

INSPECTION REPORT

VICTORIA INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Barrow-in-Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112210

Headteacher: Miss S O'Neill

Lead inspector: Mr Geoff Yates

Dates of inspection: 07 – 09 March 2005

Inspection number: 268176

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	231
School address:	Oxford Street Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria
Postcode:	LA14 5QN
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Linda Last
Date of previous inspection:	16/11/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Victoria Infant and Nursery School is larger than most other infant schools with 119 boys and 87 girls aged 4 to 7 years and the full time equivalent of 25 children in the nursery. Currently about 17 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is broadly in line with that found in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. The school has no pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue and the proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is very low. The nature of the school's intake has changed since the previous inspection. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are broadly average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is similar to that found in most schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2465	Geoff Yates	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music English as an additional language
9883	Brian Silvester	Lay inspector	
7979	Anthony Calderbank	Team inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school provides a very high standard of pupil care. Teaching is good overall with every child valued as an individual and involved fully in all school activities. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards of attainment are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and design.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher and governors carry out their duties effectively.
- Teaching is good overall.
- There is a lack of consistency in the application of the school's marking policy.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships with others are of a very high standard.
- Statistical information about what pupils know, understand and can do is not collated well enough.
- In the Foundation Stage [nursery and reception] opportunities are missed to incorporate effectively the outside area into all aspects of children's learning.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good. The school is highly successful in supporting pupils who have emotional and/or behavioural problems.
- There is a very high standard of care for its pupils and links with parents and the community are good.

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 1998. The quality of teaching has improved as has teachers' planning. The climate for learning is now good. Good improvements have been made to the building. While there have been some improvements in the Foundation Stage curriculum the school is aware that there are things still to be done.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	B	D	D
writing	A	B	D	D
mathematics	D	C	C	C

Key: A top 5% in the country; 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.

The results in National Curriculum tests in 2004 were adversely affected by the above average number of pupils in the age group with learning difficulties. Inspection evidence demonstrates that current standards in Year 2 are above average in writing, reading and mathematics. **Pupils' achievement is good** in these subjects and also in science, ICT and art and design where standards are above those found normally.

Children start in the nursery with broadly average attainment. They make satisfactory progress and most are set to meet most of what is expected by the start of Year 1. Children [nursery and reception] achieve well in developing their personal, social and emotional skills and most will exceed expectations by the time they enter Year 1. However, most pupils are unlikely to meet all of

what is expected in the physical development because of the lack of opportunities provided for skills to be developed in the outside area.

There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and also pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good overall. The school's curriculum is mostly well organised to enable staff and pupils to make the most of learning opportunities each day. Teachers have good subject knowledge. All teachers assess what pupils know, understand and can do in each subject but the results of assessments are not brought together in any cohesive way. The school has revised its marking policy but this is not followed consistently. The school enables all its pupils to be equally included in the education it provides. It has developed a good partnership with parents and satisfactory links with other schools. Links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the school's leadership, management and governance is good. The headteacher has ensured that the school has continued to move forward and receives good support from all members of staff. The staff has the professional qualities to enable pupils to achieve their best in most subjects. The governing body has significant expertise and guides the school well. Together, school leaders and governors have created a very good ethos that is founded upon the principles of inclusive education and the desire to improve performance continuously.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils express a high degree of satisfaction with the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that the outside accommodation is fully incorporated into all aspects of children's learning in the Foundation Stage;
- improve the overall management of assessment information;
- ensure that all members of staff consistently apply the school's marking policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain standards that are above those found in most schools in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT and art and design due to good teaching.
- Special educational needs pupils and the small number of pupils from ethnic minorities achieve well.
- In the Foundation Stage achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good but physical development is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage start school with broadly average skills. The previous inspection found that pupils started school with above average skills. Children achieve well in their personal and social development and soundly in most other aspects of the Early Years curriculum. By the time they enter Year 1 most are likely to reach the standards expected in most areas of the curriculum and to exceed what is expected in personal, social and emotional development. However, achievement in physical development is unsatisfactory and pupils are unlikely to meet what is expected. This is because teachers and support staff do not have a satisfactory knowledge of how best the outside accommodation can be used to improve pupils' skills. Pupils' achievement in personal, social and emotional development is a major strength because of the high quality support they receive in this aspect. There are currently no children from minority ethnic minorities. Children with special educational needs achieve as well as other children.
2. Achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 with special educational needs is good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Educational and Behavioural Plans. This is because teachers and support staff have very good information about pupils in their class. Individual plans for pupils with special needs include short-term targets that are specific, time-related and measurable and contribute to the attainment of long-term goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.0 (15.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (16.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 84 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the 2004 national tests standards in reading and writing were below average and average in mathematics. When the results are compared with similar schools they show the same picture. Inspection evidence shows that there was a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in the age group who took the tests and as a result standards in all three subjects were not as high. The trend in the school's results over the past five years has been below the national trend. There are no significant differences between boys and girls achievements in writing but boys did better than girls in reading and mathematics.

4. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged and achieve well. The small number of pupils from ethnic minorities achieve as well as other pupils. Standards in reading and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be average. Standards in mathematics have risen this year because of the good emphasis placed on pupils being given plenty of opportunities to use their mental skills in solving mathematical problems. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls. The school is not complacent and is constantly striving to be even better. For example, an action plan for improving standards in reading and writing has been implemented successfully. Writing tasks set in most other subjects, especially history, are sufficiently challenging. While pupils have good listening skills their speaking skills are less well developed.
5. Standards in ICT have improved since the time of the previous inspection and are now above average. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to use and consolidate their skills in other subjects. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in religious education but teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject and as a result achievement is not as high as in other subjects inspected. It was only possible to see limited amounts of work in other subjects but achievement in all lessons in other subjects was never less than satisfactory. Standards in art and design are above average and the subject is linked well to other curriculum areas.
6. The school has just introduced a policy for gifted and talented pupils. Although the school has not yet identified any, teachers plan appropriately for all pupils in lessons and provide suitably challenging work to ensure that the most able achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The level of attendance is good. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships in the school are very good.
- The pupils are happy to attend the school and this is reflected in the good level of attendance.
- The very good social and moral attributes of the pupils are reflected in their very good behaviour.
- Pupils work together well in a friendly atmosphere.
- The weekly focus on one aspect of personal, social and health education (PSHE), through 'Alpha Frog', is very effective.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

Commentary

7. The level of attendance is good and above the national average. There are no unauthorised absences and no exclusions. The importance of good attendance and punctuality is emphasised to parents and pupils. If a pupil is absent without a known reason a phone call is made to the home. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer (EWO), who attends the school on a regular basis. The good level of attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the pupils' attainment and levels of progress.
8. Pupils have a very good attitude to their work and this makes a major contribution to their learning. They get on well with the task given, concentrate and persevere. Pupils work and play together well in a friendly, caring atmosphere. The relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good. Pupils are expected to respect and care for people and their property.

9. The very good social and moral development of the pupils is reflected in their very good behaviour. The weekly focus on one aspect of PSHE, through 'Alpha Frog', is very effective. Parents are informed of the weekly aspect, via the newsletter, so they can pursue the theme at home with their child. All forms of bullying are discouraged but when they do occur they are dealt with appropriately. There have been no exclusions. Parents are generally happy with the standards of behaviour in the school and the way that bullying is dealt with.
10. Pupils with special educational need work well within their classes. They have positive attitudes towards their work because they have specific targets to aim for which are within their capabilities. Pupils are able to persist with their tasks because the work is well matched to their individual needs. They are well integrated into all aspects of school life and receive the help they need. This is especially true of the pupils who are withdrawn from class to work in Elmer's Den [a specially adapted classroom where pupils receive additional support].
11. Pupils have a very good appreciation of what is right and wrong which reflects the fairness and caring attitudes displayed by the staff. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers encourage pupils not only to express their own feelings but also to consider and respect those of others; for example, through circle times. Younger children competently share and listen to each other and individual children show very mature and responsible personal skills. Older pupils set a good example to younger ones.
12. Topics in the personal, social and health education curriculum include developing good attitudes to life and exploring values of the school and the community. During their time in school pupils learn to co-operate well with adults, work in pairs, small and large groups and socialise with each other. These skills are developed further through opportunities on school visits and performing arts events where they learn to socialise with people in the wider community. There were few examples of unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils regularly collect for charities.
13. The school promotes knowledge and experience of pupils' own culture through the use of the local community, the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. They are encouraged to appreciate and respect differences between people and beliefs though the school acknowledges that the religious education curriculum needs developing. Pupils show only a very basic knowledge of Christianity and Judaism for their age. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups but these few are involved in all aspects of school life. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural traditions of other communities such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year, photographs of different cultural groups, visits by South African drummers, celebrating the work of a range of European artists and using resources such as Caribbean counting rhymes.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.1%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	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 school provides a good quality of education overall with good opportunities provided for enrichment. Teaching is effective and leads to a good quality of learning. Curricular provision is good and the care and support given to pupils are very good. Links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Very good use is made of classroom assistants.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to the effective use of the outside area in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop and use their ICT skills.
- The school's marking policy is not fully effective in providing pupils with pointers to help them improve on previous best.
- Assessment information is not brought together well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	5 (14%)	15 (41%)	16 (43%)	0	0	0

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

14. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection with almost sixty per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection being good or better. Unlike the previous inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well because of good teaching and sometimes very good teaching. The school's policy of social inclusion is effective and pupils feel valued. Homework is provided in all classes at a similar level to that found in most schools. A strength of the school is its inclusive approach to education for all pupils.
15. In the Foundation Stage, a particular strength in teaching is the prominence given to children's personal and social development and as a result pupils achieve well. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Staff plan appropriately for communication, language, literacy and numeracy. Planning for other areas of learning is brief and there are many missed opportunities to 'build in' the use of the outdoor area.
16. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is carefully planned in Years 1 and 2 and generally well taught, so as a result the quality of learning is good. However, some members of staff lack confidence in teaching religious education. Most lessons contain achievable objectives and usually proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers use a good variety of methods to build on pupils' previous learning. Questioning is successful and challenges pupils to think. Occasionally more could be done to extend pupils' speaking skills. Tasks in English are well matched to pupils' needs. Classroom organisation is very good and the behaviour management policy is applied very well in most classes. However, in one class pupils do not always put up their hands when waiting to answer questions and are allowed to shout out which impacts adversely on the quality of learning. Good use is made of ICT and all teachers receive very good support from a teaching assistant in this curriculum area. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in most other subjects. In history and science for example, they produce writing of good quality. In mathematics, pupils are provided with good opportunities to use their numeracy skills to quickly solve mathematical problems.

17. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Elmer's Den is seen as a haven by pupils with emotional or behavioural needs where they can go and receive very good support from an experienced classroom assistant. When pupils are withdrawn from class for intensive tuition on a one-to-one basis or to work in small groups in Elmer's Den, they are given work that is appropriately focused on developing key basic skills.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into classes and teachers' planning usually takes appropriate account of their needs. Teachers have appropriate expectations of the standards they want the pupils to achieve. Support in general from teachers and other adults is effective. Pupils' needs are identified and the necessary help is given.

Assessment

19. Overall provision is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. The headteacher and her staff know what individual pupils need to do to improve on previous best. However, statistical information related to assessments is not collated well and as a result the school does not have an accurate overview of standards. The school is aware of this issue and is developing its approach to collecting assessment data.
20. The school has recently introduced a new marking policy and there are some very good examples of it being applied well. However, this is not the case in all classes. In English, for example, some basic spelling mistakes are allowed to pass un-checked and in other subjects opportunities are missed to provide pointers as to how pupils might improve their work.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. The accommodation is good. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school's commitment to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good.
- The school's participation in the arts is very good.
- The school has made improvements to the Foundation Stage curriculum in response to a key issue from the previous inspection.
- Further development is needed to integrate outdoor resources and accommodation more fully into the Foundation Stage curriculum to help ensure provision for pupils' physical development is satisfactory.
- The religious education curriculum needs further development.

Commentary

21. The whole curriculum is permeated by the school's caring ethos which is often reinforced through skilful teaching and ideas discussed in assemblies such as the focus of the week in the headteacher's assemblies on Mondays.
22. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. It is broad and a good range of learning opportunities is planned in most subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular clubs. Clubs include a well-managed breakfast club, a 'Team theme' football club and investigative activities for information and communication technology (ICT). This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
23. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, except that provided for pupils' physical development. Provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is good. There have been improvements since the previous inspection in the curriculum for creative and imaginative development.

24. The curriculum meets the requirements of all pupils with special educational needs very well. It provides very effectively for equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties receive very good support from a well trained teaching assistant in The Nurture Area (Elmer's Den). In this area, pupils are able to take part in activities that are very well organised and planned to take account of their individual needs and to improve their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, the pupils achieve well not only in the development of their literacy skills but also in learning how to behave appropriately.
25. There has been a clear focus on developing the English and ICT curriculum which is evident in the range and quality of learning opportunities for these subjects. Due emphasis is placed on literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. Throughout the school, the curriculum is enhanced through the planned links between subjects or areas of learning; for example, work on Florence Nightingale in English lessons and the use of computer programs to support different areas of learning.
26. The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good throughout the school. The main focus of provision is through well-planned circle times where pupils are able to consider and discuss sensitive issues such as how to play games fairly and including all children so that none feels left out.
27. A well-planned programme of visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Pupils visit museums, parks and local shops to support subjects such as history. Provision for art is good and visitors such as musicians and artists extend this aspect very well. Links with local schools are satisfactory.
28. There is an appropriate number of teachers and support staff. Teaching assistants take on extra responsibilities in the nursery where they do all the teaching and, on many occasions, do this well.
29. Improvements have been made to the accommodation since the previous inspection and it is now judged as good. The school is adequately resourced overall and kept very clean. Resources for ICT and to support pupils with special educational needs are very good. They are good in mathematics. Better use could be made of the outdoor resources and accommodation in the Foundation Stage.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety provision for the pupils is very good. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils is good. The involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught to be active workers and take responsibility for themselves.
- Pupils work in a happy, secure and safe environment.
- Pupils are given roles to carry out in their class and in the school.
- The procedures for the induction and transfer of pupils are good.

Commentary

30. Pupils work in a happy, friendly, safe and secure environment. Annual health and safety inspections, and risk assessment updates, are carried out. There are good links with outside agencies such as education psychologists and Education Welfare Service officers. The school nurse visits regularly, holds a half-termly 'drop-in' clinic and participates in induction sessions for parents new to the school. The school is part of the Healthy Schools' Initiative and is awaiting accreditation. Healthy eating and the drinking of water are encouraged. The

school has a child protection policy. The headteacher is responsible for its implementation and has had the necessary training. Whole-staff training on child protection has been provided by the local education authority. Lunchtime supervisors have received training from the deputy headteacher.

31. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils is good. Pupils are helped to become independent and confident. The achievement of each individual is acknowledged and celebrated. The school has strategies in place to help pupils who feel stressed. There is a special unit, called 'Elmer's Den', where pupils with emotional problems can go for support. Pupils can raise concerns by putting a note in 'Elmer's Problem Box'. The induction of pupils into the school is good. Children come into the school prior to entry; there are meetings for parents, home visits are made on request and an induction pack is supplied.
32. Pupils have roles to carry out in their class and around the school. Pupils are fully involved in environmental issues and enjoy working in the gardening club. There are two helpers in each class to assist with the lunch provision. Pupils help in assembly and in class assemblies. They participate in school performances and sing carols for local old age pensioners. Pupils raise money for local, national and international charities. There is no school council.
33. The support and guidance offered to pupils who have a special educational need is very good. The promotion of equal opportunities is high on the school's agenda. The school is a very caring community which promotes pupils' self-esteem. Pupils with special needs are provided with additional support and encouragement so as to enable them to take a full part in school activities and to accept and exercise responsibilities. The quality of liaison with support agencies is good. For example, the school has the use of a Speech Therapist for one day a week. Members of staff know pupils well. There is a good working atmosphere in lessons and as a result pupils are confident to approach adults for help. Pupils receive appropriate verbal feedback during lessons to enable them to improve. However, though marking is supportive it does not always inform pupils what they need to do next in order to improve their work.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The links with the local community are good. The school's links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a good opinion of the school.
- An annual questionnaire is used to ascertain the views of parents.
- The pupils' annual reports tell parents what the child knows, understands and can do but do not always indicate targets for improvement.
- Informative weekly newsletters are sent to parents.
- The Friends of the School works hard to raise funds to enhance the education of the pupils.
- Good use is made of the local community to enrich the curriculum.
- Despite the best efforts of the school to involve parents in their child's education, parental help at home is mixed.

Commentary

34. The information provided to parents about the school, and about pupils' standards and progress, is good. The pupils' annual reports tell parents what the child knows, understands and can do but do not always set targets for improvement. Weekly newsletters are informative to parents and they are also displayed on the notice board on the school wall. Attached information provides the PSHE focus for the week as well as a weekly challenge in numeracy, literacy and a topic. Every Friday afternoon 'parents' information and training

- sessions' are held. There are two parent interview session per year, meetings to share curricular targets with parents and meetings in preparation for SATs.
35. The school has a parent co-ordinator who works hard to try to get parents to help their child at home. Despite this, parental help at home for pupils is mixed. The Friends of the School is very active and holds a wide range of fund raising and social events. The money raised is used to enhance the pupils' education by, for example, subsidising trips and performances. Parents are encouraged to help in school and a number take up this opportunity. They help on trips, outdoor activities, clubs and in class. The views of parents are sought through an annual pupils' questionnaire. The school has the full confidence of the communities it serves.
 36. The quality of links with the local community is good. Pupils visit local churches and clergy participate in the school's Harvest Festival. There are good links with the emergency services. A local constable is a governor and the Police and Fire Service visit the school. Local businesses visit to support the curriculum and pupils go on trips to local places of interest, such as Furness Abbey. Pupils sing carols for local old age pensioners. They raise a large amount of money for local charities and support needy communities abroad. The Sure Start 'Mother and Baby Group' and a local counselling charity meet in the school.
 37. The quality of links with other schools and colleges is satisfactory. Links with receiving junior schools have improved with joint celebrations, performances and events. Pupils spend time in their new schools, prior to transfer, parents are kept fully informed and pupil records are transferred. However, the school has recognised that there is a need to develop further links with receiving junior schools, particularly in regard to the transfer of special educational needs pupils. Work placement students from local secondary schools and Furness College come into the school. Currently there are no students on teaching practice.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership of the school is good, with the leadership of the headteacher being very good. The governance and management of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and staff work well together as a team.
- Key staff and governors provide the headteacher with good support.
- Staff are committed to providing a good quality of education which meets the needs of all the pupils.
- The information gathered from assessments needs bringing together.
- The outside accommodation and resources are not fully integrated into the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- The school's ethos for learning is very good.

Commentary

38. The headteacher, supported well by the deputy head and all members of staff, provides very good leadership. She has created an atmosphere within which staff trust one another, give of their best and work very well as a team for the sake of the pupils. As a result, there is a shared sense of purpose and high expectations for the work of the school. Issues are debated thoroughly so that there is ownership of policies and schemes of work. The success of this approach can be seen in the effective teaching and the good achievements of its pupils by the time they leave. All staff show a strong commitment to the school and provide pupils with very good examples of how to conduct themselves. As a result, the school has a strong and effective ethos for learning in keeping with one of its stated aims of ensuring that there is 'a supportive teaching environment that is open, creative and flexible to change.' The school has recently been recognised as an Investor in People.

39. Good improvements overall have been made since the previous inspection. The school has improved its systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching to ensure that what is planned is taught in a consistent way across year groups and that pupils develop their skills systematically as they move through the school. However, the school's agreed policy for the marking of pupils' work is not being implemented consistently by teachers.
40. Since the previous inspection, a co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has been appointed and provides satisfactory leadership and management. She oversees planning to try and ensure a continuous transition from nursery to the reception year and has ensured that the curriculum provides appropriately for most aspects of children's creative and imaginative develop. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the outside accommodation and resources are fully integrated into all aspects of children's learning.
41. Procedures for self-evaluation and the taking of action are satisfactory. The school's performance against schools nationally and against similar schools is checked carefully. The headteacher has introduced good systems to monitor and improve teachers' performance. Teaching is monitored regularly and staff receive constructive feedback which includes targets for improvement. The school's performance management arrangements are effective. Whole school priorities for improvement are addressed in detail and subject leaders have a good understanding of what needs to be done to ensure further success within their areas. This can be seen in the improvements which have been made to the quality and range of pupils' writing throughout the school. Teachers have worked hard recently on this aspect and standards are now above those found in most schools.
42. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Systematic and sharply focused analysis of pupil performance data in reading, writing, mathematics and science has enabled teachers to identify where progress is being made by individuals and where it could be better. However, there is a need to ensure that the information gathered is brought together to enable challenging but realistic targets to be set for individuals, groups and classes.
43. The governing body is strongly committed to the school's success. All statutory requirements are met. Governors are knowledgeable and bring a wealth of experience from their different backgrounds which help their decision-making. They share a common vision and support the headteacher and staff well as they work to improve the learning opportunities for the pupils. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses through regular reports from the headteacher and act as a critical friend. Governors are fully involved in planning, prioritising and costing targets in the school improvement plan.
44. The school is fully inclusive. The special educational needs co-ordinator is effective in ensuring that pupils' learning difficulties are identified at an early stage. She provides valuable support to teachers and teaching assistants, making sure that they are kept up to date. She monitors the progress of pupils towards the objectives in their Individual Educational Plans and liaises with parents to keep them fully informed of their children's progress. The contribution made by the teaching assistant working in 'Elmer's Den' (Nurture Room) is a particular strength of the provision.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	592,467	Balance from previous year	16,513
Total expenditure	600,334	Balance carried forward to the next	8,646
Expenditure per pupil	2,656		

45. The governors' finance committee has a good overview of financial affairs. The governing body is very clear about obtaining value for money and works pro-actively to ensure that any available funding is used well in support of the school's priorities. The school's bursar ensures that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Financial planning and control are efficient. There has been no recent audit of the school's financial systems. Taking this into account alongside the pupils' good achievements and the good quality of educational provision, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

46. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is in line with what is expected at this stage of development. This is lower than at the time of the previous inspection when it was judged to be above expectation. The children achieve satisfactorily and almost all meet most of the early learning goals by the end of reception. In personal, social and emotional development their achievement is good and attainment is above expectations. However, most pupils are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in physical development.
47. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Opportunities for creative and imaginative development have been improved. However, provision for physical development needs further development. Members of staff have begun planning together but this is still at an early stage.
48. Teaching is satisfactory overall; however a significant minority of teaching is good. It is nearly always good in personal, social and emotional development. Staff plan appropriately for communication, language, literacy and numeracy. Planning for other areas of learning is brief and the learning objectives are too broad to help focus teaching and learning for different children. Groups are frequently too large for effective learning for this age group. Whole class teaching is frequently good and all the rooms are organised well and are very attractive learning environments. In a few lessons, notably in the hall, staff show a lack of confidence about the physical development of pupils. Planned assessments are too few to monitor progress effectively. There are missed opportunities for staff to assess spontaneous learning moments.
49. The curriculum is satisfactory and consistent across classes. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Outdoor provision is unsatisfactory.
50. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior management acknowledge the Foundation Stage still needs further development. There have been good improvements in planning and assessments but these are not yet implemented consistently. Monitoring of planning takes place but the valuable feedback is not acted upon.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are good and very good in a minority of lessons.
- Good provision for children, including the youngest, to develop independence and improve social interaction skills.

Commentary

51. The children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception. The children settle well, share resources, interact and work together well. Even the youngest children show independence when choosing activities.

52. Staff plan regular circle times where issues such as making friends and not leaving children out are handled sensitively. In the nursery the snack time is a good opportunity for children to help by giving out the straws and they learn to eat and drink with their peers sensibly. As a result of very good relationships in one lesson, reception children had the confidence to respond to the teacher's questioning and the very positive feedback enhanced their self-esteem.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's reading skills are developed well.
- Children's speaking skills are not always developed sufficiently

Commentary

53. Children's achievement is satisfactory and almost all are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teaching is satisfactory.
54. In most sessions children listen well to peers and staff. They usually carry out instructions accurately and their listening skills contribute significantly to their learning. They have frequent opportunities to listen to stories and poems. At times, particularly in some reception literacy lessons, children spend too long sitting on the carpet and this reduces children's ability to maintain concentration.
55. Children's speaking skills are not as well developed. They do not always speak clearly when answering questions or at register time when their voices are very quiet. Staff do not consistently encourage them to improve these skills. Children rarely initiate speaking apart from questions relating to their needs.
56. There are varied and frequent opportunities for early reading activities. Teaching is often good in these sessions. Children enjoy stories. Reception children retell stories such as Goldilocks with the help of staff or resources such as stick puppets, sometimes with good expression. Most can name initial sounds of words. In another class children showed understanding of the plot of Jack and the Beanstalk. Nursery children learn about linking sounds and letters through activities such as the letter of the day – they needed a lot of support but could name words which begin with l. They have frequent opportunities to browse books with their peers. They are familiar with books, hold them the right way up, turn the pages correctly and discuss them with peers.
57. Children are developing their writing skills appropriately. A group of higher attaining reception children were able to write speech bubbles for characters from fairy stories. Two were using letters to represent words which they could read back to an inspector. Two were able to spell simple words such as 'went' accurately and independently and two were using word banks to support their writing. Generally children's letter formation is satisfactory. Nursery children have opportunities to make marks and practise early writing skills using a range of tools such as paint, pencils and crayons.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is consistent coverage of this area of learning but opportunities are missed to use the outside area.
- Staff reinforce mathematical skills throughout the curriculum well.

Commentary

58. Children make satisfactory progress and are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Staff reinforce counting and number recognition skills in many situations; for example, when counting the children present and absent during the register. Individual reception children know that taking the number of children present from the total on roll is subtraction and they could answer this accurately. However, opportunities are missed by not using the outside area to develop mathematical skills. Work in books indicates that they learn to form numbers accurately, order numbers from the lowest to the highest up to 10 and do simple calculations to 10. A few work with numbers up to 20. Children learn to recognise shapes such as triangles and to order sizes from smallest to biggest. They can make repeating patterns successfully using pictures of the bears in the Goldilocks story.
59. In one lesson nursery staff was observed using 'compare bears' to encourage children to sort by colour and size and for the higher attainers to make groups of 5. This is a challenging activity for the few who could accomplish it and was adapted successfully for those who could not.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is in place for using computers.
- Good use is made of visits and trips to support projects.
- Unsatisfactory use is made of the outdoor area to support this area of learning.

Commentary

60. Children make satisfactory progress and are in line to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Reception children use computers in classes and in the computer suite and many are likely to exceed the early learning goals in this aspect. They use computer programs based on the reading scheme where they click and drag to place words in lists beginning with the same letter. Higher attainers in one class clicked and dragged words successfully to make sentences.
61. Reception staff plan a range of activities to support this area of learning. One involved making gingerbread biscuits – groups of children cut out the shapes and decorated these independently with good support from a volunteer. Work in books shows they have looked at their growth over time and learnt about the local area while taking walks. In one lesson about the parable of 'The Lost Sheep', children understood its meaning that everyone is important to Jesus. Higher attainers knew that the Bible is in two parts and that the Old Testament is about the time before Jesus was born.

62. Nursery children have frequent opportunities to experience the properties of sand, water and construction resources. Currently the role play area is a fire engine and children have learnt about the job firefighters do, enhanced by a visit from fire officers and a visit to the fire station. They are also learning about growth with good support from a key worker [teaching assistant] where they planted and watered new seeds independently. However, there are missed opportunities to support this area of learning outdoors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of computer paint programs to help pupils develop their creative skills.
- Good use is made of dance and music activities to develop pupils' skills.

Commentary

63. Children make satisfactory progress and are in line to meet the early learning goals by the end of reception. Reception children have regular music and dance activities to develop their skills. In one dance lesson linked to the story of Jack and the Beanstalk children were learning to move to the beat of a tambourine, the prompts from the teacher and music excerpts. They are learning to stop when the music stops and make their movements match the character; for example, giant steps - but they do not yet do this confidently. There was little teaching of skills and therefore children did not refine their skills as well as they could. In a music lesson children were learning to clap a beat and to imitate beat patterns which they did well though the teacher did not always make it clear where they should start. It was a missed opportunity for children to choose instruments themselves.
64. There is a good range of painting activities. Nursery children choose to paint independently and are using brushes appropriately though not yet able to make recognisable representations of objects. A wonderful example of maturity was shown by a young girl who put on a back-fastening apron independently and then realising the difficulties asked a boy to help her fasten the apron so she could join the painting group. She did this with little fuss and showed very good initiative for such a young child. Children in reception use the 'Colour Magic' program to make symmetrical patterns. Work in books shows they are developing printing, collage and rubbing skills soundly.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too little use is made of the outdoor resources and accommodation.
- Too few learning opportunities are provided.

Commentary

65. Children make unsatisfactory progress and are not likely to meet all the early learning goals in this area of learning.
66. Staff plan regular indoor lessons to develop children's physical skills though these are insufficient currently. They show a lack of confidence and knowledge in how to develop this area of learning. The organisation of lessons is not always conducive to good learning for

nursery children; for example, groups are too large and the pace is slow because children are not very involved. In reception lessons, there is little teaching of skills and lessons are too formal to allow children to explore movements or what their bodies can do.

67. There is insufficient use of the outdoor accommodation and resources and this hinders progress. Some staff referred to this aspect as 'going out to play' which reflects a lack of awareness of the valuable learning opportunities which could be provided not just for physical development. The school has employed a well-qualified assistant in the afternoons to take responsibility for the outdoor education of reception children but this is a 'bolt-on' to the curriculum rather than integral to it.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The actions taken to improve standards have been very successful.
- Pupils' speaking skills are not as good as other aspects of English.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers are not consistently applying the school's policy with regards to the marking of pupils' work.
- Assessment procedures are good but the information needs bringing together.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Reading areas in classrooms are underdeveloped.

Commentary

68. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in English and, by the end of Year 2, standards in most aspects of the subject are above average. This represents good progress from a broadly average starting point on entry to the school. During the inspection, no obvious difference between the achievements of boys and girls was noted. These judgements are similar to those made at the time of the previous inspection.
69. Standards in speaking are similar to those found in most schools. Taking into account pupils' overall below average speaking skills when they start school, achievement is good in this area. Members of staff work hard to improve pupils' speaking skills. Standards are better in lessons where the teachers use questioning skilfully to help pupils develop and extend their initial brief contribution but this practice is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers provide children with good opportunities in lessons to talk through ideas in pairs before answering a question. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils developed their speaking skills well when discussing what information to include in a piece of non-fiction writing about nurses in the Crimean War. Other opportunities such as 'hot-seating' and taking part in assemblies provide pupils with the chance to speak in front of an audience, which helps to develop their self-confidence. Throughout the school, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, other adults and each other and standards are above average.
70. Standards in reading are above average and pupils achieve well. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read with fluency and meaning. They can discuss the story line and know that characters are 'people who act out the story.' Lower attainers sound out the letters to help them make sense of unfamiliar words and use picture clues effectively to get an understanding of what is happening in the story. Most pupils know how to use the contents page and index to locate a specific topic in a reference book. The school has chosen not to have a separate designated library area but to keep fiction and non-fiction books in

classrooms. However, these reading areas are not organised in a way that enables pupils to develop their library skills effectively and some reading books are in need of replacement. Pupils take reading books home regularly and the help given by parents significantly improves reading skills. Though comments written by teachers in pupils' reading diaries are very supportive, they do not give sufficient guidance on what needs to be done in order to improve.

71. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in writing. The school has recently focused on improving the quality and range of writing throughout the school and has been very successful. Teachers have high expectations and provide pupils with good opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences. For example, a more able pupil in Year 2 wrote an account of a visit made to the school by a nurse and included speech and question marks as in 'I asked Rachael a question. I said, "What happens when nurses get sick?"'
72. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan the work well and ensure that it is matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils are managed very well, and as a result, classrooms are usually quiet places where they can learn in peace. Very good relationships exist between pupils and teachers. A particular strength of some lessons was the use of assessment for learning strategies. Pupils were clear about what they were expected to achieve and teachers referred back to the checklist of success for the particular piece of writing such as a letter. The use of writing targets clearly displayed on tables for groups of children is very appropriate, and a tighter focus on the monitoring of progress towards achieving these would be helpful.
73. The effective deployment of classroom assistants to work with groups and individuals means all pupils are able to join in lessons well and make good progress. Though there are examples of some good marking with comments that are evaluative and give clear suggestions for improvement, this is not consistent throughout the school. For example, one higher attaining pupil wrote 'an over' instead of 'another' but it was not corrected.
74. Pupils with special educational needs including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, receive very good support from a well trained teaching assistant in The Nurture Area (Elmer's Den). Pupils are withdrawn from class and take part in activities which are very well organised and planned to take account of individual needs to improve their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, the pupils achieve well not only in the development of their literacy skills but also in learning how to behave appropriately.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and pupils' work and has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has taken appropriate action to improve standards and the quality of learning. Assessment information is of a good quality but the information needs bringing together in order to provide a comprehensive picture of pupils' achievements in each aspect of the subject and to give an overall picture to help target setting.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

76. Teachers provide good opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop their literacy skills. Teachers use correct terminology in all subjects to extend and develop pupils' vocabulary. Writing is used extensively across the curriculum especially in science and history, which makes the work done in literacy more meaningful to the pupils. For example, one pupil wrote 'Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the king because he didn't want to pray in the king's church.' Pupils use ICT well to word-process some of their work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to use their numeracy skills in problem solving situations.
- Assessment information is not collated well enough.

Commentary

77. The results of the 2004 national tests showed standards to be in line with all schools and similar schools. Inspection findings show that overall standards this year have improved and are now above average. Standards have improved because pupils are provided with good opportunities to apply their number skills. Pupils achieve well because teachers have clear and high expectations for all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well through the effective support of the teaching assistants. The small numbers of pupils from ethnic minorities make good progress and as a result they also achieve well.
78. In Year 2, pupils have a good command of basic number. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their numeracy skills to solve problems. For example, in working out the time a child would arrive at school if he/she was half an hour late. Pupils make good use of ICT to consolidate their number skills. Pupils are able to explain well how they have arrived at a particular answer. In Year 2, for example, one child commented, 'my brain's ready for anything' when asked to carry out mental calculations. Pupils have a good knowledge of the properties of shapes and know that right angles have 'square corners.'
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers provide challenging work that encourages pupils to maintain their concentration and try their best. This results in good achievement. In one excellent lesson in Year 2 pupils were really challenged to use their addition and subtraction skills with lively questioning to probe their understanding. 'Stretch the brain' sessions did just that. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and question keenly to encourage pupils to think a problem through in most classes. However, in one class pupils are allowed to shout out and this has a detrimental effect on the quality of learning. Teachers receive very good support from classroom assistants.
80. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She provides very good leadership and has undertaken monitoring of the subject. The school currently does not have any cohesive overview of what pupils know, understand and can do in the subject. Assessments are carried out but the results not brought together. Very good practice shows good use being made of Year 3 Key Objectives in one class to really challenge the higher attainers.

Mathematics across the curriculum

81. Overall, satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support other areas of the curriculum. For example, time lines in history and graphs used in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance in lessons between practical activities and developing factual knowledge.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils' understanding of what makes a test fair is not as good as their factual knowledge.

Commentary

82. Standards attained in science are above those found in most schools at the end of Year 2. All pupils, including children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. These findings are similar to those made at the time of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be good.
83. Pupils cover an appropriate range of scientific topics that involve a good number of investigations. Discussions held with pupils show that they enjoy their work, especially when they are given the opportunity to engage in practical activities. However, their knowledge of scientific facts is better than their understanding of what makes a test fair. This aspect needs more reinforcement because young children can quickly forget what they have been taught. At the time of the previous inspection, there was an over-reliance on worksheets to record the outcomes of investigations but this is not the case now. Pupils write up their observations competently when completing an experiment as in 'We planted some cress seeds. When we gave them sun and water they grew tall with white stems and green leaves.' As a result, science is now making a good contribution to the development of children's literacy skills. Effective links are also being made with some other subjects such as design and technology.
84. Teaching is good overall. In all the lessons seen, there was a strong practical element that deepened pupils' understanding and enhanced the quality of learning. In a Year 2 class, the pupils were working well towards an understanding of fair testing by comparing the distances travelled by three toy cars over different surfaces. The pupils' mathematical skills were appropriately reinforced as they carefully measured out and recorded how far each car had travelled. The introductory discussion teased out many interesting ideas such as how to ensure all three cars started at the same time with the same amount of force. A strength in the teaching is the practice in all classes of noting down what pupils want to learn before beginning a particular topic, for example, electricity. Questions posed by the children are often at a high level such as 'Where does electricity come from?' and 'How does it come to your home and get in things?' The school's ecological work makes a good contribution to the subject especially with regards to pupils' understanding of life processes and living things.
85. The subject is well led and managed. Information from assessments is being used well to track pupils' progress and attainment in each class. However, this information is not drawn together so that it can be analysed to find out what works well in the subject and what is in need of improvement. Resources are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good access to the ICT resources in the suite to learn new skills.
- ICT is incorporated well into other subjects.
- Good use is made of the expertise of a classroom assistant to support staff and pupils.
- The length of lessons needs to be reviewed so as to ensure pupils have the time to consolidate newly acquired skills.

Commentary

86. Standards of attainment in ICT are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. These judgements show an improvement on those made at the time of the previous inspection when standards were broadly average. All classes have access to the well-equipped computer suite. The school's newly acquired interactive whiteboard is beginning to be used competently to instruct pupils in basic ICT skills and to enhance learning across the curriculum
87. Overall, pupils in Year 2 demonstrate good skills in all strands of ICT. They use an art and design program to produce their own pictures in the style of William Morris. Pupils are able to competently type, change font and colour. They know how to interrogate protected websites to research the Victorians. Younger pupils use the 'Colour Magic program' very well to make repeated and abstract patterns of a good quality. They also produce some well-presented word processed statements based on the theme, 'All about me'.
88. The quality of teaching is good. One member of the non-teaching staff has good ICT skills and he not only supports pupils and staff well but also finds the time to organise an out of school computer club. In one lesson pupils achieved very well in inputting correctly a sequence of instructions into a roamer [programmable moving device] in getting it to move to a designated place. The lesson was successful because pupils were all given 'hands on' experience and time to correct any inputted instructions that were not accurate enough. Some lessons are too short and just as things are going well are brought to a close because another group is waiting to come into the suite.
89. The curriculum co-ordinator is new and provides satisfactory leadership and management but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards to check on the teaching and learning. The school does not have any system to assess and record the development of pupils' skills as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. ICT is used well in most other subjects to enable pupils to develop and refine their skills. It is used particularly well in history linked to topics about Florence Nightingale and life in 'Victorian Times', to research for information and in English to word process writing. In science, the 'expresso' program is used very well as part of a study of forces.

HUMANITIES

91. Too few lessons were seen in geography and history to make overall judgements about provision.
92. **Geography** is taught in blocks of time over the year. Because of this way of organising the curriculum, a scrutiny of work and displays showed little evidence of work. Work on a survey of road use in the locality and, from last year, map work showing the routes from pupils'

homes to the church show standards to be in line with expectation. As part of a history project on the Victorians, pupils have looked for evidence of the Victorian era's influence on the local community such as the names of streets, buildings and, indeed, the school.

93. In **history**, there is evidence of a range of pupils' work in a large number of displays in classes and main areas of the school. These indicate that topics such as the Victorians are covered well. One display consists of artefacts brought in by pupils; these are particularly successful in engaging pupils' interest in the past. Good use is made of resources from a local museum to stimulate pupils' interest.
94. Staff link history with literacy very successfully and much work in the subject is found in literacy lessons; for example, where pupils in Year 1 showed good knowledge of Florence Nightingale and the conditions in hospitals at the time of the Crimean War.
95. The teaching was satisfactory in the Year 2 lesson seen which was about the differences between the conditions in hospitals at the time of the Crimean War and now. Pupils are aware of the changes over time and have a sense of the past. The children drew pictures to show differences over time although only a few had time to label the drawings to demonstrate fully their understanding of these changes. Work in books is not always marked and, if it is, it does not help pupils improve.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from a range of visits and visitors.
- There is a lack of confidence in teaching the subject.
- The school recognises that the subject needs further development.

Commentary

96. Pupils reach standards that are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are not as good as at the time of the previous inspection when they were above expectation. Their achievement is satisfactory in their awareness and understanding of Christianity and Judaism. In a discussion with a group of pupils from Year 2, they showed some knowledge of the patron saints of Britain and Ireland, the importance of Shabbat in Judaism and that different foods are important in different religions.
97. Work in books shows that pupils have learnt about some Jewish and Christian festivals. There is little written work in books and staff use speaking and listening skills as the main means of teaching and learning in lessons. Marking does not help pupils to improve their work and is frequently mainly ticks even when the content is uninformed. School displays do not include pupils' work which is a missed opportunity to celebrate their learning.
98. Too few lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about teaching. However, inspection evidence shows there is a lack of confidence amongst staff in teaching the subject. In the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory although in one Year 2 lesson the real strengths of the teaching related to the expectations for literacy. In this lesson about Saint Patrick, the teacher made good links with history – a timeline of his life and geography – where Ireland is. Although the use of ICT was planned it was not used in practice.
99. The headteacher has taken over the subject leadership and management following a change in staff. She recognises that the subject needs developing. A start has been made to improving current provision. Training is planned to improve staff confidence and knowledge

which is a main priority. Weekly lessons are timetabled but some pupils did not feel they took place that regularly. Visits to a local abbey and churches and visitors to the school such as local clergy enhance the provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

100. Very few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education. It was not, therefore, possible to make judgements about provision in these curriculum areas. However, the abundance of art and design work on display in classes and around the school demonstrates that standards of attainment in art and design are above average.
101. Standards in **art and design** are above average by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well throughout the school. These judgements are an improvement on the ones made at the time of the previous inspection.
102. Pupils are offered a wide range of experiences using a variety of media. These include pastels, chalks and paints. Two lessons were observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and introduce pupils to a range of other artists' work to stimulate their thinking. For example in Year 2, pupils were inspired by the work of William Morris and a display of natural objects to produce their own effective designs using water colours. The quality of the finished products clearly demonstrated pupils' above average skills in drawing and painting.
103. The subject makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' personal development and the quality of the learning environment. A strength of the provision is in the good links made with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 have used their ICT skills well to create repeating and abstract patterns. The finished products were of a good quality.
104. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on standards and teaching in **design and technology**. Satisfactory planning is in place and throughout the school pupils are introduced to the full design and make process. Evidence of pupils' work to be found around the school shows that in Year 1 pupils have designed and made their own healthy sandwich. They have also used reclaimed materials to produce models of houses (based on the story of The Three Bears) and the fire station. Lessons are sometimes planned to link appropriately to pupils' work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2, inspired by the work of Mondrian, used their ICT skills effectively to design a bookmark before making it out of paper and card.
105. The subject has a newly appointed co-ordinator. There is no whole school approach to assessing pupils' work and using the information to identify strengths and weakness.
106. In **music** pupils sing with great enthusiasm during assemblies and enjoy the action songs. In the lessons seen they demonstrated a good sense of rhythm and pitch and teaching was good overall. In one very good lesson the teacher made good use of her guitar playing skills to accompany the singing. The way the subject is currently timetabled means that some lessons are very short and this sometimes means that worthwhile activities are curtailed at a stage when a few more minutes would provide opportunities for more pupils to play instruments. Resources are satisfactory overall but include some good multi-cultural instruments from the African continent.
107. Only one lesson was observed in gymnastics and two in dance. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement about standards or provision in all aspects of **physical education**. Attainment in dance in the lessons observed and in gymnastics was similar to that found in most schools and all pupils achieved satisfactorily. In the gymnastics lesson the pupils took responsibility for their own learning by putting out the equipment and worked well

together in pairs. In this lesson the teacher made good use of pupils to demonstrate good practice. The management of pupils is good overall and care is given to ensuring safe working practices.

108. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has drawn up an action plan to develop the quality of teaching and learning across the school. She has introduced a new scheme of work and drawn up a long-term curriculum plan for physical education to include dance, gymnastics and games. Assessment procedures for dance and gymnastics but not games have been put in place. However, the information has not yet been brought together to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject to help future planning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

109. Only one lesson was seen so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. The subject is covered mainly through circle times where staff lead discussions about a range of sensitive issues and pupils are able to state their views in an unthreatening environment. In the session observed pupils were learning about playing games fairly, and this was a well-organised and valuable session. Weekly sessions are planned and all staff are trained in circle time techniques. A very valuable part of the provision is the support for pupils with particular needs who need help to develop their emotional and social skills. A trained senior teaching assistant in a very well-resourced 'Elmer's Den' gives very good support to these children. The headteacher, who has relevant qualifications, has monitored the quality of teaching in order to promote good learning and teaching.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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