

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NEWBARNs PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Risingside, Barrow-in-Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112244

Headteacher: Mrs Jill Byrne

Lead inspector: Mr Andrew Scott

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 257005

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	469
School address:	Risingside Barrow-in-Furness
Postcode:	LA13 9ET
Telephone number:	01229 894615
Fax number:	01229 894616
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William Pears
Date of previous inspection:	15th June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Newbarns Primary School is the largest primary school in Cumbria. It has 469 pupils aged three to 11. It serves the immediate neighbourhood but also admits pupils from further afield. Although pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, most pupils come from those that are below average. Until recently, pupils have had below average skills and knowledge when they began school. However, the trend has been falling and pupils' attainment is now well below average on entry, especially in language and social skills. Almost all pupils are of white British descent and have English as their first language. More pupils than average have special educational needs and most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. Almost four per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs and this is above average.

The school is becoming increasingly involved in an Excellence Initiative with other local primary schools and the Primary Learning Innovation Network, both of which focus heavily on developing new teaching and learning strategies. The school has received many awards, including an Activemark Gold for physical education, a Healthy Schools Award, an Investors in People Award and an Early Years Kite Mark.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27545	Mr Andrew Scott	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography Music Special educational needs
32671	Mr Christopher Gosling	Lay inspector	
27591	Mrs Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology
33231	Mrs Lesley Steele	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an excellent school providing a high standard of education for its pupils.** The excellent leadership of the headteacher, supported by a very effective staff, has ensured that the school is thriving. Teaching is very good and so pupils achieve very well. Standards have mostly remained high over recent years, and are above average at present. The school's excellent care and support for pupils produce pupils who become mature, thoughtful and confident. As a result, **the school gives excellent value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent relationships between all members of the school create an inspiring ethos in which pupils develop considerable self-belief, self-reliance and a deep consideration for others
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, very ably supported by key staff and governors, has made the school a very special place and ensures that success continues to build on success
- The school takes every care to make sure that all pupils benefit equally from school, including pupils with special educational needs and particularly able pupils
- Pupils' standards of work are good and pupils achieve very well, because of the high quality of teaching throughout the school
- The school provides an excellent range of exciting and innovative learning opportunities to give pupils a rich experience of the world
- The partnerships with parents, other schools and the community at large are extremely influential in supporting pupils' learning and broadening their horizons

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The key issues from the previous report have all been very successfully addressed. In addition, teachers' use of assessment has improved and so has the achievement of pupils. All aspects of care and provision for personal development have strengthened and, as a consequence, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and level of attendance have become even better. The school's partnerships with other schools, parents and the community have become stronger. Very high standards of leadership and management have been sustained as before.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school.** Children currently enter school with skills and knowledge that are well below average, notably in language and personal development. They achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because of the good teaching. However, despite this good start, they do not reach the goals expected of them and standards are below average by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and pupils achieve very well. Standards are also above average in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, music, physical education and religious education. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is good. Standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics are above average, and well above average in art and design and science. Standards in science have improved dramatically this year, because of a whole

school focus. Achievement in all these subjects is very good. Standards in ICT, music and religious education are above average and achievement is good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good. It was not possible during the inspection to judge standards in the other subjects.

**Pupils' personal development is excellent.** The outstanding relationships throughout the school produce in pupils a highly developed work ethic, genuine thoughtfulness and immaculate behaviour. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is first rate. The high level of attendance clearly demonstrates that pupils love coming to school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall.** Teaching and learning are good, and sometimes very good, in the Foundation Stage. Elsewhere, they are mostly very good, especially in Year 6. Teachers are knowledgeable and very well organised, and they succeed in inspiring pupils to work enthusiastically. The teaching of basic skills is particularly effective.

The school's curriculum is very good. It is wholly inclusive and caters equally for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with particular gifts or talents. Indeed, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The school places a great deal of emphasis on enriching the curriculum and, in this, is highly successful. There is an interesting and extensive range of clubs, visits, visitors and other opportunities, as well as fruitful links with parents, other schools and the community, both near and far. The quality of care is second to none, and the school greatly respects the opinions of pupils in its development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are excellent.** The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Her clear-sightedness, rigorous determination and boundless energy have ensured that the work of the school is a finely-tuned operation and that the whole education of pupils is the continual focus. The leadership of key staff is very good, and very effective at developing the school. Management of the school is excellent, including its financial control. Governance is very good, providing valuable support and advice for the staff.

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

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are full of praise for the warm and welcoming atmosphere, for the high quality of teaching and learning and for the excellent behaviour. They appreciate the richness of the curriculum and the high level of care; they rate highly the quality of leadership and management. Pupils echo these views, as does the inspection team.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant areas for improvement. A few less important areas are identified in the relevant sections of the report.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils throughout the school is **very good**. Pupils' standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6, and well above average in science and art and design. Standards in most other subjects are above average. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of all pupils is very impressive, given their low attainment on entry
- Pupils' attainment is consistently above average across all subjects
- Children have a good start to school in the Foundation Stage

#### Commentary

1. Until recently, children started school with below average skills and abilities. However, children are increasingly beginning with well below average attainment, especially in language and personal and social skills. They achieve well as they pass through the nursery and reception classes, because of good teaching. Nevertheless, they do not achieve their goals in all areas of learning, and standards are below average by the time they enter Year 1.
2. In the national tests of 2003, the standards of pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing were well above average. The results in all subjects were well above those of similar schools. Girls tend to perform better than boys in reading and writing but the difference is not significant. Standards overall have been rising steadily over recent years, and keeping above the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.4 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.3 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Pupils' achievement in the current Year 2 is very good. Their standards in reading and writing are above average, an improvement since the last inspection, when they were average. Standards in mathematics have been maintained and are still above average. Standards in science have improved and are now above average, as they are in ICT, religious education, art and design, music and physical education. It was not possible to judge attainment in the other subjects.
4. In the national tests of 2003, pupils in Year 6 achieved standards in English and mathematics that were well above national standards and also well above those of similar schools. Standards in science, however, were average when measured against the national norm and similar schools. Girls tend to do better than boys in English but there is always a higher percentage of boys with special educational needs. Results over time show a strong picture, with standards consistently above the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.7 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- Standards in the current Year 6 are above average. This shows a drop compared to last year, because there is a higher number of pupils with special educational needs. However, compared to their well below average standards in Year 2, all pupils have achieved very well. They have also achieved very well in science, as standards are now well above average. Standards in ICT, religious education and music are all above average, and standards in art and design are well above average. It was not possible to judge standards in the other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as the other pupils. The skilful planning and focused additional support have enabled pupils to make considerable progress and, in many cases, achieve the levels expected for pupils of their age by the end of Years 2 and 6.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **excellent**, and the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **excellent**. Attendance and punctuality at the school are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high quality of relationships throughout the school is a direct result of the deep respect all individuals have for one another
- The highest standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour are expected and achieved
- The school's emphasis on pupils' personal development pays handsome dividends
- Pupils are very happy to attend school and so attendance levels are well above average

### Commentary

- The school greatly values the integrity of the individual. Teachers are excellent role models. They give pupils every care and consideration, respect their opinions and appreciate their efforts. They treat all pupils as equals. As a result, pupils feel very secure, highly valued and very appreciative of this warm and supportive atmosphere. Furthermore, the school is eager for pupils to develop close bonds with one another and look out for one another in and out of the classroom. Therefore, pupils work purposefully and generously with all the pupils in their class.

#### The ethos of the school

It is the way in which pupils interact that encapsulates the ethos of this school. Pupils are influenced by a rich diet of care, respect, expectations and opportunities from the moment they set foot in this school. It is a process of osmosis, rather than something imposed. Pupils simply learn to value one another. It is almost as simple as that – yet not quite. Pupils learn to understand that the school considers their every need. Nothing is too much for them. They are not judged or pigeon-holed but treated scrupulously fairly and, what is absolutely critical, consistently, throughout the school. So there is no squabbling over the mouse in the computer suite, or jostling in the lunch queue. No shouting out in lessons or 'liberating' another pupil's rubber. There is instead a calmness, an air of contemplation. There is self-discipline yet enthusiasm. There is a framework of common sense in which pupils are able to thrive and prosper, experiment and create, think for themselves and know their successes, however small, will be celebrated.

8. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are excellent and are even higher than they were at the last inspection. The school succeeds in instilling a genuine desire to work. Teachers are consistently highly organised, are very positive in lessons and take every opportunity to praise pupils for their industry. It is no surprise that pupils respond eagerly. Their enthusiastic participation in lessons and all the school's activities is clear evidence. Excellent behaviour is almost second nature. Courtesy is the norm. Pupils listen intently to one another in lessons, they move around the school wholly responsibly and are very conscious how their actions affect others. There have been no exclusions for the past ten years.
9. The school has an uplifting ethos. Pupils learn considerable respect for others, as well as for themselves. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on a variety of issues. In their last class assembly before leaving the school, pupils in Year 6 wistfully recollected highlights from the year to share with all the other pupils. All pupils now have philosophy classes to stimulate and develop a breadth of vision. An awareness of beauty is cultivated through a diversity of cultural experiences, including music, drama, dance and art. The school is all too aware that it exists in a mainly white area of the country and so vigorously promotes pupils' awareness of multi-cultural Britain. Teachers are forging links with a school in Manchester with pupils from many ethnic minorities, for example, and an African artist has worked with the pupils.
10. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now well above the national average. The school works very hard to encourage pupils to attend regularly and to make parents very aware of how important continuous learning is. There are very good systems for checking any unexplained absences but these rarely need to be used. The headteacher awards much-coveted certificates for 100 per cent attendance over the year and, this year, several pupils received awards for more than one year's continuous attendance. One pupil celebrated four years at school without a day off.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The curriculum is very good, with excellent inclusion and provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school takes excellent care of its pupils and involves them fully in the development of the school. The partnerships with parents, other schools and with the local and wider community are all exemplary.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **very good overall**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent relationships between all staff and pupils produce a very positive climate for learning in each classroom
- Teachers are very effective at teaching basic skills
- The high expectations of teachers ensure that pupils work consistently very productively and very good assessment systems check how well pupils are progressing and inform planning

- Teachers are very knowledgeable about their subjects and so make learning interesting
- Teaching assistants make very good contributions to pupils' learning, especially in the support of pupils with special educational needs
- Teaching is stronger in Years 1 to 6 than in the Foundation Stage

## Commentary

11. Classrooms are happy, purposeful places. Teachers make sure that lessons fairly zip along to keep pupils' interest high. Teachers are relaxed yet very expectant of a strong work ethic. There is also a high degree of trust in classrooms. As a result, pupils are very appreciative of their teachers' faith in them as well as the praise they receive for working hard. Furthermore, pupils learn to value one another's views and opinions, so co-operative work is excellent. For example, when composing simple, rhythmic music, pupils in Year 5 listened politely and intently to other pupils' ideas and then strived to play together as one. Equally, pupils throughout the school work extremely well on their own, without the need for constant supervision to spur progress.
12. Teaching overall has maintained the high standards seen at the last inspection. Teachers continue to focus understandably on key skills, especially in literacy and numeracy. They plan learning carefully to ensure that pupils build progressively on skills like spelling, punctuation, handwriting and times tables, as these are critical to their wider learning. Similarly, in ICT, pupils have to concentrate hard on keyboard dexterity and mouse control to help with their speed of progress in the subject. The school has succeeded in improving pupils' investigational skills, which strengthens their work, especially in science, geography and history.
13. Teachers expect pupils to do their best, and they do. The quality of assessment is very good, so teachers are able to set work at the right level, which is both demanding and stimulating. It is not surprising, therefore, that pupils relish rising to the challenge. For example, pupils in a Year 3 class were thrilled at harvesting some of the vegetables planted in the school garden and experimenting with the tastes and characteristics of broccoli and rhubarb. Teachers are very good at providing suitable work for less able pupils. They are not always so precise with more able pupils, but the level of expectations, together with open-ended opportunities, is high enough for these pupils to achieve very well. This provision is successfully extended to gifted and talented pupils.
14. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and teach with an authority and enthusiasm that pupils respect. In a Year 6 art and design lesson, the teacher's skills enabled pupils to succeed in reproducing the famous Campbell soup tin design by Andy Warhol. There is particular expertise in music, ICT and outdoor pursuits. Teachers also understand very well how pupils learn. They ask searching questions to make sure pupils fully understand and they use resources shrewdly to reinforce and stimulate learning. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson, for instance, responded very well to the challenge of interpreting the fine detail of Ordnance Survey maps.
15. Teaching assistants work very well with teachers to support learning. They are especially effective when working with individual pupils or with small groups. They are very sensitive and careful in their guidance, yet insistent on full concentration and maximum effort from the pupils. Teaching assistants are very instrumental in helping pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well. Teachers plan very suitable work for these pupils, linked closely to their individual learning plans, and teaching assistants provide the close support necessary for effective learning.
16. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, but not as good as in other classes. Lessons in Year 1 to 6 are mostly more sharply focused and have a greater sense of purpose. Teachers are more demanding of pupils' efforts, keeping them firmly on task throughout each lesson. Teachers in the Foundation Stage are effective but sometimes lessons are only satisfactory because children are not always encouraged enough to make the most of learning

opportunities. This tends to happen when adult support is not close at hand, and because the pace of lessons is sometimes rather flat.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	25 (49%)	18 (35%)	8 (16%)	0	0	0

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

## **The curriculum**

The school provides its pupils with a **very good** curriculum. It enriches pupils' experiences with an excellent range of opportunities that boost their skills in sports, arts, and personal development. The accommodation and staffing are very good, and resources for learning are excellent.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is very well planned across the school ....
- .... is accessible equally to all pupils, and includes excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The many rich and innovative activities enhance learning opportunities greatly
- The impressive accommodation and learning resources are major factors in motivating pupils to achieve

## **Commentary**

17. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Planning is even more rigorous and ensures that pupils' knowledge, understanding and basic skills build progressively as they move through the school. All subjects are given ample time and, increasingly, teachers are blending subjects together to put learning in a better context. For instance, pupils in Year 4 developed their writing and speaking skills by devising and performing rap music, and pupils in Year 1 experimented with mathematical patterns to paint designs of goldfish in the style of Monet. However, teachers do not systematically maximise all such opportunities.
18. The school is excellent in ensuring that all pupils benefit equally from the curriculum. As an example, teachers ensure that the vocabulary in work set is suitable for pupils who have difficulty with language. Pupils with special educational needs have very thorough and specific individual learning plans and the programme of support by teaching assistants is expertly managed. This provision is excellent. Similarly, the school has identified pupils who are very able, and these pupils are given considerable scope to progress at their own pace in, for example, creative writing and investigative science. This helps to explain why many pupils achieve the higher levels in the national tests.
19. Pupils' learning is greatly enriched by a wealth of clubs, visits and visitors to the school. The list of activities at lunchtime and after school is comprehensive and includes touch-typing, golf, table tennis, gardening and philosophy. Pupils greatly value these clubs and the time that teachers willingly give. Visits are always tightly linked to learning and residential visits to the Lake District for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are particularly important. Pupils are able to take advantage of the natural beauty of the area and to experience some challenging opportunities such as camping, as well as learning how to live with others away from home. There are also many sports fixtures with local schools, in which the school tends to do very well.
20. The accommodation is very good. The building is spacious and bright with thoughtful displays that celebrate pupils' achievements. It is also kept meticulously clean and so provides a very safe and welcoming environment in which to learn. Pupils benefit especially from the two halls,

two very well stocked libraries and an excellent computer suite. However, despite many recent improvements, the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage remains underdeveloped. The resources for learning are excellent.

## Care, guidance and support

The provision for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is **excellent**. Support, guidance and advice for pupils are **very good**, and the school takes **excellent** account of pupils' views.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have complete faith in the adults in the school
- The school takes every precaution to ensure the health and safety of pupils
- The school council is an established and intrinsic part of school life
- Teachers monitor pupils' progress scrupulously and give very good guidance for improvement

## Commentary

21. Pupils feel wholly confident about approaching staff if they have concerns or worries. Pupils clearly recognise that the teachers and teaching assistants have their best interests at heart, and find that extremely reassuring. Staff do not judge pupils but get to know them very well, both their strengths and their weaknesses, and so are very well equipped to offer just the right kind of guidance. Pupils know that they will always receive a kindly ear, and never a raised voice. During lessons pupils and teachers are at ease with one another, so that learning is a distinctly pleasurable experience.
22. The school is extremely vigilant about the health and safety of its pupils. The headteacher, governors and site manager all ensure that there are regular inspections of the premises, so that pupils are safe at all times. The school maintains a record of pupils with specific health problems so that all staff have very clear information and know how to act in case of need. Child protection issues are fully addressed. The school has a tight policy for safeguarding pupils' access to the Internet. Staff rotas ensure that the playground is very well monitored and the security systems for the premises are effective. The quality of care overall has improved since the last inspection. .
23. The school council, in existence for over seven years, plays a central part in school life. It is enthusiastically supported by pupils, who value their role in the school's development. Pupils are firm in their view that the school listens to their concerns and acts to ensure their wishes are met. The council is empowered to introduce new school rules and has recently restricted ball games during the afternoon break. Information from the weekly meetings with the headteacher is fed back to classes and to the whole school during Monday's assembly so that all pupils feel part of the process. Council members are proud of their APE (Active Playground Encouragers) club, which evolved as a more pro-active 'friendship bench'. Year 6 pupils now have a voluntary rota of monitoring the playground to ensure pupils are happy and free to play as they wish. The school council has organised a questionnaire to canvass the opinions of all the year groups on a range of subjects. A committee of pupils analysed the results, which have informed this report.
24. The school has exemplary systems for tracking pupils' progress over time. The data gives precise information about whether pupils are doing well enough from year to year, and highlights pupils who need extra help. It is also very helpful in explaining differences in trends. For example, although the standards in Year 6 are lower than last year, the data shows that these pupils have achieved particularly well since they were in Year 2. Much of this data is valuable in informing the targets set for pupils in the main subjects. Although these targets are sometimes good, they are often not as specific as they could be to guide pupils' progress.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **excellent** links with parents, other schools and with the community.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in very high regard
- Links with other schools benefit pupils greatly in a variety of ways
- Community links are extremely successful in giving pupils a very good perspective of the wider world

### Commentary

25. All the school's partnerships are better than they were at the last inspection. Links with parents are excellent. At the parents' meeting and through their questionnaires, parents gave the school a ringing endorsement. They have nothing but praise for the provision their children receive, and are appreciative of the excellent communication from the school and the opportunity they have to air their own views. The school's annual questionnaire ensures that parents' opinions are valued and acted upon. The school's website also provides a very wide range of useful information and links for parents. The annual reports that parents receive on their child's progress are excellent. They give precise indications of how their child is progressing in relation to national standards and thoroughly explain progress in each subject. Reports are wholly individual and all pupils are given detailed targets for improvement. The headteacher takes the time to write a paragraph on each pupil.
26. The school has excellent links with schools in the area and further afield. There are many regular sporting links and projects linked to the arts. The headteacher is a joint leader of the local cluster of primary schools, which is concentrating on new ideas for teaching and learning. Pupils in Year 2 visit a small local rural school to experience the differences, and pupils in Year 6 are developing links with a school in Manchester so that pupils can understand more of life in a multi-cultural community. The school is used by a variety of institutions for training purposes and teachers from secondary schools occasionally teach at the school. The very strong links with secondary schools mean that pupils feel very well prepared for the transition.
27. The school has excellent and influential links with the community. These strengthen pupils' learning and widen their experience of the wider world. The choir visits local retirement homes and churches, and pupils have performed a Music Hall on behalf of Age Concern. This was reciprocated by some of the audience, who visited classes to give talks on local history and past experiences. Pupils raise funds for local charities and sponsor a child's education in Kenya. The school has strong links to four local churches who welcome visits and contribute towards assemblies. There are well-established links with local commerce and industry, such as British Aerospace and Warburton's, that broaden pupil's horizons.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **excellent**. The leadership of the headteacher and the overall management of the school are excellent. Leadership by key staff and governance are very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher inspires all members of the school and guides its development extremely effectively
- Management systems are highly focused, detailed, rigorous and effective
- The management of the school's funds is exceedingly astute
- Senior staff and subject leaders are very influential in the success of the school

- The governors of the school are very supportive and fully involved with the school's development

## Commentary

28. The leadership and management of the school have remained as impressive as they were at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher is meticulous in her approach to every school matter and constantly strives to provide the best for the pupils and staff. The procedures for appointing new staff, for example, are exhaustive and highly focused, so that the applicant is just right for the school. The headteacher has very clear aims, backed up by steely determination and a great deal of stamina. However, she is also very inclusive and values the input of everyone connected with the school before vital decisions are taken. She makes enlightened use of new initiatives, subjecting them to severe scrutiny before suggesting any are adopted.

### The headteacher

The calibre of the headteacher is the very substance of the school. This is a headteacher who thinks of everything, and then double-checks. Her vision is imaginative yet deeply rooted in common sense. She consults with everyone connected with the school and then goes out to find more beyond the gates – external advisers to assist with monitoring and colleagues in far-flung schools. The headteacher ensures that staff appointed are of high quality and ensures that they are well supported when they take up their posts. The headteacher exudes and expects excellence, and never lets anyone forget it. Pupils do not want for resources or consideration, and nor do teachers. She signs acres of certificates, which applaud attendance, good sportsmanship and a first novel. She praises pupils' achievement in activities out of school. She has a disappointment book to record errors of judgement – unsurprisingly, a slender volume. The head has infectious energy and just generates respect. She remains steadfastly humble yet is justifiably proud of her very high standards. She has, for example, never been late for an assembly in ten years, until a deep discussion with a registered inspector ...

29. The school is well aware of its strengths and areas for development. Indeed, it is so aware that there are no significant areas for improvement, just good provision that could be improved further in a few areas. The headteacher and senior staff are very thorough in their monitoring of the school's progress. The headteacher holds regular meetings with all distinct groups of staff to seek views and ensure a consistent communication. External, independent advisers are usually invited to join the team of staff during monitoring activities, adding a vital touch of expertise and objectivity.
30. The school is richly resourced because its finances are expertly managed. All decisions on spending are scrupulously linked to school development, and value for money is high on the agenda. For instance, the school has invested heavily in its two libraries, and it is no surprise that reading standards continue to rise. It has put money into specialist teaching in music, and that is already paying dividends in standards of pupils' music appreciation and composition. The skilful deployment of teaching assistants helps less able pupils to achieve standards expected for their age. The school has generated a larger than average surplus of funds, but has very specific plans to spend much of it in the near future on playground initiatives, improved study areas and the replacement of computers in the computer suite.
31. Senior staff are very effective. The two assistant headteachers play a very valuable role in not only supporting the headteacher, particularly in school development, but also as clear channels of communication throughout the school. They, together with the other subject leaders, are very good at analysing subject areas, drawing pertinent conclusions and suggesting ways to improve. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved, although they are not all yet consistently very good in every subject. For example, further development is planned to improve further links between subjects. The excellent leadership and management of the special needs co-ordinator ensure that pupils with special education needs receive excellent support.



32. The school's governors do a very good job. They keep a watchful eye on the school, liaise regularly with the headteacher and other staff and are, therefore, very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The effective committee structure enables the governors to play a key role in decision-making and shaping the development of the school. For example, they strongly recommended the appointment of a bursar, to alleviate the burden on the headteacher. This has proved very successful.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,086,846
Total expenditure	1,104,475
Expenditure per pupil	2,380

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	110,563
Balance carried forward to the next	92,934

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

33. Most children have well below average attainment in all learning areas when they start nursery. Although children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes, by the time they enter Year 1, most do not achieve the goals expected of them and standards are below average. The good achievement is due to good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage, the joint planning that ensures all children benefit equally from the provision and the judicious blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, which are appropriate to the age and abilities of the children. The well-briefed and enthusiastic teaching assistants add to the quality of experience that the children receive. Sometimes, when adult support is not readily available, the quality of learning lessens, as most children still depend on adult guidance in their activities.
34. The curriculum is well planned and children receive a wide range of stimulating experiences. These motivate all children, including those with special educational needs, to learn well and enjoy all the areas of learning that lead into the National Curriculum. Assessment arrangements are extensive and generally build up a good profile of each child. However, staff have not been as rigorous as they might have been in ensuring clear starting points for each child, and so progress cannot be measured with complete accuracy. The school is very aware of this and is about to reinstate an efficient assessment system which should strengthen the situation. All staff bring enthusiasm, skill and understanding to the children's learning and every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy, numeracy and social skills. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Although these and the overall provision are not as strong as they were judged to be at the last inspection, children achieve equally as well.

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

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

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

- All staff have high expectations of how children should behave and work
- The children achieve well because of the many, well-focused opportunities

#### **Commentary**

35. Good teaching in this area of learning means that children achieve well. The children have well below average personal and social skills on entry to the nursery and so staff work very hard to establish vital routines and develop the children's social skills. Even so, by the time the children leave the reception classes, many of them will still not have reached the expected levels and standards are still below average. All teachers and teaching assistants are patient, caring and succeed in improving children's independence and approach to learning. Relationships are very good throughout the Foundation Stage, because adults set good examples for the children to follow and children feel respected and valued.
36. In the nursery, children settle quickly and begin to acquire key skills. They learn, for example, the need to decide for themselves when to change activities and that coloured bands indicate the number of children allowed at each activity. They begin to show respect for equipment and other children. In the reception classes, routines are consolidated and extended, and children are better at working independently. For example, children engage in happy role-play in the class 'café', taking orders and writing menus, while others are absorbed looking at rainbow

trout through hand lenses. They learn to share resources. They take part willingly at tidy up time, because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good, especially in basic skills
- There are exciting and varied activities to promote children's reading, writing and talking

### **Commentary**

37. Standards are well below average on entry and, although children achieve well, are still below average by the time children enter Year 1. Adults in all classes take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills. This was evident in the nursery class where the teacher involved children in feeding 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. They had to interpret the number on a dice, decide what fruit was being eaten and count them out for the caterpillar. In the reception classes, staff are also skilful at making learning fun and capturing the children's interest in activities that draw on their natural curiosity. For example, before drawing pictures of rainbow trout, children discussed the feel, colours and patterns of the fish.
38. Opportunities to promote reading and writing are similarly effective. All the children enjoy listening to stories and they join in enthusiastically with well-known rhymes, thus developing their memory skills. In the nursery, children become confident about handling books. In the reception classes, children learn that pictures can help to deduce what might be happening in a story. The development of reading skills has a high priority and is well supported by parents. Teachers encourage skills in writing. In the role-play areas, children are able to 'write' orders in the 'Pizza Parlour' or the 'Newbarns Café'. Children in the nursery often recognise and make good attempts to write the first letters of their name. In the reception classes, some children can write their names and are willing to 'write' wedding invitations, postcards, passports, with a few able to write a short sequence of sentences. Most children recognise individual letters and use them in recognisable form in their emergent writing.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to develop mathematical understanding

### **Commentary**

39. When children start in the nursery their mathematical understanding is underdeveloped and well below average when compared with children of the same age. Standards are below average by the time they are ready to move into Year 1 but their achievement is good. Children benefit from good, direct teaching and from activities that promote their mathematical understanding, such as jigsaws, computer programs and matching games for numbers and shapes, which children enjoy and complete enthusiastically either on their own, with a partner or in a small group.
40. In the nursery, children begin to count numbers to 5 and, in the reception classes, they use the role-play shop to begin to understand the concept of coins and their value. They write shopping lists, add up numbers up to 10 and count out money, using real coins. Higher

attaining children are challenged by more demanding tasks, such as adding several totals together, and the less able children have smaller learning steps.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good teaching motivates children to respond well in lessons
- The wide range of activities develops children's awareness well

### **Commentary**

41. Most children do not have a wide range of experience beyond their own home and the immediate community when they start school. Children achieve well. Their knowledge and understanding are extended but are still below those of most children of the same age by the end of the reception year. Children are enthusiastic about the activities provided and so work hard. Teachers' careful planning identifies clearly what children are expected to learn and the key vocabulary to be introduced and reinforced.
42. Children develop their skills and knowledge well. In the nursery, children learn about the life-cycle of a butterfly, and draw and paint a variety of small creatures. Children in the reception classes study the seaside. They have used old photographs to look at how people used to live, and they have visited the local beach to look for signs of plant and animal life and then used a variety of resources to create sea creatures. Children in all classes use computers with increasing confidence. They know how to open programs, manipulate the mouse and click and drag objects on the screen. Children in the nursery have visited a local church, and now understand that a font is used when baptising a baby and that the priest wears special clothing during a service. Reception children study the Jewish faith. They know how a wedding is celebrated and have written prayers to put in a mezuzah. Such activities provide chances for children to develop an awareness of themselves and others.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to develop the necessary skills

### **Commentary**

43. When they begin school, children's physical development is well below average. Children achieve well in all classes and, by the end of the reception classes, standards are higher but still below those expected. Teaching is good and children learn quickly. Children use large and small apparatus well to balance, jump and land with some accuracy. They are able to run and make reasonable attempts to throw and catch a ball, showing developing control of their bodies. At present, the outdoor and newly covered areas in nursery and reception are purposefully used but the quality of learning environment is not good enough to develop children's skills fully. The school already has very good plans to improve this provision. Children develop their manipulative skills effectively by rolling and moulding dough, using scissors and tools and playing with small toys and a wide range of construction equipment.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lively and interesting activities capture children's interest
- Teachers encourage children to use their imaginations to develop their ideas

### Commentary

44. Children's creative development is well below that expected for their age on entry to the nursery. They achieve well and, although standards rise, they are still below average by the time they move to Year 1. Good teaching ensures that children have a good understanding of their learning. Children are able to sustain interest for long periods, becoming engrossed in the activities and using their imagination to develop ideas. Children in the nursery are happy to talk with adults and engage them in their activities. For example, children in the 'Pizza Parlour' took an order and produced a 'pizza' to share with their customers. Other children took orders in their class 'café', created the 'food' and supplied the bill, dealing with 'cash' in the till.
45. Clear links between the different areas of learning make learning relevant and reflect the quality of teaching. For example, nursery children printed caterpillars using a variety of materials whilst older children used salt dough to create sea creatures. The children use their imaginations well and engage in meaningful talk. Conversations with adults in these activities are a strength of teaching, and help to expand ideas and vocabulary. In music, children sing and play musical instruments with enthusiasm.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well because the quality of teaching is very good
- The excellent relationships in the classrooms encourage pupils to have very positive attitudes to learning
- Teachers are extremely thorough in monitoring pupils' progress
- The support by teaching assistants for less able pupils is very effective
- Pupils are inspired by the rich opportunities within the curriculum
- The subject has been skilfully developed over recent years

### Commentary

46. The school has succeeded in sustaining high standards since the last inspection. Standards are above average in all areas of the language and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well by the time they leave the school. The teaching of basic skills is very good. Pupils have good listening skills, because teachers make lessons interesting and so pupils concentrate hard. Teachers actively promote fruitful discussion in each lesson, and so pupils speak with confidence and clarity about a range of topics. Pupils love to read and read widely, because of the skilful guidance by teachers and teaching assistants, the high quality of the two libraries and the very good support by parents at home. Pupils write efficiently in a variety of styles. Their writing is very well organised, with good spelling and punctuation. Higher attaining pupils write at length expressively, structuring their writing into paragraphs.

47. The climate for learning in each lesson is inspiring. Pupils know that teachers expect the best and value everyone's efforts and so they are very responsive. They behave very well and relax in the knowledge that their contributions are always welcome and appreciated. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils could barely wait to air ideas in response to a 'spoof' letter than all school visits should be discontinued. Pupils work particularly well together. They co-operate purposefully and productively. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were animated yet appreciative of others' ideas as they prepared presentations about the pleasures of camping.
48. The systems for assessment are very good. Teachers keep a close watch on pupils' progress over time through regular tests and skilful recording of results. As a result, teachers are in no doubt which pupils need extra help with their work and which can be guided to achieve more. Particularly useful are the half-termly analyses of pupils' independent writing. Teachers are very consistent about marking pupils' work and giving advice informally about how to improve. However, not all targets are clear-cut and pupils are not sure exactly what aspect of their spelling or handwriting they need to work on to improve.
49. Teachers plan rigorously and skilfully across year groups. Their planning always involves teaching assistants so that the role of all adults present is not only abundantly clear but is very well focused. Whether in the classroom or in withdrawn groups, teaching assistants do a very good job in motivating and teaching less able pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, have good techniques of teaching and are very sensitive to the needs of individual pupils. Consequently, these pupils achieve very well and many achieve standards expected for pupils of their age.
50. Teachers provide pupils with stimulating experiences to develop their language. Pupils produced, for example, a variety of factual and narrative writing about their residential trips in the Lake District. Pupils in Year 5 even visited Wordsworth's Dove Cottage to gain inspiration for poetry. Pupils are encouraged to develop their public speaking. Year 6 pupils gave a dramatic synopsis of their last year at school in one assembly. One particularly able pupil won a prize at a local music festival for choral speaking.
51. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The three co-ordinators work very closely together to oversee and develop all aspects of the language. In this, they have been very successful. They have conducted an in-depth analysis of any areas of concern and made sensible plans to address them. For example, the school is very well aware of the need to boost boys' reading and writing, has invested in suitable staff training and resources and, thereby, improved the situation. The development of the libraries has been excellent. The co-ordinators know that target setting needs to be fine-tuned and have this already in hand.

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

52. Teachers develop language and literacy well across the curriculum. Within English lessons, pupils develop factual writing when describing the Great Fire of London or evaluating the effect of pollution. In subjects like geography, pupils write detailed accounts and hone reading skills when researching in reference books or on the Internet, about life in India for example. Speaking and listening are strengthened in philosophy lessons. However, teachers do not plan systematically to enliven most lessons in this way and so valuable opportunities are lost.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils achieve very well as they pass through the school
- The quality of teaching and the contribution of teaching assistants are very good
- Pupils are keen to learn because of the very positive atmosphere in lessons

- The leadership and management of the subject are very good
- Mathematics is well developed across the curriculum

### Commentary

53. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Standards have continued to rise and are now above average. Standards are not quite so high as they have been in recent years because the current Year 6 is not so strong academically. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs, is very good, especially compared to their improvement since Year 2. There is very good teaching of basic skills and a wide range of activities which pupils are taught on a daily basis.
54. Teachers have very good strategies to develop pupils' skills. They use, for example, brisk question and answer sessions to stimulate pupils' mental agility. As a result, pupils learn good ways of solving problems. Teachers make the aims for what will be learnt very clear at the start of lessons so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and settle very quickly to their tasks. Teachers plan very well together to ensure that that pupils of all abilities have work that challenges and extends them. Teaching assistants are sensitive and very effective at supporting pupils' learning, in particular those with special educational needs.
55. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work. They are eager to learn because of the teachers' excellent, encouraging relationships with them. They understand that teachers expect high standards of work and behaviour. As a result, pupils are industrious and are happy to consolidate their learning very well through plenty of practice, in a pleasant working atmosphere. They listen attentively, volunteer responses readily and co-operate productively in groups. This ensures that learning by all pupils is consistently good and they make the very most of each lesson. Pupils work efficiently whether on their own or with others.
56. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. She is passionate about the subject and is very well aware of strengths and areas for development. She provides a very good role model for other staff and pupils. The very good action plan shows that the subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject. Resources are very good.

### Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Teachers provide good opportunities to develop mathematics through other subjects. For example, in science, pupils use precise measurements when investigating the length of shadows. In geography, they interpret tables of results and use ICT to create graphs and charts. However, teachers do not plan similar opportunities systematically enough within mathematics lessons, and so miss crucial chances to put learning in a clearer context.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good by the end of Year 6
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good
- There has been a very good development of investigative science throughout school
- The leadership and management are very good
- Teachers are good at developing other subjects through science

### Commentary

58. By the end of Year 2, standards in science are above average. Pupils' achievement is good in view of the well below average standards on entry to school. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils'

learning accelerates and, by the end of Year 6, pupils' work is well above average. Pupils understand key aspects of biology, for example, and use an appropriate scientific vocabulary with confidence in their writing. For instance, pupils correctly used such terms as 'photosynthesis' and 'chlorophyll' when describing an experiment. Investigative reports contain predictions, results and conclusive remarks. Tables, graphs and symbols are accurately used and pupils know exactly what units to use when measuring. For instance, they know that newtons are used for measuring forces. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because they are very well supported by teaching assistants.

59. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Teacher subject knowledge is secure and lessons are very well planned, with well-prepared resources. Pupils know what they are going to learn because teachers clearly explain the purpose of the lesson and the skills to be learned. Teachers match work closely to the different abilities of pupils, because their assessment of pupils' progress is very informative.
60. Since the last inspection, there has been a whole-school focus on the development of investigative science. This has been very successful and had a major impact on standards this year. Pupils in Year 1, for example, explored ICT to display their preferences for fruit in a graph and then interpreted their results. Year 2 pupils were very thorough when analysing the distances travelled by toy cars on different surfaces. Year 3 pupils have grown their own vegetables and, having dug some up, identified which part of the plant is eaten. Not only are such lessons enjoyable, they make learning relevant for pupils and enable them to investigate science for themselves. Consequently, pupils have an excellent attitude towards their work. They are keen and eager to learn and work hard to meet the teacher's high expectations.
61. The role of the subject co-ordinator is very well developed. She has a thorough understanding of the subject throughout the school and continually monitors planning, teaching and pupils' work. The recent plans for action have been absolutely appropriate and their success can be seen in the current standards. The high quality of pupils' work in lessons, books and in displays around school simply reinforces this.
62. Teachers make good use of other subjects within science. Pupils develop mathematics through the many opportunities to measure and record their findings. ICT is well used for data handling, research and recording. Pupils make very good use of literacy skills to record their scientific work and this is well presented in clear, neat handwriting. There are good plans to develop science further across other curriculum areas.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well
- Pupils learn well because teachers ensure that learning is challenging, systematic and relevant
- Pupils make the most of the excellent computer suite and resources
- The subject is very well led and managed
- The development of ICT across the curriculum is good, but not as good as it could be

### **Commentary**

63. The school has succeeded in maintaining the good standards seen at the last inspection. By Year 6, pupils are confident at computer operation and can access and operate programs with relative ease. They word-process efficiently and insert photographs and pictures well, skilfully adapting them to fit their layout. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to develop other skills. For instance, pupils are good at carrying out simulation activities on-screen and they can also program the computer to, for example, draw two-dimensional shapes.



64. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers mostly have good skills and so new learning is explained very clearly, giving pupils plenty of time to experiment with and reinforce new skills. Teachers expect a lot from their pupils. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were required to draw on-screen rectangles and triangles by giving the computer precise instructions. While the less able pupils wrestled with, and eventually succeeded with, the angles involved, more able pupils were able to produce repeated patterns and, thereby, geometric designs. Learning is mostly put in context and, therefore, more effective. For instance, pupils in Year 5 prepared promotional brochures about their experiences in a recent trip to the Lake District, designed to inspire pupils in Year 4.
65. Pupils enjoy their weekly lesson in the spacious computer suite. As each pupil has a computer to work on, they have the maximum hands-on time possible. This means that they can get a lot of work done and work at their own pace. There is a very good range of software so that pupils can consolidate skills in other subjects, such as mathematics, but also explore simulation programs. Pupils work very hard and, although on separate machines, they co-operate naturally and considerately. Pupils just lean gently over to help a neighbour who may be struggling a little and offer a word of advice.
66. The subject has developed well since the last inspection. The subject leader has very good skills and clear awareness of the strengths of the subject and areas for development. The development of the computer suite has been first rate because not only do all pupils have individual access to a computer, but all the computers work and pupils are very comfortable. Teachers' skills have been developed and are complemented by the expertise of the support staff in the computer suite.

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

67. ICT is developed well through other subjects. For example, in ICT lessons, pupils in Year 2 developed their skills in both English and geography when they accessed a website to find out information about the fictional island of Struay. Pupils in Year 5 experimented with mathematics and art and design when they created geometric designs on the computer. However, teachers do not exploit all such opportunities. In the near future, the extra computers in classrooms will be a valuable resource for developing this provision further.

### **HUMANITIES**

68. There was not enough evidence to judge provision in **geography**. Pupils have a suitable curriculum, although the organisation of their study does not always allow for good continuity of learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 have studied geography only during the summer term this year, suggesting a gap of at least nine months from Year 5. However, pupils' learning is certainly strengthened by the residential visits that many pupils make to the Lake District and elsewhere. On these visits, pupils develop their mapping skills and are more aware of environmental issues.

### **History**

69. It was also not possible to make a judgement about the provision in **history**. There is a good, well-structured curriculum, which provides good links with other subjects. Year 6 pupils used design and technology and ICT in their very comprehensive individual projects on the Egyptians. Their work on Tudors and Stuarts provided links to geography and literacy. There is an emphasis on practical activities and discussion, and there is a good programme of visits and visitors in all classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit local museums and historical buildings whilst older pupils visit places like Roman settlements and take part in themed days, such as a Greek Day. The pupils in Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed taking part in philosophical discussions and quizzes, and feasting on Greek food.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum ensures that pupils build progressively on their learning
- Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6
- The subject leadership is very good

### Commentary

70. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Attainment in both key stages is now above the expectations set by the locally agreed syllabus, because the quality of teaching in all classes is very good. The new syllabus is fully embedded and there is a comprehensive scheme of work, which covers three world faiths – Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism. This has recently been updated well with the help of an adviser from the local authority. Teachers plan thoughtfully to ensure pupils learn about events in Christianity and the other two faiths and appreciate what is important to each group. The planning ensures good, systematic coverage throughout the school.
71. Very good teaching ensures pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. For example, pupils in year 2 became engrossed in a lesson about the Jewish faith because of the very good resources. The practical activities of making challah bread and dressing up in costumes to re-enact the ritual and ceremony of Shabbat thrilled and wholly motivated pupils. Pupils in Year 6 have covered a wide range of topics which link well to literacy and demonstrate a sensitivity and empathy for others through poetry and prose. Pupils understand some of the main beliefs of Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism at a level appropriate for their age, and explore the similarities between them.
72. Subject leadership is very good. The co-ordinator has addressed all issues from the last inspection and has clear ideas about future developments in the subject. The resources for the subject are very good; each class has its own specified resources as well as access to artefacts that are available for the use of the whole school.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. As no lessons were seen during the inspection, no judgement can be made about the provision in **design and technology**. However, an analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils have good skills such as, for example, in joining materials, sewing and making moving mechanisms. The subject is often linked productively to other curriculum areas. For example, Year 1 pupils designed and made model greenhouses linked to their science topic and 'feelie' pictures were made in the style of the artist, Mackenzie Thorpe. Older children used glass tiles and ceramic glue to create a mosaic, based on a Roman design. Pupils in Year 5 made Victorian peg dolls and Year 6 pupils constructed models of Tudor houses. There was not enough evidence of pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluation to judge their overall achievement.

## Art and design

The provision in art and design is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of art and design that pupils produce is impressive
- The leadership and management of the subject is very good
- The rich curriculum stimulates pupils' imaginations and develops their techniques

- Art and design are developed well through other subjects

### Commentary

74. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average; pupils achieve very well and they produce work of a high standard, very much as pupils were doing at the time of the last inspection. This is because, throughout the school, pupils are continuing to receive a rich and varied curriculum from teachers who are enthusiastic about the subject and who have confidence in teaching the subject.
75. The co-ordinator carries out her role very well. She monitors planning, scrutinises pupils' work and ensures the curriculum is delivered fully. The bright displays around the school celebrate pupils' achievements and enhance the learning environment.
76. Teaching is very effective. Teachers make very good use of major artists to show the effectiveness of different techniques. Pupils talk confidently about the work of such artists. The youngest pupils, for example, study the work of Matisse, whilst older pupils study the work of Alfred Wainwright, a Cumbrian artist well known for his line drawings of Lakeland. Year 6 pupils produced brightly detailed pottery designs in the style of Clarice Cliff and, during the inspection, were skilfully emulating Warhol's famous tin of soup. Such work contributes very well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Artwork from other cultures is well represented within the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3 recreate Aboriginal art using earth colours and pupils in Year 4 study African art. The work of Swiss sculptor, Alberto Giacometti, is the starting point for Year 3 pupils who created three-dimensional figures using tin foil and wire with quite dramatic results.
77. The subject is used well to enrich other areas of the curriculum, such as history. Pupils in Year 3 created Roman shields, and pupils in Year 4 have made good, pencil sketches during a visit to Furness Abbey. Work of the ancient Greeks and Egyptians is celebrated in art work. Pupils in Year 1 use potatoes to print sunflowers, linking this with their science topic. The curriculum is greatly enriched by visits and visitors to school. An Indian artist instructed pupils how to make paper flowers and garlands and a Kenyan artist, Gakonga, taught pupils the basis for his art work.

### Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well
- The specialist co-ordinator is very good and his teaching has a significant impact on learning
- Pupils relish the wide range of opportunities available to them

### Commentary

78. Standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is at least good, and often very good, and so pupils develop good skills. For example, they sing well. In assemblies, they sing well together and have a good sense of rhythm. Pupils perform capably on simple instruments like recorders and percussion, and a few have very good skills, on the cornet, clarinet and piano for example, because of the extra tuition available. Pupils are particularly good at appreciating and composing music. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, swiftly identified musical interpretations of weather, such as thunder and sunshine. Pupils in Year 5 produced some thoughtful and tight rhythms on percussion to accompany some raps they had devised.

79. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has considerable expertise and takes most of the lessons himself, alongside his colleagues. Consequently, he ensures that pupils build emphatically on their skills and he is aware of how well pupils are learning and what they need to do to improve. The school has acquired a very good range of resources and the special music room is ideal for performing music and putting movement to music.
80. Lessons are fun yet challenging. Pupils patently enjoy working together and value each other's contributions. They make the most of opportunities that are on offer. For example, the school choir and recorder club are well attended and many pupils benefit from the individual tuition on a variety of instruments. From time to time, pupils have the chance to perform at assemblies or school functions, and this strengthens their performance skills.

## Physical education

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is maintaining high standards in a range of sports because of very good leadership and management
- Teachers ensure that lessons are very well focused and move at a swift pace
- There is an excellent variety of opportunities in sport, in which pupils can participate fully
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good

### Commentary

81. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and pupils achieve well. It was not possible to judge the standards by the end of Year 6, because no lessons took place during the inspection. However, in the Year 5 lesson seen, standards in games were well above average. The quality of teaching seen in all lessons was very good, and the subject is very well led and managed. The accommodation and resources support learning very well. The overall provision, therefore, is similar to that seen in the last inspection.
82. Teaching and learning are very good. The excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils, foster self-confidence and encourage a determination to improve skills. Pupils sustain considerable concentration at times, as seen when pupils in Year 1 balanced a tennis ball on a tennis racquet for as long as possible. This lesson had a brisk pace with a good balance of teaching, coaching and practice and the teacher steadily increased expectations of physical effort and concentration from the pupils.
83. The school provides a rich curriculum within and outside of lessons. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities, some run by specialist coaches. For example, pupils take part in competitive sporting events in athletics, rounders, rugby and swimming. The school is particularly successful in swimming, coming 16th in the recent national primary school championships. The school takes full advantage of expertise from outside. For example, a specialist dance teacher had enabled pupils in Year 2 to produce a complex dance routine.
84. Pupils clearly relish sport and participate both enthusiastically and considerately. In many of the activities, teamwork among the pupils is essential, and they readily support one another. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils worked very well in groups to practise throwing and catching skills whilst others practised rounders and Kwik cricket skills. Pupils shared fielding positions on the rounders pitch and readily changed roles without needing to be told by the teachers. All pupils were keen to ensure fair play at all times. Indeed, physical education is very inclusive and staff ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities in the subject.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

### Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good, stimulating opportunities for pupils' development both in.....
- ..... and out of school

#### Commentary

85. Pupils benefit from weekly lessons devoted to discussions of personal issues and social awareness. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, have debated why people can be selfish and ultimately deduced that it is better to think before acting. Pupils in Year 6 spent time creating poems with the message that friendship has to be worked at. Central themes are linked to the school assemblies. For instance, 'lack of thought' was explored by the headteacher in an assembly, as she ruefully recalled being 'told off' for using her car for travelling a short distance instead of walking. Teachers are increasingly using lessons in philosophy to open pupils' minds to all kinds of wider issues and to improve thinking skills. During their Greek Day, pupils in Year 4 had an enthusiastic debate about the value of subjects, like history and physical education. One pupil was quite emphatic. "If you don't do it, you will die," she said, referring to physical exercise.
86. There is a great deal of scope for pupils to mature socially beyond school. The many competitive sports fixtures mean that pupils rub shoulders with pupils from other areas, learn the pleasures of winning and acquire the art of losing gracefully. Links with rural and inner-city schools further the experience. The residential visits are carefully planned to encourage social interaction, whether cooped up in a tent or debating map directions. The liaison with Age Concern gives pupils very good opportunities to communicate with people who have perhaps a different outlook on life.

#### The philosophy club

It was lunchtime. All the other pupils were playing out in the sunshine or munching their way through the last of their lunch. Upstairs in the meeting room, 16 pupils were talking philosophy. The pupils, from Years 2 to 6, with an equal number of girls and boys, were totally absorbed in their discussion of life after death. It was a topic that they had chosen earlier and now it was giving them food for thought. "I think that spirits return and are confined to their houses," said one pupil. One recent convert explained that his new belief in the after-life had been inspired by watching the film 'Beetlejuice'. Another boy thought that his dead grandfather shone down protectively on his father and his colleagues at work. The atmosphere was calm and reflective, older pupils listened to young pupils with care and interest, and the headteacher, almost incidental to the process, took notes. A final show of hands revealed that most pupils believed in some form of life after death, a few remained unconvinced and one boy stuck firmly to his opposing view.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	1
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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