

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NETHER KELLET COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Carnforth

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119141

Headteacher: Mrs S Jobbins

Lead inspector: Mr J Hagan

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 256993

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:              | 75  |
| School address:              | Bridge Road<br>Nether Kellet<br>Carnforth<br>Lancashire |
| Postcode:                    | LA6 1HH   |
| Telephone number:            | 01524 733778  |
| Fax number:                  | 01524 733778  |
| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body                                      |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr S Greenwood  |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1997   |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small primary school is situated in the village of Nether Kellet, a rural location in Lancashire near to Carnforth. The school is smaller than most primary schools with 75 pupils on roll. Approximately 50 per cent of the pupils come from outside of the local village; some are from professional families and others from more disadvantaged backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (8 per cent) is well below average. Nearly all pupils are of white, British heritage. Four pupils are from families who are members of the Brethren. Children start school in the September before they are 5-years-old, and at the time of the inspection there were nine children in the reception year. Whilst the full range of ability is represented overall, when children start school, their skills and knowledge in most areas of learning are just below those typical for their age. Most children have experienced pre-school provision before they start. There are three mixed-age classes; one for children aged 4 to 7 years, and two for the junior-aged pupils. Children can spend between 2 and 3 years in the same class. There are 3 full-time and 3 part-time teachers. The percentage of children with special educational needs is below the national average; most of these have specific learning difficulties. One child has a statement for special educational needs. The school has recently gone through a very difficult and challenging period because of unexpected absence of senior staff and the resignation of an experienced teacher. Major building work has only just been completed and the local community contributed significantly to the cost of the recently built school hall.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |               |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| 1065                           | Mr J Hagan    | Lead inspector | Mathematics<br>History<br>Physical education   |
| 19446                          | Mrs S Wood    | Lay inspector  |  |
| 30724                          | Mrs D Hiscock | Team inspector | Art and design<br>Design and technology<br>Music<br>Religious education<br>Geography<br>The Foundation Stage |
| 2810                           | Mrs C McBride | Team inspector | English<br>Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Special educational needs                  |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school.** It takes good care of its pupils and provides an environment in which they can thrive and achieve well. The quality of the teaching and the curriculum the children receive is good. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. The governors and key staff contribute very effectively to the work of the school. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in science at the ages of 7 and 11 years and the school's performance in national tests in reading and mathematics at the age of 7 years is impressive;
- Children's attendance, attitudes to work and behaviour are very good; relationships are very good;
- Good teaching and secure assessment procedures mean that children are well challenged in most of their work and they make good progress;
- The head, key staff and governors work well together to overcome considerable difficulties and move the school forward;
- The school's systems for checking how well it is doing are very effective;
- The provision for physical development in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory;
- Pupils' oral language skills are weak, which hinders their achievement in writing;
- Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed but they could do better in problem solving and in accurately recording how they worked out their answers.

The school's rate of improvement since the last inspection has been good. The working conditions for staff are much improved and children's well being is also no longer adversely affected by the accommodation. Governors now meet all the legal requirements and children access the full curriculum. Pupils achieve much more in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, and standards in these subjects have risen. Whilst the school has gone through a very difficult time, which slowed the rate of progress, it has successfully continued to move on. The weaknesses identified in the provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage remain.

### 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    | B               |
| mathematics   | B           | D    | A    | A               |
| science   | A           | C    | 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.*

Because the number of children in some year groups is small, caution is needed in interpreting data as the scores of individual pupils can often distort overall results.

**Children, throughout the school, achieve well and reach average standards in most areas and subjects.** In English, children do consistently well in reading but not as well in writing and they could achieve more. Their speaking skills are not strong enough and this affects the quality of their written work. Throughout the school numeracy skills are strong, but more attention needs to be given to children's problem solving skills and opportunities for them to describe in written form how they have carried out a calculation. Standards in science are higher than test results show and they are

above average. In the other subjects of the curriculum pupils' achievement is satisfactory; they achieve well in swimming. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good; they make good progress against their difficulties; with support, they cope well with their work. Higher attainers achieve as well as they should overall, although they could do better in information and communication technology (ICT). In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well in all areas of learning and are on course to meet or exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year, except in physical development where the provision is not good enough.

**Pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.**

Attendance levels are well above average. Children are punctual. They behave really well and have very good attitudes to learning. There have been no exclusions in the last academic year.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good; teaching is good.** The pace of learning in most lessons is good because teachers have a good knowledge of each child's progress, and lessons meet the needs of the different ability groups within each class. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it effectively to support children's learning. Whilst reading is taught well, there is scope for improvement in the teaching of language skills and writing, where the rate of learning is not as strong. Pupils develop numeracy skills at a good pace, but need more practice in writing down their methods of working out; and in using their knowledge in problem solving. The school has a very successful partnership with its parents. The staff provide pupils with high levels of care, support and guidance.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management are very good. The governance of the school is good.**

Governors use their skills and expertise to good effect and fulfil their roles well. The headteacher and senior staff provide very strong leadership and ensure all children's needs are met. The school has a clear understanding of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve because there is an impressive and effective cycle of monitoring and evaluation. There is a very positive ethos that promotes an excellent atmosphere for learning.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents and pupils have very positive views about the school. Children enjoy coming to school and feel their views are taken into account. Parental confidence in the school is high; they have great trust in, and regard for, the head's leadership.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in pupils' speaking skills and the quality of their language as this limits their achievement in writing;
- Increase the amount of time pupils spend on problem solving and investigation; raise pupils' achievement in the recording of their working methods in mathematics;
- Make better provision for the physical development of pupils in the Foundation Stage.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

#### **Children throughout the school achieve well and reach average standards in most subjects.**

Standards in science are above average and pupils' achievement in this subject is good. Whilst standards in writing are average children could achieve more.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's performance in the national tests for pupils aged 7 years in reading and mathematics is impressive;
- Children achieve well in mathematics but could improve their problem solving skills and the way they record their working out;
- Pupils speaking skills and the quality of their written work could be better;
- Standards and achievements in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education have improved significantly since the last inspection;
- Standards in science are above average;
- Pupils with special needs achieve well;
- Children produce a good volume of work in most subjects;
- The children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in most areas of learning; they could achieve more in their physical development.

#### **Commentary**

1. The school's performance in the national tests for pupils aged 7 has been good and at times very good for most of the last five years. Over time, the strongest performance has been in mathematics. In the 2002 tests the school also did very well in reading where its performance was well above average when compared with all schools and in the top 10 per cent when compared with similar schools.
2. At the age of 11, the school's performance in the national tests has fluctuated, but it has kept pace with trends seen nationally. In 2002, the results were not as good as they were in 2001. Of the 15 pupils in the year group, approximately one third were identified as having special educational needs. A couple of pupils also joined the school at different stages in the juniors; they started with skills and knowledge that were at a lower level than would be expected for their age, and were not able to make up enough ground. The school's results for 2003 at the age of 11 have not yet been validated, but they indicate a much better performance than in the previous year. Virtually all pupils achieved the national Level 4, and nearly one third of them reached the higher Level 5. It is likely, therefore, that the school's performance will be good when compared with all schools and those with a similar intake.
3. Inspection findings are that most children will reach the standards expected for pupils aged 7 and 11 years in English and mathematics; in science standards are above average. In mathematics, children do very well with their number work. They are good at adding, subtracting, dividing and multiplying numbers. They are not as skilled when asked to explain in written form how they worked out a sum because until recently too little emphasis was placed on this aspect. Older juniors need more opportunities to work with percentages and across the school pupils' achievements in problem solving are not as strong as they are in other aspects of mathematics. In English, children achieve really well in reading and whilst their writing is satisfactory, they could do better. The school needs to place further emphasis on the development of children's speaking skills and improving their overall vocabulary.



4. Whilst there is a full spread of ability on entry to the school, for the last three years, overall, attainment on entry has been just below average. A particular weakness is in children's speaking skills. Children achieve well during their time in school. In the Foundation Stage (reception age children) in virtually all the areas of learning, children's achievement is good. Most of them are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception except in the area of physical development, where the provision is unsatisfactory.
5. Since the last inspection standards and pupils' achievements have improved in design and technology, art and design, music and physical education. The improvements in the accommodation now enable the school to provide children with regular dance and gymnastics lessons. Whilst the older pupils' skills are below those expected for their age in these two aspects of physical education they now make good progress and are closing the gap. In music, the appointment of a specialist teacher has helped the school to raise children's standards to a level that is typical of that seen in most schools. In art and design children's standards have improved and are now typical of those seen in most schools.
6. In swimming pupils achieve really well because of the opportunities they are given in Years 5 and 6. All of the present Year 6 have met the national expectation of being able to swim 25m by the time they leave the school.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are well supported in class and given work that is at the right level for them. The school has employed the services of a special needs teacher to provide these children with additional one to one support, and this is proving to be successful.
8. In religious education the children are achieving standards that are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. In ICT standards are average but some higher attainers could achieve more and they need a greater level of challenge during lessons.
9. In history and geography children achieve well because they cover a good volume of work. Appropriate emphasis is given to helping children to develop skills and knowledge in both subjects. In history, children's understanding of chronology is not as strong as other aspects of the subject.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 27.8 (27.4)    | 26.8 (27.0)      |
| Mathematics   | 29.0 (26.2)    | 26.8 (26.7)      |
| Science       | 28.6 (28.2)    | 28.6 (28.3)      |

*There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading       | 16.8 (18.3)    | 15.7 (15.8)      |
| Writing       | 16.8 (15.0)    | 14.6 (14.4)      |
| Mathematics   | 17.0 (17.8)    | 16.3 (16.5)      |

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

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**This is very good.** Pupils develop as mature, sensible individuals who know how to look after themselves and each other. Attendance, punctuality and behaviour are very good. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The attendance and punctuality of pupils is very good;
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and they are interested and fully engrossed in their lessons;
- Relationships are very good and underpin the very positive ethos that is evident throughout the school;
- The school's provision for moral and social development is very good;
- The pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility and to use their initiative;
- Pupils develop a sound understanding of their own cultural heritage, but more opportunities could be provided to learn about other cultures.

### **Commentary**

10. The attendance figures for the school are very good in comparison with the national figures. Pupils like to come to school. They arrive at school in good time to enable a prompt start to the school day.
11. Pupils become absorbed in their lessons. They say they like school because their teachers make lessons interesting and help them when they experience difficulty. They settle very quickly at the start of lessons and take pride in the work they produce. Pupils listen carefully to their peers and are confident to contribute their views. They work well as individuals, in pairs or in a group and show well developed co-operative skills.
12. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good and they clearly know what is expected of them. There are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour, bullying or racial harassment in the school. When they have occurred, pupils' views are that they are quickly and sensitively dealt with. Relationships throughout the school are very good, and the adults act as good role models. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility at an early age and this is nurtured throughout the school. The members of the newly formed school council have already had an impact on the life of the school through successfully negotiating the introduction of fruit juice at lunchtime. Older pupils help and support their younger peers through paired reading. They show respect for each other, the resources and buildings. Pupils are very polite to visitors and are keen to show their work and share their experiences with them.
13. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development well. Assemblies are used effectively to give children opportunities for reflection; through science lessons they also develop a fascination for the natural world and its phenomena. Good quality displays enable pupils to be proud of their work and achievements. The pupils' moral and social education is planned for effectively through the personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) programme and assembly themes. Circle times are used well to develop pupils' respect and understanding for others. The introduction of the school council and children's involvement in it is adding to the development of citizenship and responsibility. The school regularly supports charities to raise pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves such as the NSPCC and a children's hospice.
14. Opportunities are given to pupils to appreciate their own culture, through visits to the Fleetwood Museum and local churches. They take part in the Lancaster and Morecambe music festival and visit local art galleries. They are introduced to other beliefs through

religious education but they would benefit from more opportunities to study the diversity of the world's cultures.

## Attendance

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data        | 4.0 |
| National data      | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data          | 0.0 |
| National data        | 0.5 |

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

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British                             |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean           |
| Mixed – White and Asian                     |

### Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 72                   | 0                                 | 0                              |
| 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good.** There is a good curriculum and pupils are very well cared for. There are strong links with the community and good links with other schools and institutions.

### Teaching and learning

There is good teaching throughout the school, which enables all pupils to achieve well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong relationships between children and adults underpin the positive climate of trust and security;
- Teachers' assessments are accurate and well used to inform future learning;
- Work is well matched to the needs of the different ability groups;
- Teachers have high expectations;
- Good subject knowledge is well used to develop and extend children's learning;
- The teaching of numeracy is effective;
- Teachers make very good use of other adults to support children's learning.

### Commentary

15. This is a school where pupils and adults get on well together. Teaching for children in the reception class gets them off to a good start. There is a constant buzz of conversation, and adults use this close contact well to talk with children about what they have done or find out what they have learned. A particular strength of the school is the way in which it ensures that

all children are well challenged in most of the work that they do. The school's assessment procedures are good and teachers have a very clear understanding of where children have reached and plan work that enables them to make good progress. Test results are carefully analysed so that weaknesses in the learning of groups of pupils can be addressed through teaching of specific skills.

16. Teachers expect a great deal of pupils; they set time limits for activities within lessons so that everyone is working to a deadline; they insist on orderliness and good presentation in written work; they expect pupils to work hard and help each other out. As a result, pupils develop good work habits and apply themselves energetically to what they are doing. Lessons move along at a good pace, and little time is wasted.
17. As a group, the staff have good knowledge in English, mathematics and science and a spread of expertise across most other subjects, which is at least sound. This is well used to ensure that pupils have few gaps in their knowledge and skills. For the most part, teaching is successful in developing the crucial aspects in subjects, and not just the parts that teachers feel secure in tackling.
18. Reading skills are taught particularly well in the infants. The school's systematic approach to helping children develop their knowledge of letter sounds and new words pays off in high standards. Pupils' interest, however, fades as they get older and more needs to be done in the junior classes to sustain a faster rate of progress. Teachers have been successful in addressing some of the weaknesses in pupils' factual writing and have carefully planned work so that other subjects have been used to improve standards. Whilst this element is going well, more attention needs to be paid to language and communication skills; for many pupils these are weak on entry to school and most lessons do not give a high enough priority to improving them.
19. The pace of learning for pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good. Here, support staff come into their own as they boost the confidence and enthusiasm of all less able children. Adult helpers start each lesson having been thoroughly briefed, and they are therefore able to provide useful support for the specific problems that different pupils face. In many lessons they are able to spread their attention to all those who find learning more difficult and need extra help. Between the teachers and support staff, all pupils who struggle with their work have plenty of attention and cope well.
20. Numeracy skills are taught well overall, but there are one or two areas where the quality of teaching, if raised from good to very good, would result in even better achievement for pupils. More attention given to teaching pupils to record their working methods, for example, would increase their understanding of methods of calculation. Most teachers need to increase the amount of time that they allocate to work on problem solving and investigation in mathematics; these are the weaker areas of pupils' achievement.
21. The school's recent history has been traumatic; it is of great credit to the staff that they have, despite difficult circumstances, maintained the school's good working atmosphere and strong relationships. Although the whole school community has undoubtedly felt the impact of the problems they faced, this has not been allowed to affect the quality of the day-to-day teaching and learning that takes place.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons**

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 1         | 12   | 6            | 0              | 0    | 0         |

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

## The curriculum

The curriculum is of good quality. The school offers a good breadth of curricular opportunities and a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. The quality and quantity of the school's accommodation and resources is good and much improved since the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The breadth of curricular opportunities is much improved since the last inspection;
- The curriculum enables pupils to learn skills and gain knowledge at a good pace;
- Opportunities to use literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum are planned well;
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to bring learning to life;
- The provision for children with special needs is good;
- The school meets the requirements of and deals very well with the wishes of the Brethren Families with regard to religious education, shared worship and ICT;
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 to develop their speaking skills, benefit from experiences in drama and from the richness of the spoken word;
- The accommodation and resources support learning well except for the provision for physical development for the children in the Foundation Stage, which is not good enough;
- Throughout the school, children need more opportunities to solve problems in mathematics.

### Commentary

22. Since the last inspection there have been a number of significant improvements to the school's curriculum. There is now much better provision for art and design, music and design and technology, than at the time of the previous inspection. The school's accommodation, which was also judged to be poor, is now good. New extensions to classrooms and the new school hall mean that the staff can teach the full curriculum, including the full range of activities for physical education. The newly created library and ICT suite area provides children with a bright and spacious area for learning and helps them to develop their research skills. All the statutory requirements for the curriculum are now met.
23. The curriculum for children in the reception class enables them to benefit from a good range of stimulating experiences. These are closely tailored to their needs and planned well to extend their ideas and learning except for some aspects of their physical development. This well rounded provision in the classroom is tempered by the unsatisfactory provision for outdoor learning, which means that children cannot develop their skills and achieve as much as they should in their physical development. When children move into Year 1 they are interested young learners, ready to make headway into the beginnings of the national curriculum and take on the challenges it presents.
24. Overall, the provision for all subjects is good. The curriculum is well organised and enables children to build well on what they have already achieved. There is a good balance given to ensuring children learn skills as well as gaining factual knowledge in all subjects. There is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to investigate scientific phenomena and handle the findings of their own tests. These skills help pupils to think things through in science but are not as well paralleled in mathematical problem solving. In this element of mathematics there are not enough opportunities planned for all pupils to explain and write out the methods they use. Whilst children are given plenty of opportunities to use their reading and writing skills in subjects other than English, there are not enough opportunities for them to engage in drama, role-play and work on their oracy skills.
25. The curriculum caters well for the needs of all the different groups of children. Pupils with a keen interest or talent in mathematics, for example, have the chance to shine. The specialist provision for music ensures children experience a good quality curriculum. Pupils with

special education needs receive good support from the adults who work with them. The children's work programmes are well planned and linked closely to their individual education action plans.

26. Good use is made of visits, visitors and the locality to make the curriculum more interesting for the pupils. Having visited a local history museum, for example, their study of life in Victorian times was much more meaningful to them.
27. There is a satisfactory range of clubs and activities provided outside lesson time. At present, they are only available to junior aged children who benefit from the additional opportunities they are given to extend and develop their skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child protection procedures are secure and meet statutory requirements;
- Staff know pupils very well and there is a high degree of trust between pupils, staff and parents;
- The school provides a very caring environment in which pupils can learn, achieve and develop well;
- The school's PSHCE programme ensures the needs of all the pupils are met;
- The school gives pupils many opportunities to share their ideas and views, which are listened to and acted upon.

### **Commentary**

28. At the time of the last inspection, the poor accommodation was judged to be having an adverse affect on pupils' well being. This is no longer the case. Pupils and parents feel this is a strong area of the school's work. Pupils are confident that they can approach adults with any concerns or worries. The school gives high priority to health and safety and child protection; this ensures that there is a very caring environment in which pupils can learn and develop into mature and responsible adults. The reception age children and those who join the school during the academic year are carefully and successfully introduced to school life. They settle quickly into the daily routines of the school. The school is very sensitive to the individual needs of all its pupils and works hard to ensure that they are fully met, as is clearly evident in the successful inclusion of the children from Brethren families. Pupils are prepared well for their transfer to secondary education. Systems for assessing and monitoring of pupils' personal development and their work are very effective. The information is well used to support the setting of class, group and individual targets. The school listens carefully to pupils' views and acts on them, as was seen recently when the staff responded to pupils' requests for the introduction of fruit drinks at lunchtime. The head teacher and her staff encourage pupils to become involved in the decision making in the school through, for example, their school council.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a good partnership with its parents and there are good links with the community and other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very happy with the school and feel their views are listened to and considered;
- The school provides good quality information for parents, which enables them to take an active part in their children's education;
- Strong support is given by the 'Nether Kellet Friends of the School Association';
- The school has established good links with the community and neighbouring schools that enhance pupils' learning;
- The school makes good use of visits and visitors.

### **Commentary**

29. The strengths identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. A range of very well presented information is provided for parents. This helps them to be clear about the everyday routines of the school, the curriculum being taught in each class and the progress their children make at school. They have many opportunities to share in their children's learning and achievements through homework, attendance at productions and information evenings. The school values and makes good use of the regular help it receives from grandparents and local residents to support children with their reading or spelling during lesson time. The dedication and hard work of the 'Nether Kellet Friends of the School Association', through social and fund raising events has recently resulted in the building of the school hall and the addition of a parents' notice board.
30. The school has developed good links with the local playgroup, nursery and secondary schools in the area and they often share resources. A good range of visits and visitors from the local community, including trips to Grizedale Forest, local churches, and a quarry enhance pupils' learning. The local vicar visits school regularly to conduct assemblies.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management are very good. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very positive ethos that promotes an excellent atmosphere for learning; relationships are very good;
- The governing body fulfils its role well and makes good use of each individuals expertise and experiences;
- Children's education has not suffered during a period of great uncertainty;
- The school has a clear understanding of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve;
- Good use is made of performance management;
- Key staff provide very strong leadership and ensure children's individual needs are well met;
- There is an impressive and effective cycle of monitoring and evaluation and action planning;
- Parents have a high level of confidence in the leadership of the school;
- There is good financial management;
- Resources to support outdoor play for the Foundation Stage need to be improved.

## Commentary

31. The school went through a most difficult period from March 2003 to the end of the summer term. The difficulties caused by the unexpected absence of senior staff and the sudden resignation of an experienced teacher led, at one stage, to the school being run by the part-time teacher. The difficulties and uncertainties the school faced were extreme. Although the rate of development understandably slowed, the school successfully emerged from this period. This was because the systems and processes established by the head were robust enough to ensure that problems were overcome and the school stayed on an even keel. Standards have been maintained and children's discipline and attitudes to work have not deteriorated.
32. The leadership and management of the headteacher and her senior staff member are very good. A real strength of their work is seen through the very effective systems they have established to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. There is very good analysis of data; pupils' progress is carefully tracked; and teachers are observed teaching. Through these rigorous processes the school gains a clear understanding of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve. Action plans are drawn up and implemented and they have a positive impact on the quality of education the children's experience. This is a school that knows itself very well and its own evaluation of how it is doing is accurate. It does not rest on its laurels and is committed to continual improvement. The subject leader for mathematics, for example, has identified the need to improve children's knowledge and understanding of percentages and made changes to the teaching programme to rectify this weakness.
33. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils and staff get on well. Children respond positively to the high expectations set by the school's leadership. The school actively involves the children and their parents in the decision making process because it consults with the children through, for example, its recently formed school council and with their parents.
34. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all children are able to achieve their potential. The school provides very effective support for all the different groups of pupils. Changes in the school's organisation to meet the requirements of the Brethren families, and the effective use of adults to support children's learning during the time they are withdrawn at the request of their parents from assemblies and collective worship shows the school's adaptability and commitment. The school supports children with particular gifts or talents. Two very able mathematicians, in the last Year 6 group, were given opportunities to attend master classes at the high school and participate in a national mathematics challenge.
35. Good use is made of performance management to ensure that school priorities are addressed and that the system has benefits for the individual teacher as well as the school. This positive impact of this is seen, for example, through the improvements in the way the school teaches reading and in pupils' reading standards at the ages of 7 and 11.
36. Good use is made of external agencies and expert teachers to support the school's work and to raise standards. To improve the children's achievements in music, for example, the school employs a specialist teacher, one afternoon a week to teach this subject to all classes. Additional support for children with special educational needs is brought in and this adds to the good work the school is already doing for these pupils.
37. Governors use their own expertise and skills really well to support the work of the school. They make regular visits to school and sit in on lessons. Through these activities and the regular reports they receive from the headteacher and subject leaders they are well informed. They have a clear knowledge and understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve. They are actively involved in the decision making processes. They keep a careful eye on the progress children make and of the action plans in



the school improvement plan. They provide good support to the school and deal effectively with difficult situations when they arise.

38. Since the last inspection the school's governance and leadership and management have got better. All the legal requirements are now met. Children now access the full national curriculum. The governors overcame a major barrier caused by the poor accommodation and actively sought the funds needed to build the new school hall.
39. Parents' views of the school leadership are very positive. They have great confidence in the headteacher. This was clearly evident during the parents' meeting and through the questionnaire returns, which indicated that 95 per cent of parents considered the leadership to be very good.
40. The management of the finances is good. Governors ensure that the impact of spending on developments such as the provision for ICT is followed through. This enables them to keep a careful check on the value they get from the financial commitment and the impact it has on the quality of education and children's achievements. The budget carry forward figure, which is in excess of 5 per cent, is earmarked for upgrading classroom furniture and resources for the newly built library and ICT suite. The school clerk manages the day-to-day administration matters, very efficiently and the school is smooth running. This enables teachers to concentrate on their teaching with little or no disruption.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

| Income and expenditure (£) |         | Balances (£)                        |       |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Total income               | 214,303 | Balance from previous year          | 36378 |
| Total expenditure          | 214,558 | Balance carried forward to the next | 36123 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2977    |                                     |       |

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception class) is good. The strengths identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained but the weaknesses identified in the area of physical development have not been fully resolved.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good;
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage by the headteacher are very successful. She leads with clarity and purpose;
- Relationships are very good and there is an effective team of adults who promote a climate of calm and trust;
- Children achieve well and are on course to meet the expectations for their age in all the areas of learning except physical development;
- The outdoor accommodation for learning and in particular, the resources for physical development are unsatisfactory;
- Some activities for children to choose are not as rich or as inviting as others.

#### **Commentary**

41. When children start in reception they are taught in a mixed-age class with pupils from Years 1 and 2. Children's attainment varies from year-to-year. Whilst the full range of ability is represented, overall, when they start in the reception class their skills and knowledge in most areas of learning are just below those typical for their age.
42. During their time in reception children achieve well in all but one of the areas of learning. The provision for physical development is unsatisfactory and as a result children do not achieve as much as they could.
43. The quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning except for physical development. Whilst there was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement in this area, the lack of suitable resources and poor outdoor play facilities restricts both the effectiveness and impact of the teaching on children's physical development.
44. The strengths in teaching include the short productive sessions that are well focused to enable children to develop their early skills of reading, writing and number. All adults are skilled at spending time with the children when they have just finished an activity to let them know how well they have done. This is a reason why children are keen to play and to work. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those where children choose from a selection of resources for themselves. Whilst most of these experiences are challenging, some of the free choice activities are more ordinary.
45. 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. They are keen to learn and can sustain their concentration well.
46. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by the headteacher. She acts as a very good role model for the children and her staff through her own skilled contribution to the teaching and ethos that permeates the early years.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff develop the children's trust and confidence really well;
- There is a strong emphasis on children's moral and social development;
- Opportunities for choice and shared play with older children helps the reception age children to quickly develop mature attitudes to learning;
- There are few opportunities for independence in a large outdoor space.

### **Commentary**

47. Teachers take account of pupils' individual needs and help them to build well on the skills they start school with. Children quickly settle in the reception class. The older Year 1 and 2 children act as good role models and this helps the younger children to develop mature, sensible attitudes. They are confident enough to share resources with others and learn to take turns. All the children know and accept the boundaries for behaviour and adopt them very well because all adults have the same high expectations and a consistency of approach. Children are given plenty of opportunities to learn to deal with new situations positively and without stress. They are well aware of the class routines and feel happy and secure in their environment. There are not enough chances for children to extend their skills through activities in an outdoor area. This gap in the school's provision limits the opportunities for children to further develop mature levels of independence or to expand their experiences far enough.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children develop very good skills for reading, including knowledge of letter sounds, because all adults including volunteers and parents make a substantial contribution to the development of children's reading skills;
- Whilst they achieve well in most aspects of literacy they could do better if their experiences in learning writing and communication skills were richer;
- Overall, teaching and learning are good.

### **Commentary**

48. Most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They enjoy books and many of them can use single letter sounds to deal with unfamiliar words. They know how to survey a page to gain an idea of what is happening and use this to gauge meanings well. Strong and effective support from a range of helpers ensures children read a lot and share their books in comfortable and stress free situations. This helps children to understand stories and learn to deal with information well. Resources are used skilfully to fire children's imagination and trigger questions to extend their ideas. For example, adult support in the 'All Night Café' enriched the quality of speaking and helped children to make good progress. Higher attainers can already spell some simple three-letter words and write one or two sentences independently. Whilst most children write their meanings and messages in ways that are delightfully typically of children the same age, they are not drawn readily into writing experiences as a matter of choice because resources on the writing table do not entice them and most children have no reason to write there.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children achieve well with their number work and some are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals;
- Adults introduce the children to an interesting range of activities and games;
- Teaching is closely linked to learning needs that are thoroughly measured and linked to planning.

### **Commentary**

49. Teachers provide the children with plenty of practical activities and opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers. Children gain confidence and learn how to deal with simple addition and subtraction with numbers to ten. They are beginning to record simple number sentences. Higher attainers can count beyond ten and this demonstrate the good progress they have made through their understanding of the value of each number up to ten. Evidence in children's books show that adults use a range of interesting activities to develop children's mathematical understanding, most of which shows a good rate of learning. The new hall is well used by staff to help children develop an understanding of space, shape and distance.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teachers help children to progress well through making links in their learning;
- Good teaching in short, well managed sessions lead to even the youngest children learning a lot;
- Computers are used confidently;
- Children do not gravitate towards resources by choice.

### **Commentary**

50. The teachers plan effectively to ensure that good links are made across the different elements of this area of learning. Through the topic on 'Dark and Light', for example, children learned about science, technology and history. Teachers are good at providing children with opportunities that enable them to explore exciting ideas. They help the children to make connections between their existing knowledge and that of the wider world. Adults provide good support for children because they recognise they need their guidance to explore some ideas. They invent situations for children to explore, for example, when using torchlight in the 'dark' tent. Sometimes, when good resources are set out but are unfamiliar, children are disinclined to explore them; further support would bring greater curiosity and more sustained exploration. Adults help children to develop an understanding about the past through rooting this in the children's own experiences and good use of simple, everyday resources. Children are given plenty of opportunities to use the computer regularly and through these they learn to accurately control the mouse and show good skills, for example, when they drag and click it to ensure that the on-screen teddy gets his socks on.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children develop their manipulative skills well;
- There are very 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. Through these they develop their manipulative skills well. They show skills and control that are typical for their age, for example, when they manipulate materials and add details to objects made in dough and cardboard. There are very few resources and no tricycles, trolleys, track ways or equipment for climbing and scrambling. This provision is unsatisfactory and children do not achieve as well as they should.
52. Whilst the school recognises the problem, improvements in provision are planned as part of the school's rolling programme of improvements to its accommodation.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good attention is given to developing children's observational skills;
- Adults make creative use of ordinary resources;
- Teaching is good.

## **Commentary**

53. Children achieve well in this area of learning. They are on course to meet the goals expected of them by the time they leave reception. Children are keen to paint and explore different media both with and without adults. Most of their paintings and drawings show recognisable features. The provision for indoor play is much better than it is for outdoors. There are good opportunities for role play and most children play imaginatively and purposefully for sustained periods of time. This is because the staff team manage to harness the children's natural creative energies and keep the momentum going and maintain children's interest in creative activities. Whilst only a limited amount of singing was seen during the inspection, teaching plans and children's enjoyment when involved in action songs indicates appropriate emphasis is given to this aspect of the creative area of learning.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils reach average standards at the ages of 7 and 11 years;
- Pupils' achievement in reading is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors;
- Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well;
- Standards in writing are average, but pupils could achieve more;
- Pupils' speaking skills and the quality of their language and vocabulary are not strong enough; this limits the quality of their writing.

#### Commentary

54. The school's test results for 7-year-olds show a pleasing picture over time; those for 11-year-olds are not quite as strong, but nevertheless, keep pace with all schools nationally and with those whose pupils come from similar backgrounds. An analysis of the school's performance shows that reading results are the strongest aspect. In 2002, for example, the results for 7-year-olds in reading fell into the highest 5 per cent compared to similar schools. Writing was also better, but not by such a good margin. When broken down into scores for reading and writing, English results for 11-year-olds show that it is pupils' test marks in reading that boost the overall result. Inspection findings match the school's own accurate assessment of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work.
55. Given their start on entry to school, by the end of Year 2, most pupils have achieved well in reading. They are confident in trying out new words and take a pride in being able to tackle increasingly difficult books. They make a flying start because there is good quality teaching of early reading skills and the school gives it a high priority.
56. Most infant pupils reach average standards in writing. They make good progress in using correct punctuation and spelling, and they develop a neat handwriting style. They are able to express simple ideas well, but sometimes their work lacks a little of the sparkle or imaginative choice of words that is present when pupils reach even higher standards. Assessments of their language skills when they start school show that they are not doing as well as most children their age in speaking and communicating; this weakness persists and it hampers their writing because the quality of their language and range of vocabulary is more limited than usual.
57. In the juniors, the weakness in pupils' communication skills shows through during class discussions or when an adult questions them; at these times they are confident but not articulate. Higher attainers have a broader range of vocabulary, but sometimes even they find it hard to phrase a precise enough answer, or to give a clear explanation of what they mean. In both the infants and juniors teachers have concentrated on helping pupils to explain themselves through developing better factual writing. This has improved matters to some extent and achievement in this aspect is now much stronger. For example, when pupils are recording the results of experiments in science or recounting events in history, they now set out their ideas clearly and use correct vocabulary to describe what they mean. All teachers are good at introducing new words or terms to support this type of work, but now more needs to be done to help pupils in both the infants and juniors to experiment with a wider and more adventurous range of vocabulary in their speech and imaginative writing.
58. Pupils who find learning difficult are supported well during lessons, and in some cases make better progress than other groups in the class because of this concentrated attention. All

make good progress against their difficulties and with the extra help, cope well with the same reading and writing tasks as the rest of the class.

59. Pupils are taught how to search for information and how to extract the most relevant facts from text; they share a good range of books with their teachers either in small groups or as a whole class. However, the good achievement in reading that they carry through from the infants falls off a little, and pupils' enthusiasm wanes. Most pupils like listening to stories and appreciate it when their teachers introduce humour or interest by changing their voice to suit different characters, but many are not switched on to reading. Even among higher attainers, some say that they do not find reading by themselves enjoyable or interesting. The result is that they do not draw enough inspiration from what they read or use the ideas to add interest and quality to their own writing. This makes the difference between them reaching average rather than even higher standards.
60. Literacy lessons are of good quality and teachers have secure subject knowledge, which means that pupils develop the skills of using grammar, punctuation and spelling at a reasonable pace. Teachers set high expectations for handwriting and neatness of work, which result in pupils showing a pride in good presentation.
61. Good leadership and management of the subject have meant that achievement has not suffered unduly during the school's recent turbulent history. A careful eye is kept on the progress of all pupils, and the rigorous and systematic tracking by staff means that weaknesses in the work of individuals or whole year groups are identified and action is taken to remedy problems. The school's current development plans show that they recognise the challenges still ahead and that these are rooted in the need to adopt a broader approach to improving writing.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

62. The school gives pupils plenty of opportunity to develop their reading and writing skills in other subjects, which has enabled them to improve weaker aspects of their work. Where they were less skilled in writing factual accounts, such as reports, teachers have planned for them to practise this type of writing as part of their science or history work. Other areas of English are not developed as profitably; there is, for example, too little use of drama or role play to develop communication skills or to enliven and stimulate pupils' writing. Although pupils' horizons are widened through a good range of visits, teachers do not capitalise on them well enough or use them to their full potential as a basis for lively, good quality writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and it is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6; assessments are accurate and well used to plan the next stages of pupils' learning; much of the marking of work is of a very good quality;
- Children achieve well over time, because the school provides well for the needs of all the pupils;
- Pupils' numeracy skills are very well developed;
- Pupils enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes to the subject;
- There is very good subject leadership;
- Performance in the national tests at the age of 7 is consistently well above average when compared with all schools and those of a similar type;
- Children need more opportunities to record and explain in writing their working methods;
- The challenge for higher attainers during the mental and oral starter could be better;

- Older pupils' understanding of percentages is not as well developed;
- Children throughout the school need more opportunities to use their knowledge and understanding to solve problems.

## Commentary

63. The school's performance in the national tests at the age of 7 has been consistently well above average for the last four years when compared with all schools and those with pupils of a similar background. At the age of 11, the performance has fluctuated over the last few years. In 2002 it was below average. There were a number of reasons that explain the below average results. Approximately 33 per cent of the class were identified as having special needs. Two children missed the higher Level 5 by a single mark. The indications are that the 2003 Year 6 group have performed very well in the national tests. This was a much stronger cohort and not only did the vast majority achieve the national average, a good number of them reached the higher Level 5. Standards in the present Year 2 and 6 are average. The Year 2 group on entry to the school was not a strong cohort, but they are achieving as well as could be expected.
64. The school is successful in enabling all children, whatever their starting point, to achieve well. The teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of how well the children are doing because they keep accurate and detailed assessments of their progress. These assessments are used effectively to plan the next stages of learning. During lessons, teachers have specific learning objectives for each of the different ability groups in their class and they provide children with activities that are well matched to their needs. Children with specific difficulties have individual action plans drawn up; from these the staff and the special needs teacher plan appropriate work programmes. As a result, these children achieve well.
65. Children enjoy mathematics because they experience success. They are given work that challenges them because it is neither too easy nor too hard. They have a good understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve. Some of the marking is excellent. At the start of one lesson a child eagerly read her teacher's comments and from this knew exactly how well she had done and what she needed to do to improve.
66. The teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. This helps children to become very confident when working with numbers. As they move through the school they develop a very good understanding of place value. By the time they are in Year 6 they can identify the value of a digit in a seven-figure number and numbers to two decimal places.
67. Teachers place a strong emphasis on children developing their skills of mental recall. This helps them to improve their knowledge of their times tables and to develop a range of strategies for adding, subtracting, dividing and multiplying numbers. There are occasions when these whole class sessions at the beginning of the lesson are not as effective because the teacher is dealing with at least two different age groups and a number of different ability groups. This sometimes makes it difficult to get the pitch of work right for all children, and occasionally the higher attainers are not as well challenged during the opening part of the lesson.
68. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly strong. The teacher is a leading numeracy teacher within the local authority. Her subject knowledge is very good and she uses it very effectively to ensure children develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts and the correct use of vocabulary.
69. Whilst the children are doing well in mathematics, there are some areas where they could do better. Children need more opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding of number, for example, to solve problems. They also need more opportunities to record in written form how they have worked out their answers. This is an area in the national tests where the children do not do as well. Older juniors are very



confident when working with fractions and decimals. They can convert one to the other but they are less secure when working with percentages or seeing the links between the three areas.

70. Subject leadership and management are very good. Detailed analysis of children's work, their test results and the teaching of mathematics are very effectively used to identify strengths and weaknesses. Through this process the subject leader gains a very clear understanding of how well the children are doing and what they or the staff need to do to help the children do better. The school is well aware of the need to give more attention to the teaching of percentages in the older juniors and problem solving throughout the school. Plans are in place to remedy both of these shortcomings.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. This is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects. In design and technology and science they use their measuring skills and in geography they use coordinates to support their map work.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at 7 and 11 years are above average;
- Achievement is good in both infants and juniors;
- Teaching is good and it enables pupils to develop skills in investigative work at a good pace.

#### **Commentary**

72. In recent years, results for 11-year-olds have seldom risen above average compared to all schools, or to those with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, standards are higher and the school helps pupils to achieve more than the test results indicate. The last inspection noted that pupils were doing well, particularly in investigative and experimental science; this is still the case.
73. The school's success is founded on good teaching. Pupils to get off to a secure start in the infants and develop their scientific skills well; their achievement in guessing what will happen during experiments, observing changes and recording what they find out is good. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties is particularly strong. Teachers stimulate pupils' thinking really well through posing questions that make them think hard and explain what they mean. During a study of the different qualities of materials, the teacher set children the task of choosing wrapping paper and asked them to write an explanation for their choice. One Year 2 pupil recorded, 'My paper needs to be strong, not see through, fold easily and I need to write on it.'
74. Junior pupils are given plenty of opportunities to build on this good foundation and they achieve well in carrying out experiments and setting up fair tests. By Year 6, teaching has taken them further into systematic investigation; higher attainers begin experiments with a prediction based on their existing scientific knowledge. All pupils make precise measurements and use diagrams and graphs to record their findings. As with the infants, good teaching and the use of challenging prompts, takes their learning forward at a fast pace and the expectation is that pupils will explain what they are thinking. In a written comment on a pupil's work for example, the teacher wrote, 'Well, done L. ... do you think that the amount of force you applied to an object could affect how much the object changes shape? Have a think....'

75. Throughout the school, all pupils make good progress in using correct scientific terms. They make confident contributions to discussions and science lessons are popular because teachers give them chance to use their initiative and try out their ideas.
76. The subject is well led and managed. A careful eye is kept on pupil's progress, which enables teachers to match work well to pupils' needs; it also results in any weaknesses being spotted quickly. Where this is the case, action has been effective and improvements have followed.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**. Only one lesson was seen in ICT but inspectors also observed pupils using computers to support work in other subjects; they looked at samples of pupils' previous work and discussed it with them.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are average for pupils at 7 and 11 years;
- Pupils enjoy their work in ICT;
- The achievement of most pupils is satisfactory, but higher attainers could do better.

### **Commentary**

77. Pupils' work shows that they cover a good range of topics throughout the school, and this enables most of them to achieve satisfactorily. They make steady progress in using computers to find information from different sources, to present and share their ideas and control devices or events. Teaching is satisfactory and lessons generate enthusiasm among pupils. Most of the time, they provide a reasonable level of challenge and pupils take on harder tasks with confidence. Higher attainers, however, often have a better starting point as they have computers at home. The school does not build well enough on this advantage and challenge them hard enough so that they achieve as much as they should.
78. Recently, there have been improvements to the school's accommodation and further expansion of the computer resources. The library and computer suite are now housed in an 'information centre', where pupils can set about research tasks with all the necessary resources to hand. These positive developments have, however, been dulled over time by staff changes and a subsequent lull in development when the teacher with responsibility for leading the subject left. The school has responded well to the challenge of moving things on in the absence of a member of staff with expertise; teachers increased their training and the average standards noted by the previous inspection have been maintained. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, but it does not always extend far enough to plan more difficult work; this is needed to stretch the more able pupils, and provide the degree of challenge for them to realise good, rather than sound, achievement.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

79. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT in other subjects. In mathematics, infant pupils collect data and make graphs showing, for example, their favourite flavour of ice cream. In English, all pupils word process their finished pieces for display, and junior pupils use digital photography and combine images with sound to make computer books. Good use is also made of computer programmes to practise spellings and to improve grammar. Pupils collect data or record the results of science experiments; this is stored and retrieved when needed to make graphs and communicate their findings. Pupils steadily develop the skills of using ICT to research information, which supports their work in history and geography.

## HUMANITIES

80. In humanities work was sampled with no lessons observed in **geography** and only one seen in **history**. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement on provision. Based on discussions with pupils and an analysis of their work, standards in history and geography are typical of those seen in most schools at the ages of 7 and 11.

### Commentary

81. Pupils' achieve well in both subjects. This is because there is an appropriate emphasis given to teaching them facts as well as the skills they need to research, interpret and compare information. In geography, they have made good use of books and the Internet to gather information for their topic about mountain ranges. Years 5 and 6 Children produce a good volume of work. Whilst they make good gains in their knowledge of historical facts, their understanding of chronology is less secure. Whilst children have plenty of opportunities to independently record their findings, they are not as skilled in explaining in written form the reasons behind or for their findings.
82. In the history lesson seen, good use was made of ICT to support learning and children were constantly reminded of the need to provide quality explanations to back up the points they were making. In geography, appropriate emphasis is given to ensuring children learn and use the correct vocabulary, for example, when they explain their views on how people use land or when they describe similarities and differences between places.
83. Good use is made of visits and homework to support learning. Children have good recall of the time they spent at a local museum dressed up as Victorians, experiencing what life was like in a Victorian school. For homework, Year 1 and 2 children completed questionnaires about toys with their parents or grandparents to enable them to learn how things change over time.

### Religious Education

84. Whilst discussions took place with staff and pupils and teachers' plans and pupils' work were analysed, no lessons were seen. Therefore, no overall judgement can be made on the provision in this subject.
85. Standards of attainment, as they were at the time of the last inspection, are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. The strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained.
86. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a growing awareness of the symbols of Christianity. Pupils in the junior classes have produced a good volume of work in the subject. Discussions with them show that they understand the key principles in different faiths such as Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, which are important to peoples' beliefs. They recognise how the lives of different believers are influenced by their beliefs.
87. Children enjoy their lessons and have good recall of the knowledge gained during their lessons, from studying religious objects and listening to the views and beliefs of visitors.
88. The subject leader had only taken up post in September 2003 and was absent during the inspection. However, the school has established effective systems for monitoring and evaluating its work. These are well used to ensure the senior staff have a clear overview of the strengths and areas for development within this subject. The subject is planned well and covers a 2-year cycle. This makes sure that it meets the needs of the children in the mixed age classes without any unnecessary repetition.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

89. These subjects, with the exception of physical education, which was a focus for the inspection, were sampled, but not examined in detail. Children's work was analysed and discussions took place with staff and pupils. Teachers' plans were scrutinised and one lesson was seen in art and design. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology and music. However, the curriculum for art and design, music and design and technology has much improved since the previous inspection when standards in these subjects were found to be below those typically seen in most schools.
90. In **art and design** the range of work covered by pupils is much better and they are able to build and develop their skills in painting and drawing. This is best seen in the delightful portraits of pupils in Years 3 and 4 drawn in the style of the artist Paul Klee. Pupils now use exciting media to create objects, for example, when they formed sculptures using wire and naturally found objects. In the one lesson seen in art and design, Year 6 pupils gained a good understanding of the vocabulary of landscape that an artist uses. Pupils' skills are now better developed and their paintings, pictures and 3 dimensional work show that standards have improved and are more typical of those seen in most schools for pupils aged 7 and 11. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
91. In **design and technology**, pupils have produced a good volume of work. They are able to discuss and share their thoughts with confidence about the design process. They clearly understand how to design for a purpose. Throughout the school, pupils write thoughtfully about how they have tackled a design and make brief. They are clear about the difficulties they faced and the options they chose to make things better. As one Year 2 child wrote, 'Next time I will put on a stronger axle.' Year 6 pupils have investigated which glue is best for the job by devising a whole raft of tests to find the answer. Pupils now achieve well enough and thoroughly enjoy this subject.
92. In **music**, discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6, time spent listening to taped recordings and analysing teaching plans indicate that pupils now experience the full range of the curriculum. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards because not enough evidence was seen during the inspection. The recordings of older pupils' compositions in the pentatonic scale, their pitch work and short pieces of musical rounds indicate that they have achieved well in this element of music. The quality of singing is satisfactory. Teacher's planning for Year 6 shows that appropriate emphasis is given to correct diction and control of breath. The use of computer-based music is at the early stage of development. However, improvements in the provision for music by using a specialist teacher, have led to a much better curriculum that meets the legal requirements.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The overall provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been significant improvements in provision since the last inspection;
- Children achieve very well in swimming;
- The subject is well led and managed;
- Children's standards in dance and gymnastics are not as good as those seen in most schools at the ages of 7 and 11. They have not been able to achieve as well as they might because of the problems the school has faced with its accommodation.

### Commentary

93. The problems caused by the lack of accommodation have been resolved and the school now meets its legal requirements for this subject. The recently built school hall enables the school to provide children with regular lessons in gymnastics and dance, which until recently was not possible because of the previous lack of suitable facilities. At present, children need to spend time practising and developing skills that they would normally have mastered much earlier in their school life. Pupils are now beginning to achieve more and standards in gymnastics and dance are showing signs of rising quickly.
94. Pupils achieve really well in swimming because the provision is very good. From Year 5 until the end of Year 6 pupils attend a weekly swimming lesson. Swimming records indicate that the vast majority of pupils meet the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres at the age of 11 and many exceed this. At present, there are no non-swimmers in Years 6 and only four in Year 5. The school provides additional support for the non-swimmers by ensuring that not only does a qualified swimming coach teach them, but also another adult spends time in the water with them to help them gain confidence.
95. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of specific skills and techniques and staff constantly remind children about health and safety procedures. There are occasions, however, when the children spend too much time sitting listening to their teachers and not enough time practising and developing their skills.
96. The subject is well led and managed. The teacher with responsibility has a clear overview of what children can and can't do and what support teachers need to improve their own confidence in teaching dance and gymnastics after such a long time without the facilities. Training in gymnastics and dance has been organised and the subject leader is checking on the impact of it by observing teachers and feeding back strengths and areas for further development.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

There is **good provision** for PSHCE.

### **Commentary**

97. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their thoughts and feelings about anything that concerns them, and the school is good at teaching them how to keep themselves safe and well. This is carefully handled; for example, aspects of human growth and development are covered during science lessons. The school's provision is enriched by the effective use made of both family and community links. Pupils are helped to understand the importance of being good citizens and about the choices open to them.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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