

INSPECTION REPORT

GRASMERE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grasmere, Ambleside

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112319

Headteacher: Mrs Lindsey Ferrie

Lead inspector: Mr Phil Snelling

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 1st October 2003

Inspection number: 259766

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: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 36

School address: Stock Lane
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Ms Dee Lacy

Date of previous inspection: October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are mainly taught in two separate key stage mixed-age classes in this small village school, though for literacy and numeracy lessons the Key Stage 2 pupils are split into two groups. Nearly all the pupils who attend come from the village but a few travel from the surrounding area. All the pupils are of white British background and there are no pupils from homes where English is not the language mainly spoken. Whilst the area has above average social and economic conditions, many parents work in the tourist industry, which is very demanding, especially in the spring and summer months. When pupils start at the school, most attain what is expected at that age. Around one-third of pupils are identified as having SEN, which is above average. One pupil has a statement of SEN, which is about average given the number of pupils altogether. Most of the pupils receiving additional help have speech and communication or language difficulties. The movement of pupils to and from the school other than at the usual times of starting and leaving is low. The headteacher has been in post for less than a year and there is a new part time Key Stage 2 teacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, which is getting better and better under the outstanding leadership of the new headteacher. The teaching and learning for juniors is now especially interesting and challenging, so this key stage buzzes with enthusiasm and active learning. Pupils' achievement grows and becomes very good higher up the school. Younger pupils' achievement is as expected, though their learning activities are a little constrained compared to older pupils. Standards overall are good, the school is managed well and it provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils get off to a very good start in learning to read in the reception/infant class;
- Standards in English, mathematics and the creative arts are above average at 11;
- The headteacher's excellent leadership and teaching has transformed learning in the junior class;
- The curriculum is rich and varied, including an exceptionally wide range of out of school activities;
- The school's commitment to pupils' personal development is reflected in their excellent behaviour, their hard work and their enjoyment in taking up the opportunities offered;
- The school provides well for all its different pupils; boys, girls, the most able, those with SEN and children interested in the arts and sport;
- The teaching in the reception class (Foundation Stage) and Years 1 - 2 does not produce the same pace or excitement in learning that is found in Years 3 - 6.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall, and at its strongest in the past six months. Issues highlighted at the time – providing parents with more information and improving handwriting – are now areas of strength. Other significant improvements include pupils' better personal development, the richer curriculum and the school's stronger links with its community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	B	E	E*
mathematics	E	C	E	E*
science	C	B	E	E*

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* - Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. E* indicates a result in the lowest 5%

Please note: this is a very small school and the number of pupils taking the tests is always few. In 2002 there were only 3 pupils, so each accounted for 33% of the total. These results must therefore be treated with caution in making judgements about standards.

Pupils achieve well. Looking at the results, it appears that standards are very low. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the Foundation Stage, the reception children make a steady start and are on course to reach the standards they should (the Early Learning Goals) when they move to Year 1. Reading and writing standards are good in the infant class but in mathematics and science some pupils could achieve more. They move rapidly forward in Years 3 - 6. Standards are rising quickly here and pupils are on course to reach higher levels in their national tests at the age of 11 compared to recent years. The most able pupils are achieving very well in the junior class and pupils with SEN do well for their capabilities. The school puts a strong emphasis on the creative arts and this results in some outstanding achievement in poetry, drama, dance, art and music.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very strong. The pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes very good. They work extremely hard and enjoy school immensely. They treat each other well and have first-rate relationships with adults. Their attendance is satisfactory, marred only by parents taking them on holiday in term time or keeping them off for the odd day. The school is vigorously challenging this habit.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good overall.

There is very good and sometimes excellent teaching and learning in Years 3 – 6 because pupils are challenged to the limits and a lot is expected of them. They are given much responsibility for their own learning. There is sound to good teaching in the reception and infant class but pupils are not always stretched as much as they might be. Reading is taught very well in the infant class, which gives the pupils a strong foundation on which they build well later. Marking is outstanding in the junior class so the pupils have a very clear idea of what they have achieved and what they should do to improve.

The curriculum is varied and interesting, offering more and more variety in learning opportunities as pupils move through the school. Provision in the creative arts is especially strong. Visits and visitors are used very well to enliven history and geography. Pupils use their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills frequently across the subjects. Staff know the pupils very well; they are caring and have the interests of the children at heart.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher has made her mark on the school in less than a year and her excellent leadership is seen in a clear vision and relentless drive for higher standards. Team spirit is substantial and staff highly motivated.

Management is good. The performance of the pupils is closely checked though the systems for evaluating teaching have yet to be brought fully into use. Governance is satisfactory. Individual governors are supportive and interested. As a governing body they are gaining an increasing understanding of how well the school is doing but are not yet using this knowledge as much as they might to ask questions about standards and to contribute to the school's improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents think very highly of the school and are especially pleased with the way it has strengthened links with the community. They are very impressed by the vigorous leadership of the new headteacher. The pupils share the parents enthusiasm for the school, especially the range of different activities they can try out but they are not yet fully confident in using the school council to get their views across.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school is moving forward rapidly. The most important step it should now take to improve is to:

- Raise the quality of learning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 - 2 to that found in Years 3 - 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well overall. In the reception class and Years 1 - 2 their progress is steady and they reach the expected standards at the end of the Foundation Stage and at the age of 7. In Years 3 - 6 they achieve very well and the older pupils are currently on course to reach better than expected standards at the age of 11. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Junior pupils make the fastest progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Rapidly improving standards and a fast rate of achievement in Key Stage 2;
- A very good start to reading in Key Stage 1;
- The identification, support and achievement of special educational needs (SEN) pupils throughout and gifted and talented pupils in Key Stage 2;
- Older children reach high standards in the creative arts.

Commentary

1. Grasmere is a small school, and consequently the number of pupils taking national tests at the ages of 7 and 11 each year is never very many. Thus test results in any one-year can be misleading, perhaps based on the attainment of only two or three children and tables of results are not included here. However, over a number of years the pattern of scores can give some indication of how good standards are, even with small numbers of pupils. In Key Stage 1, there is a consistent pattern of good results in reading and writing but more variation in mathematics. The inspection has shown this to be a fair reflection. Pupils are achieving better in reading and writing because the teaching is better and more confident than in mathematics.
2. The Key Stage 2 results over four years reflect low standards and the inspection found evidence to suggest that standards could have been higher in the past. There has not been much variation between pupils' successes in English, mathematics and science. Not enough pupils have reached the higher Level 5. During this time results did not rise as much as in other schools across the country. However, the evidence from the inspection shows that standards are rising quickly here and older pupils are on course to reach higher levels in their national tests at the age of 11 compared to recent years.
3. The improvement has been brought about by the arrival of a new headteacher who teaches many lessons in Key Stage 2 and a new teacher working part-time. Together they have significantly changed the way pupils learn, introducing greater challenge to stretch them. The curriculum has been overhauled and high quality planning to link subjects together has been introduced. This gives junior pupils many new opportunities; for example, in developing their language or computer skills through other subjects. This approach has also raised their enthusiasm and commitment. The influence of the headteacher's leadership is also seen in improvements in particular subjects, for example, in science where weaknesses in pupils' investigative skills have been identified and tackled and in mathematics where the teaching in Key Stage 2 is now very challenging.
4. Pupils get off to a sound start in the Foundation Stage (reception year). All are on course to reach the expected levels, (the Early Learning Goals) by the end of the year, and some will get there sooner. There is no significant difference in their progress in the different areas of learning, though they make a particularly good start in developing their reading and writing in

communication, language and literacy. However, more could be done to extend the children's language by making better use of speaking and listening in their play.

5. Pupils with SEN are well supported in class and consequently they make good progress. Accurate assessment of their needs and levels in English and mathematics ensures they are given work they can complete but which challenges them. Carefully written individual education plans (IEPs) accurately guide and direct teachers' lesson planning, enabling these pupils to be fully included in class activities. Teachers in class are aware of the targets included in the individual education plans for these pupils and provide the right materials from the school's well-suited resources. Occasionally, when pupils are taught away from their class, the resources used to support their learning are not as well suited so they do not achieve as much as they might.
6. Boys and girls achieve as well as they should because the school tracks all pupils individually and further stretches or boosts those who need it. The most able pupils (gifted and talented) are achieving very well in the junior class because they are identified and given harder work. Their learning programmes, particularly in English and mathematics, are exactly planned to enable them to work at higher levels.
7. The school puts a strong emphasis on the creative arts and this leads to some outstanding achievement in poetry, drama, dance, art and music. This stems from an exciting curriculum and a huge variety of valuable learning experiences. In their science work, pupils show high levels of skill in recording the outcomes of tests and investigations. They develop very good skills in word processing in ICT, which in turn plays a big part in extending their language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Levels of attendance are **satisfactory** and pupils are consistently punctual. Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. They demonstrate very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. There have been no exclusions from school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very happy at school;
- Pupils rise to the challenge of the best teaching and try hard to succeed;
- The school is exceptionally calm and well ordered;
- Every aspect of school life helps pupils to flourish, both emotionally and academically;
- Some parents persist in taking their children out of school for holidays but innovative measures by the headteacher to improve parents' understanding of the importance of regular attendance are having an impact.

Commentary

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

8. Registers for the first few weeks of the current academic year show fewer instances of recorded absence and this is helping to improve the school's attendance rates. In the past, a

significant number of parents have had few qualms about allowing their children to take time off school either for a day here and there, or when going on an annual holiday. The headteacher is determined to eliminate mediocrity in the school and one goal is to improve these average levels of attendance.

This is one idea that the headteacher has used to try to change parents' attitudes to attendance:

A firm believer in the power of visual persuasion, the headteacher offers damning evidence to parents of just how much work their children miss when taken out of school for a two-week holiday. She collects ten days worth of literacy and numeracy planning, adds work from other curriculum areas for the same period and stacks it all up, like a supermarket special offer. She then presents this jaw-dropping pile of work into the arms of unsuspecting parents who, misguidedly, still believe their children can catch up with ease after two weeks away. Their horrified reactions are telling and the headteacher is provoking a gradual change in parents' cavalier attitudes towards term time holidays. Some are beginning to realise just how difficult it is for children to achieve their best after missing so much work.

9. Pupils state that they enjoy school and the vast majority arrive on time. This is partly due to the insistence of staff that pupils are punctual – they know that if they walk into registration even one minute late, they will receive a late mark. Attention to details, such as these encourages pupils to become self-disciplined and is good preparation for secondary school. Parents also agree that their children are happy at school.
10. Pupils really like their teachers. The youngest pupils feel very secure so they concentrate well on activities and take pride in their work. Older pupils respond very well when adults organise interesting activities that stimulate their interests. In the best lessons, the oldest pupils are totally engrossed in their learning. They hang on to the teacher's every word and are extremely reluctant to leave when the lesson is over. Numerous volunteers vie to answer questions and pupils reappraise their answers, coming back again and again to try to answer more fully. All pupils are diligent and complete a good volume of work; this makes a strong contribution to their learning as they consolidate their new knowledge.
11. All adults set the behaviour bar at its highest level and pupils never fail to reach it. Parents value this aspect of the school very highly. Staff are totally consistent in the way they manage pupils' behaviour and everyone knows exactly what is expected of them. There is an orderliness about the school that does not deter pupils in any way from expressing their own animated thoughts. Indeed, because they feel very comfortable here, pupils enjoy their learning without distraction or worry. They know that other people value their contributions and they, in turn, listen carefully to the views of their peers. The mixed-age classes gel very well together without any thoughtless remarks or inappropriate behaviour.
12. The very strong relationships in school are based on pupils' ability to respect the feelings of others. The headteacher is totally committed to providing a rewarding learning environment in which each pupil can grow into a sensitive adult, equipped to live in a multicultural society. To the onlooker, this could be perceived as a difficult task because all the pupils live in a monocultural, rural community (see also personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE). The headteacher has turned this into a positive by introducing interesting approaches to learning about the lives of people from different times and cultures. She teaches pupils to recognise where there is unfairness in the world and to question why this is. Pupils learn to look beyond the superficial and to value differences between people as exciting learning opportunities rather than threats.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	37	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are at their best in the junior class and for these children the curriculum is especially imaginative. Staff help pupils throughout to mature very well and there are very strong links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (5%)	5 (25%)	6 (30%)	8 (40%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

There is good teaching overall, with satisfactory to good teaching and learning in the reception class and Years 1 - 2, and some inspired teaching and learning in Years 3 - 6. The learning is more challenging for the older children and better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' work is marked and assessed thoroughly across the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The best teaching is based on strong subject knowledge, has pace and excites the pupils;
- Excellent use is made of carefully planned educational visits to link the subjects;
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour which ensures that time is used efficiently and there are no disruptions;
- Excellent marking of the work of older pupils tells them what they have achieved and helps them to identify the next stage in their learning.

Commentary

13. Teaching of the younger children is well founded in many tried and tested methods, none more so than in teaching reading. Reading is taught through carefully planned steps that build up the skills that the children need to unlock words and become confident. This ensures they achieve well in learning to read quickly. However, more challenging ways of organising pupils to work independently as groups, to develop their confidence, are not used as often as they might be, particularly to stretch the more able younger children. Older pupils have greater opportunities to improve their confidence in learning because they are regularly challenged to work alongside their classmates, sharing their ideas, evaluating each other's work and working as a team. This gives them a sense of purpose, builds their concentration and further improves skills, such as their reading and handwriting. The stimulating approach to teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 reflects the particular skills of the new headteacher and her clear vision of what good learning is about.

14. Teachers' explanations to pupils are often well supported by appropriate visual aids and interesting resources such as learning games are used well in activities. Teachers subtle and persistent questioning, especially in Key Stage 2, effectively draws out pupils' responses and prior learning. They are challenged to think and to explain their answers fully on the basis of this. Staff use ICT well throughout the school to support the learning in most subjects. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their ICT skills in recording and in problem solving.
15. Throughout the school, excellent use is made of carefully planned educational visits that are relevant to the topics being studied. These visits give the pupils a link to reality and reinforce the work and research already completed in preparation for the visits. A succession of visitors work with the pupils in school to further extend their levels of insight and understanding.
16. Teachers make good use of time and insist on high standards of behaviour. This ensures that pupils usually make good progress to complete their work and that there are very few disruptions. Pupils' with SEN are taught alongside their classmates and all children have full access to everything that the school offers.
17. Pupils with SEN receive good quality teaching, guided and directed by accurate individual education plans. These identify specific learning targets enabling teachers to plan accordingly to meet their needs. Most pupils with SEN are taught alongside their classmates where teachers are skilled in providing effective support and encouragement. Some pupils receive extra support, working individually with learning support staff, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next learning activity or have opportunities to reinforce previous learning.

Assessment

18. Throughout the school, pupils' work in English, mathematics, science and ICT is thoroughly assessed and evaluated. The assessments of infant pupils inform teachers and parents but they do not always inform pupils about their progress other than by the use of a tick and an encouraging comment. In the junior class, teachers' assessments are written in such a way that the pupil has a clear understanding of what has been achieved and what is the next learning activity. They understand what they are doing and how they can improve. All marking is positively worded. The accurate assessments of older pupils have enabled the most able pupils to make the progress of which they are capable because teachers use the information to plan work which stretches them. These developments represent an improvement on the findings of the last report.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a very good range of worthwhile opportunities that cater very well for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils. Provision in the creative arts is very strong and there is an exceptional range of after school activities, especially for such a small school. The accommodation and resources are adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning themes, where subjects are linked, are expertly planned in Key Stage 2;
- The strong links between subjects provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of their work and to use newly learned skills;
- The involvement of outside agencies and visits to places of interest make an excellent contribution to all that happens in the school, particularly in the arts;
- Planning for play in the Foundation Stage is not sufficiently thorough.

Commentary

19. The school has improved its curriculum since the last inspection. Very good opportunities are now identified for many subjects to be taught together in the junior key stage as part of a theme, without the individual subjects losing their own identity. One particular example is the historical study of The Celtic Settlement in the locality that includes work in English, geography, literature, ICT, art and dance. Whilst pupils learn about life in Celtic times, they also develop their geography skills by examining maps of the locality. They gain introductory insights into the artistic character of Celtic tribes who lived close to Grasmere, by observing and copying their skills in art. They find out about the everyday life of these Celtic tribes by reading classical historical literature, and use ICT and dance to communicate the challenges, thoughts, fears and celebrations of these people who existed beyond living memory. Curriculum initiatives, such as this create very high levels of interest, as pupils become engrossed in their work. They are continually challenged to produce work of high quality. This quality of planning does not reach such heights in the foundation or infant key stages. There are fewer opportunities and activities that encourage children to follow their own interests and their learning through play is not as productive in developing their language skills as it could be.
20. The school makes excellent use of people, places and events in the community to supplement the work done in the classroom. Pupils' participation in the arts is enhanced by links with The National Trust and local artists. Visits to significant historical sites reinforce the knowledge, understanding and skills pupils gain in school. They provide an atmosphere of empathy for the historical period as pupils handle genuine artefacts and imagine the lives of people who once inhabited the site. The excellent planning considers the current situation of the pupils living in a small village in a mountainous area of The United Kingdom. Plans are at a final stage of development to give pupils an experience of living in a city through the organisation of a residential visit to Liverpool.
21. All pupils have good opportunities to participate in out of school activities. These include a residential visit, outward bound work, music and dance groups, various sports and drama productions.
22. The provision for those pupils with SEN is good. They are effectively taught alongside their classmates because the accurate assessments in English and mathematics lead to the writing of individual education plans with clear targets. These guide and direct teachers to provide challenging activities that enable the pupils to achieve well and experience success.
23. Staffing levels are adequate. Teachers are experienced with areas of personal expertise and enthusiasm. The present building is adequate for present needs though not generously off for space in which to develop ICT facilities. The school uses the environment very well to provide stimulating, exciting and challenging learning opportunities. This has been a key factor in raising standards.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety, is **sound** overall. Staff provide very good support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school is committed to involving pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults in the school are very clear about their duty of care towards pupils;
- Staff know the pupils' strengths and weaknesses very well and use their knowledge to help individuals develop to the full;
- Teachers encourage pupils to take a more active role in the life of the school and take notice of their views;

- The impact of the public right of way continues to present unresolved difficulties for the school management.

Commentary

24. All staff are very caring of pupils and ensure that they are happy in school. Very clear child protection arrangements safeguard pupils and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in this regard. Adults are also very sure of what to do if an accident occurs or if a child has particular medical needs. The headteacher is highly motivated and will not let a subject rest until she feels happy with the result but, from time-to-time, she encounters obstacles that are very difficult to overcome because other external bodies have ultimate control. The unresolved public right of way through the school grounds is an example of this. General issues of health and safety are given due attention although some routines need to be practised more frequently.
25. Pupils feel secure in school because staff are very interested in them and offer as much support as they can for their personal development. Target setting is established and moving on so pupils now know what is expected of them, as do their parents. Teachers plan with teaching assistants to ensure appropriate levels of support are given to pupils with SEN, so that they gain as much as any other pupils from lessons. Pupils value the system of rewards and are particularly proud to receive the different end of year awards for outstanding work.
26. The school has very strong links with outside support agencies so that pupils have access to the best possible guidance for any individual concerns.
27. There are a number of ways pupils can make known their feelings and views. The school has started to canvass pupils' opinions formally through written questionnaires. There is also the school council that meets very regularly to discuss any issues raised by pupils from all year groups. However, as the systems are new, pupils are not yet sure how best to pursue the outcomes. Adults also take time to discuss issues more informally, during day-to-day interactions with pupils in the classroom or in the playground.
28. The extended induction programme for the youngest children as they begin school is very effective and ensures that each new intake settles with minimum anxiety and that children make the most of every day in school. Parents are able to stay with their children and this helps to allay their fears. They also gain a clear understanding of the school's very high expectations for both children and their parents. There is no room in this school for the complacent – everyone is expected to pull their weight and to add to the quality of education on offer, whether they are governors, teachers, parents or visitors and this is the main reason they are encouraged to come.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Very strong links exist between the school and parents. Highly effective links are maintained with the local community. There is a very strong partnership encouraged with other schools and colleges to support pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are very positive;
- The headteacher's determination to extract high levels of parental support for, and involvement in, children's learning pays great dividends;
- There are first rate annual written reports for parents that tell them exactly what their children can do and what they need to do next;
- Members of the local community offer a great deal of expertise to add colour and skill to pupils' learning, especially in PSHCE and the arts.

Commentary

29. Parents are unfailingly appreciative of the school and the quality of the education it provides for their children. They are effusive in their praise for all the provision and are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching. The headteacher makes sure that parents receive enough information to have a crystal clear overview of school life. She knows exactly what it is she wants parents to do to support pupils' learning and makes it extremely easy for parents to find out whatever it is they need to know. Parental partnership has moved on in this school; parents do not need to be invited in to become involved – they are already involved and everyone is very comfortable with this. Parents feel that their views are valued and acted upon and can recall several recent initiatives that began as a result of parental input. Staff provide very high quality information for parents about school routines, the curriculum and the progress that children make. Individual written reports on pupils' progress are particularly impressive and contain all the evaluative detail parents could possibly wish to receive. Parents know that staff have a clear picture of what their children can do and that teachers will help them to support children's learning at home. The latest 'Bring Your Parents to School' initiative sums up the school's philosophy on parental involvement very well. Parents can drop into lessons during the week to gain a better flavour of what, for example, a literacy lesson actually entails. Parents and pupils offer unusually high praise for the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
30. Valuable links with the local community ensure that pupils experience a far richer curriculum than would otherwise be possible in such a small school. Supportive links with the local churches ensure pupils regularly celebrate and worship with the local clergy. All pupils learn to swim, thanks to a local hotel that offers the use of its pool. The National Trust has had a major impact on how the school uses the outdoor environment over the past few years and this has been of particular importance to reception children and their physical development. Many of a constant stream of visitors that come into school to nurture pupils' love of the creative arts are part of the local community. The headteacher is very adept at winning funds through sponsorship deals with local businesses and this helps with printing costs and the purchase of much prized resources for learning.
31. Pupils benefit from a carefully considered transfer programme to secondary education. Their fears about moving to a much larger secondary school are recognised and allayed during discussions with their new teachers and visits to their schools. Staff from the secondary school also judge pupils' work for specific awards and present these at the annual prize giving ceremony.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's leadership of the school is excellent. The pace and successful implementation of change during her two terms in post has been stunning. Management is good and improving though there are one or two important routines yet to be established in the whirlwind of change. Governance of the school is satisfactory and getting better as governors recognise that 'they are learning new ways of doing things'.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is inspired leadership by the headteacher;
- The staff are getting on well as a team;
- There is strong commitment to further improving the school;
- The school has a very clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and takes decisions, which tackle the weaknesses, whilst celebrating the strengths;
- ICT is used very well to make management efficient but some procedures in the running of the school could be better.

Commentary

32. The excellent leadership of the headteacher is a driving force for change in the school. Parents at the pre inspection meeting talked of a school that was no longer 'coasting'. The new headteacher has 'raised expectations - she pushes them', a comment endorsed by all the parents. The headteacher was described as 'a very good communicator with personality and real skill' in a school where there is 'so much change we are struggling to keep up!' This change has opened up the school and brought it closer to its community. The greatest effects have so far benefited the older pupils, with new approaches to learning in the classroom and more opportunities outside. For example, through the production of the musical 'Oliver' last summer they were given new opportunities to blossom as performers within their own village. Such was the demand to be involved that there were two separate casts to involve all the children who wished to take part. In these activities and on a day-to-day basis in class the approach is 'inclusive' - aimed at recognising the pupils as individuals. As one parent remarked, 'the staff pick up whatever the children are good at'. Hence they recognise that the teaching for older pupils has changed and their learning is more 'varied', 'diverse' and 'independent'. They recognise that gifted and talented pupils are stretched whilst those with SEN are supported. The pupils themselves see the school as 'getting better'. As one proudly put it 'we are doing more exciting and harder maths; we now know about pie, vulgar fractions and decimal fractions!'
33. The new headteacher has been a 'leading mathematics teacher' and has a high level of expertise, as seen during her lessons. Again the impact of her skills has been seen immediately in Key Stage 2 where standards are now rising quickly. For example, monitoring of the test performances of last year's Year 6 pupils identified some gaps in their knowledge about 'co-ordinates' and changes have been made to the curriculum. These particular skills need to be brought to bear on the learning in Key Stage 1 where pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory but not as high as it is now in Key Stage 2. There are good elements in the leadership of literacy, which is shared between the Key Stage 1 teacher and a new part-time teacher. Both have very good subject knowledge and experience in teaching literacy but more needs to be done to develop the learning links between the stages. There is a growing 'team approach' to moving the school forward and developing learning, which has created the right ethos for this to take place. The SEN co-ordinator has ensured that all staff are conversant with the latest Code of Practice, which has been fully incorporated into school routines. The SEN governor is aware of the school's response to the teaching of pupils with SEN and makes a very good evaluative contribution to this important aspect of school life.
34. Management of the school is good. Some strong features are:
- the successful winning of a range of extra funding, in particular Kelsick Trust funds, which has allowed significant additional teaching time to be bought;
 - the use of this time to reorganise literacy and numeracy lessons in KS2, so that previous low standards are tackled and achievement is raised;
 - accurate self-evaluation of the school's performance to feed the school development plan;
 - very good use of ICT to make administration and management efficient, as seen, for example, in the use of CDs to submit the pre inspection documents to the inspection team.

35. However, there are one or two routines yet to be established and procedures to be implemented. The nature of the site with its public footpath offers some management and supervision challenges, which staff are very aware of and continue to address. Also of importance are the procedures for evaluating the teaching and learning throughout, which are ready but not tested. Along with effective professional development, these provide the means to spread fully across the school the challenging and exciting learning and activities now seen in Key Stage 2.
36. In the school's self evaluation for the inspection, governors are described as becoming 'increasingly aware of their roles and rising to the challenges set by the headteacher since January'. The inspection confirms that this is an accurate view. Governors are very supportive of the school and a number are closely involved as individuals with the school's work. Together with the headteacher, the governing body has set direction for the future and there is a clear view of what is important. For example, they applaud the way the school has opened out into the community in recent months and there is a shared belief in the vital importance of this to the village school. They share the view that the ethos should be one where pupils' aspirations are raised, their successes are celebrated, their curriculum is broad and their parents are involved as much as possible. However, the governing body is only just becoming involved in reviewing the performance of the school and influencing its work; for example, by asking why standards are as they are or whether procedures have been carried out. The good level of training that governors are now undertaking bodes well for a growing involvement.
37. The school is on an upward trend and this is set to continue. A key reason for the improvement is the drive of the headteacher. With a supportive staff and governors the school is on course to continue getting better.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	120,665	Balance from previous year	5098
Total expenditure	123,878	Balance carried forward to the next	-4667
Expenditure per pupil	3311		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction gets pupils off to a confident start;
- Pupils achieve well in their early reading and writing;
- Pupils' play is not always as purposeful and challenging as it should be;
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' language skills.

Commentary

38. When children join the reception class, most have attended a nursery. Their attainment overall is broadly as you would expect for their age, although this varies from child to child and year-to-year. Pupils join in most lessons with the Year 1 and 2 pupils, though at times they work on their own with a teacher or support assistant. Their work is planned to meet the needs of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, based on the Early Learning Goals and the 'stepping stones' to reaching them. As the year progresses, those who are ready begin to work in groups with children on national curriculum based activities.
39. Children in reception are well motivated to learn and are on course to achieve the standards they should in their **personal, social and emotional development**. Even at this early stage of the academic year, many are confident and are able to respond appropriately in various social situations. They are showing increasing independence, work well alongside their peers and enter freely into any role play games. Children benefit from the very good induction programme planned by staff (see paragraph 28) as they quickly settle into school routines. They become fully involved in activities, develop very good relationships with adults and each other, and show pride in their work.
40. **Pupils' achievement in communication, language and literacy is good.** The children take part well in conversations and are attentive when listening to stories. Although some have a lack of writing skills when they arrive, they soon attempt to write their names and many can manage their initial letter clearly. By the start of Year 1, expected levels are reached. However, there are times when more planned interventions by adults into pupils' play and role play would help their language skills to broaden and develop faster.
41. **Pupils' achievement in mathematical development is satisfactory.** Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding through practical activities in number and in shape, space and measures. For example, a group working on shape with the teaching assistant enjoyed the challenge of cutting out accurately. One was delighted with his triangle - 'look, look that's mine' he said proudly. Pupils were able to recognise triangles, rectangles and squares. Opportunities are taken to develop number skills at all times; for example, when pupils in a bat and ball games session counted how many successive hits they could make. Sometimes the more able could be challenged more; for example, when one such pupil working on counting and ordering numbers to ten counted successfully to 29.
42. As part of their work in **knowledge and understanding of the world**, pupils achieve well in developing their computer skills. A good number of children have access to computers at home so they arrive with skills that the staff build on. Some pupils can work the mouse, click accurately and drag objects to new spots. In their **creative development**, pupils' were observed to achieve well in an art lesson. They showed good knowledge of colour and

shape, and confidence in making a collage. On another occasion, the children collected leaves and twigs and counted them accurately into a bucket before arranging them imaginatively into pictures on the picnic tables.

43. In their **physical development**, younger pupils gain some benefit from undertaking activities with the older ones when they work in pairs in lessons; for example in gaining spatial awareness or ball skills. At other times they have good access to a range of resources such as jigsaw puzzles, construction kits, large scale climbing apparatus and wheeled toys such as tricycles. They develop good hand eye coordination when they sew, paint and thread beads.
44. Whilst pupils' overall learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, at times the teaching has less effect than it might because opportunities are not best used for adults to intervene and guide the pupils. Rightly, children are offered a balance of self-chosen and teacher led activities but sometimes they would benefit from more guidance in their physical play and their role play. At times, developing their independence is treated too much as simply giving pupils the activity and letting them get on with it. This can lead to missed opportunities to stretch them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning is at its best in Years 3 – 6;
- The quality of pupils' handwriting has improved;
- Achievement in writing in the junior class is better than what is normally expected;
- Having two subject leaders is not helping to bring about continuity across the key stages.

Commentary

45. The very small numbers of pupils taking tests from year-to-year make it difficult to draw reliable conclusions from the results. However, the results in Key Stage 1 over the past three years have indicated pupils reach high standards in reading and writing at the age of 7. The inspection evidence bears out that pupils get off to a good start and that they achieve well. The results for pupils at Year 6 have not been good but this does not reflect pupils current achievement which is much better than the results would suggest.
46. Standards in reading are above average in Year 2. Higher attaining pupils read confidently and independently and talk about the characters, plots and main events of the story. Average pupils make good progress but do not have quite the same level of confidence in discussing the main events in their storybooks. Those pupils with SEN have developed a good phonic ability and visual memory patterns, enabling them to read pages of text but they sometimes experience difficulties in recalling the story they have just completed. Pupils in Year 6 are reaching high standards of reading for their age. For example, many read with confidence, accuracy and expression and demonstrate skills of inference and deduction as they take turns to read from a play script and discuss the emergence of the plot.
47. The good teaching of phonics in the infant years is helping pupils to learn their letter sounds effectively. Group teaching in the junior years, where pupils read classic texts, successfully raises their interest in the skill and helps pupils with SEN to make good progress.

48. Standards in writing are in line with the national average for Year 2 but are high in Year 6. In the infant class, lesson planning is satisfactory but what is expected of the more able pupils does not always fully challenge them. Pupils write about their own ideas and a wide range of writing includes imaginative and diary writing and book reviews. Younger pupils' handwriting is good and their spellings are acceptable and often accurate, indicating an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Year 6 pupils write well. Their reading of the work of famous poets and novelists gives their writing greater maturity. Their work is grammatically correct and spelling is accurate. Usually handwriting and presentation is neat. They plan, draft and produce extremely imaginative and well crafted pieces of work that often show very good maturity as exemplified by a younger pupil who has written a poem in the style of W H Auden titled 'Grasmere Blue' including the following lines:
- 'The drizzle creeps through the village streets
Then in the sky mist and drizzle meet'.
- They experiment with language and show very high levels of confidence and developing expertise.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils answer questions confidently though the emphasis is often on verbal description rather than analytical language. This is because the teaching does not systematically highlight this aspect of literacy. In the junior years the teaching is very good and lessons always include time for pupils to express their ideas and opinions logically. Consequently by Year 6 they are beginning to reach a standard that is higher than that expected for their age.
50. The quality of teaching is good overall, across the school. Procedures for assessment and monitoring of pupils' achievement are satisfactory in Key Stage 1. They are detailed and informative for adults but they do not inform the pupils of their success and areas for development. The procedures for assessment are excellent for older pupils. Teachers' comments are highly informative. They create a dialogue between the pupil and the teacher and ensure that the pupil understands what has to be done to maintain improvement. Lessons are effectively planned in the infant years showing the teacher's secure knowledge of the literacy strategy. Good questioning helps the pupils apply rules for spelling to recently introduced words and helps them to sequence the events in a story. Very good teaching in the junior years is closely tied to the high expectations of the teachers. These challenge children to think, take pride in their work and give their best. The teaching of 'powerful verbs', the inclusion of relevant adverbs and adjectives and the teaching of metaphor and simile enrich creative writing. Lessons are enhanced by reference to classical literature and the work of famous authors and novelists. Pupils evaluate their classmates' writing so encouraging expression and improvements to presentation. This is a very good improvement on the findings expressed in the last inspection report.
51. Currently there are two subject co-ordinators, one each for the infant and junior years. Managing the subject this way is not best developing continuity throughout the school because improvements in the junior key stage are not being sufficiently spread to the infant key stage.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The development of literacy across the curriculum is very strong and all subjects are used very effectively to extend pupils' vocabulary as well as their reading skills. ICT is used well in spoken communication and in word processing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils now achieve well in Key Stage 2 and standards are rising fast;
- There is some first rate teaching and learning in this key stage;
- Marking of pupils work in Key Stage 2 is exceptionally good;
- Some pupils in Key Stage 1 could achieve more.

Commentary

53. In mathematics, with few children taking the tests each year, the pattern of test results in recent years has suggested that pupils in Key Stage 1 have attained average to above average standards but Key Stage 2 standards have been below and sometimes well below average. In 2002, Key Stage 1 pupils reached average standards compared to pupils in similar schools and results were around the same level in 2003. In Key Stage 2, pupils scored well below the national average in both years.
54. Given these figures, it might have been expected that older children would be found underachieving and working at a low level. Far from it. Over the past two terms and into this one, their achievement has rocketed and the current Year 5 and 6 pupils are on course to reach much higher levels by the time they take their tests at the ages of 11. Furthermore, many pupils have developed a huge enthusiasm for the subject. The main reasons are in the transformation of the mathematics teaching and learning, and in the organisation of classes, which now allows the pupils to be split into a Y3/4 group and a Y5/6 group. The teacher carefully targets the work towards each individual so that those who are particularly gifted at maths can be stretched and those who find it difficult can be supported. The teaching methods are stimulating and exciting, and the challenge to the pupils is now very high.
55. This high quality teaching and learning was observed in two Key Stage 2 lessons. A particular strength was the excellent knowledge of the teacher as to how best to teach mathematics, which showed in:
- questions which probed and demanded pupils to think, think again, calculate in their heads and on whiteboards, and concentrate very hard indeed;
 - the very good use of resources such as geostrips (plastic strips which join together) to back up explanations, and for children to use to help them understand difficult concepts;
 - constant use of the correct mathematical terms and language so that the younger juniors themselves were comfortable talking about 'vertices' or 'different orientation' and older juniors 'hypothesis' or 'order of rotation';
 - the use of games and a colourful home made 'function machine' which motivated pupils to accept mental challenges and enjoy the lessons immensely;
 - spontaneous seizing of opportunities by the teacher to extend pupils knowledge based on their response to questions.
56. Almost all the time, all pupils in both Y3/4 and Y5/6 groups were challenged up to the hilt. This was of particular benefit to the more able pupils. Now and again less able pupils struggled, though the teacher's interventions were usually sharp in giving extra support. The strength of the school's knowledge of its pupils was reflected in the way those with language difficulties but able in number were identified and stretched. Similarly in the lesson for older

pupils, the teacher skilfully involved two pupils who had been absent the previous day to ensure they recovered the ground and were not left behind.

57. The quality of pupils' learning in Key Stage 1, though sound, is more mundane. Pupils are given help with strategies to help them with mental problems, such as 'put the big number in your head' and they respond enthusiastically to the teaching and are keen to have a go. Resources, such as magnetic boards are used well to demonstrate or set out work, and the teacher targets questions well to individuals so that they are at the right level of difficulty. However, this level of challenge is not sustained at all times and a 'glass ceiling' operates. For example, pupils counting up in 5s together were stopped at 30 when the teacher said 'that's as much as you need to be able to do', yet they could have gone on. Another very capable child who completed a set task quickly might have been extended by a further challenge based on what he had learned but the opportunity was missed. Although the pupils' mathematics books suggest that the level of challenge is sometimes better than seen, not many pupils reach higher levels at this key stage. This is reflected in the smaller number who reach Level 3 in mathematics than in reading and writing in tests at the age of 7.
58. The new headteacher, who leads the mathematics development in Key Stage 2, has a strong knowledge and is very skilled in the subject. Her marking of pupils' work, for example, is a genuine dialogue with them and gives them first-rate guidance. It is her leadership and teaching which has raised pupils' achievement enormously in the junior classes. The co-ordinator for Key Stage 1 has less specialist experience and is less confident in the subject. It would be beneficial for the headteacher to spread her expertise more widely.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics skills in other subjects are good. These are mainly in science, ICT and geography through, for example, producing graphs on computers from the outcomes of science experiments.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching involves older pupils regularly in investigative work;
- Effective use of ICT promotes pupils' interest and brings science alive;
- Pupils' use of precise vocabulary produces accurate scientific writing;
- Not enough pupils achieve at a higher than average level in the infant key stage.

Commentary

60. Pupils in the infant years make steady progress and almost all are assessed as achieving the national standard at the age of 7. Attainment for Year 6 is broadly in line with that expected at the age of 11. The general standards have been sustained since the last inspection. However, standards in investigative work have improved throughout the junior years. More of the older pupils are now working at the higher level and they achieve well. This is because the teaching is now more challenging and pupils are expected to predict and investigate.
61. By the time they are 7, pupils have been taught about growth and living things. They identify materials and examine their characteristics. They study light sources and examine the effect of light on plants and investigate the strength of magnetic forces. However, they do not go on to more challenging investigations by, for example, investigating fully the phenomenon of

- growth through identifying factors, such as heat and water or by growing seeds in controlled environments to examine the absence of a factor. Their studies into magnetism do not range to set up investigations to identify sets of everyday materials that are magnetic or non-magnetic. The teaching does not thus challenge enough pupils to make generalisations based on their investigations.
62. In the junior classes, there is now much greater emphasis on the development of investigations. The Year 3/4 pupils are beginning to make sensible predictions and to organise fair tests to determine, for example, which fabric is the most resistant to wear and tear. Good teaching supports them in their work, allowing them to follow their own lines of enquiry, using questions or making suggestions to help the pupils organise their thoughts and move their investigations forwards. Consequently, they make good progress.
63. The Year 5/6 pupils continue to make good progress and show good scientific attitudes towards their work. They work well in small groups to organise investigations, for example, into how sound is made and how pitch can be changed. They use scientific vocabulary accurately and measure their findings against their earlier predictions. Throughout the school, ICT is used well in lessons, whether it is infant pupils creating pictograms to record information or junior pupils using a digital microscope to compare the rate of erosion on different fabrics after rubbing with sandpaper.
64. The subject is developing rapidly. The inclusion of investigations has helped pupils to gain a deeper understanding of scientific knowledge and confidence to recall earlier work. It is managed well and standards are rising.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is used effectively in many other areas of the curriculum and high standards are achieved in word processing. In other applications, pupils achieve well and reach expected standards;
- Teachers are confident in using ICT. There is a good balance between teaching the skills and applying them to specific learning tasks;
- Good assessment procedures are in place although they have yet to be used to full effect.

Commentary

65. The pupils' attainment is broadly in line with what is expected of children aged 7 and 11. It is above these levels in word processing and in the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. There has been an improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection. Good teaching ensures that older pupils apply their ICT skills to their work in many subjects.
66. By the time they are 7, pupils have gained expertise in the use of ICT to print their own name, and write words and simple sentences directly to the screen. They use the mouse to select applications from the 'tool bar' to create imaginary landscapes. They lift and drag geometrical shapes and use line instruments to create shapes and spray fill tools to shade in portions of their work. Suitable mathematical, word recognition and reading programs are readily available.
67. Older pupils show skill and confidence in using resources, such as digital cameras. They can set up the shot, direct the camera, check the focus and record a commentary to keep the observer informed about what is happening. Other pupils are able to produce the school's half termly news sheet and other documents containing information and articles to

a high quality. They include writing in columns and stimulating illustrations showing that pupils have good skill levels in using text box techniques. The text is chosen according to size, colour and font style. It is punctuated accurately and edited effectively. In science the oldest pupils successfully analyse data and carry out graphical analysis. They produce line graphs in identifying trends. The strength of the teaching is in the planning for direct learning of skills followed by their application in other subjects. This raises pupils' levels of interest, and helps them to concentrate and take pride in the finished products.

68. The management of the subject is good. The use of assessment sheets accurately record pupils' performances and these records have been used as key documents in the school's successful submission of work to the local authority, to achieve the standard of excellence for its planning and teaching of the subject. However, the information is not yet fully informing the next steps for pupils in their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. Teachers plan worthwhile opportunities for using ICT in many subjects. For example, in the infant key stage, good links are forged between ICT, mathematics and other subjects when pupils enter mathematical information onto a database and use the software to interrogate this information to create pictograms. As they become older, pupils' expertise is further extended through other subjects when they set up digital camera technology to record an ongoing story and the plot of an historical novel they are reading and enact it using a puppet theatre.

HUMANITIES

70. Inspectors did not see any lessons in the humanities. They looked at the work pupils had already done in these subjects and talked to some of them about it. Inspectors also discussed these subjects with teachers.
71. In **geography and history**, pupils' achievement is typical of that of pupils of a similar age. The infant pupils can construct sketch maps showing their journeys to school and they are involved in fieldwork activities which extend their knowledge of life in the village of Grasmere. In the junior class, pupils successfully compare aerial photographs with scale maps, developing their map work skills as they study the physical terrain of their local environment.
72. The study of mountain settlements enables pupils to include historical enquiry, art, dance and literature in their investigations. For example, the pupils' rubbings of Celtic rock engravings are of very good quality and their study of 'The Outcast' opens their minds to the human predicament of those times. Very good use is made of dance, and ICT, to enable pupils to share and record their knowledge and opinions.
73. Pupils recently visited the Roman Wall and the site of Vindolanda during their historical studies of invaders and settlers. The organisation of such visits, and visits to the school from actors and actresses in the role of famous historical celebrities, enrich the quality of pupils' learning.
74. Very good opportunities are planned to ensure that pupils develop specific subject related vocabulary and language skills. The school is currently re-writing the National Curriculum module on Grasmere Village.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. No lessons were observed in design and technology and only a dance lesson in physical education. Consequently no judgements are made about standards or teaching and learning in these subjects. However, teachers' plans were reviewed, discussions held with staff and pupils, and some of their work and photographic records scrutinised. These sources indicate that the work undertaken and pupils' achievement is what you would expect for their ages.
76. In **design and technology**, pupils achieve more in following instructions and making products than they do in designing them, evaluating when they have finished, going back to designs and making them better.
77. In **physical education**, pupils' standards in swimming are high. It is unusual for any pupils to leave unable to swim and most are confident swimmers well before this time. The arrangement the school has in using a swimming pool in a local hotel is highly beneficial. The support given by parents in accompanying the staff and children is an example of their valuable contribution. More emphasis is placed on games than gymnastics in lessons, and after school clubs for boys and girls provide additional opportunities to develop team skills.
78. The school is very successful in its **provision for the creative and aesthetic arts**, especially for the older pupils. The staff, children, parents and community value this curriculum area (which includes **art and design** and **music**) highly.

There are a number of **strengths** that make it such a success:

- the headteacher's leadership of the area and subject knowledge;
 - promoting strong links with the vibrant arts community in Grasmere;
 - linking of subjects and flexibility of timetables;
 - drawing upon outside expertise.
79. Through her leadership and teaching, the headteacher fosters creativity in the pupils and has established an ethos of aesthetic celebration. The older pupils hugely enjoy the challenges presented by the arts and this results in high quality work displayed in classrooms. The village of Grasmere is a centre for the arts in the Lake District and the school has reached into this; for example, by performing the musical 'Oliver' in the village hall. The headteacher's own skills as a musician are brought fully into play at such times, and the enthusiasm and quality of performance is high. The school takes a flexible approach to timetabling which allows it to seize many opportunities to participate in competitions and bring in artists, poets, a drama specialist and variety of musicians throughout the year (see paragraph 20). Visits are of equal importance when pupils explore different and contrasting environments, such as their own and urban surroundings (see paragraph 19), as a stimulus to creative work. The children, enabled by the way teaching links subjects and skills, develop a variety of skills through creative work. A prime example is seen in work linking digital photograph images ICT to the pupils' art designs, in preparation for the 'Paint Race' project, which is set within the context of PSHCE (see paragraph 81).
80. Art and design lessons were observed in both key stages. In the well taught Key Stage 1 lesson, the teacher set the pupils to make a collage from items made or painted in the previous lesson, encouraging them to be creative and 'do it as you like'. They were led to draw on the work of William Morris to give them ideas if needed. To help them improve or where ideas were slow to emerge the class teacher supported them with suggestions ('why don't you try.....') and taught them how to use fixing tools and media properly. In the Key Stage 2 lesson, teaching was very good. When analysing pictures, sharp questioning by the teacher made pupils think deeply about what the artist was trying to show. Pupils' responses showed a good understanding of why an artist might use particular colours or what the

picture said about relationships between the people in it. Pupils became engrossed in their painting tasks and showed they had achieved an understanding; for example, when one Year 4 pupil said 'I am using this bright red because I want this feature to stand out'. Boys and girls of all abilities and ages were suitably challenged and very good support in developing skills was given to one group by the classroom assistant.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for PSHCE is very good for all age groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very clear about the need for multicultural education in this mono ethnic area;
- Very exciting learning materials are well presented with the help of ICT and these stimulate pupils' interest;
- The wider community is heavily involved in the PSHCE programme;
- Pupils become engrossed in their work and do not want lessons to end.

Commentary

81. Pupils throughout the school benefit greatly from the very carefully considered PSHCE provision. The programme encompasses the spirit of healthy living in all its guises, from eating well, drinking water throughout the day as an aid to learning, taking short bursts of exercise to improve pupils' quality of learning to valuing different cultures and what they have to offer. There is an extra dimension to the PSHCE provision at Grasmere due to staff and governors taking a very close look at their own community and realising it reflects only a tiny part of what children will encounter when they leave the area. The innovative 'Paint Race Positively' Arts Initiative, begun in the school, aims to equip pupils to participate in a global society. Its strength lies in the fact that it reaches far beyond this school and extends the same opportunity to every primary pupil in small schools in Cumbria. All primary pupils are invited to submit an A4 poster on the theme 'Paint Race Positively'. At the same time, pupils with musical talents attend workshops and also work alongside professional musicians to produce a large-scale piece highlighting diversity in our culture.
82. Pupils are stimulated in lessons by challenging materials and very moving personal stories of oppression. The headteacher is particularly adept at relating historical fact to pupils' own experiences and this makes the suffering caused by racism, for example, far more understandable and memorable. Well considered use of ICT ensures that the diaries of Anne Frank come alive in a present day multimedia presentation. Significantly, pupils are left at the end of one lesson to ponder why it is that they are still considering the same subjects today, in the context of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, that Anne Frank and Martin Luther King talked about so long ago. They begin to realise that these are, as yet, unresolved issues for many members of society.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).