

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ARLECDON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Arlecdon, Frizington, Cumbria

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112151

Headteacher: Mrs E Mills

Lead inspector: Paula Allison

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 266316

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	67
School address:	Arlecdon Road Arlecdon Frizington Cumbria
Postcode:	CA26 3XA
Telephone number:	01946 861409
Fax number:	01946 861409
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Toman
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2003

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small community school with 67 boys and girls aged three to eleven on roll. There are three classes, and a nursery class which takes children in the mornings. The school is currently suffering from falling rolls, as a result of a decline in the child population in the locality. There is one class less than there was at the time of the last inspection. The school is situated in the village of Arlecdon, near the west coast of Cumbria. It serves the village, which is a mixed area of privately owned and council owned housing. A number of pupils are brought in from nearby towns, villages and rural hamlets. There is a wide range of socio-economic circumstances amongst the families, but they are broadly average overall. Free school meal eligibility is six per cent, which is below average. There has been in recent years an above average percentage of pupils leaving and joining the school during the school year, as families move into and out of the area.

The school has 21 children in the Foundation Stage, 13 of whom attend the nursery class on a part-time basis. Eight reception children are taught in a mixed age class alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly average. All pupils are of white British ethnic background. There are no pupils for whom English is not the home language. Six per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is well below the national average. However, five per cent

have statements of educational need, which is well above average. The needs are mostly moderate learning and speech and communication difficulties.

Since the last inspection there has been a change in headteacher. The current headteacher has been in post since the beginning of the current term, although prior to this she was acting headteacher for two terms. The school now offers after-school care, the space being provided as a result of some major additions to the building during the current school year.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21420	Paula Allison	Lead inspector	English Science Information and communication technology Religious education Geography History
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
17877	Christine Ingham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

3 Harrowby Road  
West Park  
Leeds  
LS16 5HN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the 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>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	
<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>19</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>31</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Arlecdon Primary is a good school**, which has improved considerably during the last year. Pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well during their time in the school. Standards are above average. The school is very well led and managed and gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The new headteacher has provided direction for the school and has inspired everyone to make the school's vision of achievement for all a reality
- The governing body has been the driving force that has brought the school from weakness to strength
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave responsibly; relationships in the school are excellent
- Teachers encourage and support their pupils and have effectively raised standards
- Pupils are very well cared for in school; they are valued and respected as individuals
- The school is now well managed, but many of the systems are new and as yet there has not been time for them to be sufficiently developed
- The curriculum is well enriched with visits and visitors, but information and communication technology (ICT) is not used as well as it could be to support learning in other subjects

When the school was inspected two years ago, it was found to have serious weaknesses, particularly in leadership and management, which were impacting negatively on pupils' achievement. Improvement since then has been very good and much of it has taken place during the current year. Leadership and management are now very good. All aspects of the school's work have improved, and in particular the quality of teaching and learning and assessment. As a result, pupils now achieve well and standards are much higher. The school no longer has serious weaknesses.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	D	E	E
mathematics	C	C	D	E
science	C	D	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

In common with all small schools, test data can be quite misleading, as the performance of even one pupil can make a significant difference to the overall results. However, it was obvious at the last inspection that there was a downward trend in standards and some pupils were not achieving as well they could have done. A year later, in 2004, the picture was no better and it seemed that pupils in Year 6 had not made the progress they should have done since they were in Year 2. Standards were well below those in similar schools.

Under new leadership, the school has made a determined effort to raise achievement and has been very successful. **Pupils are now achieving well through the school** and current standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the very good quality of provision in the nursery and the careful teaching of skills in the reception year. Most children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and in some areas, such as personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development, a number exceed the goals. By the end of Year 6, standards in music and religious education are above what is expected, because of the specialist and expert teaching pupils receive in these subjects. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with what is expected, but pupils do not use these skills enough in other subjects.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Attendance is good. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are attentive and responsive in lessons. They are keen to learn and they participate fully in school life. Behaviour is very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships are excellent and the school is particularly good at developing pupils' self-confidence.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good,** with particular strengths in the nursery and the Year 3/4 class. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who respond by working hard in lessons. Pupils receive a lot of support and encouragement from all the adults who work with them. Assessment systems are good. Teachers are now more aware of how their pupils are progressing and can plan accordingly to meet their individual needs.

The curriculum is well planned and a wide range of enrichment activities and experiences is provided, although not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. Improvements to the school building have greatly enhanced the quality of the accommodation. Pupils are very well cared for. Health and safety procedures are rigorous. The school's partnership with parents is good. The school has recently developed its links with the local community and they are now very good.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The new headteacher has provided the school with the necessary direction for its work. Now there is a shared vision for the future of the school, based on all pupils reaching their full potential. The role of subject leader has been developing and has had a particularly effective impact on standards in literacy and numeracy. The work of the governing body is outstanding. They make a vital contribution to the leadership of the school. The loyalty and commitment of the individuals on the governing body are of the highest order, which has been a major factor in the improvement over the last year. The school is well managed. Systems for monitoring performance and tracking progress have been effectively introduced, although some of them need to be embedded in the work and some need developing further.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school and have positive views of it. They are particularly happy with the progress their children now make, the quality of the teaching and the high expectations of staff. They are very confident in the new leadership. A few parents have concerns about homework and about the amount of information they receive. These were



not considered by the team to be major issues, but the school is looking into the concerns. Pupils are very happy with their school. They feel that their teachers are kind and give them interesting things to do.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Consolidate the developments that have recently brought about such impressive improvements in achievement – for example, assessment systems, teachers' marking, the role of the subject leader, pupils' involvement with their own learning.
- Provide training and support for the headteacher, so that she can develop the management skills she needs to continue with the work she has so effectively started.
- Make more use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards in Years 2 and 6 in all core subjects (English, mathematics and science) are above average. Achievement is good throughout the school.

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

- Pupils achieve considerably better than they did at the time of the last inspection
- Standards in English and mathematics were on a downward trend, but have risen dramatically in the last year
- Efforts of the new leadership and of the teachers and other staff have brought about the improvements
- Standards in music and religious education are particularly high as a result of the expert teaching
- All pupils achieve well, because of the way in which their individual needs are met

#### **Commentary**

1. The school has very small year groups and it is difficult, and often quite misleading, to use test data to provide information about performance when the cohorts are so small. For example, last year there were only ten pupils in Year 6. In these circumstances, the impact of even one pupil's performance on the overall percentages can be quite significant and comparisons with other schools can be unreliable. Despite this however, it is obvious that standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 over the last few years have been on a downward trend. The improvement rate for both year groups has been below the national trend.
2. The last inspection two years ago identified attainment as a serious weakness that had to be addressed. It was judged that some pupils could achieve more than they were doing, particularly the more able pupils. There was insufficient challenge generally and the progress of pupils was unsatisfactory. A year later in the national tests, standards were still low and the school did not reach its own targets. Standards were well below average and did not compare favourably with those in similar schools. Year 6 pupils did not seem to have made the progress they should have done since they were in Year 2.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.6 (26.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.8 (27.0)	27.0 ( 26.8)
science	27.0 (28.3)	28.6 (28.6)

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

### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.6 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.4 (12.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.3 (15.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. This year there has been a determined effort to put this right. This has stemmed from the new leadership and has been implemented with extremely hard work from teachers and other staff. Considerable changes have occurred and the results are quite remarkable. The school vision, to which staff and governors are committed, states that all pupils will reach their potential, and the school seems to be well on the way to realising this. Currently, pupils throughout the school are achieving well and standards are considerably higher than they have been for many years. Standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, and in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, are above average. Virtually all pupils reach the expected levels and a high percentage reach higher than this. The school set itself some very challenging targets and has even exceeded these.
4. Achievement is now good. The school's own tracking shows how well pupils are progressing and it is also obvious from pupils' books just how much they have moved on through the current year. Parents are very happy with the progress their children are making now. Although the value added from year to year has not been good enough in the past, it is currently looking very good indeed.
5. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with what might be expected of children of this age. The quality of the provision in the nursery and the careful teaching of skills in the reception year ensure that children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Children in reception are currently on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In some areas of learning, for example in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development, many children exceed the goals.
6. Pupils now continue to make good progress through the school. In the past teachers were not aware of the standards and meaningful targets were not set, so some pupils were allowed to under-achieve. This is no longer the case. Now everyone is well aware of how well each pupil is progressing and any problems are quickly and effectively addressed with extra support. Clearer data has enabled the school to identify larger issues, such as boys' achievement which was a concern especially in writing, and to put in place a range of strategies to address these.
7. All pupils now achieve well. Boys are doing better in writing than they were. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and they make good progress towards their own goals. Higher expectations have meant that more able pupils are now challenged by the work they are given to do and they achieve well. This is shown by the numbers of pupils who are currently working at higher than the expected levels in the National Curriculum. Pupils now know their own targets and this inspires them to try hard and do better. The school has identified pupils who are gifted or talented

and is working with other schools to ensure that they have appropriate provision to enable them to develop their potential.

8. It was not possible during the inspection to make a judgement on standards and achievement in all subjects and the school has quite rightly focused in the first instance in getting things back on course in the core subjects. There are, however, some major strengths in music, where standards in Year 6 are above the expectations of the National Curriculum, and in religious education, where standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In both of these subjects, inspired teaching by teachers with a high level of expertise and enthusiasm enables pupils to achieve well. Standards in ICT are in line with what is expected. Pupils gain adequate skills, but currently they do not have enough opportunity to use these skills to support their learning in other subjects.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)**

Pupils have a very positive attitude to school life and their behaviour is very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance at the school is above the national average and punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy school and participate fully in school life
- Pupils are very well behaved, which creates an atmosphere that is very conducive for learning
- Relationships in the school are excellent
- The school is very good at developing pupils' self-confidence
- Pupils mature into well-rounded and sensible individuals with a clear sense of right and wrong

### **Commentary**

9. All areas covered in this aspect have improved since the previous inspection. The quality of relationships within the school has improved significantly. Parents are very happy with the values that the school promotes.
10. Pupils enjoy school. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average for primary schools. Throughout the school, pupils have an enthusiasm for learning and are very keen to try their best. They positively want to be involved in lessons – offering ideas, answering questions eagerly and quickly setting about tasks. They respond very well to opportunities to help in the running of the school and take homework seriously.
11. Behaviour is usually very good and sometimes excellent. Lessons do not suffer from disruption as pupils are attentive and follow instructions. Movement around the school is very orderly. Playgrounds are very friendly. Pupils report that bullying is not an issue in the school and that the staff deal promptly with any incidents of name-calling. Any problems are usually resolved amicably through class discussions. There have been no exclusions.
12. Pupils told inspectors that the best things about the school are the teachers and how friendly everybody is. The excellent relationships stem from the headteacher who sets an impressive standard in treating everybody as an individual and with a high level of

respect. This is infectious, with the result that pupils are polite and kind, share well and are very prepared to listen to others' points of view. Consequently, pupils collaborate very well in lessons and know how to show appreciation. The strong emphasis given to relationships makes a major contribution to the pupils' personal development.

13. The school is very good at providing a framework for pupils to develop their personal qualities. Social skills stem from the high quality of the relationships. Dinnertime is well organised with family type tables that encourage dining to be a civilised social occasion. Low noise levels allow easy conversation and table manners are good. Moral issues are covered in assemblies, in class discussions and by the good examples set by the staff. Great emphasis is given to boosting pupils' sense of self-worth. Achievements both in school and outside are recognised and publicly praised. The highest accolade is to be made a 'superstar' with a photo displayed at the entrance. Good use is made throughout the school of photos of pupils participating in school life, for instance on residential trips and to identify those who have specific responsibilities. These procedures very effectively give pupils a sense of pride in achievement and the value of hard work.
  
14. Spiritual matters are well covered in assemblies and in religious education. For instance during the inspection pupils were comparing symbols associated with Christianity and Judaism and discussing what makes a saint. Pupils get a good feel for Western culture through history, visiting theatre groups and literature. Music in particular has a high profile in the school, but currently art is not sufficiently evident. Contacts by emails to a school in Japan and by letters to a school in Bangladesh give pupils a valuable insight into other cultures. Pupils are enthusiastic about playing competitive sports against other schools and taking on roles within the school. These effectively help to develop an understanding of fair play and a sense of responsibility. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are confident, interesting to talk to and know how to act responsibly.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	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 provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning, the curriculum and the partnership with parents are good. Pupils are very well cared for.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is good. Pupils learn effectively. The assessment of pupils' work is good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection, which has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who respond by working hard
- Pupils are encouraged by the support they receive from their teachers and other adults
- Assessment systems are much better than they were; teachers are more aware of how their pupils are progressing
- In literacy, teachers' marking is used effectively to show pupils how they can improve; this is not the case in other subjects

## Commentary

15. Teaching and learning and assessment were weaknesses at the last inspection. They were unsatisfactory overall. Weaknesses in planning and low expectations were having a negative impact on pupils' achievement. There was still some unsatisfactory teaching a year later and there was little being done to support it.
16. This year things are very different. The focus for the school was improving teaching and learning and this has been very successful. The changes have been brought about by the determination and support of the headteacher and the hard work and willingness of teachers to act on advice. The considerable improvement that has been made has been recognised by visitors, by advisers and by parents, who are now confident in the quality of the teaching their children receive.
17. Teaching and learning are now good. There is nothing that is unsatisfactory and there are some major strengths in the nursery and in the Year 3/4 class, where teaching is often outstanding. Overall, this is very good improvement from the last inspection and the impact on pupils' achievement is quite dramatic.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3	4	8	2	0	0	0

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

18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, with particular strengths in the nursery where the teaching is often excellent. In both the nursery and the reception class, support staff make a very valuable contribution to children's learning, activities are well planned and children learn effectively.
19. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good overall, and is often very good. The feature of the teaching that has had the most impact recently is the high expectations that teachers now have of pupils. They challenge them and expect the most of them. Pupils respond positively to this; they work hard and achieve well. When asked for their views of the school, pupils were well aware that they had to work hard, but they were also confident that they were well helped and supported. The quality of support in the school is good. Adults, whether paid support staff or volunteers, make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. With the small classes and the levels of support available, no pupil wants for help and guidance when they need it. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and they are always fully included in lessons.

20. Relationships in classrooms are excellent. High standards of behaviour are maintained and the learning environment is very positive. Everyone is included in lessons and treated as an individual. Pupils work independently or collaboratively with equal ease. They are confident in the classes, not afraid to take part in discussions, make suggestions or answer questions, knowing that their contributions will be valued and it would not matter if they were wrong. For example, in a Year 5/6 English lesson pupils were fully involved with discussing their ideas about characters from a book they had been reading. A thorough knowledge of the pupils enabled the teacher to target questions at the right level and everyone made some sort of contribution. Pupils enjoyed the task and worked very hard throughout. This attention and involvement enables pupils to make good progress and to achieve well.
21. Planning is now more precise than it was. Teachers use the information they have of pupils' achievements to help them match tasks to individual needs. This is most effective in literacy and numeracy, where pupils are helped to gain the skills they need through tasks and activities that have the right amount of challenge. In Year 1/2, planning is particularly meticulous and this helps the teacher cater for the wide range of ages and abilities in the class. In an English lesson in this class the teacher knew exactly at what stage individuals were in developing their writing skills. Support was targeted at the less confident, the most able were given a challenge and there were plenty of aids for spelling available, which encouraged pupils to be independent. Pupils were very productive and made good progress during the lesson.
22. Teachers use a range of different approaches in their lessons so as to enable all pupils to learn effectively. There is as a result a high level of engagement on the part of pupils. They remain interested and involved throughout. Teachers usually use available resources well, although on the whole they do not always use ICT as effectively as they could do to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning in lessons. In the very best lessons, the teacher inspires pupils with a high level of subject knowledge and enthusiasm. The lessons are lively, with a good pace, and a range of resources is used imaginatively to keep pupils interested and involved. Learning is of the highest order and achievement is very good. Examples of such lessons were observed in music and religious education and in the nursery.
23. Led by the headteacher, teachers have made considerable improvements to assessment systems and to the way in which they use the information they get from assessment. Teachers have always had a very good knowledge of their pupils as individuals and have been generally aware of how well they are doing. Now from their assessments they have much more precise information, which they use to help them group pupils and plan the next stages in their learning. Record-keeping is more secure and target-setting more meaningful than it was. Pupils themselves are aware of their targets, which inspires them to work hard to try to achieve them.
24. The issue of marking has been addressed, at least in English where the positive approach is working very effectively in giving pupils a good idea of how well they are doing and how they can improve. This quality of marking is not yet used consistently across other subjects, but it is a good start. A good start has also been made to involving pupils in their own learning, with the target-setting and the use of very obvious learning objectives in lessons. However, teachers do not always give pupils time to reflect on whether they have achieved the objectives or to articulate what they have found difficult.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good and is well enriched. The accommodation and resources satisfactorily meet the needs of the curriculum.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The nursery provides a range of very high quality practical experiences for children
- The curriculum is planned well to cater for the mixed age classes
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported
- The curriculum is well enriched by a wide range of visitors and visits
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support learning across the curriculum
- Recent improvements to the building have greatly enhanced the accommodation and ethos of the school

### **Commentary**

25. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good. In the nursery there is a wide range of high quality experiences provided, ensuring that children experience the full breadth of learning. Staff make the children's learning interesting and often exciting, by using the school's indoor and outdoor areas creatively. The flair and ingenuity of the nursery staff are shown in the very good organisation of the nursery. The displays are excellent, varied and very colourful. Resources are plentiful and of a good quality. These together create a vibrant and purposeful exciting classroom where children are motivated to learn.
26. Provision for Foundation Stage children in the reception class has been improved, particularly with the new layout to the building and the development of the outdoor area. Planning across the whole of the Foundation Stage is more continuous and now fully reflects the commitment to provide practical learning experiences. There are very good links made across the areas of learning.
27. The curriculum for Years 3 to 6 is broad, balanced and planned carefully on two or three-year rolling programmes to cater for the mixed-age classes. Teachers are very keen to develop the curriculum and have already improved the delivery of literacy, numeracy and science in order to raise achievement. There are some good examples of learning across subjects being linked, such as religious education with aspects of geography, and teachers are keen to develop this further. Language and literacy skills are used effectively across the curriculum, particularly pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, ICT is not regularly planned into the delivery of other subjects and opportunities to enhance teaching and learning with the use of ICT are often lost.
28. There is a good range of additional opportunities to support learning. Links with schools in the area allow pupils to learn the value of competitive sports. Recent visits by pupils have included a haunted room in a castle to support English writing, various local churches to support religious education and the local library to improve library skills. A programme of residential visits for older pupils contributes very well to pupils' personal development.
29. The curriculum is fully inclusive and caters for all the pupils in the school, whatever their needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The



requirements of these pupils are carefully assessed and they receive a good level of support. Pupils' statements and individual education plans are closely followed by staff. The school has identified pupils who are gifted and talented in different areas of the curriculum and these pupils will now be included in the special educational needs provision. There is a commitment to work with parents and provide a higher level of challenge for these pupils both inside and outside school.

30. The school has recently undergone considerable upheaval due to building work. This has been managed well and the accommodation is now judged to be good. The physical inclusion of the nursery within the building adds greatly to the sense of a single community. The premises are well kept and clean. Classrooms are bright and airy; however, many displays in classrooms and around the school are insufficiently stimulating and contribute little to pupils' learning. Some of this is due to the impact of the very recent building work, but overall opportunities to value pupils' work in this way are often missed.
31. The school has an adequate range of resources, although there are a few gaps in areas such as science and mathematics. Some recent additions to some areas of the curriculum have enhanced the delivery of the curriculum, but funding is currently very tight and does not allow for many extras. The school has protected its staffing levels this year and pupils throughout the school benefit from the small classes. This has been an effective measure in terms of raising achievement. The school has a very good level of support staff, so that all pupils receive the support they need.

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

Pupils are very well cared for at school. They receive very good support and guidance in both their personal and academic development. The school takes the views of pupils very seriously.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very well looked after in a friendly and secure environment
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good, in part due to very effective governor involvement
- Pupils are extremely well supported in their personal development
- Pupils have a very effective voice in the running of the school

### **Commentary**

32. The school is a very friendly community where the headteacher and staff show a high level of care towards the pupils, who are treated as individuals with views that are worth listening to. Pupils told the inspectors that they look upon the teachers as friends who they can trust. This confirmed an extremely positive response in the pupils' questionnaire on the subject of trust. Pupils generally have a close rapport with the headteacher. Supervision is good at all times.
33. The school's procedures for ensuring health and safety are very good. The governors are very involved in regularly inspecting the premises and ensuring that any points noted are followed up. All necessary checks on equipment are carried out thoroughly. There is a very good level of first aid cover.
34. The school's good systems for tracking progress ensure that pupils receive good support in their academic development. Through their targets, pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve, and a beginning has been made to using teachers' marking as a means of

involving pupils more in their own learning. Support for pupils' personal development is excellent and based largely on the headteacher's great knowledge of each pupil, their parents and the family background. The section on personal development in pupils' reports is consistently well written. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Very good relationships between adults and pupils lead to good development of personal skills and these pupils have high levels of self-esteem.

35. The school is very keen to know and act on pupils' views. A questionnaire to pupils that predated the inspection raised no issues of concern. An arrangement of class councillors and school councillors, combined with a well-used suggestion box, ensures that any idea or concern is aired and discussed. The school council is particularly effective, often running its meetings without any adult intervention. School councillors regularly represent the views of the pupils to the parish council, for instance giving opinions on the lack of litter-bins in the area and the allegedly rowdy behaviour by older youths in the village. The school councillors have additionally been involved in an area youth council discussion on behaviour and bullying. The school council gives pupils valuable opportunities to understand how meetings are run, how decisions are arrived at and the importance of lobbying. School councillors are currently lobbying for a field as an addition to the playground. Pupils in the school value the school council, particularly for improving the range of playtime equipment.

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

The school has good links with parents and other schools. Links with the community are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a very high opinion of the school and the headteacher
- Parents are kept well informed on school life and their children's progress; however, they are not given enough opportunities to be involved in their children's learning.
- The school is very good at consulting parents on future developments.
- Pupils benefit greatly from contacts with the local area.

### **Commentary**

36. Parents think very highly of the school. They commented on the good behaviour, the way their children become mature and how all children are treated fairly. They also expressed great confidence in the new headteacher. School funds benefit significantly from a very active Parent Teachers' Association.
37. The school keeps parents well informed on the life of the school through letters home and the prospectus. Curriculum plans, containing a good level of detail, are sent home at the beginning of the year. Very well attended parents' meetings are held in the autumn and summer term. However, although staff are very accessible, most parents do not have a formal opportunity to discuss their children's progress between November and July. Pupils' reports are satisfactory but most do not contain clear enough guidance on what the child needs to do to improve. This is a missed opportunity to involve parents in their children's learning. Homework is often used well to support pupils' learning in class, but again does not involve parents sufficiently.
38. Parents' views on future developments are highly valued by the school. A recent questionnaire invited parents to submit ideas for inclusion in the school improvement plan, with all the responses being considered by the governors.

39. Pupils benefit from the school's very good links with the local area. Sporting skills are developed through local tournaments. Recent visits to the local fire station, library and various churches have been used effectively to support learning. History has been made more relevant by inviting residents to talk about the area in the past and by visits to local heritage areas, for instance Whitehaven harbour. The school council has given pupils' views to the parish council. Pupils have represented the school at a local jazz festival and in local swimming galas culminating in competing in a national event. Links with local schools have been effectively forged and have supported the improvements in school. For example, teachers have been able to look at how other teachers work and have used this to help in their review of their own practice. Some joint initiatives, for example provision for those pupils identified as having particular gifts or talents, have greatly enhanced the quality of the curriculum for individual pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. Governance is excellent. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership of key staff is good. The management of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership has brought the school from weakness to strength in a short space of time
- The governing body has been a driving force in the school
- The new headteacher provides the vision and direction that was lacking; she now needs to develop her management skills further
- All involved with the school share a vision that is firmly based on pupils' achievement
- The school is well managed, but systems have not had the time to be fully embedded in the work of the school

### **Commentary**

40. At the last inspection, leadership and management were unsatisfactory and this was judged to be a serious weakness that needed to be addressed with some urgency, as it was having a negative impact on the quality of education and the achievement of pupils. In a short space of time the improvement in leadership and management has been considerable and has already had a major and very positive impact on the quality of education and the achievement of pupils. Parents are now confident in the way in which the school is led, which many were not in the past.
41. The new headteacher has provided the vision and direction that the school urgently required. She has a strong commitment to the pupils in the school and is determined that every one of them should be successful during their time in the school. She has high aspirations that are infectious and have touched every aspect of school life. She has worked tirelessly to bring together all who have a stake in the school and build a strong team based on mutual respect. She has gained the trust of parents, pupils and governors and has motivated a staff whose morale was low after the last inspection. She provides an excellent role model in the quality of her own teaching and the respect she has for individuals.

42. All this the headteacher has achieved in a very short space of time, but the impact is already immense, showing itself in the quality of education now being provided, in the improvement in all areas since the last inspection and in the achievement of pupils. She was inexperienced in school management when she took on the role, but has taken it all in her stride. She now needs training and support to help her develop the management skills required to enable her to take the school further.
43. The work of the governing body is outstanding. They make a major contribution to the leadership of the school and have been the driving force that has taken the school through some difficult times from weakness to strength. The loyalty and commitment of the individuals on the governing body are of the highest order. They are in close touch with the work of the school and have secure and effective monitoring systems in place. They are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved with strategic planning. They do all they can to ensure that statutory requirements are met and make a substantial contribution in areas such as provision for special educational needs, health and safety and target-setting. They fully support the headteacher and other members of staff, but at the same time provide challenges to ensure that the school continues on its successful path.
44. All staff share the vision for the future of the school and they have worked very hard to make it a reality. They make a strong team where everyone's contribution is valued. There is an air of purpose in the school and a determination to improve and provide the best for all pupils. School development planning is shared by all and focuses on priorities that reflect the school's ambitions. With so few teachers in this small school, each one has to take on a range of responsibilities for subjects and other aspects. This they have done willingly, despite the fact that many of the areas were new to them in terms of leadership this year. The role of subject leader is developing and leaders are now beginning to take responsibility for standards and quality through the school. They are willing to learn from best practice elsewhere and to seek advice. The literacy and numeracy subject leaders in particular have worked very hard and effectively to bring about the improvements that have helped to raise achievement.
45. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well led and managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator, (SENCO) has a good overview of the provision, the progress of pupils is closely monitored and the SENCO is involved in review and updating the pupils individual educational plans. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has a very high level of involvement and a good understanding of special educational needs. He gives substantial support to the SENCO and regular meetings are held to review developments.
46. The school is well managed. On a day-to-day basis the school runs efficiently. An increase in administration time has been effective in taking some of the burden of paperwork from the headteacher, leaving her time to deal with management at a curriculum level. Similarly, the investment in the services of a bursar is effective in this small school and ensures that financial planning and administration are efficient. The school has had to deal with a reduced budget, mainly because of falling rolls, and the major impact this has on a small school. The situation has been well managed and, although the school is currently running a deficit budget in order to protect staffing levels and ensure that all the planned improvements could take place, there is a clear plan for rectifying this situation in the future.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	237,763	Balance from previous year	5,924
Total expenditure	243,521	Balance carried forward to the next	166
Expenditure per pupil	3,865		

47. All the systems that were missing at the last inspection, such as for monitoring teaching and learning, tracking progress and evaluating performance, have now been put in place and are working effectively. In particular, the monitoring and support for teaching and learning have led to significant improvements and the tracking of pupils' progress has been a major factor in raising achievement. However, and although much has been achieved already, such systems and procedures have not yet had time to be fully embedded in the work of the school and some need developing further. A period of consolidation is what is needed now.

The school's vision is based on achievement for all: *'creating the right environment, culture and level of support, to enable every pupil to reach their full potential'*.

The vision is evident in all aspects of the school's work. That the leadership has managed to achieve this in such a short space of time is remarkable and a credit to the hard work and commitment of all who are involved with the school.

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

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

48. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are admitted into the nursery at the beginning of the term following their third birthday, for a daily morning session. The nursery is led by a very effective nursery nurse. The reception children are taught alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the infant class. When they start school, most reception children's attainment is average overall. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the levels expected for their age, with the exception of personal, social and emotional development and mathematics where their attainment is above the levels expected. The children achieve well in all the areas of learning.
49. Teaching is good overall, with some very good and outstanding examples. Consequently the children learn and achieve well. Support staff make a significant contribution to the children's learning in both the nursery and the reception class. As a result of meticulous planning and the effective and efficient use of time, children maintain a good pace in their learning and show positive levels of interest and concentration in their daily activities. In the nursery in particular, there is a purposeful and busy atmosphere and there is great enthusiasm for learning because the nursery nurse plans exciting and very imaginative activities for the children.
50. Reception children benefit from sometimes working alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils. However, their learning is significantly enhanced when they are withdrawn by support staff or the teacher for group and independent activities, for example for literacy and numeracy, and when they have opportunities to use the outdoor practical activities. A strength of teaching lies in the staff's very good knowledge and understanding of how children learn best. Assessment systems are also very good; the staff know the children well, carry out regular checks on the children's progress and maintain detailed records which clearly show the progress of each child.
51. The high quality of provision in the nursery has been maintained since the last inspection and improvements to provision for reception children has been good. Improvements include the quality of teaching and learning, assessment procedures and continuity in the curriculum. Although learning for reception children is more formal because of the constraints imposed in a mixed-age class, the children are well provided for and all indications are that they are confident members of the class, achieve well and enjoy school. Leadership and management are now satisfactory and the co-ordinator has received substantial support to resolve the issues raised in the last inspection.

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

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

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

- Most children will exceed the levels expected by the end of the reception year
- The children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good

- The children are confident and have high levels of self-esteem

### **Commentary**

52. A strong sense of community typifies the nursery and reception class, where each child is a valued member. The children in the nursery soon begin to understand that good behaviour is expected and the staff sensitively and calmly manage any disruptive behaviour and help these young children to understand why it is not acceptable. Children in the nursery want to learn, because it is such an enjoyable experience. Children's enjoyment is very evident by their laughter and participation, for example as they explored in the role-play jungle to find wild animals.
53. In the reception year the children become increasingly independent and demonstrate high levels of self-esteem in the way they approach tasks and show much pride in their achievements. Teaching in this area is particularly good. Staff are very patient and caring, and provide consistent routines. This ensures the children know what is expected.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is rich so children want to talk about it
- The children develop an interest in books and reading
- The children are making slower progress in writing independently

### **Commentary**

54. The development of speaking and listening is integral to all activities. In the nursery the excellent improvisation of resources has a significant impact on the children's skills in communication. A very good example was seen when two boys used the new language learnt in the jungle topic as they played together to create a jungle environment. They sustained a conversation for over 20 minutes, mainly speaking in sentences. Reception children make very good progress in developing confidence to speak and they readily initiate their own conversations because the well-planned activities promote discussion. Children designing a multi-coloured coat for Joseph, confidently shared ideas with their friends.
55. There is a high focus on book provision and there are regular opportunities to share books with each other and adults. They help children to acquire a love of books and the skills needed to start reading. Words and pictures surround the nursery and opportunities to read are a part of nursery life. Reception children benefit from the regular group reading sessions and the very good support they receive from adults to practise individually.
56. Early writing skills are well developed through play activities and access to writing materials. The reception children are now systematically taught letter sounds and names and use this knowledge as they write. There are, however, too few

opportunities for early writing to challenge the more able children who could achieve more.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children learn mathematics mainly through practical activities
- Most children make good and often very good progress and achieve well

### **Commentary**

57. By the end of the reception year most children are likely to achieve the expected levels and many are likely to exceed these levels. Achievement is good because of the well-planned practical activities which have meaningful links, for example through the themes. Nursery children count whenever there is a natural opportunity. They count when they sing songs and as they share the fruit at snack time, and count the objects in pictures. Nursery staff ask well-focused questions and introduce new words such as “How many more or less?” Staff plan well so that mathematics occurs in a purposeful situation, for example to count the legs as the children paint an octopus.
58. Reception children build on these skills and staff present counting opportunities in interesting ways such as through the ‘Chopsticks’ game and counting around a circle like a Mexican Wave. In daily mathematics lessons reception children develop their ability to calculate. In a good lesson, children began to use ‘counting on’ to solve some simple money problems. When learning is planned through a game the children respond well and actively participate.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Learning opportunities are very rich and the area of learning is taught well
- Children are encouraged to be curious and the emphasis on investigation contributes very much to their understanding

### **Commentary**

59. The good teaching, the rich and varied provision, the effective use of the outdoor areas and visits to places of interest, such as the harbour, all contribute to the children’s good achievement in exploration and investigation.
60. Learning is an exciting experience for the children and they have a very good range of experiences both inside and out to arouse their curiosity and bring some wonder to their learning. An excellent example involved observing the activities in the swallow’s nest in the outdoor shed. The children were enraptured when the baby swallows flew out of the nest and when they observed feeding.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

61. It is not possible to make an overall judgment on provision or teaching because only a limited range of physical activity was directly observed. However, planning and observation of children using the outdoor areas indicate that the children's physical skills are well developed.
62. In the nursery the children develop agility as they manipulate tools because they are taught the skills required. The children showed high levels of competence as they used paintbrushes and paste brushes. They use these with care and safety because they know this is expected. Reception children demonstrated good balancing skills as they used the log stepping stones, crossing them without adult support.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a clear focus on skill development and children gain good artistic skills
- Outstanding resources for role-play in the nursery support children's learning very effectively

### Commentary

63. Art skills are developed well. The children have access to a good range of materials which they can select for themselves. Children concentrate well and these opportunities are an exciting part of the day. Good opportunities are provided outdoors for work on a large scale. Reception children, working together, painted a very impressive large background for a jungle picture ensuring the animals were well hidden by camouflage.
64. In an excellent lesson in the nursery, the children achieved exceptionally well because of the availability of a wonderful range of resources to develop their creative skills. Some children carefully used sparkling paper to create an underwater picture making their own decisions about the content of their picture. Others were totally absorbed mixing paints to create a seaside effect on large smooth pebble stones and then painting an octopus in the foreground with some very good results. The quality of role-play is outstanding because of the excellent imaginative ideas, improvisation and wide range of role-play areas. These make a very significant impact on the children's achievement particularly in the nursery. The children enjoy role-play and become totally engrossed in their roles either in the Space Station, The Rainforest or The Tent.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average
- Standards in speaking, listening and reading are particularly high.
- Improvement since the last inspection has been considerable
- Teaching is imaginative and keeps pupils interested in lessons
- Leadership of the subject has been a major factor in the improvements

#### Commentary

65. At the time of the last inspection two years ago, achievement in English was a weakness and provision was unsatisfactory. With new and determined leadership and the hard work of teachers, provision is much improved. Pupils now achieve well and standards are above average. Improvement overall has been very good.
66. There had been a downward trend in standards in English, which was obvious even given the distortions in results that can be caused by the small numbers of pupils involved each year. This weakness was identified in the last inspection. Standards were not as high as they should have been, especially in writing, and there was underachievement, particularly amongst boys and the more able pupils.
67. Currently, standards are much higher. They are above average in all aspects of English, in both Year 2 and Year 6, and all pupils now achieve well. Speaking and listening and reading are still stronger, as they have been for a while, but standards in writing are much better now than they were. Virtually all pupils reach the expected levels and a high proportion reach a higher level than this. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and, with the good level of support they receive, they often reach the expected levels in reading and writing. The more able pupils are much better challenged and they achieve well.
68. Speaking and listening are strengths of the school. The small classes and the positive relationships in classes mean that all pupils get the opportunity to talk in a range of contexts and to listen to each other and their teachers. Year 2 pupils talk to a partner, in a small group and in a larger group. They talk about things that interest them and, when given the opportunity, can explain their ideas. They listen to others and are developing the skills of responding to what others say. The introduction of more role-play and drama in the class has had a positive impact on the breadth of pupils' vocabulary and the development of their ideas. Year 6 pupils talk confidently in a range of different contexts; they ask questions and explain their ideas. The teachers in the older classes give pupils a lot of opportunities to share their thoughts and discuss different topics. Pupils listen to each other and often respond to what has been said. In a Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher used the device of 'hot seating' where one pupil took on the role of a character and answered questions from other pupils from that viewpoint. The maturity of the questions (and the answers!) showed the high standards in speaking and listening being achieved.

69. Standards are particularly high in reading. Reading has always been stronger than writing, but now skills are being taught in a more structured way in Years 1 and 2 and there are higher expectations generally, which has meant that achievement is even better. Year 2 pupils read confidently and with interest. They enjoy books and are happy to talk about what they are reading. Year 6 pupils read a range of different texts and respond to their reading with a good understanding. The library has been made more attractive and pupils use it much more than they used to do.
70. Standards in writing were low and there was a reluctance to write, especially amongst boys. A range of strategies, particularly those aimed at encouraging boys, have been put in place and the results at the end of this year show, even at this early stage, how effective they have been in raising achievement. Year 2 pupils write independently, often quite long pieces of writing. They use interesting vocabulary and use their developing knowledge of sounds to help them spell the words they need. Year 6 pupils write in a range of formats, such as narratives, letters, newspaper reports and poetry. They often use quite complex sentence structures and are beginning to be very adventurous in their use of words.
71. Spelling and handwriting, although adequate, are not as good as the actual content of the writing. The school has begun to address some of the issues, such as spelling and presentation, highlighted in the last inspection, but has, rightly and effectively, concentrated on ensuring that pupils are confident in writing and this has paid off in terms of the higher achievement. Now is the time to look at the basic skills and ensure that they are developing in a structured way through the school, and in so doing continue the good work that is being started so well in the Year 1/2 class.
72. Teaching and learning are good overall, and can sometimes be very good. Teachers use different approaches to interest and stimulate pupils. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson pupils were asked to write letters to an Agony Aunt from the points of view of different characters in a book. This captured their imagination and they worked creatively and achieved well. The Year 1/2 teacher made effective use of drama to help pupils develop their ideas and vocabulary in preparation for a story writing task. They entered into this with enthusiasm and the next day they were keen to get started on their stories. Assessment and tracking systems enable teachers to identify pupils in danger of underachieving and to provide support. Good use is made of other adults, such as parents, to help in this. Those who volunteer, for example to listen to reading, make a valuable contribution to the learning. Other resources are used well, but not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in English. For example, older pupils often 'publish' their own stories and make books for others to read, but rarely is ICT used in this process. Neither has ICT been fully exploited in the efforts to interest boys in writing.
73. Leadership and management of the subject were unsatisfactory. They are now good and have been a major factor in the raising of achievement. The new subject leader took on the role at the beginning of this year and was determined to raise standards. Targets were set, teaching and learning improved through monitoring and support and pupils were involved more in their own learning through positive marking. As a result, achievement has been raised and standards are much higher.

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

74. Skills in speaking and listening are well used across the curriculum and help pupils to achieve well. For example, in religious education pupils are given the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Writing is used in many subjects to help pupils record their findings, for example in science and geography. More confident writing skills have meant that pupils can put their ideas down on paper more readily; for example they write letters and descriptions in history.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a very good improvement in standards and achievement since the last inspection
- Good teaching and assessment have led to the improvement
- There is an effective focus on problem solving
- Pupils' positive attitudes and confident approach to the subject have a positive impact on their learning
- Marking does not always inform pupils of how they can improve

## Commentary

75. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and pupils' achievement is good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when the standards were deemed to be unsatisfactory. In 2004, standards were well below the national average and over the last three years standards in mathematics were below average. The present significant improvement is the result of a high level of support from the local education authority advisory services to develop the competence of teachers and their ability to develop the subject. The subject leader attended training sessions and as a result policies and guidance have been redrafted and a higher focus given to using investigation and problem solving as a learning strategy. The numeracy strategy is securely in place and pupils work hard in these sessions.
76. The school has worked very hard to raise standards in mathematics. The time given to developing pupils' mental calculation at the start of lessons is used effectively and challenges pupils to think for themselves. This was well demonstrated in a Year 1/2 lesson when pupils responded with much enthusiasm to the Full Circle number game involving speedy calculation of the four rules of number. In another lesson, Year 3/4 pupils used their knowledge of fractions to mentally calculate fractions of numbers.
77. Teaching is good overall with some excellent teaching. This represents very good improvement from the previous inspection. In an outstanding lesson in Year 3/4, the pupils were very highly challenged to develop an understanding of the equivalence of fractions. Excellent relationships, appropriate praise, the determined attitudes of the pupils and the teacher's enthusiasm resulted in the very good achievement of the pupils. Lessons are thoroughly prepared to meet the range of ability within each class. Pupils work hard in mathematics lessons, because the teachers successfully promote good learning habits and an enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils enjoy working together and they readily support each other. In a good Year 5/6 lesson, pupils worked together to solve number problems. A strength of this lesson was also in the appropriate use of calculators. This enabled pupils to solve word problems using very high numbers. The learning focus was to find appropriate ways to solve problems and the use of calculators ensured lengthy written calculation did not inhibit the intended learning
78. Progress in assessment has been made with the introduction of tracking systems and target setting. Pupils are aware of their targets and when they have been achieved. Improved monitoring has included analysis of the results of national tests and the scrutiny of pupils' work is effectively used to plan future learning. A weakness remaining in assessment procedures is in the marking of pupils' work. Whilst teachers

do mark the work mainly by identifying whether it is correct or incorrect, they rarely write comments on pupils' work to indicate how they can improve their work.

79. The leadership and management of the subject are now good. The subject leader has had a significant impact on the quality of provision and in raising standards through her hard work and commitment. Teaching and learning are monitored through lesson observation and outcomes discussed with teachers. The subject leader has most competently addressed the many weaknesses identified in the previous report.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

80. While pupils do use their mathematics in other subjects such as science, design and technology and geography, these skills could be promoted further. Possible links with other subjects are not specifically planned. Neither is ICT used regularly to support the pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards
- There is effective emphasis on scientific investigation and a practical approach
- Pupils enjoy science, and are keen to learn and to carry out their own investigations

### **Commentary**

81. Standards in Year 2 and 6 are above average. Both standards and achievement have improved since the last inspection and the downward trend in standards in Year 6, which was not as marked as it was in English and mathematics but was still there, has been halted. Standards in Year 6 were average at the last inspection, but were low again last year. Currently standards are much better. All pupils in Year 6 have reached the expected level and a high percentage of pupils have attained a level higher than this. The challenge for the more able pupils, which was a weakness two years ago, has been addressed, as these results show. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
82. Achievement is good. Pupils gain good levels of knowledge and understanding, which develop as they go through the school. For example, Year 2 pupils can sort materials by different criteria, such as 'bendy' and 'stretchy'. Year 4 pupils know more about the properties of materials; they compare solids and liquids and recognise the changes that can take place in them. By Year 6, pupils have extended their knowledge of solids, liquids and gases and can describe, often in scientific terms, changes such as evaporation.
83. Pupils also develop an understanding of scientific investigation, so that by Year 6 pupils know in practical terms what makes a fair test and are able to carry out their own investigations to answer a question. They record their findings and draw conclusions from them. This was illustrated in a Year 5/6 lesson where pupils confidently and competently planned and carried out their own investigations into the

factors that affect the rate at which sugar dissolves. It is the quality of this aspect of science that has enabled more pupils to achieve at higher levels.

84. Pupils enjoy science. It was one of the things that older pupils mentioned when asked what they liked best about their school. They are keen to learn and interested in the topics they are introduced to. They are responsible and show initiative when carrying out investigations. They collaborate well with each other. The practical approach has a positive impact on boys' attitudes and achievement.
85. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is well planned to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum and there is a good emphasis now on scientific investigation. The quality of the teaching shows in pupils' work – the range of approaches and the support given for recording findings for example. In the one lesson seen, the teacher's enthusiasm was infectious and had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and their achievement during the lesson. Available resources are used well, but there are some gaps in resources that can inhibit the investigative approach that is developing. ICT is not used sufficiently to support teaching and learning in the subject.
86. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. Issues of assessment, challenge for more able pupils and opportunities for investigation have been addressed. Lessons are better planned and the curriculum now allows more able pupils to achieve well. The subject leader has effectively monitored some lessons and has usefully carried out an audit of resources. His role is still developing, but he is taking more responsibility for standards and quality than was the case two years ago.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils acquire adequate skills in ICT, but not enough use is made of ICT to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum
- Resources are good and are being developed further

### **Commentary**

87. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum. Pupils gain satisfactory ICT skills. For example, Year 2 pupils use computers for drafting text, creating pictures and finding information. Year 6 pupils work with graphics to model possibilities when planning a building and they are gaining confidence in using spreadsheets. However, these skills are not used sufficiently across the curriculum and many pupils are not sufficiently confident in their skills, as they have not had the opportunity to practise them.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the one lesson seen, the teaching effectively covered the skills of using graphs. Although the Year 3 and 4 pupils were a little confused at first and rather too much was being asked of them, by the end of the lesson most pupils had created different graphs from their own database, had saved them and had printed them out. The computer suite was used well to enable pupils to work independently and gain confidence.

89. There are some good examples of teachers using ICT effectively. For example, in music ICT is used well to develop composition skills and in a religious education lesson an interactive whiteboard was used very effectively to display a video. Some other avenues have been explored. For example, pupils have exchanged emails with pupils in a school in Japan and last year there was some work done on multi-media presentations. Overall however, teachers do not use the available ICT resources sufficiently to enhance teaching and learning. Not all teachers are confident in using ICT in their teaching and some resources, for example the interactive whiteboard, are new and there has not been adequate training for their use.
90. New leadership has ensured that the subject is adequately planned and an assessment system is now being introduced, but as yet there is no clear overview of how teachers are using ICT and what pupils' actual experiences are. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Resources are actually good, and are being added to as funds become available. For example, interactive whiteboards are being introduced into classrooms. There is a small, but easily accessible, computer suite and other computers around the school. Software is more of a problem and no one has carried out an audit of what is needed.



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

91. Some ICT is used in other subjects. Year 5 and 6 pupils have used a digital camera and have created graphs on a computer to record their findings when carrying out a survey of a local town in geography. Year 1 and 2 pupils have researched on the Internet for information relevant to their current topic of Africa. However, overall, pupils do not use ICT enough across the curriculum and opportunities are often lost. ICT is not planned into the curriculum and teachers are not supported in their planning for its use.

## **HUMANITIES**

Religious education is reported in full. History and geography were sampled.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards and achievement are more consistent through the school than they were at the last inspection
- There is particularly inspiring teaching in Years 3 to 6
- The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development

### **Commentary**

92. Pupils achieve well and standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2; in Year 6 they are above this. Year 2 pupils have learnt about aspects of Christianity, such as festivals and stories from the Bible. They have also gained knowledge and understanding of other religions through, for example, learning about things that are special to people of different faiths. The knowledge and understanding of Year 6 pupils are well developed. For example, they recognise the features of a Christian place of worship and compare it with a Jewish building. But more than this – they show a high level of understanding about the significance of aspects of religion. For example, whilst remembering visits they had made to places of worship, they explored their own thoughts and feelings about being in a special place. The maturity of their responses showed a high level of understanding about religious faith and its impact on people's lives.
93. Teaching and learning are now good in Years 1 and 2. The weaknesses in teaching highlighted in the last inspection have been addressed and the full curriculum is now taught. Teaching in Years 3 to 6, which is taken by the subject leader, is particularly inspired. In the lesson seen the teaching was outstanding. It was characterised by an exciting approach: a virtual tour of places of worship visited; challenging questions that made pupils think; lively and imaginative delivery that captured pupils' attention; and excellent use of resources.
94. The curriculum is well planned and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Good use is made of available resources, for example visits, artefacts and

pictures. There are good links with the faith community, which enhance pupils' understanding. The subject is sensitively approached and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, as they learn about other people and have the opportunity to talk about things that are important to them. The quality of the relationships in the school helps with the teaching of the subject, as pupils are confident enough to discuss their own feelings and ideas, knowing they will be listened to and their contributions will be valued.

## History and geography

95. There was insufficient opportunity during the inspection to gather enough evidence to make a judgement on standards, teaching and overall provision in these subjects. However, scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and teachers' planning indicates that an adequate curriculum is in place and pupils are reaching the standards expected by the National Curriculum. In both subjects, language and literacy skills are used well, but ICT skills are not fully exploited.
96. In **history**, Year 6 pupils have looked closely at Victorian life and have compared the lives of children then with their own lives. They have used a range of sources, such as books and pictures, to gain information for their studies. When they were investigating changes in their own locality, they used census data very effectively. Visits, for example to the Roman Army Museum, are used very well and enhance pupils' learning.
97. In **geography**, Year 2 pupils have gained an awareness of places beyond their own locality. Currently they are learning about life in Africa and they have researched this and had access to a wide range of resources. Year 6 pupils have covered a number of topics, such as water and world climates. They have studied a locality and carried out a range of field studies, such as a shopping survey, to help their investigation.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music is reported in full. Art and design, design and technology and physical education were sampled.

### Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The support of a specialist music teacher is very effective
- The very good resource provision enhances the subject
- Pupils' performance is of a good quality
- Pupils enjoy music and participate enthusiastically

### Commentary

98. Standards in music are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good improvement from the average standards identified in the last inspection. The pupils achieve well in music because of the musical talent of the visiting specialist teacher and the extensive range of musical instruments available in the school. Each class in the school benefits from a weekly lesson from the visiting specialist. However, teachers miss opportunities to develop their own skills to teach music, because they rarely have the opportunity to either observe or participate in the lessons.

99. Teaching and learning are very good. Key features of the teaching are the well-planned lessons, the variety of activities within the lesson and the lively pace. Pupils are fully engaged and enjoy these lessons.
100. They have many very worthwhile opportunities to develop their skill in playing tuned and untuned instruments. During the inspection, the younger pupils enjoyed making sounds on different types of drums and linking the sounds to the story. Year 5/6 pupils practised and improved their performance as they all contributed to a performance using chime bars and glockenspiels to experiment and improvise a 12-bar blues chord pattern. Results were of a high standard.
101. Good use is made of ICT to support learning, through the use of the Cumbrian website and mainly to develop instrumental skills. The school has a high focus on music; activities include participation in the Keswick Jazz Festival and singing at local community events. Music groups visit the school, including a South American group.

### **Art and design**

102. No lessons were observed in art and design; it is therefore not possible to make an overall judgment on standards and teaching. However, through a discussion with the subject leader and a review of work on display, indications are that standards are at the expected levels. To raise standards in art and design in Years 5/6 in response to the previous inspection the school was given support from an advanced skills teacher. Also, a new scheme of work was introduced which focused on a skills approach. The subject leader was involved in supporting the Year 5/6 teacher in lesson planning and introducing sketch books. This has resulted in improving standards in Years 5 and 6. Future plans for development include another artist in residence, focus on the outdoors and more use of ICT in the art and design curriculum. However, not enough use is made of displays to value pupils' work.

### **Design and technology**

103. To improve standards in design and technology, which were deemed to be below average at the previous inspection, a range of strategies was introduced. With the support of a local education authority teacher, an action plan was drafted to both raise the profile of the subject and raise staff awareness of the expected standards. Design and technology is now taught in blocks rather than short weekly lessons and this has resulted in more in-depth work. Emphasis is now given to the design process with less emphasis on making. Pupils have increased their confidence in this area and have developed skills to constructively evaluate their own work. Resources have improved although they remain just satisfactory. The school has addressed all the issues raised in the previous report.

### **Physical education**

104. No lessons were observed in physical education; it is therefore not possible to make a judgement on teaching or standards. Curriculum plans show that the school is covering the required elements. A good range of sporting activities, including after-school clubs, contributes to the pupils' skills and interest in sport. Older pupils benefit from opportunities for adventurous outdoor activities on a residential visit.

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

105. No lessons in personal, social and health education were seen, but discussions were held with the subject leader and planning files were inspected. The subject is well planned, with a two-year rolling programme for each class. This gives pupils good opportunities to consider environmental issues, the problems of drugs and substance abuse and many aspects of healthy living and growing up. Circle time – a form of structured class discussion – is used to provide pupils with opportunities to discuss openly and without embarrassment subjects ranging from emotions to bullying. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the value of circle time lessons. Considerable thought has been given to developing cross-curricular links between the subject and religious education, geography, English and science.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
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	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*