

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORMAN STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112219

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Baskerville

Lead inspector: Mr Andrew Scott

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 257031

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	307
School address:	Norman Street Carlisle
Postcode:	CA1 2BQ
Telephone number:	01228 607501
Fax number:	01228 607502
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Diane Naylor
Date of previous inspection:	23rd March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average urban primary school with 307 pupils. Pupils come from a wide area and mixed social and economic backgrounds which, taken overall, are average. Almost all of the pupils are from white British extraction and there are no pupils with English as their second language. A significant number of pupils either enter school after the age of four or leave before they are eleven, but this does not have a particular impact on standards. Most pupils enter the school with below average knowledge and skills, and many are particularly weak in language. Just over 30 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is higher than average. Most of these pupils have mild learning difficulties but several have moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs. The headteacher is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools and the school gained an Investor in People Award in 2001. There is a good partnership with a local sports college, St Aidan's School, and close links with St Martin's College for teaching training.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27545	Mr Andrew Scott	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, geography, history
11358	Mrs Vicki Lamb	Lay inspector	
33237	Mrs Christine Haddock	Team inspector	English, music, physical education, religious education, special educational needs
27591	Ms Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, science, art and design, design and technology

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus Ltd

BPS Business Centre  
Brake Lane  
Boughton  
Newark  
Nottinghamshire  
NG22 9HQ

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>29</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school.** There is a positive and supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel respected and motivated. At present, standards are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory because of pupils' below average ability on entry to the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and there is some good and very good teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6, and in the reception classes. The leadership and management of the school are good, and the quality of governance is satisfactory. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school has a very caring ethos in which pupils feel respected, valued and safe, and which helps them to become responsible and well-rounded individuals
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction, and is well supported by key staff
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average
- There are warm and positive relationships between staff and pupils which ensure that pupils behave well and are keen to work
- Pupils do not all have enough scope to be self-reliant in their learning
- The everyday curriculum is not always challenging or stimulating enough for all pupils, especially higher attaining pupils
- The curriculum is enriched by new initiatives, educational visits and after-school clubs
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that these pupils achieve well
- Pupils' attainment in music is good

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Various elements of the school are not quite so good as at the time of the last inspection, such as the curriculum, leadership and management. However, the key outcomes are very similar. Pupils' achievement, for instance, remains satisfactory and teaching is a blend of satisfactory and good, as it was then.

### 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	B	C	C
mathematics	D	C	C	C
science	C	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' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory.** Children enter school with abilities and skills that are below average; a significant minority of pupils have poor language skills. They make satisfactory progress in their first year, although good in language, and are below the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year. They also make good progress in mathematics, and their attainment is average by the end of the year. By the end of Years 2 and 6, current standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. Both year groups have a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils do not achieve as well as they might. In Year 2, standards in these subjects have stayed below the national trend in recent years but, in Year 6, standards have remained in line with the national trend. Pupils' attainment is average in all other subjects, except for music where pupils have above average skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their individual targets.

There is good provision for pupils' personal development. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall.** There are positive relationships between staff and pupils; pupils behave well and have satisfactory attitudes to work. Attendance has been higher than average in recent years and now is broadly average. Punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.** Teaching is often good in Years 2, 5 and 6 because teachers expect more from pupils and set work which is suitably challenging for individual pupils. The teaching of language and mathematics is also good in the reception classes. Pupils learn well in music throughout the school because of good teaching.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. There is sufficient time for each subject and good enrichment outside lessons. There is good provision for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs. The school takes very good care of its pupils, so pupils feel safe and valued. Partnerships with parents and other school are good; links with the community are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The current priorities of the school are sensible, although not wholly focused on raising standards. The governance is satisfactory. Governors are well involved with the school's development and monitor its progress closely but they do not always act decisively enough to check whether standards are as high as they should be. The management of the school is good. There are good systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning and very good support for new staff. However, the school is not always rigorous enough in its evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses.

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

Parents have a good opinion of the school. They know that their children enjoy school and feel that the school does its best for them. Parents consider teaching and learning to be good, although the inspection team found this to be a mixed picture and satisfactory overall. A few parents expressed concern about bullying, but the inspection team found little evidence of this. Pupils appreciate their school, especially their teachers, work and fellow pupils.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- to improve standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6
- to ensure lessons are consistently challenging and stimulating to all pupils, and provide opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills fully
- to be more rigorous in evaluating its own development

## 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 **satisfactory**. Standards in all the main subjects are currently below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, although standards by the end of Year 6 have been in line with national averages over recent years. Pupils' attainment in most other subjects are average. However, their attainment in music is above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There is little difference in the attainment of girls and boys by the time they leave school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6 is below average
- Children in the reception classes achieve well in language and mathematical development
- Pupils achieve and attain well in music by the end of Year 6

#### Commentary

1. Children begin school with below average knowledge and skills, and many children have poor language and literacy skills. By the end of the reception year, children achieve satisfactorily and so are still below average when they enter Year 1. However, children make good progress in mathematical development and so achieve the goals expected of them. Children also progress well in language development, although most children are still below average at the end of the year. Children develop good relationships with others and start to become more responsible for their own actions. Their speaking and listening grow in confidence but a limited vocabulary restricts their abilities. Children have a sound understanding of number and a reasonable awareness of the world about them. They lack co-ordination in their physical development. Although they have some creativity, they are not yet skilled enough in their painting and drawing.
2. In the national tests of 2003, the standards of pupils in Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils achieved the expected levels but too few more able pupils reached the higher levels. Attainment has been below the national trend over recent years, particularly in reading. Compared to similar schools, standards in reading were well below average and below average in writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in speaking and listening were below average, but standards in science were broadly average. The differences between the attainment of girls and boys have fluctuated from year to year and are not significant.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.1 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.8 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Pupils' achievement in the current Year 2 is satisfactory. They enter Year 1 with below average knowledge, skills and understanding and have similar attainment by the end of Year 2. Pupils have below average reading skills, because they lack a sound vocabulary and do not have sufficient skills to deal with unfamiliar words confidently. Vocabulary also limits the quality of

their writing, but pupils' development is further restricted by the limited opportunities for extended writing. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is below average because, although they have adequate number skills, pupils are not adept at working out problems for themselves. In addition, more able pupils do not achieve as well as they might. In science, pupils' achievement is below average because teaching is too directed and pupils do not think enough for themselves. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment and achievement are satisfactory. However, they all tend to do very similar work so not all pupils achieve as well as they might.

- Pupils in Year 6 achieved average standards in 2003 in English, mathematics and science compared to the national average and compared to similar schools. Results were typical for pupils of their age, including more able pupils, although these pupils did not achieve quite so well in English. Standards have been reasonably consistent over recent years and test results have remained close to the national average. There is very little difference between the attainment of girls and boys.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (28.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- Pupils in the current Year 6 have achieved satisfactorily compared to their attainment in Year 2. Their attainment is below average in English, mathematics and science, especially because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who do not reach the expected levels of attainment. In English, pupils' writing does not show a wide range of styles. In mathematics, pupils are competent in number and increasingly able to use these skills to solve problems, although they do not develop their own strategies enough. Similarly, in science, pupils are not good enough at devising investigations for themselves. Standards in all other subjects are average, except in music, where they are above average. Pupils sing tunefully and expressively, and compose simple music well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, when measured against their individual learning targets. They make good progress in literacy and numeracy lessons where their needs are targeted and also when taught in small groups out of the classroom. The quality of individual learning plans is good, because learning is planned in small, well-defined steps and regularly assessed by teachers.

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

Pupils have **satisfactory** attitudes to learning and their behaviour is **good**. The school makes good provision for social, spiritual, moral and cultural development. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good. This aspect of the school is not quite as strong as it was as the time of the last inspection.

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

- Pupils' behaviour is generally good
- Most pupils have good relationships with each other as well as with all adults in classroom and opportunities for social development are good
- Pupils do not have enough scope to develop independent learning
- There are limited opportunities to extend pupils' awareness of other cultures

## Commentary

7. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are well aware of how teachers expect them to behave and appreciate the praise they receive for such action. Pupils, therefore, have a clear idea of what is right and what is wrong. They arrive at school promptly in the morning. They understand the school rules clearly. For example, they know that they are expected to sit calmly and quietly, listening to music, whilst waiting for other pupils to arrive in assembly. Lunch-times are fairly orderly and although playtime behaviour can be lively, it is not unduly boisterous. However, there are a small number of pupils who occasionally behave badly in lessons and this causes temporary distraction to the learning of other pupils. When incidents do occur, they are dealt with promptly and thoroughly. There have been no exclusions during the last school year.
8. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils co-operate well in lessons, discussing their work and carrying out practical activities sensibly. In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils were supportive of each other when trying to understand quadrants. In a Year 5/6 science lesson, pupils organised their work so that each had a go at the fun parts of the experiment, the dissection of a flower, as well as the part they found more taxing, the recording task. This contributes to good social development. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 share reading books with older pupils and these pupils also accompany the youngest children into whole school assembly.
9. The school provides useful opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take on responsibility. Pupils from across the school are proud to be members of the school council and this gives them a sense of value. The door-monitors at break and lunch-times carry out their duties seriously and thoughtfully. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to become more responsible for their own learning. Too much work is directed by teachers, and work is often tightly controlled on specific worksheets. Pupils lack the independence to develop their own learning, whether in science experiments or solving mathematical problems.
10. The development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is satisfactory. Although school promotes spirituality in some of its work, such as appreciating art or the wonder of the inside of a flower when dissected, it does not maximise all opportunities. Assemblies, for example, are appropriate but are not always inspiring or uplifting and do not necessarily give pupils time for quiet reflection. Pupils have some awareness of cultures through art, religious education and music but are not always given opportunity to draw on the richness and diversity of different cultures, both in Britain and the wider world.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
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 quality of education that the school provides for pupils is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but stronger in Years 2, 5 and 6 where there is some good teaching. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. The good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils are very well looked after and cared for. There are good partnerships with the parents and other schools, and satisfactory links with the local community, all of which improve pupils' learning.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a positive learning environment in classrooms
- Teachers do not always expect enough from pupils and provide work which is challenging and stimulating for all pupils
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, but mostly good in Years 2, 5 and 6
- Teachers explain concepts clearly and use good teaching strategies so that pupils understand new learning readily
- Pupils are not sufficiently clear about what they have to do to improve
- Teaching assistants contribute well to the learning of pupils, especially those with special educational needs

### Commentary

11. Pupils enjoy being in lessons because the atmosphere is relaxed and purposeful. Teachers are keen for pupils to learn and structure their teaching sensibly so that pupils are rarely unemployed. They try to involve all pupils in class discussions, by adapting the questions to cater for the different abilities of pupils. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, on multiples of 10 up to 100, the questions were appropriate for average and less able pupils, and the teacher used three-digit numbers to stretch the more able pupils. As a result, pupils feel valued and happily contribute to class activities, although less able pupils lack the confidence to participate fully in all lessons.
12. Lessons are not always skilfully planned to motivate pupils fully. Often, pupils' learning is a routine activity and much written work centres on the completion of mundane worksheets. Consequently, pupils are not especially stimulated and the pace of learning and the quality of presentation suffer. In addition, tasks set for pupils are too controlled and teachers do not offer enough scope for pupils to learn through their own discovery. In a Year 3/4 science lesson on light, pupils simply had to carry out tests on the lengths of shadows without having make deductions about their findings for themselves. This is particularly important for more able pupils to enable them to achieve well, and attain higher standards. Pupils benefit from a good variety of educational visits which enrich their learning, but teachers do not spice up the everyday curriculum enough to fire and capture pupils' imagination.
13. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, much as it was at the last inspection. However, there is good teaching in key areas of the school. In both reception classes, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and children achieve well. One teacher gave the children so many different opportunities to practise doubling single numbers that they learned swiftly almost without realising it. In Years 2, 5 and 6, teaching is mostly good and sometimes very good, because of the enthusiasm and high expectations of the teachers. These teachers are more careful to provide work that challenges pupils. In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, for example, most pupils found tackling simple co-ordinates in one quadrant tricky enough, but the teacher knew that more able pupils could already handle these, and so required them to work in all quadrants.
14. Teachers are good at explaining new learning. They use resources such as computer projection to focus pupils' attention and strengthen their understanding. In a Year 3/4 history lesson, the teacher projected a satellite picture of part of the earth to highlight where Vikings came from and the direction of their invasion routes. As a result, pupils could appreciate the distances involved and the locations. Recently introduced teaching strategies are successful, in part. The use of talk partners in lessons is helpful in consolidating learning and developing

speaking and listening. The 'brain gym' activities at the start of many lessons are good at putting pupils in the right frame of mind to learn, but it is not clear yet whether these are having an impact on pupils' achievement.

15. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistently good enough to help raise standards. Most teachers praise good work but few give clear guidance about what is inaccurate and what pupils need to do to improve. There is not enough insistence on finishing or correcting work and on neat presentation. Consequently, pupils' work is often incomplete and untidy. The new system of self-evaluation is good in that it gives pupils and teachers the chance to discuss any areas of weakness and pinpoint targets for improvement. However, some of the agreed targets are clear and sharply focused, others are too broad to be wholly effective. One pupil in Year 6 intended 'to keep my maths good', while another was keen 'to finish my spelling'.
16. Support staff are effective, particularly when working with groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are sensibly included in the weekly lesson planning meetings so they know what their role will be in each lesson. Their support for individual pupils during whole-class work is satisfactory. However, they work more successfully with groups, whether in or out of the classroom. They guide and suggest ideas to pupils, rather than direct their learning too much. In this way, pupils have to think for themselves and deal with problems head-on.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	5 (12%)	15 (37%)	20 (49%)	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 **satisfactory** curriculum. It enriches pupils' experiences with a good range of extra activities that boosts their skills in sports, arts, and personal development. The accommodation, staffing and resources for learning are satisfactory.

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

- There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs
- The school is keen to adopt new ideas into the curriculum
- The focus on literacy and numeracy restricts the time allocation for other subjects

### **Commentary**

17. The overall curriculum is satisfactory. This is similar to the judgement in the last inspection report which referred to it as 'an appropriate sequence of learning'. The school broadens pupils' experiences well outside lessons. There are many visits to places of educational interest. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited Eden Camp, for example, to further their understanding of life during World War 2. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 gain valuable skills in geography, history and other subjects during their various residential visits to places, such as Birdoswald. Visitors to the school extend pupils' learning by sharing their expertise. Effective use is made of links with a local secondary school which improve pupils' skills in a variety of sports. Approximately 40 pupils benefit from extra music tuition and learn instruments such as guitar and violin. Pupils also have the opportunity to join school recorder groups and choir, which stimulate their interest in music.

18. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, because of good provision. They have clearly defined targets in their individual learning plans which enable them to improve their learning step by step. They receive good support from teaching assistants in class, especially when working in small groups or individually. However, in contrast, the curriculum for more able pupils is not designed to give them enough challenge and independence in their learning, and this restricts their achievement.
19. The school takes advantage of new initiatives to try to motivate pupils. For example, pupils now have specially selected 'talk partners', a strategy designed to improve pupils' speaking and listening, as well as their self-confidence in class discussions. The brain gym and thinking activities are also good attempts to strengthen the curriculum. However, these initiatives are quite new and, as such, it is too early to measure their impact on pupils' standards.
20. The school rightly gives priority to literacy and numeracy in its timetable. This is understandable in view of the school's aim to raise standards in these subjects. However, as a result of this, some subjects such as music and religious education tend to have split and very short lessons. Often, in these lessons, both teachers and pupils are rushed and find it difficult to produce work of a consistently high standard. Similarly, there are few specific times when ICT is taught as a separate subject. Although pupils acquire the basic skills satisfactorily, they do not have enough time on a computer to consolidate and hone their skills further.

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

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development, are good. Pupils' involvement in the work and development of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school works very hard to ensure a healthy, safe and caring environment for pupils
- Staff are committed to maintaining good relationships with pupils
- Pupils are well involved in the development of the school, especially through the school council

### **Commentary**

21. The school is highly conscious of its duty of care towards pupils and has developed very good procedures to ensure their well-being. The high quality of care has been sustained since the last inspection. Staff are knowledgeable and conscientious in their approach and supervise pupils carefully throughout the school day. Staff know pupils well and pupils know there is always someone to turn to for help or advice. The school has very good arrangements for the health and safety of pupils, and there are ample suitably qualified staff to administer first aid. There are very good procedures for child protection. Staff are provided with sensible guidance should they have concerns about a child's welfare. It is impressive that this guidance is also given to voluntary helpers in school so that they know the correct procedures to follow.
22. The views of pupils are valued. Consequently, there are good relationships between all staff and pupils. Staff make a point of getting to know pupils well and so pupils approach them confidently with news, ideas and for help. In particular, pupils are listened to by adults in school and their views taken into account, as the good relationships allow friendly exchanges of views.
23. Pupils are well involved in the development of the school. The school ensures that pupils have a communal voice through the school council. This provides an efficient means of involving all pupils in new developments, as all proposals are seriously considered and voted upon. As an example, pupils have recently been successful in obtaining mirrors for the toilets and new equipment to use during breaks and lunchtimes, which they helped to select.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and other schools are **good**. Links with the community are satisfactory. These are similar judgements to those of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of high quality information is provided for parents
- The school involves parents very well through seeking and acting on their views
- Links with secondary schools help pupils transfer smoothly
- Not all parents are supportive enough of their children's learning at home

### Commentary

24. The school keeps parents very well informed. The prospectus emphasises the attitudes and values that are fundamental to the school alongside very clear information about school procedures, the curriculum and test results. Teachers are readily available to parents on an informal basis each day and provide valuable information on pupils' progress. Parents appreciate this 'open door' policy. Frequent newsletters provide a wide range of additional information to keep parents up to date. The information that the teachers provide regularly about what is taught in each class is especially useful. Annual reports give parents a good picture of how their children are progressing academically and in their personal development.
25. The school is committed to working closely with parents. The school is particularly eager to consult parents when considering new developments. Parents' opinions were sought in the autumn to determine the level of their satisfaction with the school. Several parents regularly work voluntarily in school, for instance supporting teachers during group work in lessons and hearing pupils read. They are well advised on their roles and make good contributions to children's learning and well-being. There is a small group of hardworking parents, staff and friends of the school that welcomes all parents to its meetings and organises fund-raising and social events. The funds raised make a significant contribution to resources for play and learning.
26. There is a good partnership with the secondary school to which nearly all pupils transfer. These links are fruitful as they enable pupils to get to know staff, other pupils and routines in time for a smooth transfer. The school has introduced work diaries for pupils in Years 3 to 6, for instance, so that they will be familiar with using them in readiness for the greater independence that is required in secondary school. These have proved very successful.
27. Most parents are supportive of their children's work at home. They hear their children read and ensure that other homework is completed and returned on time, writing messages to staff about how their child is getting on. However, a significant number of parents do not help their child with reading and other work on a regular basis, and so their child does not make as much progress as he or she might. The school is eager to encourage parents to support their children but previous efforts have not achieved the desired success.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The overall management of the school is good. Governance is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides strong and purposeful direction for the school
- Although the school has many good priorities, they are not all focused sufficiently clearly on the raising of pupils' standards
- Key staff are well involved in the running of the school and ensure effective teamwork
- There are good management systems which help the school to monitor its own development
- However, the results of monitoring do not always have enough impact because the school is not objective enough in its self-evaluation

### Commentary

28. The headteacher has many strengths. She places high value on a positive and caring atmosphere in the school, so that relationships are warm and mutually supportive. She has established clear working practices and a sense of belonging by ensuring that staff know their responsibilities and that all of them play a vital part in school life. She is keen to embrace new initiatives in order to see whether these can help to raise standards. Her links with other schools are useful, because they provide examples of good practice, such as a common professional target for all staff in each section of the school. The headteacher considers pupils' safety and well-being to be a high priority, so the school is a very secure, well-organised and clean environment.
29. Although the school has many sensible priorities, there is not sufficient emphasis on standards. The current action plan has little direct reference to standards, even though standards have not been as good as they might have been in recent years, especially by the end of Year 2. Albeit acting on external advice, the ICT action plan was not moulded to take into account pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Plans for the next school action plan are better, because they are more focused on achievement and attainment in the main subjects, such as speaking, listening and writing for younger pupils.
30. The headteacher is keen for all senior staff to assume responsibilities for important areas of the school. This makes the management structure slightly top-heavy, with six of the 13 teachers in the senior management team. However, this structure effectively allows for good communication throughout the school. For example, each section of the school holds weekly planning meetings with all staff concerned and information from these is distilled and refined before reaching the senior managers. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher are good teachers and lead by example, and are also involved in managing the performance of their colleagues. Overall, the leadership and management have remained as effective as they were at the last inspection.
31. The school's management procedures are good, and some are very good. There is a systematic and thorough programme to observe the quality of teaching. Each teacher is regularly observed and is provided with clear and helpful feedback. This is closely linked to the process of professional development and each teacher is set suitable targets, which are checked during the school year. New teachers and temporary teachers are very well supported by detailed documentation, such as the exhaustive staff handbook, and they benefit well from both formal and informal guidance from colleagues. The school uses its funds well, especially as its income is below average. There is a deficit budget at present, because of higher than expected staff illnesses and a sudden drop in pupil numbers. However, the school is taking sensible steps to overcome this next year.

32. The school is not so effective at analysing its own progress. Although lesson observations are scrupulously detailed and contain clear judgements, they are not sharply focused on how well pupils achieve in each lesson. Feedback to teachers is not having the desired result. Indeed, outcomes of monitoring show that teaching is good throughout the school, whereas it is in reality a mixed picture. Standards are not rising because the school has not yet been able to extend the good teaching that exists, throughout the school. Similarly, although the governors are well involved in the school's development, they do not challenge the school enough on the key aspect of pupils' achievement.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	705,107
Total expenditure	699,996
Expenditure per pupil	2,195

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-20,750
Balance carried forward to the next	-15,639

# **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 **satisfactory**.

Children in the reception classes are given a sound start to their education. This means that provision is similar to what it was at the last inspection. Most children have some pre-school educational experience but have below average attainment in most learning areas when they start school. In communication, language and literacy, attainment is well below average on entry. Children achieve well in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy because of good teaching. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.

The curriculum is well planned and children are given a range of experiences that are interesting and varied. These motivate all children, including those with special educational needs, to learn soundly. Children enjoy all areas of learning, although the outdoor environment has to be further developed to make it an attractive and meaningful learning area. Assessment arrangements are effective and build up a clear picture of each child's development, enabling staff to match activities closely to individual needs so that all groups of children make suitable progress.

The strengths of the reception classes include the good teamwork which ensures that all children share the same experiences and the positive ethos that prevails throughout. All staff bring enthusiasm, skill and understanding to the children's learning and every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy and numeracy skills.

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

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Caring and warm relationships help children settle quickly into school and become familiar with the daily routines

### **Commentary**

33. Standards are below those expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and much of the teaching underpins the work in the other areas of learning. Once in school, children settle quickly because staff establish clear daily routines. Children begin to appreciate how to make their own decisions when selecting and changing activities. They take part willingly at tidy up time, because they have understood that working together makes the task easier. Relationships are positive throughout the reception classes and children have the opportunity to develop effective working relationships with one another and the adults who work with them. Nevertheless, children are still very reliant on adults when making choices and are not yet confident enough about initiating their own activities.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop skills in speaking and listening as well as early reading

- The quality of teaching is good

### **Commentary**

34. Children generally enter school with poor speaking, listening and writing skills. Because of good teaching, children achieve well but, by the end of the reception year, standards are still below those expected at the beginning of Year 1. In both reception classes, children develop some confidence in speaking and listening because staff engage in almost continual conversation with them. Children learn to start their own conversations. This is developed through well-planned role-play activities in the weather forecasting television studio, for example, or recording the weather with the help of an experienced and skilled teaching assistant. However, children do not yet have a broad enough vocabulary and tend to speak in words or short phrases, rather than sentences. Teachers do not always encourage children to contribute in class discussions.
35. Children in reception are developing an enjoyment of books and a few make good attempts to tell stories using pictures and props as prompts. Most children already recognise individual letters and use these in recognisable, albeit inconsistent, form in their emergent writing. Teachers provide a range of activities to encourage children to explore writing, linking them to other areas of learning such as knowledge and understanding of the world.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a stimulating range of activities to develop children's mathematical understanding
- Resources are well used to promote children's mathematical language

### **Commentary**

36. Achievement in mathematical development is good due largely to good teaching. Children are on course to achieve standards that are in line with those expected by the end of the reception year. Teachers make purposeful links between children's mathematical development and other areas of learning. An animal frieze, for example, supported the learning of measure by highlighting the heavy weight of the elephant and the long neck of the giraffe. A good range of attractive resources stimulates children and focuses their attention, as when they used dominoes and tiny plastic bears to practise doubling numbers. There are good opportunities for children to practise counting, sing number rhymes, use the computers and play mathematical games so that they gain a secure grasp of number. Children with special educational needs receive good support with the steps in learning being smaller. This brings success and children show great pleasure in their achievements.

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

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of activities extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world

### **Commentary**

37. Standards at the end of the reception year are below those expected nationally but children have made satisfactory progress from their low starting point. Staff plan a variety of activities which help children learn about the world around them. For example, children have studied the

weather and understand what weather symbols are. They understand how animals change as they grow older and that animals have different homes like birds' nests and spiders' webs. They have discussed the dangers of water and how important it is to learn to swim. Such activities provide chances for children to draw on their own experiences, helping them to develop an awareness of themselves and others. All children have appropriate access to computers. They have some competence on computers with a few children able to identify weather symbols and create mathematical patterns, whilst others find the necessary hand/eye co-ordination difficult. Children do not yet have good enough basic skills in ICT. They learn about some feasts and festivals celebrated by different cultures, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year, but their knowledge of other cultures and beliefs is quite limited.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use a wide range of resources in a variety of activities
- Teachers make the most of the limited outside accommodation

### **Commentary**

38. Standards are below those expected by the end of the reception year. Children's achievement is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory. Children learn appropriately because they participate in structured and purposeful activities, especially indoors. At present, they have a limited secure outdoor area and staff work hard to provide adequate time with large equipment here. Children are able to run, jump, try to skip and make reasonable attempts to throw and catch a ball, showing developing control of their bodies. They move carefully, with some confidence around the hall and they show they can usually avoid obstacles when playing chasing games. Children develop their manipulative skills by rolling and moulding dough, and using scissors and brushes. They also have access to a wide range of construction equipment which enhances their physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to use their imaginations to develop their ideas
- Lively and exciting activities capture children's interest

### **Commentary**

39. Children begin to acquire a wide range of early printing, drawing and painting techniques. For example, they make prints of fish patterns, they paint their names and they draw themselves. Children are able to experiment with paints, collages and a variety of fabrics, papers and artist's materials. Their imaginative play develops appropriately through a range of sensitively supported activities, as in the role-play area. The weather forecasting studio allows good development of speaking and listening, and individual performances help raise self-esteem. Conversations with adults in these activities are a strength of the teaching, expanding ideas, inventiveness and vocabulary. Children enjoy the opportunity to sing action songs and rhymes, and they respond enthusiastically. By the end of reception year, although standards are still below those expected nationally, children's achievement is satisfactory because of their low skill level on entry to school.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good arrangements for speaking, listening and reading
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills
- Teaching is better in Years 2, 5 and 6
- Teachers' marking does not give pupils a clear enough picture of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve
- Support staff are deployed effectively to support pupils with special educational needs

#### Commentary

40. Pupils' attainment in all aspects of English by the end of Years 2 and 6 is below that normally expected. This means that standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection, although they are similar in writing by the end of Year 2. This is mainly because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group, which slows learning. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. There are good systems for overseeing the subject, but not enough success in raising standards.
41. There are good opportunities for speaking and listening through 'talk partners' and school assemblies. Most pupils speak openly within the classroom and are reasonably clear in their speech, but they are restricted by a limited vocabulary. Consequently, both their understanding and ability to communicate effectively are hampered. Although standards in reading are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. Pupils in Year 6 have favourite authors such as J.K. Rowling and Roald Dahl and understand both characters and plot well. They are competent at reading unfamiliar words but the range of their vocabulary limits the scope of their reading.
42. The quality of pupils' written work is below average. A restricted vocabulary and limited opportunities are significant factors. For example, in one Year 5/6 lesson, pupils struggled to find precise words to explain what they meant and interesting words to hold the attention of the reader. Only the more able pupils consistently used full stops and capital letters correctly. The quality of pupils' writing is also hampered by the overuse of photo-copied sheets. Far too often, pupils are only required to add single words or phrases and therefore miss valuable opportunities to write at length.
43. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6. Teachers are capable of teaching basic literacy skills, yet much of the work is mundane and does little to inspire pupils. In many classes, teachers do not provide enough scope in their work to challenge the more able pupils. In Years 2, 5 and 6, teaching is livelier and more interesting, and teachers have higher expectations of pupils.
44. The way that teachers mark pupils' work is not consistently effective. The quality of marking varies considerably; some teachers are very conscientious and set targets for pupils to work towards. Others, however, mark in a perfunctory way and miss opportunities to guide pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are often unsure about what they need to do to improve. In addition, teachers often accept untidy work from pupils, which is detrimental to the quality of their handwriting,

45. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They are supported well by teaching assistants within and out of lessons. This support is sensitive yet firm, so that pupils feel reassured. Teaching assistants do not supply the answers but guide pupils' thinking carefully or hint at possible answers. However, most of these pupils continue to experience difficulty in becoming independent learners.

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

Language and literacy are developed satisfactorily through other subjects. For example, pupils present arguments, describe science investigations or narrate historical events. In some lessons they use word processing in relevant ways to improve the quality of their writing. However, pupils are not encouraged enough to develop their writing, in particular, by writing in depth about historical events or scientific processes.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is below average, although results at the end of Year 6 have been consistently in line with national averages
- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there is often good teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6
- Teachers do not all plan lessons which are consistently stimulating and challenging enough to meet the needs of pupils
- The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, but is not rigorous enough

#### **Commentary**

46. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the time they leave the school. Pupils' attainment is lower than expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6, and this suggests a weaker picture than at the time of the last inspection. However, current standards are affected by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good progress but many of them do not achieve the standards expected of pupils of their age. Most pupils tend to have sound skills in number but they are less secure when using these skills in solving problems. For example, older pupils in a Year 1/2 class found it hard to give correct change for 50p and pupils in a Year 5/6 class were not confident when calculating the value of angles at the centre of a circle. Teachers provide good, regular practice of routine learning, such as tests on the multiplication tables, but have only recently been introducing more opportunities for problem-solving.
47. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, it is better in Years 2, 5 and 6 where it is usually good and can be very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils in all classes are good and these create a positive climate for learning. Teachers mostly plan lessons thoroughly and explain new learning clearly, using helpful resources. For instance, in a Year 5/6 lesson on measuring angles, the teacher used a large protractor very effectively to show how to be wholly accurate. Teachers also use computer projection to help generate pupils' interest and focus their concentration. In Years 2, 5 and 6, though, teachers are more dynamic in their approach, ensure a brisk pace to lessons and expect more from all of their pupils, by skilfully planning challenging work to suit pupils of all abilities. In another Year 5/6 lesson, the energy and confidence of the teacher enthused the pupils in their different work on plotting co-ordinates.
48. This is not always the case. Often, lessons lack focus and vitality, and learning is not put into context enough so that pupils appreciate how to use what they learn. For example, in one Year 3/4 lesson on addition, the teacher stressed the importance of addition to a greengrocer when calculating bills. The lesson, therefore, might have been more successful using the selling of

fruit and vegetables as a stimulus, rather than relying heavily on simple sums. There is too much reliance on worksheets that pupils have to complete. Such activity can be beneficial in consolidating knowledge but, more often than not, is simply a bland, repetitive routine. It certainly does not inspire or motivate pupils, especially higher attaining pupils. Similarly, there are too few opportunities for pupils, particularly older pupils, to pursue their own lines of enquiry and develop their own strategies in calculation.

49. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and there are good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. However, there has not been a sharp enough emphasis on raising standards. For instance, there is no specific focus on mathematics in the current school action plan. The good teaching in part of the school has not spread to all areas of the school and good practice is not always insisted upon. Teachers' marking, for example, is not effective enough and does little to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

The development of mathematics through other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils learn how to use co-ordinates which helps them with map work in geography. They produce symmetrical patterns in art and design. Pupils sometimes use computer graphics to enhance their presentation of data. In a science study, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 clearly showed which mini-beasts were most common by compiling a database and subsequent graph. However, such practice is not extensive and not, therefore, an intrinsic part of learning.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 is below average
- Pupils enjoy the subject because of the increasing amount of investigative work
- Pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, do not have enough opportunity to plan and carry out scientific investigations for themselves
- Opportunities to develop scientific writing and a variety of recording methods are limited due to overuse of worksheets

#### **Commentary**

50. Standards of attainment are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6 but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These findings indicate a fall in standards since the last inspection. This can be partly explained by the lower standards that pupils have when they enter school. There are also more pupils with special educational needs in these year groups, and many of these pupils do not achieve the levels expected for their age. In addition, pupils are not independent enough in their own learning. However, teaching overall remains satisfactory, much as it was at the time of the last inspection. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, but less effective because weaknesses in the subject have not been addressed swiftly enough.
51. There is an increasing focus on a practical approach to science. The school is well aware that, although pupils' knowledge of science is adequate, their investigative skills are not strong enough. As a result, all classes have sufficient opportunity to carry out experiments and pupils enjoy this. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 appreciated learning more about the form and function of parts of a flower by taking it carefully apart. Their amazement at the construction of the ovule was almost tangible and they worked hard throughout the lesson. Such activity also supports the development of pupils' personal skills well because they learn to work productively in groups or with a partner.

52. There are, however, only limited opportunities for pupils to influence their own experiments. Too often, teachers give pupils too much guidance or are not demanding enough of pupils' reasoning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular do not have the freedom to think of their own strategies for conducting experiments and so do not develop good analytical skills. They are not confident either about considering their findings and drawing sensible conclusions. This is especially important for higher attaining pupils who, as a result, are underachieving. There is a growing emphasis on pupils acquiring a good scientific vocabulary but it is too soon to evaluate its impact on standards.

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

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff have confident skills in ICT and so explain new learning clearly to pupils
- ICT has been developed well through other subjects, although not so much in the recent past
- Pupils do not benefit from enough individual time on computers

### **Commentary**

53. Standards in ICT are average throughout the school and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection, although attainment by the end of Year 2 is not quite so good. Pupils are competent at a suitable range of skills, although their word-processing skills would benefit from more consolidation. Higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might, because they do not have enough open-ended opportunities to develop at their own pace.
54. Teachers have done well to strengthen their own skills in ICT. As a result, they explain and demonstrate new learning with confidence and clarity. They use computer projection adroitly to explain how to operate computer programs, and this succeeds in not only holding pupils' interest but also ensuring that pupils understand fully what they must do for themselves. In a Year 3/4 history lesson, for instance, pupils readily appreciated how to locate, insert, re-position and re-size clip-art pictures of helmets to embellish their work on Viking Britain. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, as is the co-ordination of the subject.
55. Pupils do not have enough hands-on time on computers. ICT is taught adequately mainly during lessons for other subjects, and pupils take turns to work on computers over time. Each classroom has two or three computers and there is no space for a computer suite, although the school is developing a small area for eight computers. Consequently, pupils do not have a regular and lengthy amount of time each week to practise skills and explore the scope of computers. For example, pupils know how to access the Internet but are not skilful at sifting through the vast array of data, because they are used to being given specific websites to research.

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

ICT is developed satisfactorily in conjunction with other subjects. In the past, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used sensors to record the changing temperatures in a classroom and produced neat graphs to show their findings. Pupils have word-processed a range of writing in English, such as haikus to describe a hobbit and poems about World War 2. In history, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced a computer graph to show the quantities of animals estimated to have been eaten by Henry VIII in one year. Such good work is not so obvious at present, but this has been partly due to technical problems with the computer network at the school.

## HUMANITIES

Standards in **geography** are average throughout the school. It is not possible to judge the provision for this subject, as only one lesson was observed. The teaching and learning in this lesson were satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of their locality. They know the buildings and amenities, as well as the problems and dangers of extensive parking and heavy traffic in their area. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a thorough understanding of rivers and the water cycle, although their knowledge of world physical geography is limited.

### History

Provision is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by visits to museums and historical sites
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' skills are not consistently high enough
- There are few opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop advanced skills

### Commentary

56. Pupils' attainment in history is average throughout the school and their achievement is satisfactory. Similar judgements were made in the last inspection. Pupils have a competent, sometimes good, factual knowledge, although this is not always well presented. Teachers ensure that pupils visit places of interest to help bring history alive through handling artefacts and sensing the atmosphere. For example, pupils in Year 5 have visited the ancient Roman site of Birdoswald, and fully appreciated the desolation and deprivations of a soldier garrisoned on Hadrian's Wall. Pupils in Year 2 were able to handle a wide range of lighting during a visit to a local museum and derive a real feel for how lighting has evolved over time, as they inspected oil lamps, candles, carbide lamps and modern torches. They further understood how basic life used to be, when they had to learn to peel rushes to make wicks for candles.
57. Teaching is satisfactory. It is good when teachers give pupils rich, practical experiences. However, teachers' expectations are not so robust when pupils present what they have learned. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils had only to colour in worksheet pictures of Grecian urns, rather than draw them for themselves. When researching on the Internet, pupils download information freely, but are not encouraged to distil key facts and interpret them in lucid, written accounts.
58. The co-ordination of history is satisfactory. The subject has enough priority on the timetable and the curriculum is adequate. However, all pupils receive the same curriculum and this does little to inspire or challenge more able pupils. These pupils lack the opportunity to pursue their own lines of enquiry, carry out their own analyses of data and draw thoughtful conclusions. As a result, they do not achieve as well as they should.

### Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils appreciate the differences between the world's faiths
- Religious education contributes well to pupils' personal and social education
- Pupils lack opportunities to present their knowledge in detailed written accounts

## Commentary

59. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is similar to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils benefit from a broad view of the major faiths of the world including Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism. Pupils are able to share their own thoughts and ideas, and are beginning to understand how each faith values its own festivals, special places and holy writings. Year 6 pupils talked knowledgeably of the Four Sights of Buddha and the life of Moses. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject.
60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and prepare lessons carefully. They handle issues sensitively and pupils are increasingly aware that religious beliefs and conduct have a direct impact on their own personal, social and moral development. As a result, pupils learn the value of tolerance and natural justice.
61. Pupils miss out on chances to improve their writing through religious education. Although pupils' speaking and listening are extended in the many class discussions, there is not enough scope for pupils to practise the writing skills taught in literacy lessons. This is due in part to the short and split sessions on the timetable, as well as the over-use of worksheets that require answers of one word or short phrases.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Standards in **art and design** are average throughout the school. It was not possible to see enough teaching to make a judgement about the overall provision, but it is clear that pupils benefit from a suitable range of artistic opportunities. Pupils in Year 2, for example, work with colour, shades and tints, and use paints and collage materials to produce work in the style of Pablo Picasso. Older pupils are introduced to water colour painting and learn the styles of Monet, Warhol and Kandinsky. Pupils know how to improve their skills by appraising their own work objectively. The subject is used well to enrich other areas of the curriculum. Colouring is used regularly in history and symmetrical drawings inevitably involve mathematics. The curriculum is satisfactory but not enriched enough by gallery visits and visiting artists.

Pupils' attainment is average in **design and technology**. They receive a suitable range of opportunities to plan, make and evaluate products. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 design and make moving faces using simple levers and they experience some food technology when making cakes with Rice Crispies. Pupils' attainment is not higher because they do not have enough time on the timetable. Older pupils develop their food skills further by making bread but their overall ability is not as good as it might be because teachers do not teach the basic skills systematically enough. Pupils are able to evaluate their own work and suggest improvements but only more able pupils are particularly effective.

### Music

Provision is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- The leadership and management of the subject are good
- The quality of extra-curricular activities, including instrumental tuition, is good

## Commentary

62. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory and standards are average. However, by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well and attain standards higher than expected for their age.

63. Pupils in Year 2 sing capably and show good control of pitch and dynamics. They know a good range of songs. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop good musical skills. They sing well, for example, because they are tuneful and expressive, and have a good sense of rhythm. They understand the importance of breathing properly and sustaining notes for effect. Pupils compose and perform well. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were very effective in creating a rhythmic rondo using percussion instruments. The quality of teaching in this lesson was excellent, because of the very high level of expertise and expectations of the pupils' contributions. Overall, the quality of teaching is good.
64. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She gives unstintingly of her time to run recorder groups and the choir, which give the pupils valuable opportunities to perform. This also enables her to monitor the progress and achievement of many pupils. In addition, the tuition provided by visiting teachers adds a great deal to the provision throughout the school and has a clear impact on the achievement of many pupils.

### **Physical education**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes and are keen to succeed
- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, elements of it are good
- There is a good breadth to the curriculum, both in lessons and extra-curricular activities

### **Commentary**

65. Standards are average throughout the school, as at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and sometimes good, especially because pupils are eager to do well and enjoy their exertions. Pupils know the importance of warming up before exercise and cooling down afterwards.
66. "You might pull a muscle," explained one pupil in a Year 3/4 lesson. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are supportive of each other. "Listening is important; so is moving to a beat and interacting with your partner," said another pupil, during a Year 5/6 lesson. This helped to explain why pupils made good progress in that dance lesson.
67. Aspects of teaching are good. For instance, teachers select a range of activities shrewdly so that they will challenge the pupils. Teachers use questions adeptly to encourage pupils to review their performance and identify what worked well. It did not take one pupil very long to deduce, "If you try to run fast over a long distance, you will get tired very quickly." The good relationships between teachers and pupils enable lessons to flow smoothly and ensure that little time is lost.
68. The school works hard to overcome the limitations of its site. There is little grass for field games at the school, although there is an adequate hard surface for netball and football practice. However, staff strive to make sure that all strands of the outdoor and adventurous activities are taught effectively. There are opportunities for pupils to receive good training in sports such as netball, football and rugby through close links with Carlisle United FC, Carlisle Rugby Club and the local secondary school. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic in the way he promotes pupils' interest in sport. The co-ordination overall is satisfactory.

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

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE)**

Provision is **good**.

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

- The school values pupils as individuals and this develops their self-esteem
- There are many activities which promote social skills and responsibility
- Teachers do not allow pupils enough independence in their learning

#### **Commentary**

69. The school has an effective approach to PSHE through specific lessons and its caring ethos. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching, as only one lesson was observed. However, it is clear that the community spirit of the school is very beneficial to its pupils. Teachers work hard to make sure that all pupils feel wholly included in lessons and other activities, praise their contributions and organise them in sympathetic groups. The group work in science is a good illustration. As a consequence, pupils grow in confidence.
70. Teachers encourage pupils to be considerate, and to be useful members of the school community. Activities after school and educational visits, especially residential visits, are good at strengthening pupils' social awareness. The school also offers a range of routine responsibilities to pupils which they eagerly accept and perform very sensibly. The pupils know that they are valued as individuals and that opinions expressed through the school council are appreciated and listened to.
71. Teachers do not give pupils enough scope to organise their own work. In science and mathematics, for example, pupils are not encouraged enough to develop their own strategies for problem-solving or conducting investigations. Pupils have the same, controlled work in ICT, so pupils do not have the freedom to explore the wide world of information technology. This restricts the achievement of higher attaining pupils in particular.

## 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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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