

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **LANERCOST CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Brampton

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112254

Headteacher: Mrs A Clarricoats

Lead inspector: Mrs L J Traves

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 267175

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 Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 47

School address: Lanercost  
Brampton  
Cumbria

Postcode: CA8 2HL

Telephone number: 01697 72702

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Willey

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lanercost is a small village school near the town of Brampton in Cumbria. There are currently 47 pupils on roll and all are white and English speaking. Most pupils travel from nearby villages and hamlets and from the town of Brampton; few live in close proximity to the school. Children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and when they enter school their attainments are also wide ranging, but most have skills that are as expected for their age. A below average number have free school meals (around 3 per cent) and an average number have special educational needs (20 per cent); these are related to learning and physical difficulties. Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught by the headteacher and a part-time member of staff for different parts of the week. The Year 3 to Year 6 pupils are also taught together. The headteacher is new since the time of the last inspection and has been in post for 3 years. A new full-time teacher, a part-time teacher and a classroom assistant took up their posts in September and had been in school for 3 weeks at the time of the inspection. This represents 3 out of 5 staff. The school has achieved the 'Active Mark' and 'Healthy Schools' awards.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24039	Mrs L J Traves	Lead inspector	Mathematics English Art and design Music Physical education Modern foreign language The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
9039	Mr B Eyre	Lay inspector	
4295	Mr D Dodds	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Religious education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Lanercost is a good school with some very strong features.** It is a lively, vibrant place to learn and children flourish in its caring atmosphere. Standards are good overall and children do particularly well in information and communication technology (ICT.) Good teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities learn well and achieve their potential. The school is well led and managed, with the headteacher providing very strong and effective leadership. It gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher leads the school very well, with good support from governors and staff;
- All pupils achieve well in response to good teaching; and those with special educational needs are particularly well supported;
- Pupils reach high standards in ICT;
- An excellent range of learning experiences enrich the curriculum;
- Links with other schools, which are outstanding; greatly enhance teaching and learning;
- Pupils develop as mature, well rounded individuals, who respect themselves and care for others;
- The roles of the newly appointed subject co-ordinators need further development;
- More consistent use could be made of marking to share targets for future learning with pupils.

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. All the issues identified last time have been dealt with very effectively. For example, teachers' planning is now very good and ensures pupils are challenged at the appropriate level. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are now well provided for and the governing body plays a much more effective part in running the school. The quality of teaching and standards have also improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A*	A	A*	A*
mathematics	E	C	A*	A
science	A	A	A	A

*Key: A\* - in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally; 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.*

**Pupils achieve well.** Care needs to be taken in comparing test results because the small numbers of pupils in each year group can mean that one pupil can represent as much as 33 per cent. Results in English and mathematics in 2003 for Year 6 pupils were in the top 5 per cent in the country and well above average in science, when compared to schools nationally. The school also did well in relation to those in similar circumstances. Unvalidated results for 2004 show a comparable picture, with the pleasing upturn in mathematics standards being maintained. Results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 have risen from below average in



2002 to being in the top 5 per cent in the country in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics in 2003. The results of the 2004 tests for 7-year-olds show improvements have been maintained. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average at the ages 7 and 11. By the end of the reception year, pupils have made good progress in all areas of learning and have either met or exceeded the expected goals for children of this age. They achieve very well in personal and social development. Standards are better than in most schools in ICT, history, geography, religious education and aspects of physical education. Pupils with special educational needs do well for their capabilities.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Pupils develop as well rounded, thoughtful individuals. They wholeheartedly enjoy school and all it offers. They behave very well and get on extremely well with each other; older pupils take good care of their younger schoolmates. Attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good.** The new staff have settled in very well. Some very good teaching was observed, where older children were challenged to the limit and an excellent literacy lesson enabled the younger pupils to learn at a cracking pace. ICT is taught very effectively and pupils are provided with many opportunities to use computers to support work in most subjects. Although children's work is regularly marked and there are some high quality examples of marking being used to share the next learning steps with them, this is not consistent across subjects and classes. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective support they receive. Teaching assistants have a strong impact on pupils' learning, particularly in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is varied and interesting; it is thoughtfully planned to provide well for pupils of all abilities in the mixed age classes. Opportunities provided to enrich pupils' learning, for example through visits to places of interest and through the extremely productive links made with other local schools, are excellent. Staff know the pupils very well and provide a high standard of care for them.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher's very strong and purposeful leadership is driving the school forward. Governors are effectively involved in setting the direction and checking on how well it is doing. The new staff have already made a positive start in getting to grips with their areas of responsibility. However, their leadership and management roles need to be further developed to enable them to effectively share the workload with the headteacher. All statutory requirements are met.

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

The parents think very highly of the school. They have great confidence in the leadership and management and in the teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and feel that they are valued.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the consistency of marking to ensure that the next learning steps for pupils are identified and shared with them more frequently;
- Develop the roles of the newly appointed subject co-ordinators to enable them to effectively share the workload of the headteacher, particularly in checking on teaching and learning.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve well. They reach above average standards in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their abilities and there are no differences in achievement between girls and boys.

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

- Achievement and standards have improved since the last inspection;
- Particularly high standards are achieved in ICT;
- The identification and support of pupils with special educational needs is very good;
- Foundation Stage pupils make very good progress in their personal and social development.

#### **Commentary**

1. Lanercost is a small school and, consequently, the number of pupils taking the national tests at the ages of 7 and 11 each year is small. Sometimes, results are based on the attainment of only two or three children. This can skew the results and make comparisons unreliable; therefore the tables of results are not included here. Sometimes, the percentage of pupils within a year group, or the number of children who have joined other than at the normal starting time also has an impact. However, when taken over a number of years, the patterns of scores that emerge can give some indication of standards, even with such small numbers. Up to 2003, the trend has been for results in reading, writing and mathematics to be average to below at Key Stage 1. The trend in English, and science at Key Stage 2 has been well above average. However, in mathematics, the picture has not been as strong, with results being well below average to average. Key Stage 2 pupils have, until recently, achieved much higher test scores than their Key Stage 1 results indicated they would, suggesting that the best progress has been made in the junior years.
2. In 2003, there was an upturn in results at Key Stage 1. Results were well above average in writing and mathematics and in the top 5 per cent in the country, when compared to all schools. Pupils of all abilities did well. This was a vast improvement on the previous year's results, which had been below average across the board. In relation to schools, in similar circumstances, the picture was almost as rosy, with results being in the top 5 per cent in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. The teacher assessments in science were also impressive, with the entire small group of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3). The as yet unvalidated test results for 2004 indicate that this upturn has been sustained. Inspection evidence shows that standards at Key Stage 1 are now above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils build well on their previous learning.
3. At Key Stage 2, results in English and science have remained well above average over several years when compared with schools nationally and have often been well above

average when compared to those in similar circumstances. Results in mathematics were well below average in two consecutive years and then reached the average in 2002. However, mathematics results improved significantly in 2003 and were in the top 5 per cent in the country. Over half the pupils achieved the higher level (Level 5.) This improvement has been sustained in 2004. Inspection findings indicate that standards at Key Stage 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science, which is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.

4. Improvements have been brought about by better planning, which meets the needs of all pupils much more effectively, better systems for tracking pupils' progress and identifying those who need extra support or challenge and a close analysis of test results to highlight any gaps in teaching and learning. In addition, staff have been trained in 'mathematics recovery techniques' and in 'reading intervention' methods, both of which have had an impact on progress across the board.
5. Pupils get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. The vast majority are already on course to either meet or exceed the expected levels (the Early Learning Goals) by the end of the year and all make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development because of the high emphasis placed on this area and the very good examples set by the staff and older pupils. They benefit from the balance achieved between working as a discrete group and working alongside the Year 1 and 2 pupils.
6. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in class, small groups and individually. Consequently, they make at least good progress in relation to their abilities. Their needs are assessed accurately and work is effectively adapted or supported to enable them to achieve success, whilst still being challenged. Individual education plans set clear targets which support and guide teachers' planning very well. Boys and girls achieve as well as each other and those with particular gifts or talents achieve well because the school ensures individual needs are met.
7. By Year 6, pupils have developed very good skills in ICT. They develop their word processing and desktop publishing skills particularly well because of the extremely rich range of opportunities provided for them across the curriculum. In the majority of other subjects where standards could be assessed, pupils achieve better than expected, often as a result of the many hands on, practical learning experiences on offer to them. In science, for example, good opportunities are provided throughout the school for pupils to explore and investigate.

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

The pupils' attitudes, behaviour, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils respond positively to high expectations and exciting learning experiences;
- Behaviour management emphasises the importance of self-control;
- Matters relating to belief, cultural diversity and moral standards are embedded in the life of the school.

## **Commentary**

8. The school values its pupils highly and as a result, they respond by valuing others. Throughout the school day, there are many examples of older pupils helping their younger schoolmates and carrying out tasks for the benefit of the school community. Pupils work and play well together and behave very well in response to the high expectations staff have of them, and also because of the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. There were no instances of bullying or harassment during the inspection and the pupils themselves confirm that any such instances are rare and swiftly dealt with. It is a testament to the pupils that they have taken the appointment of the three new staff in their stride and learning has not been disrupted. They have welcomed them wholeheartedly as they do visitors to the school.

9. Pupils respond very well to the rich range of exciting experiences provided for them. They are keen to take part in all that the school has to offer and throw themselves into most activities with enthusiasm. This was very evident in the French lesson seen in the Key Stage 2 class, which is a very new venture. Pupils were already responding to questions, counting and singing songs in French, with few inhibitions.
10. Assembly themes, a rich variety of outings and classroom discussions all combine to promote a very good understanding of right from wrong and why people from different cultures or beliefs should have their traditions respected. They recall and record very perceptive and lasting impressions of their visits to holy places and show empathy with others, for example, those who are disabled. Pupils are fully prepared for the challenges they will meet when they enter the wider world.

## Attendance

11. Attendance and punctuality are good, overall. Last year, the unavoidable absence of one pupil skewed the figures. The school intervenes promptly when occasional problems arise; consequently the important life skill of reliability is promoted well.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

12. There have been no exclusions in the current year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is exciting and imaginative; it is enriched through the exceptionally strong links forged with other schools and the very good relationships with parents and the community. Staff help pupils to become mature, well rounded individuals.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good, overall. Some very challenging and imaginative teaching was seen in both classes, which is accelerating children's learning very well indeed. Teaching has improved since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The best teaching has very good pace and challenge, and it inspires the pupils;
- Lessons are thoroughly planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the mixed age classes;
- Support staff are used very well to support learning;
- Staff expect high standards of behaviour and involvement in lessons;

- Learning is practically based and enriched through very effective use of visits and visitors;
- Teachers' marking does not always pinpoint the next learning steps for pupils.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	4	9	2	0	0	0

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

13. At the time of the inspection, two out of three teachers and one classroom assistant were new to the school and had only been in post 3 weeks. A very strong start had been made on building relationships and getting to know the pupils' academic and personal achievements. Teaching judgements are based on a thorough scrutiny of pupils' work from last year, as well as the lessons seen.
14. The vast majority of teaching observed was good or better. The majority of very good teaching was seen in the Key Stage 2 class. However, differences between teaching in the two classes are not great. They are attributable, in part, to the particular circumstances and time of year, with reception pupils still being inducted and new staff 'bedding in'. In all lessons, staff have high expectations of work rate and behaviour and pupils rise to the challenge.
15. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because individual education plans set clear targets for them. All staff are sensitive in their support of these pupils, ensuring a good balance between assistance when it is needed and encouragement for them to try things out for themselves. As a result, they are confident learners who take pride in their achievements.
16. There are several key features that characterise the good or better teaching:
  - learning objectives are precisely matched to the different ages and abilities within the class and shared very effectively with the pupils in a way they can understand. As a result, they know exactly what is expected of them and remain focused on the tasks. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 literacy lesson, the teacher used two characters, 'Wilt' and 'Walt' to set the objectives in an interesting way for the two different groups. Pupils had no trouble recalling what the characters had asked them to do. In the very best lessons, the objectives are returned to at the end and the children are closely involved in checking on whether they have achieved them;
  - learning is conducted at a cracking pace, which keeps every child on their toes and stretches them to the limit. This was seen in a mathematics lesson in the Key Stage 2 class, where the quick fire mental arithmetic questions left pupils breathless and fully 'warmed up' for what was to come;
  - teaching assistants have key roles to play, both in supporting those who need extra help, or in working with groups to allow the teacher to challenge the more able or provide intensive teaching for those who find learning difficult. This has a significant impact on the learning;
  - teachers plan the majority of lessons to include hands on practical tasks, which pupils report they enjoy. For example, a science lesson in the Key Stage 2 class



included a very good 'open-ended' investigation into the properties of different materials, which stimulated much discussion and resulted in sensible hypotheses being formed. Throughout the school, there are many examples of good quality work being generated in response to visits and visitors.

17. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Lessons are effectively planned in accordance with the Early Learning Goals (the curriculum for children of this age) to ensure a wide range of exciting, practical experiences. The arrangements which enable these children to be taught for part of each lesson with the Year 1 and 2 pupils and then carry on learning on their own dedicated indoor and outdoor space is effective, particularly at this time of year. It has ensured that the children have settled very easily into their environment and enables their individual needs to be appropriately met by both the teachers and the highly skilled teaching assistant. Working alongside the older children has really helped the new ones learn the routines. The arrangements where the headteacher and part-time teacher share the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class works well because staff plan and evaluate work together and have consistent expectations of the pupils.

## **ASSESSMENT**

18. There are good procedures in place for tracking pupils' progress throughout the school, which clearly indicate how well they are doing in relation to their previous achievements. This allows staff to identify those who need support or an extra challenge and thus maximise learning. It also enables the school to make accurate predictions about how well pupils should achieve in the future. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and effective. Assessment is used very effectively in lessons, for example, to identify what pupils already know and how fast they are assimilating new concepts, to adapt work accordingly and challenge pupils of all abilities. However, although work is regularly marked and there are some examples of very effective marking, this is not yet a consistent picture. The best marking clearly identifies the pupil's strengths and shares targets for future learning. Other examples show a tick, with a positive comment, but little indication of how the child can improve or what the next learning steps should be. The school is currently developing its procedures to ensure that pupils are more actively and regularly involved in assessing and evaluating their own learning.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is very good. It is enriched by an outstanding range of learning experiences. All statutory requirements are met. Resources are good and accommodation is adequate.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is outstanding enrichment through visits and visitors;
- Very good use is made of connections with other schools and organisations;
- There are very effective links between ICT and other subjects;
- There is a strong commitment to an investigative and problem solving approach.

## **Commentary**

19. The curriculum is extended and enriched to very good effect. The school makes excellent use of people, places and events to provide memorable experiences that inspire pupils and result in the production of high quality work in many areas. Planning skilfully makes links between subjects, which helps pupils to develop their skills and

employ their talents in many different contexts. The school is very adept at providing opportunities for pupils to learn from practical, first hand experiences and committed to an approach that fosters their independence as learners and their 'thinking' skills. This approach captures and sustains pupils' interest and allows them to use new skills in real situations. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils wrote at length and with feeling, about the daily life of a monk, after taking on this role for a day at Carlisle Cathedral.

20. The high standards achieved in ICT are due, in no small measure, to the numerous opportunities that are provided in almost all subjects for pupils to use computers. For example, they record work in a wide variety of ways and retrieve information from the Internet. Digital photography is used extensively and effectively to enhance work and capture experiences for future reference.
21. The school acknowledges its relatively remote situation and makes strenuous efforts to ensure that the children develop a clear understanding of life in the wider world and in particular, in multicultural Britain today. For example, pupils from both key stages visit a Buddhist temple and a synagogue, and their knowledge and understanding of daily life, ritual and celebration is developed well through religious education. The school also undertakes exciting multicultural projects with other schools that include Indian dancing, Indonesian gamelan music and the creation of silhouette puppetry. Links with other schools also provide a wealth of opportunities for the children to experience learning in larger group situations and in a range of different venues, including the local high school.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for. Their needs are clearly defined, appropriate targets are set within each individual education programme and progress is meticulously monitored. The school enlists the help of parents successfully and good use is made of external expertise. These pupils receive very good support in lessons from all staff. Individual and small group sessions and 'recovery' programmes are very well planned and taught. Those with particular gifts or talents are also provided for well, for example through more complex work or opportunities to develop their particular talents in different contexts.
23. The school is adequately staffed and deploys both teachers and teaching assistants to good effect. Teachers and support staff are experienced and bring areas of good expertise and great enthusiasm to school. The resources for the curriculum are good. Although the accommodation is limited, the school has worked very hard to overcome the limitations. As a result of striving for the best possible resources for its children, these limitations do not have a negative impact on learning. The outdoor area is a particularly strong feature as it packs in a dedicated reception covered area, a garden, an adventure playground and a marked hard surface area, which add greatly to the quality of both work and play.

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

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are high standards of pastoral care, support and guidance which ensure personal development is very good;
- A secure, trusting environment is created in which children flourish;
- Pupils views are sought, highly valued and acted upon.

### **Commentary**

24. The school provides a high standard of care for its pupils. Staff know the pupils very well and in turn, pupils know that there is always someone they can trust and turn to if

they have a problem. The high standards of care and support are achieved because all staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities, for example, in ensuring effective child protection arrangements, and everyone's contribution is highly valued. The headteacher ensures that staff are effectively trained and outside agencies are utilised, as necessary, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all. The governing body also provides effective support in this area, for example, through ensuring risk assessments are carried out. All statutory care arrangements are in place.

25. Academic support and guidance is good and there are thorough assessment procedures in place, which underpin learning well. Pastoral support is very effective. For example, there are very good arrangements to ensure that pupils new to the school adjust well to their new surroundings. Very carefully considered arrangements are also in place to ensure that the children entering the reception class settle quickly.
26. When pupils become upset or find learning difficult, they are supported with great sensitivity. Adults and fellow pupils are always to hand to provide guidance or comfort. Behaviour is managed in a consistent manner; it works well because the pupils feel that they are treated fairly and that they will receive help when problems occur. Pupils are very keen on the rewards they can obtain for good work, behaviour or citizenship, but they also work hard and behave well because of the strong relationships and respect they have for the adults who work with them.
27. Consultation arrangements ensure pupils' views are known and acted upon. The pupils elect a school council every year, which gives them a strong 'voice'. The pupils are extremely proud of their school and are able to give numerous examples to confirm how their opinions and ideas have resulted in improvements. For example, the council have made some significant contributions through being part of the selection process for the new staff and helping to reorganise lunchtime arrangements and devise healthy menus. They told the inspectors that they would welcome more opportunities to use the well stocked library for independent study, whilst at the same time being able to explain its value as a small group tutor room, as space is limited.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

The school has very good links with parents and the local community. It has excellent links with other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a comprehensive range of information for parents who in turn support the school very well;
- Excellent links with other schools have a very strong impact on teaching and learning;
- Very good use is made of the community to promote concepts of citizenship;
- A few parents feel that they are not given adequate information; this is not a justified complaint.

## **COMMENTARY**

28. Parents like the school very much and the vast majority value the efforts it makes to inform them about routines and how their child is progressing. They are provided with topic information at regular intervals so they know how they can help their child to learn.

The prospectus, regular newsletters, telephone messages and arrangements for formal and informal discussions link with very good annual reports to provide a comprehensive range of information.

29. An extensive range of visits and visitors are used extremely well to broaden perceptions of the wider world and to develop special talents or academic potential. A host of local artists and craftspeople visit the school to share their expertise and add to the rich range of first hand learning experiences on offer. Children have had very good opportunities, for example, to try their hand at willow weaving, woodcarving and lace making. The strong links with nearby Lanercost Priory add an extra dimension to learning and it provides a stunning historic location for work in many areas of the curriculum. The school has excellent links with other local schools and colleges, which ensure that expertise and resources are shared to the great benefit of all pupils and staff.
30. Parents and other supporters help in the classrooms and on outings. A wide range of social and fund raising events raises money which is used effectively to enhance the learning environment and to subsidise transport costs. These enable the pupils to travel to major towns and cities, for example to Blackpool to visit a Synagogue, and to Newcastle upon Tyne to enjoy a Christmastide event.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very strong and effective. Management is good and set to improve as the new staff take on greater responsibility for checking on the work in their areas. Governance of the school is good. It has improved since the last inspection, with governors playing a greater part in directing the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very effective leadership of the headteacher is moving the school forward;
- There is good teamwork between the headteacher and governing body;
- New staff have been inducted very well into the life and work of the school;
- The school leadership is outward looking and draws in expertise to enhance its work;
- The leadership and management roles of the newly appointed subject co-ordinators need further development.

### **Commentary**

31. The very strong and effective leadership of the headteacher is the driving force for school improvement. She has successfully managed to push development forward and bring about improvement since her appointment three years ago, through a significant period of staff change. This is largely because of her skill, dedication and sheer hard work. Much of the work done in improving standards and addressing the key issues identified at the last inspection has been carried out by the headteacher herself. However, she has been well supported in this by the increasingly active governing body, who have demonstrated their willingness to share the responsibility of managing the school. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were unanimous in their praise of her

leadership and were fully supportive of her vision for the school. Astute appointments have recently been made and these are already having an impact.

32. Governors now have a good committee structure, which has sharpened their decision making process. They are involved in key aspects of the school's work, such as ensuring adequate staffing arrangements, improving the buildings and outdoor areas and ensuring that school meals are nutritious and of good quality. They have a good working knowledge of the strengths and areas for development as a result of their own monitoring visits, the questions they ask and the high quality information provided by the headteacher. A significant achievement has been good use of funds to increase the time available to the headteacher to allow her to carry out her role in checking on the work of the school more effectively. The outdoor area, in which every available inch of space is utilised to enrich learning and play, is another testament to the governors' good housekeeping.
33. A strong feature of the leadership and management of the school is the way in which the headteacher makes extremely effective use of all available expertise and resources to help bring improvements about. For example, excellent use is made of the links with other schools in the area, not only to enhance the curriculum, but also to enlist management support and share resources, such as ICT technical support and Foundation Stage resources. This also helps the school get best value for the money it spends, as costs for projects are often shared. Expertise from the local education authority is also drawn in, or accessed through training. This has had a significant impact, for example, in supporting children with learning difficulties in English and mathematics and in improving provision for reception age pupils.
34. Finances are well managed through governors accessing the expertise of an experienced bursar. This not only ensures that the day-to-day systems are managed with maximum efficiency, allowing the headteacher to get on with teaching and other tasks, but also provides high quality budget information on which governors can reliably make their spending decisions.
35. Other staff with management responsibilities are very new to the school and to their roles. The headteacher has ensured that good induction procedures have been implemented to best effect, so that the quality of education has not been disrupted. She is now working alongside staff to ensure they have a good working knowledge of their subject areas and can take an increasing share of the workload of managing the school and evaluating its work. A good start has been made, but the school has identified the need for staff to further develop their roles, in order to be fully effective as soon as possible, for example, through improving their skills in monitoring teaching and learning.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	179,927	Balance from previous year	6,722
Total expenditure	182,527	Balance carried forward to the next	4,122

Expenditure per pupil	4,452
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## 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 **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction procedures get pupils off to a strong start;
- Pupils achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development;
- Younger pupils benefit from the good examples that the older pupils set and the care that they take of them;
- A rich range of learning experiences is provided, both in the classroom and outside.

#### Commentary

36. When children join the reception class, most have attended a pre-school setting. Overall, their skills and abilities are as you would expect for their age, although this varies from child to child and year to year. At the time of the inspection, the 6 children were in their third week of attending part-time, as part of the very effective induction procedures the school employs. They are already very happy and settled in their surroundings and access activities with enthusiasm. Teaching and learning are good. Children join with the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils for parts of most lessons and then work as a group with either the experienced teaching assistant or the teacher. This currently meets their needs well. Work is effectively planned in line with Early Learning Goals set out for children of this age and pupils' development is thoroughly monitored. Activities outside the classroom effectively mirror and extend those inside.
37. Children in reception are already on course to exceed the expected goals in their **personal, social and emotional development**. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on this area from the outset. Staff ensure that the children are visited at home and in their pre-school settings and visit the school on several occasions before they start. Induction is carefully managed, so that children are well supported in making the transition and any individual needs are met. As a result, they are becoming confident learners who work and play well with each other and relate well to the older children. They concentrate well on activities and show pride in their achievements.
38. Pupils achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**. The children listen with interest to the stories that staff read to them and are attentive; for example, when watching a video about Barnaby Bear. The majority engage readily in conversation with adults and with other children. Staff take every opportunity to develop pupils' spoken language skills by posing questions and encouraging them to explain their ideas, make choices and take part in role play, such as building a pirate ship outside. Good opportunities are provided for them to develop early reading and writing skills and most are confidently mark making. Work from last year's group indicates that children make good progress towards independent writing by the start of Year 1. Most pupils reach the goals set and some exceed these.

39. Pupils' achievement in **mathematical development** is good. Work from last year's group indicates that all pupils achieve the goals set and a good percentage exceed these. Many practical, hands on activities are provided, such as sorting and classifying objects and recognising shapes. Good opportunities are taken to extend learning, as for example, when children identify 'longer' and shorter' as they roll clay to make legs and trunks for model elephants. Children are encouraged to use their counting skills in many different ways throughout the day, and songs and rhymes are used to reinforce understanding.
40. Pupils achieve well in their **knowledge and understanding of the world** and most exceed the expected goals because of the wealth of opportunities offered to them. For example, they learn about life in their own local area in times past and present, through visits to Hadrian's Wall, Lanercost Priory and Carlisle Cathedral. Practical activities such as baking and regular opportunities to explore sand and water extend their experiences even further. They learn about their own and other cultures through studying homes here and in other parts of the world and avidly follow the adventures of Barnaby Bear as he goes on his travels. During the inspection, children and parents had put a great deal of effort into creating 'treasure boxes' containing objects that were special to them. They glowed with pride as they shared these with others. Opportunities to use computers are readily available.
41. Good opportunities for **creative development** are provided. Children are encouraged to use a wide range of tools and media in projects such as constructing a method of transport for a small teddy or designing clay tiles. Imaginations are fired through role play, both indoors and out, when, for example, children act out a voyage on a pirate ship with very skilled support from the teaching assistant. This develops their language skills effectively as they learn to negotiate with others and take on characters. The regular visits to Lanercost Priory for special assemblies and services develop their confidence in performing to others.
42. In **physical development**, children achieve well. They benefit greatly from the weekly visits they make to the local high school to use the physical education facilities. They cope very well in the large space and with working, for a time, with Year 1 and 2 pupils, who provide good models for them to follow. Already these children listen attentively and follow instructions carefully, being mindful of the need to use space sensibly. They are able, for example, to walk carefully, whilst balancing objects on their heads, concentrating very well and showing good levels of control. Daily opportunities are carefully planned for pupils to use the well designed outdoor play areas, including the 'adventure playground' for climbing, and a range of wheeled toys. They also have good access to a good range of resources such as construction kits, beads for threading and various tools and activities to develop their manipulative skills.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Provision in English is **very good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses.**

- Standards have improved and pupils achieve well;
- Lesson planning is good and ensures the needs of different ages and abilities are catered for;
- Very good use is made of guided group reading;
- Children write for a wide range of purposes, across the curriculum;
- Marking is not always used effectively to set the next learning steps for pupils.

## COMMENTARY

43. The very small numbers of pupils taking the national tests each year make it difficult to draw reliable conclusions from the results. Results in the national tests for 7-year-olds in the last few years have fluctuated in reading and writing, from below average to average and back again. However, in 2003, there was a significant upturn in both reading and writing, with results being in the top 5 per cent in the country in reading and well above average in writing. When compared to similar schools, the results are equally impressive. The unvalidated test results for 2004 show that this upturn has been maintained. Results in the tests for 11-year-olds have been significantly stronger, and have risen faster than those nationally. In 2003, they were in the top 5 per cent in the country when compared to all schools and those in similar circumstances. In 2004, this picture has been maintained, with half the class achieving the higher level (Level 5) in the tests. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above average at the end of both key stages, with pupils achieving well.
44. Over a number of years, pupils have achieved much better results at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. However, there are strong signs that this gap between achievement in the infant and junior years is closing. The school has worked hard to bring about improvements through ensuring that children build more rapidly on their skills in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is used more effectively to identify those pupils with difficulties and their progress is improved through the use of 'reading intervention' and national catch up programmes. These are very skilfully taught by the headteacher and a teaching assistant and have a significant impact on pupils' confidence as well as their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported to ensure they progress well.
45. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at both key stages. Staff actively teach both speaking and listening skills, and make good use of drama and role play for this purpose. Pupils listen attentively in lessons, which has a good impact on their progress in all subjects. Staff have high expectations that children will answer questions and explain their thoughts and ideas. They give children time to reflect and consider their responses. Talk is also used effectively as a stimulus for writing, for example through the use of 'talking partners', where pupils share their ideas with each other before writing.
46. By Year 6, pupils are independent, confident readers. They are keen to take the opportunities provided, for example, to read lunchtime prayers and do this well. When writing in response to the texts they read, pupils demonstrate good understanding of plot, characters and main events. They are able to use books and the Internet effectively, to search for and obtain information for their topics, for example on the Romans in history. They use dictionaries and thesauri with ease. In Years 1 and 2,

pupils enjoy stories and hang on to the teacher's every word when being read to. They have good strategies for working out unfamiliar words and the confidence to use these; for example, when reading out loud. They develop good expression as they read, because good teaching has ensured they understand the purpose of punctuation and text features, such as bold print. Very effective use is made at both key stages of group teaching of reading. The regular guided reading sessions are planned very thoroughly and books and tasks are well matched to different ability levels. Staff are skilled at posing questions to probe children's understanding and at setting challenges to ensure they remain focused on the text. They assess pupils' progress particularly well in these sessions and identify exactly what they should learn next.

47. Throughout the school, writing is developing well and standards at the end of both key stages are above average. A great strength in writing is the wide range of opportunities provided for children to write for different audiences and purposes and in different contexts. For example, throughout the school, pupils write reports of visits to places of interest, letters of thanks, information booklets and stories. By Year 6, most pupils can write at length, sustaining a plot and developing characters well. By Year 2, they add interest to their stories through the use of well chosen vocabulary. Punctuation and spelling develop well because of systematic teaching and by Year 6, writing is usually grammatically correct. Handwriting and presentation of work are above average at Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. Standards in the junior classes are now rising, however, as a result of handwriting being taught regularly and systematically.

48. An analysis of children's work from last year indicates that teaching was good and the two lessons observed during the inspection indicate that this is set to improve further. The lesson in the Key Stage 1 class taken by the headteacher was excellent. Her skill in 'setting the scene' for a writing task fired the children's imaginations and engaged their interest so well, that by the time they sat down to write, the words just flowed and the quality of the language they used for their 'messages in a bottle' was of a very good standard. The very good Key Stage 2 lesson observed was carried out at a cracking pace, with high expectations of the pupils' engagement and input. In both lessons, thorough planning, clear objectives shared expertly with the pupils and high quality teamwork between staff ensured that all pupils were challenged and supported effectively. Pupils' work is marked regularly and in some instances, high quality marking sets out exactly what they need to do to improve. However, this is not a consistent picture throughout and could be usefully improved to ensure children have a better understanding of their own performance.
49. The newly appointed subject leader has made a sound start on analysing strengths and areas for development. The next step in her development is to take more responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning.

## **French**

50. The school has very recently introduced French to the curriculum at Key Stage 2. A visiting teacher with particular expertise in the subject takes a weekly class. The lesson observed was well planned and interesting. Work was set at the right level of challenge for the pupils and short, focused activities which involved speaking, listening and developing vocabulary caught the pupils' interest. High levels of success and plenty of praise really motivated the pupils, who made good progress.

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

51. Very good use is made of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. The wealth of visits to places of interest, for example, in history and geography, generates a tremendous amount of good quality written work. Joint projects with other schools, such as when children met and worked with a real author, also enrich learning. Strong links are made between literacy and ICT; every opportunity is taken to 'publish' children's writing through, for example, making attractive class books.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have risen and pupils now achieve well at both key stages;
- Pupils are given good opportunities for problem solving and practical work;
- Very good teaching by the co-ordinator is challenging pupils in Key Stage 2 to the limit;
- There is some exceptionally good marking which indicates what children need to do to improve but this is not consistent.

52. In recent years standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 have varied from above average to well below average and at Key Stage 2, from well below average to average. Standards were consistently lower in mathematics than in English or science. The school rightly identified this as an area for improvement and put a range of measures in place which have had a significant impact. As a result, standards in the 2003 tests for both 7 and 11-year-olds were greatly improved. At Key Stage 1, results were well above average in relation to all schools and at Key Stage 2, they were in the top 5 per cent in the country. In relation to schools in similar contexts, results were also well above average. Unvalidated results for 2004 indicate that these improvements have been consolidated. Inspection evidence shows that standards are now above average at both key stages.
53. Improvements have been brought about in a variety of ways. Test results have been closely analysed to identify any problem areas and these have been addressed through adjusting teaching accordingly. As a result, for example, more attention has been paid to developing pupils' problem solving skills. Pupil tracking systems have been improved in order that those who are particularly able mathematicians or those who are experiencing difficulties can be appropriately supported. Staff have received training in 'mathematics recovery' techniques and these have been used particularly effectively to support younger children. Teachers' planning is also very thorough and provides effectively for the different levels of ability in the mixed age classes.
54. Teaching is good overall. An analysis of pupils' work from last year showed that throughout the school, children covered all the required elements of the curriculum in good depth, with plenty of opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts. Children made the best progress in Years 2 and 6, because of the level of challenge in the tasks provided. Two lessons were seen during the inspection; one at Key Stage 1 which was good and the other at Key Stage 2, taken by the co-ordinator, which was very good. In the very good lesson, older children were challenged to the limit by the high expectations of the teacher and the brisk pace which almost left them breathless, as they practised number bonds to 100, then moved quickly to 1000, in the mental and oral 'starter' to the lesson. Year 3 and 4 pupils worked equally hard with the teaching assistant on a similar activity, at the appropriate level of challenge. The teacher's very clear explanation of 'palindromic' numbers ensured that pupils quickly cottoned on to the task. More able pupils were extended further through being asked to work out a rule to explain what they had found out. In the Key Stage 1 lesson, the children quickly understood that  $6+4$  and  $4+6$  both added up to 10 through the teacher's clear explanation of the concept and moved on to being able to fill in the missing number in sums such as  $7+ ? = 10$ . The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is very good and has a strong impact on the progress of all pupils. Children with special educational needs are sensitively and effectively supported to ensure they make good progress.
55. There are some very good examples of marking of work which not only evaluate how well pupils are doing, but identify how they could improve. This is not a consistent feature and pupils would benefit from having their next learning steps clearly pinpointed and shared with them on a more regular basis.
56. The subject has been well led and managed to bring about the improvements. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already made a good start in analysing results and

auditing the subject to identify key priorities. His next step is to extend his role through checking on children's work and monitoring teaching throughout the rest of the school.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Mathematics skills are used effectively in other subject areas. For example in science, pupils measure temperature, and represent and interpret data in graph and chart form. In geography, pupils use co-ordinates in map work. Computer program are also used to support the teaching of basic mathematical skills.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Investigative science is developed very well in both key stages;
- Pupils are provided with stimulating and challenging tasks, set within the school's approach to problem solving;
- The pupils are given good opportunities to develop and practise their skills of ICT, numeracy and literacy in science.

### Commentary

58. Inspection findings indicate that standards in science are above average at the end of both key stages and pupils of all abilities achieve well. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, pupils have consistently achieved results, which were well above average for their age, over the last 3 years, although these must be treated with some caution because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group. Nevertheless, this paints a good picture. Teacher assessments for 7-year-olds were also impressive, particularly in 2003, when they were in the top 5 per cent in the country because all 3 pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3.)
59. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection. The improvement has been brought about through good leadership and management, which have ensured an increased emphasis on practical and investigative work. This has deepened pupils' understanding. It has also been the result of good assessment systems, which have highlighted any gaps in teaching and learning, in order that these could be addressed. There is good coverage and depth in the topics studied. At Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding about living things, materials and physical processes is very secure and they have a good grasp of how to do an investigation. Work is planned meticulously for pupils in both key stages and is closely matched to their abilities because of the effective use of assessment. Staff often, but not always, respond well to pupils' written work to show them how they can improve their skills, knowledge, and understanding.
60. Teaching is good. Teachers make the work stimulating and challenging. The development of an enquiring mind, with an ability to pose questions, to seek answers and to work tenaciously at problem solving is a central feature of the subject. The skills of enquiry are taught consistently well. For example, in a series of lessons, Year 5 and 6 pupils had been investigating the properties of a number of soap bars to produce 'Which?' style reports. They investigated colour and scent, and in the lesson observed, looked at the quality of the packaging. Pupils decided what they needed to know about the packaging and how they would set about finding answers to their questions. A child from each group then acted as 'an envoy' and took the team's ideas to the other groups. Groups modified their initial ideas in the light of what they heard from others. Discussions indicated that the pupils appreciated the need to make their tests fair. Each group designed their own individual tests, entirely independently. The Key Stage 1 pupils investigated which material would make the best 'mopper up' of a spilled



liquid. They wrote that the material would have to be the same size, and would need to soak up the water for 2 minutes, to make the test fair.

61. In both key stages, there are many very good opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their ICT, literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout the school, children with special educational needs make good progress because work is closely matched to their abilities and they are well supported in lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The very high standards reported during the previous inspection have been maintained;
- Every opportunity is used to employ ICT across the curriculum;
- The school has very good resources, which are supplemented by visits to the secondary school;
- There is very good teacher expertise, and this is linked to an exciting curriculum;
- There is very strong and effective subject leadership.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards at Key Stage 1 are better than seen in most schools and those at Key Stage 2 are even higher. This is because ICT is used very well throughout the school, for a wide variety of purposes. High standards have also been maintained because the school has worked hard to keep abreast of changes in technology, through purchasing equipment and through ensuring staff have the relevant expertise. Pupils acquire very good basic skills, which are rapidly built upon because they are very attentive and eager to learn. All pupils make very good progress, including those with special educational needs, who are very skilfully supported.
63. All elements of the national curriculum for ICT are covered well. Independence is developed very effectively as pupils learn to 'find things out' using the Internet. Thinking skills are challenged as they develop ideas by assembling and reorganising text, tables, images and sound, for example in presentations. They learn how computers can 'make things happen' in the world outside the school through investigating control technology. A strength is the way in which pupils are able to share information in a range of formats, reviewing, modifying and evaluating their work as it progresses.
64. The subject is very well led and managed. There is a clear view of how ICT should be used to best effect in the classroom. In addition, a good scheme guides teachers' planning and thorough assessment ensures pupils of all abilities make progress. Currently, the school is involved in an innovative project to extend opportunities for pupils with particular gifts or talents. This involves the use of interactive video links between a consortium of schools, for joint problem solving activities.

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

65. Very good links are made between ICT and other subjects. ICT is seen as an integral part of learning across the curriculum. For example, in science and design and technology, the Year 5 and 6 pupils have used data capture technology to record the sound levels produced by their musical instruments; in religious education, Key Stage 2 pupils have made multi-media guides to a synagogue and a Buddhist temple; in history pupils have made a booklet about the local priory and about their studies of Roman life on Hadrian's Wall; Year 1 and 2 pupils have created stories based upon the 'Flat Stanley' books they are studying in literacy and have exchanged ideas with a child in

America. Often, they are expected to use a range of computer applications, such as 'clip art' and digital photographs to enliven their text work for publishing.

## HUMANITIES

66. Only one lesson was seen, in **geography** and **history** at Key Stage 1; therefore no overall judgement is made on provision in either subject. Children's work, displays and photographic evidence were examined and discussions were held with pupils and teachers. Planning and assessment records were also examined.
67. In geography and history standards are above those of pupils of a similar age and all pupils achieve well. The school's approach to developing research and enquiry skills through challenging pupils to pose and answer questions is a key strength, as is the excellent use the school makes of visits, visitors, links with other schools and the rich local environment.
68. Pupils develop their geographical and historical skills well by visiting places in their own locality and meeting people, either in role play or for gathering information. In geography, the pupils' mapping skills are developed particularly well. For example, for a study unit on 'Rivers' in geography at Key Stage 2, they used maps of different scales for looking at the local River Eden and the development of flood defences. They visited the offices of the Environmental Agency and talked to experts about the effects of rainfall on flood plains. In history, whilst studying the 'Pax Britannica' the pupils visited Vindolanda, studying evidence of Roman Britain, combining with pupils from other schools for related work on art, music, literacy, and design and technology. In geography, locations further afield are studied through a residential visit, and through studying in detail places such as the Gambia. History and geography topics are used to good purpose to develop literacy, numeracy and particularly, ICT skills. For example, the children's work on Gambia was enhanced by the creation of a tourist brochure using word processing and digital images drawn from the Internet.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very rich and interesting curriculum is offered;
- Good links are made with other subjects;
- Very good use is made of visits to places of worship to develop pupils' understanding.

### Commentary

69. Standards in religious education are above average at both key stages and pupils achieve well. A problem solving approach, coupled with an enriched curriculum through visits, visitors and studies that combine several subjects ensure that all pupils learn well. Discussions with pupils show that they really enjoy and derive great personal benefit from visits to places of worship for the Christian and other world religions. In a topic linked to history, the Key Stage 1 pupils visited Carlisle Cathedral and became a 'monk for the day'. Pupils visit, and re-visit in Key Stage 2, a Buddhist temple and a Jewish synagogue. They compared beliefs, customs, traditions, celebrations and symbols. Following the visit to the temple each child made a prayer flag with a prayer

on the back. In both key stages pupils are given the opportunity to reflect upon and to apply what they have heard to their daily lives. After looking at the Buddhist prayer flags, a Year 2 pupil wrote 'Thank you mum for tidying my room and making my breakfast. I rely apresheat it.' Regular visits to the local priory and collective worship add to pupils' opportunities to consider life's big questions.

70. An analysis of pupils work indicates that teaching is good. One good lesson was seen, in the Key Stage 2 class, which was linked to an ongoing study of the Bible. The teacher asked the Year 5 and 6 pupils to consider how the Church in the Middle Ages made the Bible accessible to a population that was largely illiterate. Very effective use was made of ICT, with the teacher introducing illuminated text and the Lindisfarne Gospels via an Internet site. Pupils used research skills well as they looked up references to stories in the Gospels to create their own illuminated texts. A Year 6 pupil, whilst closely examining the illuminated text, found out that even the authors of the Gospels were illustrated by specific symbols. The teacher astutely adapted the lesson after careful assessment of the pupils' understanding, through skilful questioning.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

71. No lessons were seen in **art and design** or **design and technology** and one **music** lesson was seen. Consequently, no judgements are made about standards or teaching in these subjects. However, teacher's plans were reviewed, discussions were held and a selection of work and photographic records scrutinised, which indicate that pupils achievements are as expected for their ages.
72. In art and design, pupils have good opportunities to work with a wide range of media and materials, including paint, clay and textiles. They effectively employ a range of techniques in their work, such as photography in the style of Andrew Jackson, carefully executed, close observational drawing of local landscape features and computer generated designs. Pupils have produced high quality individual and collaborative work, as a result of projects undertaken with local artists, sculptors and craftspeople. Their paintings undertaken with a local painter are particularly noteworthy and won acclaim from a wide audience when displayed locally. Their willow weaving and wood sculptures proudly grace the school garden. As well as exploring their own cultural traditions, such as lace making, joint projects with other schools have enabled pupils to try their hand at batik printing and Peruvian art techniques. An area for development is the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the lives and work of a range of famous artists through history.
73. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in design and technology. The school effectively uses the national guidance for the subject to ensure they build progressively on their skills. Pupils enjoy the creative element, which is the strongest aspect of the subject. This is because they are given the chance to show their flair and individuality, for example, as in their designs for clock faces that reflected their interests and hobbies. Also, effective links between subjects provide clear contexts and purposes for their work. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils made clay lamps based upon their studies in Roman history, employing skills they had learned in art and design. In literacy, pupils wrote extended stories that were then transferred into a 'pop-up' book. When a tab is pulled, characters in the story spring to life! The designing and evaluating elements are not as strong. Whilst the pupils take great care in their practical work, much of the design is at the sketch drawing stage, with insufficient attention being paid to scale, measurements and details such as fixings. Some of the most recent work shows that this is beginning to be addressed.
74. In music, there is a real strength in the opportunities pupils are given to perform for others in both school and local community events. Regular services and assemblies at nearby Lanercost Priory, for example, enable pupils to sing and play for parents and

the local community. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play a variety of musical instruments, including the violin and the guitar. A commercial scheme, which is closely linked to the latest national guidelines for the subject, is enabling teachers to ensure that children build on their skills progressively from year to year and cover all aspects of the curriculum. In the lesson seen in Key Stage 2, pupils developed their understanding of rhythm soundly and were given appropriate opportunities to explore rhythmic patterns with percussion instruments. Pupils have used computers to compose their own music and have, for example, composed incidental music for a 'Tom and Jerry' cartoon.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

- Pupils achieve well in response to good teaching;
- A rich range of opportunities is provided for pupils both within and outside lessons;
- Very good use is made of facilities within the local community to enrich learning;
- Very strong links with other schools enhance provision.

## **COMMENTARY**

75. Pupils achieve good standards throughout the school because a strong emphasis is placed on developing their skills from the earliest stages. The school values the subject highly and despite its limited facilities, with no hall or playing fields, ensures that all pupils have access to the full curriculum. It has worked hard to achieve the 'Active Mark' award. From the reception class onwards, weekly gymnastics and games lessons take place in the well equipped gym at the local high school. Throughout the year, effective use is made of the local cricket pitch for games and coaching sessions and all junior pupils have a weekly swimming lesson. Standards in swimming are better than usually seen, with almost every child exceeding the national curriculum requirements for the subject. Staff expertise is utilised well to extend pupils' skills; for example, the headteacher takes orienteering sessions and the school has won local contests in this aspect, competing against much bigger schools. The very strong links with local schools extend learning further and have a beneficial impact on the pupils' social development, as they take part in inter-school events. The school also organises an annual local cross-country event, in which all pupils can take part, whatever their age or abilities. The impact of this rich range of experiences is clearly seen in the skills pupils demonstrate in lessons. They report that they enjoy games and there is a very good take up for the various after school sports clubs, which are run by staff and parents.
76. Teaching is good overall. In the Key Stage 1 lesson seen, children made good progress in learning how to perform different types of rolls. They showed good awareness of space, developing control of their movements and the ability to refine their skills in response to focused teaching. More able pupils were encouraged to extend their skills further, with one child in Year 2, for example, practising a more complex 'teddy bear' roll. Younger pupils and those who were less confident were given sensitive support from the teaching assistant to ensure they made progress.
77. In the very good Key Stage 2 lesson observed, pupils developed their short tennis skills very effectively in response to skilful teaching. The lesson was very well planned to

ensure that learning was progressive, and demonstrations and explanations were of high quality. Targets were set, which kept pupils on their toes, ensuring maximum concentration and participation. In both lessons, good attention was paid to the health aspects of physical education and of safety.

78. The subject has been well led by the headteacher, who has a great deal of expertise. There are firm plans in place to ensure that this role is taken over by a newly appointed member of staff in the near future.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

- The school is clear about the need for multicultural education in a mono-ethnic area;
- It ensures that pupils have very rich experiences of life both within their own community and further afield;
- Good use is made of 'Circle Time' and the school council to share thoughts and ideas and make a difference.

### COMMENTARY

79. Pupils achieve well in this area because as well as having a planned programme of work, opportunities for development permeate all areas of school life. Healthy living is a key theme throughout the school, for example, with children being part of the team to decide on healthy menus for school lunches and the achievement of the 'Healthy Schools' and 'Active Mark' awards. Much attention is paid to physical health and fitness through regular physical education lessons and the extra-curricular sporting opportunities provided. As a result, pupils can talk confidently about what constitutes a healthy diet and it is noticeable at lunchtimes that the majority of children eat fruit, vegetables and salad willingly. An extra dimension to the work in this area comes from the school's understanding of the need for children from this small, rural community to experience different social and cultural settings. Consequently, activities which are shared with other schools, multicultural initiatives and visits to other regions, as well as towns and cities within their own locality form an important part of children's experience.
80. 'Circle Time' is used effectively to allow pupils the opportunity to discuss their own issues and problems, as well as to reflect on issues in the lives of other people. As a result, older pupils can talk thoughtfully and with real empathy about the needs and issues faced by those with disabilities and to reflect on how these might be eased. The school is currently working to develop its programme further.

## 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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
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	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).*