

INSPECTION REPORT

MORESBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Whitehaven

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112162

Headteacher: Mrs P W Adams

Lead inspector: Mr J Heap

Dates of inspection: 15th - 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 256960

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	91
School address:	Moresby Parks Whitehaven Cumbria
Postcode	CA28 8UX
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Troughton
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Moresby is a community primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 years. It is situated in Moresby Parks, near to the town of Whitehaven. There are 91 pupils on the roll of the main school. This is below the average sized school in England. The roll has significantly increased in recent years. Pupils arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels, but overall attainment on entry is below average. Pupils are organised into four classes, two of which have more than a single age group of pupils. The pupils come from a small, semi-rural catchment area, which has some signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to private individual dwellings. The vast majority of pupils are white and there are representatives from a very small range of mixed ethnic heritages. Fifteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is below the national average. There are 16 pupils (18 per cent) on the list of special educational needs and the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. This is around the national average. Two pupils (2 per cent) have a statement of special educational need, which is around the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18824	John Heap	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall, this is an unsatisfactory school that has serious weaknesses and some strengths.

From a below average attainment on entry, pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the age of 11. Overall, teaching is unsatisfactory, but strong in the reception and Years 1, 2 and 6 classes. The leadership of the headteacher is good. However, governance and aspects of management are weak. The school gives unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision, teaching and achievement in the reception, Years 1 and 2 and Year 6 classes are good;
- Overall, teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory;
- The headteacher is leading the school well;
- The quality of governance and management is weak;
- By the age of 11, standards in mathematics are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory;
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and pupils have good attitudes to school and work and relationships are strong;
- The quality of care for pupils is good;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good provision and the way that they benefit equally from what the school has to offer;
- Provision for higher attaining pupils is weak;
- The curriculum provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

In an overall picture of unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection, successes include: the rate of attendance is higher; pupils' attitudes and attendance are better and teaching, provision and achievement are good in the reception and Year 1 and 2 class. However, governance is unsatisfactory and there has been insufficient improvement in the checking and evaluation of provision by staff. Overall, teaching and learning are worse, most particularly in Year 5 where the lessons observed were unsatisfactory, or poor. However, the proportion of good lessons has increased since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter reception with levels of ability that reflect a broad range, but are below average overall. Children achieve well in the reception class and, by the time they enter Year 1, the majority will meet the goals they are expected to achieve by this age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. There was too little evidence to make

secure judgements in physical and creative development. By the age of 7, standards seen are average in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT. This represents satisfactory achievement for most pupils. By the age of 11, standards seen are below average in English, mathematics and science, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in results and the high level of pupil mobility is partly responsible. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Standards in mathematics are not good enough in Years 3 to 6, because of too few opportunities in the curriculum to use them extensively. Standards in ICT and religious education meet expectations.

Overall, pupils' personal development is good and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The strengths are in the provision for pupils' moral and social development that lead to good attitudes. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of education is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and inconsistent. The best teaching is seen in the reception and Year 1 and 2 class, where there is evidence of much good practice and children are interested in the lessons and do a great deal of work. Overall, in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. During the inspection, the amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 5 was unacceptable. Furthermore, the analysis of pupils' work shows a similar picture. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. The programme for the reception and Year 1 and 2 class is good. In Years 3 to 6, the curriculum is satisfactory, but with too few opportunities for using and developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills across the full range of their work. The steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and this helps to consolidate the satisfactory ethos in the school. Links with parents and the community are satisfactory. The school has good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Governance is weak because the governors do not have a clear vision for the school and do not check and evaluate the work of the school adequately. The headteacher is leading the school well, particularly at a time when she has faced significant difficulties. She is well supported by the teacher of the youngest children. Management is unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views about the school. For instance, they feel that teaching is good. Inspectors agree that teaching is good for most pupils and that in these classes most pupils progress well. However, there is a small minority who are unhappy with much that the school has to offer and their frustration is often shown in personal attacks on the headteacher. Pupils enjoy school and have a good opinion of it, they like the headteacher and feel that they work hard and do well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6;
- Improve governance and management;
- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics;
- Raise standards and achievement of the highest attaining pupils;
- Improve the use and development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. However, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage (reception class). Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those pupils identified as gifted and talented make satisfactory progress. Standards are average in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and below average at the age of 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- At the age of 7, the trend in the results of the national tests has been above the national trend;
- At the age of 11, trends in the national tests for English are above average;
- Standards in mathematics are not high enough.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (26.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.6 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

1. This was a small cohort with each pupil representing around 9 per cent. Over three years, results are above average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The trend is inconsistent, particularly in English and mathematics but, overall, is similar to the national trend. Girls do much better than boys.
2. In English, results have generally been ahead of the national average, with 2003 showing a significant movement ahead. Girls did very well in 2003. Mathematics and science results are very inconsistent and below average over time. Part of the reason for this is the high level of pupil mobility over time. For example, the movement in and out of the school last year was close to a fifth of the school population.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.0 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.8 (16.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.8 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 8 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The school has a relatively small number of pupils taking the tests each year. For example, in 2003, eight pupils sat the tests. This means that the attainment of individual pupils has a large effect on the overall picture and can cause inconsistencies in trends. Consequently, this report will take most notice of the three-year trend. The trend in recent years has been above the national trend, with results in reading and writing being above average and average in mathematics.

4. In reading, from 1999 to 2003 scores were always a little ahead of the average with boys doing better than girls. Results in writing were generally ahead of the national average with a leap forward in 2002 and 2003. Mathematics results have been inconsistent, but follow a similar trend to the national one.
5. The school provides good extra support for pupils with special educational needs as soon as there is cause for concern. These interventions are effective because specific difficulties are dealt with at an early stage. Assessments and individual education plans are used effectively to plan for and track pupils' progress because the school effectively identifies the small steps they need to make to achieve well.
6. In reception, children's achievement is often increased by the contact that this small group has with the Year 1 and 2 pupils. These children also benefit from the good assessment work that is done by the small team of adults and the way that the information is used to plan and direct learning. This is particularly true in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics, where most are on course to meet the nationally required Early Learning Goals. Standards in physical development are lower because of the lack of outdoor provision. There was not enough evidence to make secure judgements about knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.
7. In English, standards are average by the age of 7 and below average by the age of 11. Across the school, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils speak and listen well, often making telling contributions in a range of lessons other than just in English ones. Reading standards are average. By the ages of 7 and 11, higher attaining pupils are mature and knowledgeable readers. The school recognises that improvements are needed in pupils' skills in reading to find information. Writing standards are average and most pupils have good, accurate basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Standards would rise if pupils were given more opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects. At present, this is restricted by the overuse of prepared worksheets.
8. In mathematics, standards are average by the age of 7 and below average by the age of 11. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is sound because of the effective teaching they receive. Pupils are making good gains in the problem solving work they are doing and they are developing strategies that help them in this work, for instance estimating, checking and carrying out a test. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is unsatisfactory because:
 - higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged owing to low expectations and weaknesses in assessment;
 - boys are not progressing at the rate they should. However, lower attaining pupils make good progress because their targets are carefully identified through good assessment.
9. In science, standards are average at the age of 7 and below average at the age of 11. However, the standards at the age of 11 are lower than in previous years because of a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Achievement is sound but inconsistent across the school, with the strongest showing in Years 1 and 2, and in Year 6. The biggest improvement is in investigative work, particularly in Year 6. Pupils' competences in recording their work and results are hampered by the too frequent use of prepared worksheets that reduce their opportunities for independent work and learning. This shortcoming is particularly evident in Year 5.
10. Standards in ICT are average at the ages of 7 and 11. Achievement is satisfactory. There are improved standards since the previous inspection. By the age of 7, pupils are skilfully collecting and storing information and presenting their information in a variety of ways. By the age of 11, the skills of higher attaining pupils have not developed systematically, for instance, through the development of their skills to exchange information with others.

Opportunities to raise standards further are missed because there are insufficient opportunities to use skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects across the curriculum.

11. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory. This is better than at the last inspection, owing to improvements:
 - in the quality and amount of resources, particularly the artefacts for multi-faith work;
 - in the amount of work and regularity of lessons.
 7-year-olds have a sound understanding of the stories, symbols and beliefs of Christianity. By the age of 11, knowledge and understanding are soundly built on to develop an appreciation of other religions and the similarities and differences with Christianity. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
12. In other subjects, standards in geography and history are average and achievement is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their work and their behaviour is satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is average and punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils have good attitudes to their learning and they are interested in school life;
- Pupils are willing to take responsibility;
- The school has good procedures to promote average and improving attendance.

Commentary

13. There has been overall improvement in pupils' attitudes and attendance. The school has also improved the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
14. The majority of pupils like to come to school and they enjoy their lessons. They say that their teachers make lessons interesting and expect them to work hard and that they discover new and interesting information. The good role models of the vast majority of adults in school result in the mostly good relationships seen, particularly in classrooms. Pupils respond well and show respect for the values and feelings of others. The race equality policy is appropriate and successful and plays a significant part in developing pupils' values and understanding. Pupils are polite to visitors and are happy to show their work and talk about their experiences in school. The majority of pupils behave well in all areas of the school. However, attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory when the quality of teaching is weak, and sometimes poor, as was seen in the Year 5 class.

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	85	2	0
Mixed-White and Asian	1	0	0

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

15. The school develops pupils' social and moral development well. Pupils clearly know what is right and wrong, the school rules and that bullying or other inappropriate harassment will not be tolerated by the school. The school often supports charities to raise pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are given responsibilities through monitoring roles, such as preparing for assemblies or supporting younger pupils at lunchtime and in the classrooms when the weather does not allow outside playtimes. The school council develops the pupils' knowledge of citizenship and they have so far raised money for a school camera and they are currently writing to the catering provider about the quality of the school lunches. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.5
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.

16. The appointment of the new administrative assistant has introduced tighter monitoring procedures for attendance. Same day contact with parents ensures the school obtains reasons for absence and the introduction of an electronic registration database results in more accurate information on the overall attendance of individual pupils. Systems are new, so their impact is not yet clear, but the school is working hard to promote good attendance of all pupils and to encourage parents to ensure their children attend regularly. Pupils regularly arrive at school on time and this enables a smooth and uninterrupted start to the school day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The best quality is in reception and Years 1, 2 and 6, but teaching is weak and occasionally poor in Year 5. The school takes good care of its pupils.

Teaching and learning

Overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practice has improved since the last inspection in the reception and Year 1 and 2 class and is now good;
- Teaching in Year 6 is good;
- The quality of teaching and learning in Year 5 is unsatisfactory;
- Although the school has adequate procedures for assessing pupils' work, the use of the information is weak in Years 3 to 5.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	11	7	3	1	0

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

17. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved for pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2. However, in Years 3 to 6, the overall picture is worse than at the time of the last inspection, with a quarter of the lessons observed being unsatisfactory or poor. Nevertheless, there is more good teaching and the majority of this effective work was in Year 6 and taught by the headteacher.
18. Each pupil with special educational needs has a clear individual education plan which sets out precisely the targets they need to achieve, to help them overcome the difficulties they have in their learning. Work is usually closely matched to the pupils' needs when working individually or in small groups. As a result, the pace of learning for these pupils is good and because they gain success, their confidence and self-esteem improves.
19. Teaching in the reception class and Year 1 and 2 class is good. Owing to the large range of ages, maturity and attainment levels, the overriding strength in practice is the very good planning. This is very strong and ensures that all pupils work at the right level of challenge. The teacher and assistant are successful in encouraging pupils to work hard and make good progress at learning the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and number. Lessons have a brisk pace and all pupils are engaged by the adults through good questioning and tasks that are matched to the individual. For Year 2 pupils this is evident in the way that they are expected to explain their thinking, as in the mathematics lesson when they explained their strategies for successfully working out the number of paving stones around a pond. Good behaviour is a requirement that is achieved.
20. In Years 3 to 6, the overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. The strongest practice is in Year 6 where the teaching of the headteacher is good. The main strengths of her work are:
- the good level of planning that leads to strong challenges for pupils;
 - the good, incisive questioning that brings all pupils into the lesson;
 - the brisk pace that ensures a lot of work is done by all pupils;
 - the good use of resources, as in the religious education lesson where the computer graphics were used to illustrate the main facts about values and responsibilities.
- However, the one area where this level of challenge is less effective is in mathematics, and most particularly for the higher attaining pupils. These pupils are not given hard enough work.
21. The teaching in Year 5 is unsatisfactory and occasionally poor. The weaknesses in the teaching are:
- insufficient preparation for lessons, particularly in physical education;
 - content is not challenging enough to engage the pupils fully;
 - management and control of pupils is poor and this leads to unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes to work and a marked lack of rapport between teacher and pupils.
22. Given that the school has adequate procedures for assessing pupils' work in many subjects and records are detailed, the inconsistent use of the information is a weakness in too many classes. Where the use of assessment information is strong, in reception and Years 1, 2 and 6, the data provides the teachers with helpful guidance to plan lessons that meet individual pupils' requirements. However, in Years 3 to 5, the information is not used well and leads to lessons that lack challenge and fail to interest pupils fully. There are also examples of work not being marked, or the marking being little more than a 'tick' with insufficient guidance. Too often the lack of appropriate use is a weakness that shows itself in the overuse of prepared worksheets and lack of consistent match to pupils' prior work. In the main, pupils with special educational needs have an early assessment and the school works hard to ensure that each pupil receives well tailored, academic and personal support.

However, the outcome does not always amount to good teaching and an unsatisfactory session was observed for some Year 5 pupils receiving extra literacy support.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school offers a good range of opportunities that enrich pupils' interests and talents. The quality of the school's accommodation has improved since the previous inspection and is satisfactory. Resources are adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in Foundation Stage (reception) is good;
- Additional opportunities add interest and bring topics studied to life;
- There is good provision for pupils with additional or different needs in learning;
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is effective;
- There are good arrangements in place to support the youngest children as they start school and for pupils at the point of transfer to secondary education;
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their reading, writing, mathematics and ICT skills in other subjects;
- Outdoor facilities are unsatisfactory for children in reception.

Commentary

23. Since the last inspection, improvements have started to re-vitalise the curriculum. For example, there are some well planned inter-year group activities such as the 'Out of the Box' experience that provide pupils with experiences of team work and problem solving activities. In addition, the school organises lots of sporting opportunities between schools and for pupils in Year 6, this adds to the wealth of activities that support their transfer to the next stage of education. Moreover, improvements in the curriculum for infants this academic year are beginning to quicken pupils' grasp of new knowledge and skills. Previous shortcomings have been dealt with. Now, the school plans for all the requirements of the National Curriculum but there is still some way to go. In the juniors, in particular, improvements have stopped short of ensuring that plans for each subject are precisely tailored to the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment.
24. Children in reception benefit from the range of experiences that are carefully planned for their needs. Mini topics link all the areas of learning for this stage of their education and these very well organised activities fit remarkably well alongside those for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Activities provide continuous challenge and support for reception children. Good links with families as children start school mean that they get off to a good start to school life. However, the lack of an outdoor area for these children slows the pace at which they develop physical strength and mobility skills and limits the experiences that adults can plan.
25. Pupils with additional or different needs in learning are identified early and plans ensure that activities help pupils to reach their targets quickly. Children's programmes of work link well to their individual education action plans and help them to be included in all activities, whatever their difficulties.
26. Class sessions in which pupils share discussions provide effectively for PSHE but there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their reading, writing, mathematics and ICT skills in other subjects. This seriously limits how much pupils can achieve, especially those who are more able.

27. The new school hall ensures that pupils have much improved provision for their activities. Indoor lessons in physical education take place now as well as a greater variety of activities, such as shared musical sessions. The hall is reasonably flexible in use and provides enough space and natural light for a good range of activities. Pupils say they are pleased to use it even though poor acoustics affect the quality of speaking, listening and music. The school grounds provide satisfactory areas for activities for infant and junior pupils, a highlight being the Millennium garden. The school has enough resources for teaching and learning, now that the new equipment and resources for children in reception are suitable for their needs and resources for ICT are improving.

Care, guidance and support

There is good provision for pupils' welfare in a caring learning environment for the pupils. Pupils are given satisfactory support, advice and guidance, as a result of monitoring their achievements. There are good systems in place to gather the views and ideas of the pupils. This is overall an area of improvement since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are well provided for and they are supported well as they enter the school;
- Pupils feel happy and safe;
- Pupils feel confident to approach an adult in the school if they have worries or concerns;
- Pupils' views and ideas are valued and acted on;
- Support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is effective and improving.

Commentary

28. The clear procedures that are in place for health, safety and child protection ensure that the school provides pupils with a good environment to learn and develop into mature adults. Young children are carefully introduced to school life as they settle into the daily routines of the school. Systems are in place and followed to ensure the smooth integration of pupils from other schools mid-term who are often supported by a 'buddy' to help them settle quickly to the new routines. The school is sensitive to the individual needs of all its pupils and works hard to ensure that they are fully met. There are limited storage facilities for equipment and this creates a potential hazard in the newly built school hall, particularly during physical education sessions. For example, equipment such as a heated food trolley, tables and chairs significantly reduces the amount of floor space available. Staff are vigilant and make the pupils aware of the dangers.
29. Pupils feel confident that adults will listen to their worries and concerns and action will be taken to help them and this has a positive impact on the good relationships seen in the school. The pupils in Year 6 are full of praise for the headteacher because they know she will find time to talk with them and try to iron out any difficulties. Many parents feel the school has a family atmosphere, which enables pupils to feel comfortable discussing any sensitive issues which they may have. Pupils also state that both sides of a disagreement are listened to and then dealt with firmly but fairly and that bullying or harassment rarely occurs.
30. The headteacher ensures that the school gathers the views of pupils through questionnaires and the school council. Pupils' views are listened to, often by the headteacher herself at meetings of the council, and acted upon appropriately, such as the request for a school bell rather than a whistle, or having the heating turned up in the school hall during the inclement weather.

31. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are reviewed regularly by the special needs co-ordinator, who writes and amends them. Revised targets are set for pupils that are based on the detailed information relating to their achievements and rate of progress. The school maintains good pastoral care for these pupils. Parents are invited to participate in the drawing up of these plans and in the reviews, which are monitored by the special needs co-ordinator supported by the headteacher. Staff involved in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs use the targets set in the individual plans to guide pupils' learning. The headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator have instituted a gifted and talented register and the pupils are fully involved in setting targets for themselves.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community. There are good links with other local schools. The judgements for this area of the school remain the same as for the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many parents have positive views about the work of the school;
- Limited information is given to parents on the curriculum being taught in the lessons and how parents can support their children in future learning;
- There is a wide range of links with other local schools;
- There is a small, but significant, number of parents who are resistant to changes brought about by the headteacher.

Commentary

32. Most parents are positive about the good quality of teaching, the good progress that their children are making and the good leadership and management of the school. Furthermore, they recognise that their children are expected to work hard and grow into mature people and that the arrangements for introducing their children into the school are effective. Inspectors agree that teaching is good for most pupils and that in these classes most pupils progress well. Evidence also points to good arrangements being in place for introducing the youngest children into the school and that pupils develop well and maturely. However, there is room for improvement in relation to leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning is weak in Year 5.
33. Weekly newsletters are sent home to parents that keep them fully informed about routines and events in school. There is an 'open door' policy that enables parents to speak to staff throughout the school year if they have queries or concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and supported, which ensures that they are able to contribute effectively to their child's action plan and are aware of how they can help their child. Questionnaires are often sent home to gather the views of parents. Parents are invited in to join in a wide range of activities, such as productions, class assemblies, consultation evenings, information sessions on literacy and numeracy and sports days. However, they receive little information on the topics and curriculum that their children are studying to enable them to be of help and give support. Parents receive a written report annually that is variable in quality because of a lack of clarity about:
- how they can support their child in the next step of their learning;
 - clear areas for development or targets;
 - how well their child is achieving and progressing.

34. The school joins neighbouring primary schools, such as Lowca and Parton, for visits to a local museum, work on the Victorian Walled Garden project and visiting theatrical productions. The links with Whitehaven School are strong and contribute well to transition arrangements, with:
- Year 7 teachers visiting to work with Year 6 pupils on mathematics;
 - Year 6 pupils visiting the secondary school for French and drama sessions.
- The pupils also talk about a performance at the secondary school on racial equality that they had clearly enjoyed and that had an effect on them.
35. At the parents' meeting with inspectors and in notes received with the questionnaires returned, a small proportion of respondents are clearly unhappy with some of the work being done by the headteacher. Examples of the issues raised are:
- the 'arrogance' shown by the headteacher;
 - the unwillingness of the headteacher to continue with the previously strong bond with the community.
- Inspection evidence does not point to these types of objection being well founded. More damaging is the fact that comments are in the terms of personal attacks on the headteacher, rather than challenging her professional competence. The governing body has failed to investigate adequately these claims and deal with them on their merits. Consequently, they have formed a barrier to management and raising standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. Leadership is good. Management is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership;
- The leadership and management of special educational needs and the Foundation Stage (reception class) are good;
- Overall, the monitoring and evaluating of standards and teaching are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

36. In the relatively short time that she has been in the school, the headteacher has developed a clear vision for the school and is rightly committed to the further improvement of teaching, standards and achievement. She has focused her aims and strong sense of direction towards raising standards for both pupils' learning and personal development needs. She leads by example in providing an effective role model as a member of the teaching staff and in taking over the subject leadership of mathematics, which is in need of improvement. She is well supported by the experienced teacher with responsibility for the Foundation Stage and special needs, who has also had a period as acting headteacher in the school. They are both good teachers who provide effective role models for others and together they are forging a strong team to bring about improvement. All of these positives are being challenged by entrenched attitudes in small parts of the community and events, such as the need to make a teacher redundant soon after the headteacher arrived. Despite evidence of personal animosity toward her, she is maintaining her vision and working hard to promote change and improvement.

37. However, there are significant barriers to the headteacher effectively managing the school and thus to raising further the standards and achievement. The most significant barriers are:
- her teaching commitment is too time consuming when there are clearly issues that need resolving in teaching and standards;
 - the lack of professional mentoring early in her time as headteacher, although the local authority has since provided much more support;
 - the resistance to change shown by a small but significant number of parents and staff, which has proved extremely difficult to deal with.
- Furthermore, many of the initiatives that have been introduced have not had time to be properly evaluated.
38. As a result of these barriers to progress:
- the school's improvement plan is weak and does not accurately reflect the aims and needs of the school;
 - policies and practices are not consistently applied and have limited effect on raising standards;
 - good intentions are not always followed through;
 - the performance management of staff is not accurately linked to the improvement of the school;
 - the training and development of staff lacks a sharp focus and is not evaluated.
39. The management team has begun to focus clearly on using performance information to plan appropriately to improve key areas of the school and raise standards in teaching and learning, curriculum planning and assessment. However, procedures for accurately judging the success of this work on raising achievement are not focused and reviews of previous actions are not used in planning the future direction of the school. Only in the Foundation Stage, Years 1, 2 and 6 and in special educational needs do the teachers have the skills to make accurate judgements on the quality of what is taught and how well pupils are learning. In these well led areas, planning and action are based on clear and accurate judgements of what the pupils need to learn and how they should be taught.
40. The school's provision for children with special educational needs is particularly well led and managed and good progress has been made from the last inspection. There is an accurate understanding of strengths and priority areas for improvement, such as increasing the progress for gifted and talented pupils are clearly identified and planned for.
41. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities in terms of policies in place, but the impact of its work on raising standards requires immediate attention. Although highly supportive and committed to providing the best for the pupils, they have failed to provide a clear and corporate understanding of their responsibilities, or to define and implement the necessary procedures for carrying them out in practice. Their aims and vision for what they want to achieve for the pupils are not specific enough to provide a clear direction for the work of the school. As a result, their understanding of strengths and weaknesses and how well the school is performing is weak, which means that governors are unable to act as a critical friend or hold the school to account for the standards it achieves.
42. Recent changes, often instigated by the headteacher, to the way the governing body operates, such as a new committee structure with terms of reference and a more detailed approach to monitoring the school improvement plan, are positive moves towards bringing about a more organised and systematic way of working. Systems are in place to ensure that money is targeted towards the school's priorities and the budget is monitored carefully by governors. The recently appointed administrative assistant is having a positive impact by checking vigilantly the levels of spending, and plans are in place to provide detailed monthly spending reports to all governors on a regular basis. Extra funding has been used

effectively to improve the school building with the addition of a new school hall. However, insufficient space has led to health and safety issues in storing equipment in areas where pupils are doing their physical education lessons.

43. The anticipated surplus in the budget for the current year is in line with recommendations on school finances but judgements on how effectively spending is used are not fully developed in the process of decision making by governors. The school obtains and uses well the grant funding from as many different sources as possible. For example, it is working with other local centres to develop a community computer facility in the new school hall. Although the school has adequate procedures and practices to obtain best value when purchasing supplies and services, the school does not effectively obtain, or provide, best value for money because, for example:

- insufficient attention is paid to actively comparing the cost of goods and services and evaluating how effectively the money was spent;
- the process of evaluation is not focused on the pursuit of the highest quality of teaching and how this is achieved and maintained.

The headteacher is leading the school towards the position where these essential structures are in place, but some governors are slow to recognise that this, often detailed, work is part of their responsibility.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	203117
Total expenditure	241250
Expenditure per pupil	2681

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	32463
Balance carried forward to the next	3310

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception children) is good. The curriculum for this stage of education has improved significantly but the provision for outdoor activities has not been fully resolved. Children in reception are taught in a mixed-age class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Attainment of the very youngest children varies significantly from year-to-year, as do the numbers. In this very small year group (5 children) the full range of abilities are represented. When children start in the reception class, their skills and knowledge in most areas of learning are below those typical for their age. During their time in reception children achieve well in all but one of the areas of learning. The provision for physical development is improving rapidly but is adversely affected by the lack of an outdoor area. Checks made by the school of children's progress indicate that children may not achieve as quickly as they could in some aspects of physical development.
45. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths in teaching include well designed sessions where adults enable children to develop their early skills of reading, writing, number and ideas about the world. Adults are developing skills themselves to match significant improvements in the curriculum this academic year and this is enriching children's experiences. The small team promotes a climate of calm and trust by skilfully spending time with the small group of children to encourage learning. As a result, children are keen to play and to work alongside others including older infants. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those where children choose for themselves. Most of these experiences are challenging and free choice activities are engaging though not linked into topics at this early, but positive, stage of planning. By the time they leave the reception year, children are well prepared to step into the increasingly challenging work expected of the Year 1 and 2 pupils. This is mainly because adults keep a close eye on children's achievements and provide a well painted picture of each child's development in comprehensive records.
46. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is strong and management is particularly successful. The leadership of this stage of children's education brings a vibrancy and sparkle to children's daily lives in school. The teacher acts as a very good role model for the children and together with other adults creates a positive ethos that permeates the early years, even though huge changes to organisation and planning have been an additional burden.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff develop the children's trust and confidence really well;
- Children's moral and social development is strong;
- Opportunities for shared work and play with older ones means that children quickly develop mature attitudes to learning.

Commentary

47. Teachers take account of pupils' individual needs and help them to build well on the skills they bring to school on starting. Year 1 and 2 children behave as good role models and this helps the younger children to develop sensible attitudes. Reception children are confident enough to share resources, take turns and change their clothing for themselves. They know

the boundaries for behaviour and cope confidently and well with the needs of other pupils who have different learning needs. Moreover, they learn to deal with new situations without stress in this caring classroom. They are well aware of the class routines and feel happy and secure in their environment. The weakness in the school's outdoor provision limits the opportunities for children to expand their experiences far enough.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop good early skills for reading and writing, show a pleasing attitude towards books and some interest in writing for themselves;
- Children listen well to others and chat together, taking turns;
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

48. Most of this very small number of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They gain an idea of what is happening in stories and books and use this to gauge meanings well. One or two children can spell some simple three-letter words and write a sentence independently. Teaching is very closely focused on their individual needs. The closeness of this small world, where the children learn together but with older pupils around, means that they learn to listen and talk with familiarity and trust. Adults support writing skills soundly and encourage children to see what they have achieved.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve well in their understanding of number and those capable are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals;
- Planned activities are interesting and help children to understand mathematical ideas well;
- Teaching is closely linked to learning needs. Achievement is measured thoroughly and this information is used to move children on.

Commentary

49. Adults provide children with practical activities and effective ways for them to develop their understanding of number. Children gain confidence and learn how to deal with '3 more than' using numbers to 20. One or two children can count beyond ten and recognise patterns of 10 with Year 1 and 2 pupils. Planning shows that work is carefully designed to build on what children know by creating exciting experiences to explore mathematical ideas, for example through water play and linked activities. The new hall is well used by staff to help children develop an understanding of space, shape and distance as they travel through and over shapes they have built together.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

50. No judgment could be made about the provision in this area of learning but in ICT children make good progress. Teaching plans indicate that good links are made across the different aspects of this area of learning and this is reflected in the previously mentioned topic of 'Water'. This strong planning helps children to make connections between their existing knowledge and that of the wider world. Adults provide good support for children by guiding them thoughtfully to gain as they explore for themselves and in situations that demand concentration. Very well managed sessions using computers and technological resources lead children well into thinking logically. They achieve well in these experiences. In one example, children used a floor robotic device and programmed it exactly and quickly to proceed a short distance towards a three-dimensional cardboard character from a storybook.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their manipulative skills well;
- Opportunities in the new school hall bring out children's good ideas for traveling and working on soft equipment;
- There are few resources for developing children's strength, mobility and stamina on large equipment outdoors.

Commentary

51. Children are given plenty of opportunities to use small tools and materials. They show skills and control that are typical for their age, for example, when they manipulate materials and handle small figures. Opportunities in the school hall show that children have imaginative ideas for travelling through and around soft equipment that they have built into obstacles and pathways. The newly purchased resources include scooters and equipment for climbing and scrambling. Overall, and despite improvements, this provision is unsatisfactory and children do not achieve as well or as quickly as they could.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

52. No judgment could be made about provision in creative development. Evidence from children's activities in play in the hall and using small world figures indicates that children are very engaged in their experiences and gain from planned sessions that fire their imaginations. There are good opportunities for role play and most children play imaginatively and purposefully together. Children thoroughly enjoy participating in singing and most can tap out the syllables of their name to the rhythm of a familiar song.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are above average;
- National test results have improved;
- The quality of reading by the highest attaining pupils is good;
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 2 and 6 is a strength;
- Extra literacy provision in Year 5 is not good enough;
- The use of literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory;
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

53. In national tests, results in 2003 were much better than those in the last report for 1997. Standards seen during the inspection are similar to those observed at the time of the last inspection. The programme of work is an improvement because detailed schemes of work are now in place.
54. By the age of 7, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average, with most pupils reaching the standard expected for their age. Pupils listen well and speak clearly in a range of activities, such as in an interview role play relating to geography work about the Island of Struay. Reading standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils are very accurate, fluent and expressive readers who understand the books they read. They have good attitudes to reading and talk about their favourite author with relish. Lower attaining pupils know their sounds and are beginning to read with greater expression. Writing skills are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have sound basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Higher attaining pupils are developing a good style that is structured to provide the reader with good description and information that sustains their interest.
55. By the age of 11, overall standards are below average because there are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. In response to these difficulties, the school has identified pupils who need extra support and this is available through regular small group work away from the full class. Most pupils speak and listen well and these oracy skills are developed across a range of subjects and in interesting contexts. In reading, the highest attaining pupils are mature readers who enjoy a wide range of authors and describe well the variety of strengths they show. These pupils are very accurate, fluent and expressive readers who can talk at length about plot and characters. Most pupils have sound library skills that enable them to find information. Writing skills are sound overall. Pupils make a good attempt at interesting the reader, through the use of detail and accurate vocabulary. For example, a higher attaining pupil wrote: 'the key character was not Ali, but Cal her supposed friend.' These pupils manage to write well in a range of styles and use the conventions they have been taught to good effect, such as the proper use of connecting words.

56. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This covers a range of lessons from very good to unsatisfactory. The best teaching was observed in Years 2 and 6. The strengths in these two classes are similar, for instance:
- lesson planning is very thorough and the learning intentions are challenging and lead to good achievement;
 - teachers and classroom assistants know their subject well and this leads to good questioning and use of vocabulary. Pupils respond well to these models and discussions are animated and informative;
 - management and control are very good and are helped by the brisk pace and challenging discussions that take place;
 - opportunities to consolidate basic skills are plentiful, such as discussion in Year 6 about the effect of the use of a colon in the studied poem.
- In these classes, pupils are supported well, regardless of their prior levels of attainment. However, those with special educational needs receive particularly robust help that enables them to achieve consistently well.
57. The unsatisfactory session was part of the programme of extra literacy support for a group of pupils in Year 5. The main shortcomings were:
- insufficient opportunities for pupils to provide their views and ideas;
 - evidence of work not being marked;
 - a minority of pupils are allowed to dominate discussions, to the exclusion of others who become a little distracted.
58. The co-ordinator has insufficient knowledge of standards and the quality of teaching. The curriculum is improved well by visits to a local museum and a theatre visit that explores attitudes to racism.

The use of language and literacy across the curriculum

59. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop literacy skills across the curriculum. However, the co-ordinator is aware that the use of literacy is weak and that the main reasons for this are:
- the overuse of prepared worksheets that limits writing opportunities;
 - the need to develop all pupils' skills at finding information from the library.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average for pupils aged 11;
- The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory, particularly for the higher attaining pupils;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress;
- Pupils are well taught in Years 1 and 2;
- The rate of progress for boys is too slow;
- Older pupils are not confident in using and applying their knowledge in mental arithmetic and problem solving;
- Better use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics;
- The development of mathematics across the curriculum is not consistent.

Commentary

60. Although the school has small numbers of pupils taking the national tests each year, the school's performance at the age of 7, over time, shows standards to be in line with those of similar schools. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged and challenged by effective teaching, so that by the age of 7 all groups are making steady progress. The rate of progress for children in Years 3 to 6 is not well developed so that by the age of 11, pupils achieve less well than those in similar settings. Pupils capable of working at higher levels are not sufficiently challenged in their work, because of low expectations and inconsistent assessment of their needs, resulting in low levels of achievement and progress. This is also true of boys' achievement because they are capable of learning at a faster rate but do not, owing to a lack of demanding and stimulating activities in lessons. Pupils with additional needs are well supported, with careful planning and accurate judgements of what they need to learn, which enables them to make good progress.
61. The quality of teaching and learning from reception to Year 2 is very good. The curriculum is planned effectively towards the needs of the children, with opportunities for independent thinking in problem solving situations. For example, Year 2 children were able to investigate number patterns by calculating the number of paving stones required by a character in a storybook and were able to understand the link between making an estimate and carrying out a test. Teachers' expectations of pupils and the way they engage all children in developing their understanding through effective questioning are strong features of lessons. As a result, pupils show positive attitudes to their work and apply themselves well.
62. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils aged 7 to 11 is satisfactory overall, with pupils in some classes making more progress than others. This is due to teachers not always securing an accurate match between the activities set and the level of attainment of the pupil. Some tasks are too easy and lack a balance of independent and investigative activities to engage fully the interest of the children. For example, there is an over use of published worksheets which leads to learning not always progressing at a fast enough pace. Across the junior classes, teaching was judged to be good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. However, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in Year 5, where progress and achievement are held back by the teacher's lack of confidence and subject knowledge. This led to insufficient attention being paid to the individual needs of the pupils by clearly identifying what they needed to learn and how they should be taught. Where teaching is strong, teachers plan effectively, develop the children's thinking with effective questioning and promote the use of mathematical language to extend learning and deepen understanding. The next step in developing skills is clear, with effective use made of the beginning and end of the lessons to discuss what the children will be learning and how successful they have been. For example, in Year 6, pupils were encouraged to gain confidence in their ability to use different methods in multiplication by careful prompting and questioning at the start of the lesson.
63. Opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge in problem solving situations, using a wide range of resources such as ICT, are not fully developed. Consequently, the children's skills in mental, oral and investigative activities are weak.
64. The marking of pupils' work lacks consistency in some classes, where teachers' comments are not always informing the children of how they need to improve their work.
65. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum leader has made a positive start in identifying strengths and weaknesses with the scrutiny of standards in mental and oral activities. This is a positive start, but it is too early to see the impact on achievement and standards. Plans are in place to track the progress of pupils in their understanding of written calculations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Pupils use their measuring and calculating skills when carrying out experiments in science. Pupils in Year 2 were given the opportunity to estimate distances and angles with the aid of remote controlled cars, and dictaphones to interview and question each other. However, too few opportunities are available for children to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Year 6 has strengths in the focus on investigative work;
- Pupils with additional or different learning needs are well supported;
- Not enough pupils in the juniors are sufficiently challenged by the work set for them;
- Leadership is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

67. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make steady progress and the work seen demonstrates that almost all are close to the national standard at the age of 7. Pupils' books and lessons seen show that attainment in Year 6 is below that seen typically because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards have risen a little at the point of transfer to secondary education since the last inspection, despite fluctuating numbers of pupils in each year and pupils have achieved soundly overall. However, standards in investigative work have improved a great deal in Year 6, as a result of the enthusiasm and impetus of the subject leader. This improvement is not matched consistently throughout the junior years where few pupils work at the higher level.
68. By the time they are 7, pupils know about materials and can identify some of their characteristics. In the best practice seen, pupils in Year 2 examined the materials that might be used to build the house of the 'Three Little Pigs'. Pupils decided, after much concern, that steel mesh and iron bars for the windows would be a suitable source of strength. However, these effective teaching events are not employed often enough to challenge pupils regularly, in particular the higher attaining pupils, to make generalisations based on their investigations. There are too few examples of pupils recording their findings for themselves, with an overuse of published worksheets that reduces the number of opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.
69. The reliance on prepared worksheets is more obvious in the junior classes and is reflected in the few occasions for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 to record their findings for themselves. Where some thought has gone into teaching plans, pupils' work is richer because they begin to follow their own lines of enquiry, using questions to help them to organise their thoughts and feed their curiosity. In one inspiring example that enlivened the subject, Year 3/4 pupils examined particles of moon rock and, with support, deduced from information about the type of rock that it must have come from volcanic mountains of the moon.
70. Leadership has accelerated progress in Year 6 but has had little impact on the work in the school as a whole and as such is unsatisfactory. The subject is beginning to develop but the pace is too slow. The development of investigations has indeed helped pupils in Year 6 to gain a deeper understanding of scientific knowledge but the limited amount of writing in the subject does not match the level of pupils' literacy skills. They could achieve more.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection;
- The skills and confidence of staff are much improved;
- The achievement of higher attaining pupils' is not high enough;
- Some strands of the subject are underdeveloped;
- Pupils' use of ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

71. Standards are broadly in line with the national average at the ages of 7 and 11. This represents a steady improvement from the time of the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. This has been achieved by a combination of increasing teachers' expertise through specific training programmes, and in the provision of new resources across the school. As a result, teachers are increasingly confident with the equipment and the software they use and this, in turn, instils confidence in the pupils, who like this subject. Pupils aged five to seven achieve soundly and make steady progress in collecting and storing information and redesigning and changing their work. They show confidence in investigating various forms of presentation using a variety of tools. For example, children in Year 2 were given opportunities to develop their understanding by exploring the use of story tapes, dictaphones and remote controlled vehicles.
72. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make steady progress in their learning. They have experience of searching and making judgements on information using the internet to draw conclusions and show increasing confidence in developing their own ideas in assembling and organising their work, using a range of word processing and programming skills. However, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged with carefully focused activities to extend their learning and deepen their understanding. There are too few opportunities for pupils to exchange and share information by the use of e-mail, to foster links with pupils from other schools. Pupils' skills are not always developed and built upon in a systematic way. For example, pupils are able to prepare and organise information using a range of appropriate resources, but are less confident at making judgements on how effective they have been and how they could improve their work as it progresses.
73. The curriculum co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. He has succeeded in increasing staff confidence through support and training, has established an after school Internet club and has a clear plan of action for moving the subject forward. The upgrading of the network and resources, developing e-mail skills by establishing links and improving skills across other areas of learning are all, rightly, identified as priorities. The subject leader has also completed the design of the school's website, which will provide parents with a range of valuable information as well highlighting good examples of children's work. The checking of standards by reviewing and judging the quality of pupils' work is at an early stage, as the role of the subject leader has been neglected by the management of the school. The school has plans in place to develop a community resource facility, located in the new school hall, which will extend and enhance provision in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The school is at an early stage of using ICT to support learning across the curriculum. As a result, there are too few opportunities identified where pupils are able to use and apply their skills in other areas such as literacy and numeracy. There is a shortage of software to

support this work, such as insufficient programs in mathematics, although the school is working hard to identify gaps and add new resources. In English, pupils word process pieces of their work for display and are developing their skills in the use of editing tools. In mathematics, samples of work seen in Year 2 include the use of a range of remote controlled resources to explore distances and angles. In science, a multimedia presentation used labelled diagrams on the human skeleton. The children are not yet provided with a range of opportunities to use digital photography and data logging equipment.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements since the last inspection;
- The good links between religious education and personal development;
- The good teaching observed during the inspection;
- Subject co-ordination is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

75. Attainment, achievement and provision have improved from the last inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. The main reasons for this improvement are:
- appropriate allocation of teaching time;
 - a curriculum that is linked to personal and social education, as guided by the locally agreed syllabus;
 - the greater interest of pupils.
76. By the age of 7, standards meet the expected level as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a sound grounding in stories, practices, symbols and values of Christianity. There are good links to personal development and these are enhanced by useful circle time (class discussions) and role play sessions that explore a range of issues.
77. By the age of 11, standards meet the expected standard and achievement is satisfactory. The focus of work is appropriately broadened to include multi-faith work in religions such as Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Often, personal development issues, such as leadership, are illustrated from the values and beliefs of religious leaders, such as Guru Nanak and Buddha. Good links are explored between religions, for example the common ground between the Old Testament and Jewish scriptures.
78. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The strengths of the lessons in Years 3 and 4 and Year 6 were:
- good planning that places the emphasis on uncovering pupils' views through good questioning. This consolidates previous learning and illuminates what they already know and what they need to know;
 - good use of resources, particularly the use of ICT in Year 6, that illustrate civic values. Pupils respond well and benefit from the clarity of information shown in the graphics;
 - good management and control that enable pupils to have a full say in a mature context. This provides a good role model for the pupils.

As a result of this effective teaching, religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

79. The co-ordinator has insufficient knowledge of standards in the school or the quality of teaching and learning. There is a sound range of resources, but better than this are the artefacts for multi-faith work and those that make good links between religious education and art.
80. In **geography and history**, inspectors saw one lesson in history and none in geography. They looked at the work that pupils had already done in these subjects and the plans for teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement is broadly typical of that of pupils at the age of 11. Infant pupils show a well rounded understanding of island life from their thoughtful discussion work about an imaginary island. In the junior classes, pupils' work indicates that the subject is covered well enough, but overuse of worksheets for pupils to record their thoughts brings a mediocrity to activities that hampers pupils' achievement. However, geographical fieldwork activities use and extend pupils' knowledge and make good use of their first-hand experience of the coastline. In addition, studies such as that of the River Calder, undertaken by pupils in Year 6, promote robust geographical thinking as a result of questions posed by teachers such as 'Do you think the boundary between fields 65 and 748 is still there?' These strong teaching points are not developed well enough through the use of ICT to enable pupils to search, record and interrogate knowledge to the level essential for juniors. Similarly, in history evidence on wall displays reflects a more interesting curriculum than that in pupils' work which, again, is dominated by worksheets that neither develop genuine historical enquiry nor are informed by what pupils know.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in **art and design** and **design technology** and there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision, standards, achievement and teaching.

In **physical education**, only one lesson was observed and there were discussions with pupils and staff. It is, therefore, not possible to make secure judgements about standards, achievement and provision. The school now benefits from the recently built hall, particularly in the ability to teach gymnastics. However, care must be taken in the hall because the available space is much restricted by equipment, such as musical instruments, apparatus for physical education and dining tables.

In discussions, it is clear that the range of sporting activities is good and that the school competes well against other schools. The co-ordinator is keen to maintain these standards and has enlisted, for example, parents to help in the coaching. He also recognises rightly that the scheme of work needs to be updated. Links with Whitehaven School are good, particularly in the development of orienteering.

The quality of teaching in the Year 5 lesson was poor. Although the lesson started with a useful warm-up and appropriate warnings about safety because of obstacles, the content, control and challenge of the lesson were very weak. In particular:

- the teacher showed very weak subject knowledge and understanding;
- planning was very weak and, as a result, pupils worked nowhere near their capacity;
- management and control were poor and this led to pupils taking no notice and behaving badly.

The teacher had not prepared for this lesson and, as a result, pupils learned nothing. The lesson was abandoned after 25 minutes.

In **music**, the school has improved its provision; that pupils value this can be seen in:

- the pleasure, achievement and skill gained by pupils, as a result of specialist subject knowledge;
- the promotion of strong links with other schools;
- the developing cultural richness of the music appreciation.

No lessons were seen during the inspection but the school's gamelan ensemble played in an assembly, having improvised and performed in a National Festival of Music for Youth with other schools locally. Their five short pieces based on stories of a mouse, deer and tiger showed imagination and rhythm that reflected the instruments very well. Pupils present benefited from the insight into the musical colours of a non-European culture. In addition, evidence seen shows that singing in the school is tuneful and pupils sing with a clarity of diction and with good timing. Pupils use their skills in annual performances and these are well received by parents and the community. Specialist teaching ensures that all pupils take part in music lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good assemblies provide helpful insights into a range of social and moral issues;
- Links with the religious education programme are good;
- The school has an effective council.

Commentary

81. Assemblies provide many opportunities for pupils to learn about personal and social issues. During the inspection, pupils participated in discussions about what they find difficult and how they can overcome the challenges with which they are confronted. The importance of these sessions is the level of pupil participation and the way that they are encouraged to share their views and feelings. Also, 'Circle Time' (class discussions) provides further opportunities for the exploration of attitudes, behaviours and community issues.
82. Values, rights and responsibilities are important issues in the curriculum. Often this work is linked to topics in religious education and, at other times, they stand alone. Within a Year 6 lesson, two pupils identified as gifted and talented were actively encouraged to take on leadership roles in the class. This is helping to develop their skills and independence.
83. The school council meets regularly and pupils are introduced to democratic structures, such as:
 - voting;
 - choosing officers;
 - holding class meetings to garner opinions;
 - forming agendas and writing minutes.Meetings are very orderly, interesting and valuable in terms of presenting and discussing pupils' opinions.
84. In addition, the school has several involvements that illuminate social issues:
 - developing the healthy school status;
 - writing the Year 6 newspaper;
 - linking with the life education centre;
 - receiving visitors, or making visits that confront issues relating to racism.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	5

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