunities to develop writing, mathematics skills and ICT skills in other subjects. The school provides a suitable range of work for pupils and there are a number of interesting visits to support pupils' learning. A good range of clubs and activities are provided out of lesson time to extend the curriculum. Care and support are very good and pupils are actively involved in the school's work. Links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The leadership of other key staff is good. Supported by a dedicated and talented senior management team, the headteacher is a driving force within the school. He shares a clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations with all staff to ensure that the school develops and improves. Teams and procedures are well established. The overall management of the school is good. The work of the governing body is good. They support the school well and fully meet their statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents agree that the school provides very well for their children. Parents are pleased with the achievement of their children and feel they receive good information. Pupils have positive views about the school. They feel safe and cared for and speak enthusiastically about their teachers who help them to understand and learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by using assessments more carefully so that there is appropriate challenge in the work set for all pupils and consequently raise the attainment of pupils in English and mathematics.
- Raise standards in ICT by ensuring that equipment works effectively and by ensuring that teachers plan sufficient opportunities in all subjects to enable pupils to apply their skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Achievement in the nursery and reception classes is good. Standards of attainment in Years 2 and 6 are well below average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Compared to similar schools, the schools' results in 2003 for pupils in Years 2 and 6 were average.
- Standards are well below average in Years 2 and 6 in English and mathematics, mainly due to the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a positive start to learning for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and achieve well.
- Standards are adversely affected by a small, but significant group of pupils who have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties and a similar group who do not attend school often enough.
- Pupils achieve well to attain satisfactory standards in science in Year 6.
- Staff absence in recent years has adversely affected the pace of pupils learning in Years 3 to 5.

Commentary

1 Considering their backgrounds including the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and a high proportion of pupils on free school meals, most pupils achieve well from a very low base. However, a small group with poor attendance and a group of pupils who have joined Egremont from other schools do not. As a result, the schools results, compared to the national average are low.

2 Inspection evidence shows that children enter the nursery class with a very limited range of educational experiences and poorly developed skills, especially in their language, communication and literacy and also in their personal, social and emotional skills. Analysis by the Basic Skills Agency shows that the children entering the school are in the lowest five per cent category in their literacy and numeracy skills which is clearly very low. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because teaching is well planned and organised to give them a good range of practical and imaginative experiences. All ages and abilities are given equal opportunities to do as well as they can, and so they achieve well from their extremely low levels of attainment on entry. Nevertheless, by the end of reception, their attainment is well below what can be expected in their language, mathematical and creative development. Poor communication skills and lack of early experiences means they are also very unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. However, standards in reception are still below what is normally expected for their age.

3 In Years 2 and 6, standards are well below national expectations in English and mathematics but standards are in line with national expectations in science.

4 Overall pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. A large majority of pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. However, the big picture shows a small but significant minority do not achieve as well as expected and the careful tracking of pupils gives reasons for this.

5 In Years 3 to 6, teachers set pupils in groups based on their prior attainment. These groups are regularly reviewed and pupils move between groups. Although teachers set realistic and challenging targets for the 'average' pupils in these classes, a small but significant number of teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to provide interesting and

suitably demanding work for all abilities within the class. A few pupils find their literacy and numeracy work much too easy and others cannot cope. Achievement in Years 3 to 5 has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties over the past few years. Three classes have been taught for a whole year by a succession of temporary teachers as staff illnesses and capability issues have had to be dealt with. The school managed these difficulties as well as they could and have now appropriately employed additional staff in Years 3 and 5 in order to keep class sizes smaller and help teachers to focus more closely on individual pupils' needs. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.

6 Pupils' standards are seriously affected because a large proportion of pupils who have special educational needs for general learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attendance is also a problem and clearly pupils who fail to attend school find it difficult to achieve as well as regular attenders.

7 Pupils regularly join and leave school at various times throughout the year. This very high mobility presents the school with major challenges. Many of these pupils, who have experienced a disrupted education, need time to settle into a new school environment, are troubled by family tensions and tend to underachieve. Of the Year 6 group in 2003, less than half had been in the school in Year 1. It is the same picture in the current Year 5 group. Analysis shows that over a third of the new starters have special educational needs.

8 Currently in Years 1 and 2, most pupils achieve soundly although standards are well below national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. As the table below indicates, inspection judgements are similar to the school's results in last year's national tests for seven year-olds. However, when compared with similar schools pupils attained average results in 2003. Improvements in test results have been below the national trend because over the past two years, despite effective teaching pupils are entering the school with such very low skills.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.2 (14.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.7 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.6 (14.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 73 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

9 The 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6 (see table below) showed that overall standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. Over 50 per cent of pupils in Year 6 were on the school's list of pupils with special educational needs; a significant minority of these pupils achieved very well and attained the nationally expected levels for their age. An analysis of pupils' achievement also identified that 16 per cent of eleven year olds who did not achieve the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics had less than 80 per cent attendance. In mathematics, four pupils missed the expected level 4 by one mark! When compared with similar schools, in English standards were above average, in mathematics standards were below average and in science standards were average. Currently, standards are similar to those found last year and this goes some way to halt the falling trend in average points scores at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, standards in pupils' writing are not high enough and they do not get enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects of the curriculum. Generally, the work produced by pupils in Years 1 to 6, other than those on the special educational needs register, are at the levels expected for their age. Higher ability pupils in Year 6 are working at above average levels. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily because of good teaching and good use of practical activities.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.0 (24.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.1 (26.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

10 In science, standards of work produced by pupils in Years 1 to 6, other than those on the special educational needs register, are at the levels expected for their age. Higher ability pupils in Year 6 are working at above average levels. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because work is appropriately based on investigation, enquiry and first-hand practical learning with greater attention given to pupils' knowledge and accurate use of scientific vocabulary.

11 In ICT standards are below expectations in Years 2 and 6, largely because pupils' have been unable to use the computers and apply their skills whilst building work was undertaken. This work has now been completed and pupils are rapidly developing their skills but overall achievement over time is satisfactory. In addition, the computers are now outdated and slow. Teachers are fearful that they will break down and affect their lessons; they often do!

12 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and most of those with learning difficulties achieve well. Pupils' learning is especially good in literacy and numeracy when individual education plans reflect the needs of the pupils and are used in lessons. This enables teachers to plan activities which are appropriately matched for their needs and high quality classroom assistants provide support. A small but significant minority of pupils are seriously disaffected and despite tremendous efforts made by the school they find it extremely difficult to concentrate and consequently achieve. The home, social and emotional circumstances of many of these pupils (as many as 25 per cent in some classes) are horrific and pupils' resulting behaviour is a major barrier to learning. School provides an oasis of calm and stability in the lives of these pupils.

13 Parents and pupils comment favourably about the standards achieved. During the lessons and particularly in the discussions at the end, many pupils show a pride in their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory but their behaviour and relationships are all good. They achieve satisfactorily in their personal development. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is well below the national average and unsatisfactory but most pupils are punctual to school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of pupils' conduct and promotes good relationships.
- The behaviour of pupils is good overall but some pupils have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, which disturb others, the school works hard to combat this.
- Positive initiatives such as the School Council are promoting pupils' sense of responsibility well.
- Pupils are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong actions very effectively.
- Provision for moral development is very good and for social development is good.
- The school has very good procedures to promote the importance of attending school.
- A significant proportion of parents do not ensure their children come to school.

Commentary

14 Children in the nursery and the reception class have positive attitudes to their work, and behave well, as a result of good teaching in the aspect of personal and social development. They respond well to the good provision and teaching on offer. Children in the nursery soon fit into the established routines. They learn to take turns and follow instructions well. They are beginning to work happily on their own, in a small group or with the whole class. Children in reception persevere well for their age. They have very good relationships with adults.

15 Most pupils have good attitudes to work and make a positive contribution to their learning. However, in each class there are a small number of pupils, mainly boys who have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their disaffection with school often disturbs others. These pupils are very difficult to enthuse and some react violently in even the most minor of incidents. The school has implemented some very good and innovative procedures to combat these difficulties (explained in a later paragraph). Discussions with pupils indicate that most enjoy coming to school; they are able to identify favourite subjects. Pupils are interested in what they are doing and take an active part in their learning. Most pupils take a pride in their work and are willing to talk about it and explain their ideas to inspectors, each other and adults. Pupils with special educational needs for general learning difficulties have good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons and around the school.

16 Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their personal development. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and pupils have good relationships with each other. These positive relationships promote pupils' social development and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils are developing their understanding of their own cultures and their knowledge of other people's faiths and cultures satisfactorily. Pupils in all year groups show a willingness to undertake additional responsibilities; in some classes pupils undertake a range of duties as classroom monitors and older pupils are involved in the school's 'Playground Pal' scheme. There are also good structured opportunities for pupils to take meaningful positions of responsibility, such as the School Council. Children themselves admit they enjoy being involved and are pleased to volunteer their help with classroom tasks or necessary jobs around the school. This development of independence is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

17 The provision for moral development is very good. In the majority of lessons behaviour is good. Pupils are aware of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. They have a good understanding of the school's system of rewards and sanctions. They readily accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to instances of unsatisfactory behaviour. Generally, behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good. Most pupils get on well together; however, on occasions on the playground, there is some rough play which is dealt with sensibly by staff and most pupils respond quickly. Pupils treat school equipment with care and respect.

18 Some parents and a few pupils suggest that bullying is an occasional problem. The school promotes an anti-bullying and anti-racist ethos through assemblies, personal and social education lessons and through individual meetings with those hurt and the perpetrators. Both parents and pupils say that these procedures are effective. Despite many very good procedures to deal with inappropriate behaviour, the school has very clear rules that deliberate acts of violence towards staff and other pupils are sanctioned by excluding. Most of the exclusions are attributed to a very small number of pupils and most of these are from new comers to Egremont. Funding from the Education Action Zone has enabled the school to use a 'Behaviour Champion' (explained later in the report) to spend quality time with pupils and this has resulted in a decline in permanent exclusions.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	418	46	1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

19 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. The school builds on an ethos that everyone is valued within the school community and everyone has something to contribute to the school community. During assemblies pupils are encouraged to think about ideals and achievements. Staff provide good role models. The provision for social development is good. Many lessons provide scope for pupils to work in pairs or groups and the vast majority do so willingly and sensibly. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have been made aware of the culture of their own immediate area by working with artists and visits and visitors, including a children's author/poet and musicians who make valuable contributions to pupils' cultural knowledge. In geography and religious education lessons pupils learn about a wide range of faiths and customs.

Attendance

20 The table below shows that attendance last year was well below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are keen to attend school and most are punctual. The school has established very good procedures to promote and encourage pupils to attend school. For example, there are clear reward systems and certificates for good attendance. A Breakfast Club, funded, managed and staffed through the Education Action Zone has been established as a further initiative to encourage pupils to attend. Staff have organised a 'walking bus' to support individual pupils and families to improve pupils' attendance and this has a positive effect on the attendance of a good number of pupils. However, despite their work and that of the Local Education Authority officers they have had little impact on a few parents who do not ensure their children attend school regularly enough.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (92%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.3	School data	0.7
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good and the curriculum is satisfactory. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities. The school provides very good levels of care. Links with parents are satisfactory and links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is good in nursery and reception and in Years 1 to 6. The use of assessment is also satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching in the nursery and reception classes enable children to receive a good start to their education.
- Staff have good knowledge of pupils and understand their individual needs.
- Teachers use support staff very well.
- Occasionally, teachers do not plan carefully enough because assessment is not used accurately.
- The overuse of worksheets limits pupils' recording skills and development of writing.
- Teachers use praise well to encourage pupils.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good.

Commentary

21 Teaching is good and represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9 (20%)	23 (52%)	12 (28%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

22 Teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. Lessons are well planned and organised to provide children with a good range of practical and imaginative experiences so that they learn new skills. Staff work well together and spend much time engaging the children in useful discussions.

23 Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well and have warm and supportive relationships with them. Pupils are happy and secure in their class. In the best lessons, the teachers' planning is good and they clearly communicate what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers provide demanding yet enjoyable activities to enable them to do so.

24 Teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Lessons are generally well organised to take account of the various parts of lessons described by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In mathematics lessons, the mental mathematics starter is often good and most teachers take into account pupils' need for clear explanations interspersed with 'quick-fire' questions to generate interest and enthusiasm. The weaknesses in some lessons are due to the teacher not fully extending more able pupils, or building well enough on the existing knowledge of pupils who find learning hard. In some lessons, teachers spend too long in their introductions to the main activity. This is partly because teachers are more confident in controlling their class when all are together and listening.

25 Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects and often use too many simple worksheets. This restricts pupils' ability to record things in their own way. As a result, these pupils are not productive enough and more recorded work could be expected of pupils. A particularly positive feature of lessons seen is the use of teaching assistants who help special educational needs groups. In the best examples they make a vital input, praise and encourage reluctant workers and make sure that work is pitched at the right level for them.

26 All teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently and do so well. They work hard to set a good climate for learning. In those classes where individual pupils have a special need for emotional and behavioural difficulties, staff do remarkably well to manage their behaviour. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and teachers work hard to raise pupils' self esteem.

27 Pupils' work is marked regularly. However, although most teachers use encouraging and constructive remarks to give guidance and help pupils to improve their work, a few teachers simply tick or cross work and too often they accept untidy work without comment. Other techniques of day-to-day assessment, such as questioning and the observation of work are used well to assist teachers in their understanding of how well pupils are managing their work.

28 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs with general learning difficulties is good. This is because individual education plans are targeted carefully to help pupils to learn. Most teachers use a suitable range of strategies to motivate, involve and challenge pupils and regularly monitor pupils' achievement of their targets. Good maintenance and regular updating of records enable teachers to track pupils' achievements carefully.

29 The quality of learning is good overall. Most pupils make good gains in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding; especially when basic skills and techniques are taught explicitly, systematically and thoroughly, for example, in literacy and numeracy. In the demanding lessons, pupils employ a good range of learning skills. They listen attentively, handle resources sensibly, respond well to adults and practise previously learned information in new contexts. However, too few teachers are planning opportunities for pupils to write, use their mathematical skills and ICT skills in other subjects.

30 Staff have established thorough procedures for assessment and record keeping. Pupils are assessed frequently by observations through lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and regular formal assessments and tests. These assessments are recorded and analysed in detail. They help teachers to set pupils in groups by ability. They also enable teachers to set individual, class and year group targets. However, the detail of these assessments is not always used well enough to plan pupils' future work, except in the case of pupils with special educational needs where assessments are used well. In a number of classes, teachers do not always match work well to pupils' abilities in all subjects and this prevents them from achieving as well as they might. Scrutiny of work showed a small number of pupils find work much too easy and others cannot cope. This was evident in all year groups and suggests a similar situation as reported in the last report.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Enrichment activities are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum in the nursery and reception classes.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school misses opportunities to develop pupils' writing, numeracy and ICT skills.
- A wide range of activities including visits and out of school clubs enriches the curriculum well.

Commentary

31 The pupils in the nursery and reception classes benefit from a good range of learning opportunities that develops their knowledge and understanding well across all the recommended areas of learning. Children take part in a wide range of planned and structured activities and experiences, which give them a positive start to their education.

32 In Years 1 to 6, the school offers pupils a wide range of learning opportunities to encourage pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is managed well, with religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum being taught. The school has appropriately concentrated its efforts in raising standards in literacy and numeracy and in maintaining an ethos where pupils can achieve the aim of 'Success through Praise and Endeavour'. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Opportunities to develop writing and mathematics skills across the curriculum are not always taken. For example, opportunities to write at length in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history and geography, are currently restricted by a lack of rigorous cross-curricular planning. The use of ICT has been hindered since the computer suite has been out of action and the 'old' equipment makes it difficult for teachers to use computers with confidence. These issues have had an adverse effect on pupils' achievement.

33 There has been good improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs because of the good leadership and management by the special educational needs co-ordinator. This has had a positive effect on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with general learning difficulties. There is regular monitoring by the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met soundly.

34 The leadership of the school uses extra-curricular activities and visits effectively to overcome barriers to learning. Pupils enjoy the Breakfast Club, which not only encourages pupils to come to school early and start the day with a breakfast but also offers a range of educational activities. A suitably wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered to and appreciated by the pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding in a number of subjects. These include sports and musical activities and an after school study club.

35 There are sufficient teachers to meet the needs of the pupils. They all have at least satisfactory and, at times, good knowledge and understanding of the subjects being taught. Support staff are well trained and deployed very effectively. The support given in group work is of a very high quality and has a positive effect on achievement. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall but the computers are now very slow, inefficient and often fail to work when staff are trying to teach a class.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of its pupils. It generally provides very good support and guidance. The school involves pupils well in its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff make very good provision for pupils' social, emotional and personal needs.
- A very good range of initiatives very successfully overcomes barriers to learning.
- There are good induction arrangements for pupils new to the school.
- Pupils are involved in the school's development through the School Council and Playground Pal scheme.

Commentary

36 The school has rightly recognised that providing very effective support and guidance for pupils in need is essential. This enables all pupils to learn and creates a good climate for learning. Pupils know there is always someone they can turn to for advice and this gives them confidence. To this end, the school has introduced the very effective procedures of the appointment of a Behaviour Champion and the establishment of the Nurture Group's Sunflower Room. Both these initiatives offer very good support to the most vulnerable pupils. They are based on the need for pupils to understand how they can make the right choices, think about their own actions and how they affect others as well as themselves. The Behaviour Champion is very skilled in counselling pupils and diffusing situations quickly so that pupils are able to return to learning. The Sunflower Room teacher

and support assistant work very well together to promote the inclusion and personal development of younger pupils. This very good support is effective in helping pupils to reintegrate into mainstream classes.

37 There are very clear systems to support pupils' behaviour and personal development. Most parents are happy with the school's efforts to promote good behaviour but some are concerned about bullying. The school works hard to resolve any problems of this nature and pupils are sure that they can go to an adult if they are worried. The school has effective anti-bullying and anti-racist policies and maintains detailed records of bullying and racist incidents. Pupils know the 'Golden Rules' and the reward of 'Golden Time' acts as a real incentive for pupils to do their best and behave well. The regular Circle Time sessions work well to teach pupils the importance of co-operation and concentration in aiding their achievement. Pupils respond well to the good opportunities to take responsibility, for example as members of the School Council and acting as Playground Pals. Pupils say that their opinions are respected and taken seriously.

38 The school has good induction procedures for children joining the school nursery and for the many pupils who join from other schools. The school uses many staff to help with the assessment, support and integration of pupils. Assessments are discussed with teachers so that targets can be set and each pupil provided with the most suitable work. New starters are quickly and easily identified as needing special educational needs support or put into the class group which best suits their capabilities. Very good liaison with outside support agencies, such as the behaviour support service, the educational psychologist and various health service personnel ensures that pupils gain the support and resources they need to help them achieve within school.

39 The school promotes a very caring atmosphere which encourages and supports pupils to enable them to learn effectively. Pupils are very well cared for throughout the day, for example, through the very good organisation at the Breakfast Club and in the playground at lunchtime. All staff promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence well through the warm relationships throughout the school and the many opportunities taken to praise and reward pupils for achievement and good behaviour. The school is very aware of the significant social deprivation and the many problems experienced by particular families.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works very hard to achieve a satisfactory partnership with parents and good links with other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality information and a good programme of courses for parents help them to support their children's learning.
- The community and links with other schools significantly enhance pupils' learning opportunities.

Commentary

40 The school makes every effort to encourage parents' involvement in their children's education but not all parents take up these opportunities. The school provides parents with very useful information to involve them in its work. Links with the community are used well to support pupils and to extend their experience.

41 The school is committed to working towards an effective partnership with parents so that together they can raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. It recognises that some parents have many difficulties at home and so feel unable to give their full support to the school. For example, despite the school's efforts, a significant minority of parents do not ensure their children's regular attendance. Many parents do not come to the open evenings to discuss their children's progress but there is good support at school performances and events. To increase the involvement

of parents, the school provides a good range of courses such as Family Learning and Family Works sessions. These are having success in helping those parents who attend to increase their confidence to help their children's learning. Parents speak highly of this and they appreciate the welcome they receive in school and the opportunities that they have to talk to staff. A small number of parents regularly give good support, helping in class and at Golden Time, for example. The information for parents in letters and newsletters is written in a very friendly welcoming style to encourage parents' involvement in school matters and events. There are useful booklets to explain the curriculum for each age group. The annual reports on pupils' achievements give parents good information on what pupils can do and identify areas for improvement.

42 There are good links with secondary schools to ease the transfer of pupils. In addition, through the link with Excellence in Cities, one secondary school has provided specialist professional development for teachers and activities for pupils. For example, gifted and talented pupils have been invited to 'tea-time' and summer courses in English and mathematics. Egremont Primary works closely with many outside agencies in the community to benefit pupils, for example, with health and behaviour issues. The school also makes good use of the local community to enrich pupils' learning and experience, for example, by visits to museums and other places of interest.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The school is governed effectively and they complete well their statutory duties. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very clear educational direction and is well supported by the deputy headteacher.
- Most subject leaders develop their subject well.
- The school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses is accurate.
- There is good management of special educational needs.
- The governors' close involvement with the school helps to shape the vision for its future.
- Finances are managed very effectively.

Commentary

43 The school is led well by the highly effective, enthusiastic and committed headteacher and deputy headteacher. Together they provide a very clear educational direction for the school. As a result, the school has developed well since the last inspection and everyone associated with the school shares a sense of common purpose and a desire to raise standards. This school is generally a pleasant, well-ordered and happy community.

44 The role of subject leaders has developed well since the last inspection. Roles are now clearly defined with job descriptions and, as a result of very effective monitoring by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a variety of consultants, staff development opportunities have been carefully matched to staff' needs. The school's strategy for evaluating teachers' performance and providing professional support is good and an integral part of this process. The school has wisely set up teams to oversee the development of English, mathematics, science and ICT. This is a sensible development and makes good use of teachers' skills. However, there are some areas which need to be further developed due to staff absences and recent changes in personnel. For example, English and the Foundation Stage are led and managed well. The subject leader for ICT was absent and the subject leaders for mathematics and science have only been in post for a relatively short period of time. However, in mathematics and science the subject leaders and their teams have monitored provision well and already have a clear vision as to how their subjects will be developed further.

45 Issues relating to special educational needs are managed very well by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She works very well with school staff and outside agencies to

ensure that pupils make good gains in learning by careful monitoring of their support and individual education plans.

46 The school development plan is drawn up after full staff and governor consultation and it is a well-focussed working document that enables the school to move forward. Governors provide good support to the school and there has been a clear improvement in their role since the last inspection. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties well. For example, there is a race equality policy which is effectively monitored by governors. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and as a result, are able to act as 'critical friends'. Those governors with specific responsibilities are well briefed and meet regularly with their appropriate subject leaders. The headteacher and governors are very careful to allocate spending to the school priorities in a way that maximises the value to the school. Specific funding for special educational needs is used very well to provide effective support. In addition, the headteacher has been imaginative and innovative in finding almost £100,000 from various funds to support pupils' learning, especially by providing for a number of non-teaching staff to overcome some of the barriers to learning. For example, this includes the effective support for pupils with special educational needs, supporting those pupils who arrive from other schools and implementing effective procedures to encourage pupils to attend more regularly. The school is also working continuously to ensure that staffing difficulties are overcome. The major aids to achievement are clearly the dedication of the headteacher, staff and governors and the willingness of the vast majority of pupils to improve their work.

47 Financial planning and control are very good and the apparent deficit shown in the table below has now been cleared. The headteacher and the business manager have established very effective systems to manage and to monitor spending. They provide the governors with regular statements of spending so they can monitor their budget. The governors have a very good understanding of financial matters because the business manager has a very thorough understanding of all spending. Both the headteacher and the governors have a very good understanding of 'best value' principles and ensure the school achieves value for money in all its expenditure. The school provides satisfactory value for money with lots of good features within this broad statement. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1165825
Total expenditure	1217500
Expenditure per pupil	2526

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44582
Balance carried forward to the next	-7093

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48 Forty one children attend part time in the nursery and 42 children attend full time in the reception classes, all housed in a separate 'Foundation Centre', some way from the main school. When children start in the nursery their knowledge, skills and understanding are very much lower than expected for their age. Around half the children have learning, social and behavioural difficulties and, for a quarter of them, these are significant. Several children are awaiting speech therapy, and many find it hard to communicate clearly. This means that children take considerable time to begin to achieve the first of the 'Stepping Stones' towards the Early Learning Goals used to assess standards for this age group.

49 The Foundation Stage curriculum guidance is used well, with very detailed planning, covering all the six areas of learning. It offers a very good range of activities that are always available and made easy for children to select indoors. The lack of access to the outdoor areas hampers teaching and learning but very good planning ensures maximum use for children.

50 Teaching is always good and often very good. The whole team show a clear understanding of children aged three to five and provide a well-targeted and well balanced mixture of structured play activities and direct teaching. Assessment is good. Observation and tracking of children's involvement in activities form the basis of very useful records of individual achievement. No opportunity is missed to help children acquire language, mathematical and social skills. For example, role-play, based on themes, is used well. The two assistants are very effective. They achieve a very good balance between helping children to take part in activities without doing things for them. There is very good support for children with special educational needs, including additional Family Literacy support and the 'Nurture Group' for some children. Children learn as well as they can and enjoy all their time in school. Leadership and management are good. The Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and recognises that teamwork is the key to success. Links with parents include very good information, sharing the care of 'Pat the Panda' and useful information boards about the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good; staff provide very good role models.
- Social skills are promoted very well in all areas of learning.
- Very clear routines are understood and enjoyed by the children, who feel safe, secure, grow in confidence and achieve very well.

Commentary

51 'Pat the Panda' is the nursery mascot. Children have turns taking him home and looking after him, and love his rewards for behaviour. In reception children know 'Ginger Bear', his golden rules and when they are making him happy or sad. A great deal of thought and emphasis is given to establishing routines and providing interesting activities. As a result, children achieve well during their time in the Foundation Centre because of the staff's high expectations, their very good teaching and role models. Adults patiently encourage children to look after their own needs, take turns, listen to each other and to share. Many children are vulnerable and need constant adult support to achieve this. They learn to discuss feelings, such as, happy, sad and cross with adults. They begin to understand what is right and wrong in a variety of situations, for example, in not snatching toys. An assembly for reception children very successfully allowed children to understand that small people, like them, can help others, through the 'The Lion and the Mouse' story.

52 Children remain involved in activities for a length of time, but quickly lose interest if an adult moves away. They have healthy snacks as class groups so that staff can encourage discussion and extend their spoken vocabulary. Because of the warm supportive environment, children, including some with significant behaviour and emotional difficulties, try hard to please and usually respond well. This is a testament to the care of the staff - children know what is expected of them and are supported to achieve this. However, their lack of ability to initiate ideas and to communicate clearly means that many children will be below the levels expected in this area by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-focused assessment targets learning very well; much learning is through talk and practical first-hand experiences.
- Very good opportunities are given to practise speaking, listening, reading and writing for different purposes in small and large groups.
- Links with home are very good.

Commentary

53 From a very low starting point, children achieve well. This is due to high quality teaching and support, particularly in the areas of speaking and listening. Despite this good achievement, by the end of reception, standards are well below those expected in this area of learning. A high priority is given to developing children's spoken language. Children achieve well when learning to read. In the nursery, some children recognise their own name and find letters that are the same as those in their name. Older children know the title page and back cover, and that print carries meaning. Some use speech bubbles to write very simple sentences. Children are encouraged to take simple reading books home to share with their parents. There are many opportunities for children to write on their own, and as a result, children very slowly gain confidence. Good attention is paid to correct letter formation. One child of higher ability confidently rewrote the story of 'Wishy Washy' fluently, with 'original' spellings.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-focused assessments target the learning very well; much learning is through talk and practical first-hand experiences.

Commentary

54 Although children achieve well, they start from a very low level and so, by the end of the reception year, their attainment is still well below that of most children of a similar age. In counting, recognising numbers and simple practical addition, around a third of the children in the reception class are close to achieving the levels expected, but most children do not have enough technical language to explain what they know and understand. Most are not able to discuss simple mathematical ideas when playing with large and small construction toys, or when experimenting with sand and water. Many children, across the ages, recognise and name triangles, rectangles, squares and circles accurately. The teaching of number skills is thorough. In the nursery, good and varied opportunities are provided for children to practice counting. For example, they count carefully throughout their play and when involved in number action songs. In the reception classes, teachers plan and match work carefully to children's different learning needs. The teaching assistant is very

effective in helping groups of children to concentrate on and understand the activities provided. A few more able older children count, recognise and order numbers to 10. Some children use comparative words accurately, such as, 'big' and 'little' when playing with teddy bears, and 'full' and 'empty' while filling containers with water to decorate and clean windows outside. All thoroughly enjoy number action rhymes and songs and join in with gusto.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many practical first-hand experiences develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding.

Commentary

55 On entry to the nursery, many children have had very limited experience of the world around them. By the end of the reception year, although attainment in this area is well below the expected level for children of this age, they have achieved well and are beginning to have a foundation on which to build the later subjects of science, design and technology, ICT, geography and history.

56 Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to enable the children to explore and widen their experience. For example, they use all their senses in everyday activities because of a wealth of natural objects to explore and Squeak - the very important nursery guinea pig. Reception children investigate the properties of materials using 'feely boxes' and describe 'bumpy', 'squashy' and 'smooth'. Healthy snacks provide interesting tastes. Children in reception become television weather presenters and use symbols on a large local area map and find words to describe the weather. They learn to control the mouse using simple computer programs and direct the movement of a programmable toy. Children begin to develop fine control skills when cutting or sticking or when using construction apparatus to make recognisable models or collages. Adults help children to use the appropriate vocabulary, such as before, then and now to describe their experiences, including their past as babies.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide numerous activities to move children's learning forward very well.

Commentary

57 Teaching is very good and children achieve very well in this area of learning. Many of them achieve the standard expected by the end of the reception class. Children experience outdoor learning everyday. This caters for all areas of the curriculum, but always has activities to develop a range of physical skills. Children show good control as they steer, ride, push and pull wheeled 'vehicles' and avoid obstacles. They move in a variety of ways through tunnels, up ramps, and choose to travel in different ways on mats when they negotiate the 'circuit'. Adults join in the play and move children's learning forward very well. The children have valuable opportunities each day to use equipment that helps them to improve their control of the finer movements needed to use scissors, pens, pencils, paintbrushes and glue with increasing dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective support enables children to develop their skills well.

Commentary

58 Children start from a low level of skills. Good teaching and provision ensures that children achieve well, nevertheless they will be below the expected levels at the end of reception. In the nursery, children draw, paint, making collages and print. They make shapes in dough by pulling, pinching and rolling shapes. They play imaginatively in the role-play fire station, hospital and canteen, sometimes talking through a running commentary of events, but rarely extend the play with talk unless an adult is alongside. Very effective support helps children well by showing them not only to use tools and techniques effectively to make models of fire engines, but also to develop their language. Children of all ages delight in dressing up and this releases the most imagination and language. They know many songs and make music with un-tuned percussion instruments they have made by shaking them in different ways to enhance the story of the 'Lion and the Mouse'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well below average at the end of both key stages.
- The subject is rigorously assessed so that the school is aware of what needs to be done to improve standards.
- The system for targeting pupils' learning is not sufficiently well developed to focus their work accurately on what they need to learn next.
- Learning support staff are used very well in most lessons and this enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as other pupils.
- The school has recently made a number of improvements in its provision for English and these are beginning to have a positive effect on raising standards.
- Standards in pupils' writing are not high enough and they do not get enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

59 In recent years, standards in English have been consistently very low in national tests in Years 2 and 6 when compared to national averages. However, when compared to similar schools, in the 2003 national tests, results for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading and writing. For pupils in Year 6, the schools results were above average. Pupils enter the school with very low skills in literacy and achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Adverse factors such as the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, high pupil turnover and problems with staff stability all contribute to the overall standards the school attains. For these reasons, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall but some good teaching was seen in both infant and junior classes.

60 Pupils in Years 2 and 6 do not reach the expected standards for speaking and listening. Pupils enter school with very low standards in speaking and listening and do not improve them enough by the time they leave the school. Teachers use a number of strategies to give pupils opportunities to practise and develop their speaking and listening skills. They use poetry effectively to develop pupils' awareness and sensitivity to language. When drama is used well, it is a very effective method of stimulating good use of spoken language. For example, in a Year 4 religious education lesson, pupils have to clearly express their feelings when acting out the story of Joseph. However, the use of drama in lessons as a way to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills is inconsistent across the school. Classroom assistants seize every opportunity to work with pupils with special educational needs on their speaking and listening skills so they extend their vocabulary well. Some younger pupils have additional lessons where they achieve very well in understanding

how to listen carefully and how to use accurate phrases when making suggestions or answering questions.

61 Teachers work hard to motivate and support pupils in their reading. A very effective Reading Recovery scheme for pupils in Year 1 is a notable success. Pupils enjoy reading and this helps them to cope with the demands of the well-organised National Literacy Strategy lessons and other reading sessions. Teachers act as good role models for expressive reading and clear speech. The school library is currently being reviewed following building work and this has reduced pupils' opportunities to study independently or do individual research. However, most pupils use the library and find information confidently. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional teaching in a number of basic skills and this enables them to achieve well. These sessions help to build up their self-esteem as well as strongly reinforcing sight reading and word-building skills.

62 Writing has been identified as a weakness compared to the other areas of learning in English. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are taught in all classes through formal, isolated exercises. However, although pupils generally understand and can use the rules of English in that particular context they do not show the same competence in other written work. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' writing. For example, pupils in Year 2 write imaginative poems following a visit by the poet Alison Chisholm. They are stimulated to write lovely phrases such as, "The trees are talking in the wind" and "...an elf disguised as a dandelion". Pupils in Year 6 study poetry by Charles Causley and make good use of alliteration when one writes, "Wings of flying fish all slimy and slippery". However, opportunities to write at length in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history and geography, are currently restricted by a lack of rigorous cross-curricular planning. The school has introduced an additional literacy lesson each week and this is helping pupils to make more productive links between their reading and writing.

63 The use of ICT skills in English is satisfactory. For example, pupils use their word processing skills when writing letters and poems and some older pupils contribute to the school newspaper. However, opportunities to use ICT are not often planned so many opportunities are missed.

64 The subject is managed well by a team led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher who is focused on raising standards and has developed a clear plan of action. Detailed analysis of national tests means that the school is much clearer about the weaker areas of teaching and learning. A new targeting system is beginning to direct pupils' efforts to the areas of learning most likely to bring about the greatest overall improvement. This is not yet used consistently enough throughout the school to make its full impact on standards. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and teachers are beginning to make positive changes to their practise in the light of comments and suggestions.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65 Language and literacy are used and developed satisfactorily through other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils write interesting letters of thanks to their guide after a visit to Styal Mill during their Victorian history project. Year 2 pupils increase their understanding of science when they develop a glossary of words about animals and their habitats. However, opportunities to develop language and literacy are not identified in all teachers' planning of lessons in other subjects. The school recognises that pupils' speaking and listening skills are in need of improvement and is making this a focus in more lessons, including those dealing with personal and social education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are well below nationally expected levels in Years 2 and 6.
- Teachers do not use assessment accurately enough to plan sufficiently for all ability groups.

- Pupils did not achieve well enough in some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5 when they were taught by temporary teachers.
- Additional teaching support has been placed in all year groups to boost standards and additional classes are held to support pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in small groups.

Commentary

66 The inspection findings reflect the 2003 test results in mathematics and show pupils' attainment is currently well below national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 with too few pupils attaining the expected or higher levels. Throughout the school, achievement is satisfactory. This is not as good as the standards achieved in the last inspection. However, in both classes there are a very large proportion of pupils with special educational needs, a significant number with extreme emotional and behavioural difficulties (for example, around 50 per cent in Year 6). These pupils achieve well, but many are unlikely to reach nationally expected levels. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. Standards would have been significantly better had four pupils who missed their expected level by one mark, achieved their expected grade.

67 The work seen in Year 2 represents good achievement overall considering that when pupils enter the school they are in the lowest five per cent of pupils nationally in their mathematical development. In Year 2 lessons, pupils count in tens and arrange numbers to 100 in order. However, very few children work with numbers greater than 100. There is a sound range of work and shape, space and measure and are suitably represented throughout pupils' work. Inspection evidence indicates that around 8 out of 10 pupils are likely to attain the nationally expected level but few will achieve a higher level.

68 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build steadily on their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding and they experience a good range of work in all the expected aspects of mathematics. There have been times when pupils' achievement has been slower than expected. This has resulted from teacher absences and some teaching which was not of consistently high quality. In some classes, even though pupils are grouped for lessons according to their ability, work is not always accurately matched to pupils' needs. Assessment procedures are good but teachers are not using them sufficiently well. As a result, very often the higher attainers produce a substantial amount of accurately completed work whilst lower attainers produce very little of the same work.

69 Following the analysis of pupils' performance in last year's national tests for eleven year olds, it was clear that teachers needed to spend more time in developing pupils' problem solving skills and their skills in handling data. Teachers received guidance and pupils now achieve satisfactorily in their work on handling data in all classes but teachers do not do enough to develop problem solving skills by providing sufficient time for pupils to explain how they find their answers.

70 Teaching overall is satisfactory throughout the school. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory and five of the seven lessons were good or better. Particular strengths in the best lessons are the high quality questions that develop pupils' understanding and take into account pupils' prior learning. Teachers' sharing lesson objectives at the start of lessons ensure that pupils are aware of what they are expected to learn. This keeps pupils on track and assists the teacher to make accurate assessments. In the best lessons, teachers value pupils' contributions and as a result pupils' self esteem is raised. Pupils listen well and are encouraged to participate through targeted questioning.

71 Weaknesses mainly concern the failure, in lessons prior to the inspection, by a small number of teachers to consistently plan work at appropriate levels for the different abilities of pupils in the class. As a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory overall but uneven. There are occasions when average and lower attaining pupils achieve well in the same lesson, but the higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well. There are times when pupils with special educational needs struggle to answer any questions whereas higher attainers in the same lesson complete their work with ease.

However, when pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants, they receive focused attention and achieve well. Another weakness in a small number of classes is marking that does not help pupils to improve and many of the pupils' books have untidily presented work.

72 The subject is now led well by a subject co-ordinator who has only been in post for a few months. She and her team have appropriately monitored work and planning and have, with the mathematics consultant, identified many of the areas to develop. For example, it was clear that achievement in Years 3 to 6 was not as good as expected. As a result, additional teachers were organised to support learning in these year groups. However, monitoring has not been totally effective in the past because monitoring of temporary teachers' work and some of the weaknesses in the work of pupils in all classes has not been identified. The school provides additional lessons, outside the normal numeracy lessons, for pupils in Years 2 to 6 in an effort to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Higher attainers have the opportunity to enter mathematics competitions at Mosslands Secondary School, and have won twice in recent years!

Mathematics across the curriculum

73 Pupils apply their numeracy skills satisfactorily across the curriculum, for example in measuring and graph work in science, design and technology and geography. Teachers do not at present make sufficient use of ICT in mathematics lessons. The subject leader has identified this as a key area for development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn to become scientists, to plan investigations and test out their ideas. This contributes to improved standards.
- The best teaching challenges and supports pupils' learning well by skilful questioning, well managed investigations and good strategies to manage behaviour.
- Pupils' low literacy skills sometimes hinder their ability to record findings.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support or record learning.

Commentary

74 Standards attained in national tests are well below average in Year 2 and Year 6, but better when compared to similar schools. Work is now based on investigation, enquiry and first-hand practical learning with greater attention given to pupils' knowledge and accurate use of scientific vocabulary. As a result, standards of work produced by pupils in Years 1 to 6, other than those on the special educational needs register, are at the levels expected for their age. Higher ability pupils in Year 6 are working at above average levels. Achievement is good and this is an improvement from the last inspection.

75 The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection. Teachers plan lessons well and explain carefully what pupils will be doing and why. Subject knowledge is good leading to skilful questioning which probes learning. There is a clear commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in the learning opportunities by planning practically based lessons, tasks that provide appropriate challenge for individuals and having high expectations of behaviour.

76 Learning through first-hand experiences and good questioning are key features of the teaching. This contributes to pupils' positive attitudes and improved standards. Teachers generally plan practical tasks that capture pupils' interest and make them enthusiastic about what they are doing so that they learn well. As a result, most pupils try hard, enjoy their work and achieve well in

Year 2 and Year 6. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils successfully built an electrical circuit to make a bulb light up, then carefully drew and labelled a diagram naming parts accurately. In Year 6, pupils planned a 'fair test' when investigating which detergent makes the best bubbles. They collaborated well in small groups, sharing ideas and coming to the conclusion that to be fair the test needed to be repeated. Pupils in Year 5 interrogated information thoroughly to understand the process of photosynthesis after practical work finding out about green plants. Most pupils record their findings carefully in books using charts, graphs and tables. Not enough use, however, is made of ICT to support learning and record findings.

77 Leadership and management of the subject are good, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. A team of five teachers meet regularly with a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise standards and review progress. Assessment procedures are effective, leading to action.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement has been hindered by the computer suite being out of use.
- There are not enough planned activities in all subjects for pupils to use and apply their ICT skills.
- The computers are now outdated.
- Pupils enjoy using computers and treat equipment with care.

Commentary

78 Standards are below expectations, both in Year 2 and Year 6 but overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. ICT provision was a key issue at that time and the vast majority of the issues raised then have been corrected and the subject has made good progress.

79 Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and pupils are familiar with most of the basic skills. There is limited evidence that pupils regularly use computers to edit and record their work, to investigate what happens in real or imaginary situations or to solve problems. Pupils' achievement is also satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and most pupils confidently load and save programs, use websites, send e-mails, use the word processor and use spreadsheets. Standards and achievement have been adversely affected by building work which prevented the use of the computer suite for a number of months. There were insufficient computers in the classrooms to provide for children's learning. Following completion of the building work, the school is now making best use of this resource.

80 Teaching and learning in ICT are satisfactory which represents an improvement since the previous inspection. At that time, the level of teachers' expertise was unsatisfactory. All teachers have now had training and are competent with the basics of ICT although there is still a lack of confidence among some teachers. When teaching is in the computer suite, good management of pupils is a strong feature of the teaching. This means that pupils do not waste time and equipment is looked after properly. Pupils behave well. Where pupils work together with computers, there are good relationships and many of the pupils who are confident support classmates who have difficulty.

81 One of the criticisms of the previous inspection was that the school did not have essential equipment to teach ICT. This was corrected and the computer suite did provide good accommodation, a good number of up-to-date computers and these were supplemented by a computer-linked projector to facilitate good class teaching. However, these computers are now outdated and these resources are painfully slow and unreliable, so teachers and pupils do not have confidence that planned lessons will be able to go ahead. Individual subjects are beginning to develop a range of resources, especially CD-ROMs and websites to support pupils' acquisition of

knowledge and understanding. Parents of all pupils have signed an Internet Safety form which gives pupils the opportunity to use the World Wide Web. The school is developing sound assessment procedures to track which skills pupils are learning and to ensure that a systematic curriculum is provided. The current subject leader has shown good leadership and management in addressing the issues raised in the previous report.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82 The use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. This is mainly because pupils have had limited opportunities to use computers since the computer suite has been out of use for most of the year but also because teachers do not plan its use effectively and there are missed opportunities in science and history lessons. However, during the inspection there was evidence that pupils were using computers effectively to support work in literacy, especially through word processing and in mathematics, through the use of spreadsheets and databases. There are occasional examples of work done in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1, for example, draw pictograms, produce bar graphs and label plants and creatures as they store and display information.

HUMANITIES

83 In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography, with one lesson observed in history and no lessons observed in geography. It is therefore, not possible to make overall judgements about provision in these subjects. From work seen and planning analysed, all required areas are covered by the school.

84 In **geography**, evidence shows that younger pupils do basic map work and recognise the countries that make up Great Britain and Northern Ireland. They study their local area and learn to recognise the main features of different towns. Pupils show reasonable knowledge and understanding of geographical variation and recognise the differences between natural and man-made features. Older pupils study the weather and make good use of their English skills when preparing weather reports using appropriate technical language. They develop and extend their knowledge when they make sensible suggestions to improve the local environment. Good use is made of visits to places such as Oaklands Outdoor Pursuits Centre to use and develop skills in mapping and orienteering. Teachers do not yet plan enough opportunities for extended pieces of writing, numeracy or ICT in geography that would enable pupils to develop their skills in different contexts.

85 In **history** younger pupils learn about important events and people in history. They develop a simple understanding of chronology and learn to recognise the relationship between cause and effect in historical terms. They examine evidence such as Samuel Pepys's diary and perform basic research using books and other materials. The school makes good use of visits to places such as Styal Mill when pupils in Year 6 go there as part of their study of Victorian life. More able pupils do original research and produce attractive booklets about topics such as Queen Victoria. These neat, well-presented booklets are packed with interesting facts and give pupils a good reason to use and develop their literacy skills. Pupils are particularly stimulated by handling artefacts and, sometimes, comparing them with their modern equivalents. For example, groups of Year 6 pupils eagerly discuss and evaluate a range of interesting historical items. By doing so, they develop their powers of listening and describing things accurately. Teachers plan a reasonable breadth and balance of activities in lessons and are beginning to assess work at the end of each module.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching for older pupils. Good use of teacher expertise in Year 6.
- The use of artefacts, art and music as starting points motivates pupils.
- Assessment and monitoring are not sufficient to know levels of achievement. The lack of recorded work in Years 1 and 2 makes it very difficult to assess individual achievement over time.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is inadequate.

Commentary

86 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach the standards outlined for schools in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They learn about, and from, religion and gain a satisfactory grounding in different world religions and faiths. Good links with personal and social education encourage pupils to reflect on important human values such as truthfulness, respect, sharing and caring. This is very appropriate for the nature and needs of pupils in this school and makes an effective contribution to pupils' moral and social development. There is a daily act of collective worship either as a whole school or as a class.

87 Pupils from Years 1 to 6 of all abilities achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, pupils have grown in their understanding of Christianity and some of the major world religions, such as Judaism and Buddhism. They know that people have different beliefs and values that affect the way they live their life, for example, the Jewish rules of prayer, food and drink. By Year 2, pupils know some of the teachings of Jesus, know the Christian festivals, the Chinese New Year and explore relationships.

88 Overall the teaching is good but it is very good in Year 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and little work is recorded. Good use is made of expertise in the Year 6 classes, where one teacher teaches all classes. Lessons are well prepared and resources are used effectively. In the best lessons, the introduction is particularly effective because teachers' imaginative approaches capture pupils' interest and help them to understand important ideas. A lesson in Year 4 was very effective in telling the continuing story of Joseph because the teacher had very good subject knowledge that allowed her to relate the story without reading it. Pupils used drama to 'hot seat' as Joseph. Their questions and answers revealed very good knowledge and understanding. Similarly, a Year 6 lesson exploring religious art, kept pupils' interest and engagement as they worked hard to identify and discuss religious symbols. Pupils know that teachers are very interested in what they say. This encourages them, particularly those with special educational and behavioural needs, to ask questions and share their ideas. Work for the older pupils is marked constructively, asking how and why questions. In this way, pupils learn well, are encouraged to give of their best and all abilities achieve well. Pupils generally have positive attitudes and enjoy the subject, enthusiastically recalling meditating when learning about Buddhism.

89 Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has very secure knowledge and leads the subject well. Management is satisfactory. Assessment systems are clear, but they are unsatisfactory in practice and delayed due to long-term illness. Similarly, teachers' planning has not been monitored as outlined in the policy.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90 In design and technology and physical education, no lessons were seen and so no judgement can be made about overall provision. Similarly in art and design and music, no judgement can be made about provision because only two lessons were seen.

91 In **art and design** evidence shows that pupils are taught a good and varied curriculum covering all the key aspects and achieve satisfactorily to attain the levels expected in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement from the last inspection.

92 A good feature is the use of sketchbooks to explore different media, pattern, line, colour mixing, develop observational skills using lenses and frames and also design drawings, for example to make African masks. Very good teaching in a Year 3 class promoted high quality learning in controlling tools and techniques when using cuboids to make a totem pole. There is enough use of ICT to support learning, for example, pupils made good use of digital photography to keep a record of previous work in this lesson. Pupils study different artists, for example, Andy Goldsworthy, Mondrian, Manet and Jackson Pollock. This helps them to build their knowledge of styles, techniques and different art forms in two and three dimensions. Pupils talk enthusiastically and with pride about their work in art and design. They are eager to make art, learn more and improve. Good use is made of a

link with Japanese schools which provides art work and this supports pupils' cultural development. A local high school provides a good link for pupils in Year 6 to develop their art and design skills.

93 In **design and technology**, evidence indicates that pupils of all abilities and ages achieve satisfactorily and standards are those expected in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum is well-planned allowing opportunities for pupils to explore and use a good range of materials and good links are made with skills learned in other subjects. For example, energy sources in science when Year 3 made 'Moving Monsters' using air pressure. In Year 2, pupils explored textiles and designed glove and finger puppets, older pupils built on this in Year 6 to design and make slippers using templates and extending their vocabulary to 'reinforce' parts. Work seen shows pupils have a good understanding of the process: having ideas, carefully labelled design drawings, making and evaluating the end result as to fitness for purpose.

94 Pupils enjoy the practical nature of the subject and show pride in their results. Year 6, working on shelters, talked confidently about methods to strengthen card, such as using struts. This followed noting the construction techniques of a nearby sun shelter.

95 In **music**, planning shows that all that should be taught is taught. In the lessons seen, pupils in Year 2 could name a variety of instruments and demonstrated that they can be played by banging, scraping and shaking. They are beginning to understand that music can be represented by symbols and these symbols can represent different sounds. Pupils in Year 4 listened very carefully to the music of Vivaldi's Four Seasons and used their imagination to create diagrams and pictures in response to the mood created. Pupils were asked to compare this music with that which they normally listen to. Pupils were not impressed!!

96 All classes get regular lessons in **physical education** and pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive swimming tuition. The curriculum is satisfactory. There are a number of well-supported clubs and activities held outside school hours and these expand and enrich the basic curriculum. For example, both boys and girls play football, golf and rounders. The subject is led and managed well so that all teaching staff have the necessary guidance and resources to teach the subject effectively. Particularly innovative is the Sportsperson Award. One pupil from every class, including those in the Foundation Stage, is nominated to receive a certificate and mention in assembly each week. Teachers use the system with sensitivity so that all pupils have an opportunity to demonstrate physical prowess. Some exciting additional work takes place outside school as when Year 5 pupils learn to canoe and rock climb during a visit to an Outdoor Centre. The school does not have its own playing field but works very closely with a number of local schools to ensure that pupils get the widest possible exposure to games and sports.

97 In the subjects above, the leadership and management is satisfactory. Subject leaders carefully monitor teachers' planning but the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the standards achieved has not been completed and they are currently uncertain of the quality of the work from around school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

98 Personal, health and social education is good and the school aims to teach pupils to be 'sensible citizens' and 'good ambassadors', for example by taking care of the environment and being safe, they operate a walking bus, and recycling. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible and carry out a number of monitorial duties including giving out of fruit, caring for plants in the classroom and hold key positions such as Playground Pals and members of the School Council. Drugs and health education policies are in place. The use of collective worship and Circle Time supports their work to create a pleasant working atmosphere. Throughout the school, a caring, positive ethos prevails and staff tackle issues such as controlling their feelings and caring for others. Pupils sponsor a child in Ghana. Wider issues are also considered as pupils support charities through fundraising.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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).