

INSPECTION REPORT

WABERTHWAITE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Millom

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112352

Headteacher: Mrs W Sharples

Lead inspector: Mike Warman

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 1 March 2005

Inspection number: 268184

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	47
School address:	Waberthwaite Millom Cumbria
Postcode:	LA19 5YJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Rachel Curry
Date of previous inspection:	7 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small primary school. There are 47 pupils on roll organised into two classes, the younger class catering for pupils in Reception and Years 1/2/3 and the older class catering for pupils in Years 4/5/6. There are significantly more pupils in the older class than there are in the younger one. There are two full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and one 0.2 teacher to cover the headteacher's administration time. The school serves the village of Waberthwaite and nearby villages. The attainment of children on entry to Reception is broadly average. Only two pupils are entitled to free school meals. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. Seven pupils are identified as having special educational needs which require the school to take appropriate action, including two with statements of special educational need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1516	Mike Warman	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Citizenship Music Special educational needs
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1718	Kay Charlton	Team inspector	English Science Design and technology Geography History Physical education Foundation Stage English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils have made very good progress since they started in Reception. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good as are the leadership and management of the school. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the end of Year 6 pupils' achievements are very good.
- Much of the teaching in the older class is excellent.
- Teaching is very good overall, although it ranges from good to excellent.
- Pupils make very good progress. They work hard and want to learn.
- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes. Relationships are excellent.
- The headteacher is a very good leader with very high aspirations for all pupils.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and are active partners in helping their children to make progress.
- The school's procedures for checking on its effectiveness are too informal so that opportunities are missed to raise the quality of teaching still further.

Improvement has been good since the school was previously inspected in 1999. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 are now higher. The high quality of teaching has been maintained as has the very good leadership and management. Communications with parents about the curriculum are now very good, resources for the physical development of children under 5 are good and the provision for pupils' cultural development is now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	B	A*	A*
Mathematics	B	B	A	A
Science	B	A*	A	A

Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. Caution is needed in interpreting this data as numbers of pupils in each of the year groups are small.

Pupils achieve very well. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Boys and girls do equally well. The Year 6 pupils who sat the tests in 2004 did very well indeed in comparison with the standards they had reached four years earlier when they were in Year 2. In English the results were in the top five per cent for all schools. Although there have been small year groups, and consequently the results tend to fluctuate from year to year, the results for pupils in Year 6 in 2004 were the best for several years and these high standards are reflected in the work seen in the current Year 6. Standards in Year 2 are above average overall. The children who started in Reception in September 2004 have made good progress, and a significant number are on course to exceed the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. Current standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are well above the expected levels. Challenging targets have been set for the pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 for the test results in 2005 which, evidence indicates, they are on track to reach.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. They behave very well and have very positive attitudes to school and to learning. Relationships are excellent. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. Levels of attendance are very high and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching is very good overall, with particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science in the older class. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach, which gives the pupils confidence as learners. Work is planned thoroughly and is carefully matched to the different ages and abilities within the classes so that all pupils can make very good progress. Teachers have a high expectation of what pupils can achieve and detailed support indicates how they can improve; consequently, pupils learn very effectively. They are very well behaved, work hard and happily meet the many intellectual challenges they are given. They respond very well to the very good and excellent teaching observed in many lessons. Although the teaching seen in the younger class was good it did not always have the focus, pace and challenge of that seen in the older class.

The curriculum is very good. It is enriched by many challenging opportunities, including a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The current curriculum for children in Reception is at least good for all the areas inspected in full. Provision for the care and welfare of all pupils is very good. There is a very strong partnership with parents, who support the school's work very effectively, and with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are very good. The headteacher is a very good leader who combines her leadership and teaching roles very well indeed and in the classroom leads by very strong example. She is strongly supported by the governing body and a committed staff team. Management is good but the way the school checks on its performance is too informal to ensure it maintains its present high standards and raises the quality of teaching still further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the school and the very good progress their children make. They feel their children are achieving very well and are happy. They are very positive about all aspects of its work and are pleased with the help they receive. The pupils are proud of and like their school and feel it helps them to achieve high standards.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to maintain the high standards are:

- Make more systematic arrangements for checking on the school's performance, particularly to bring the quality of teaching in the two classes closer together and make best use of the excellent practice seen in the class for older pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in the current Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. It is well above average in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 6.
- The very high standards seen in Year 6 are the result of much excellent teaching in that class.
- A significant number of children in Reception are on course to exceed the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and for personal and social education.

Commentary

1. The results of the mathematics tests for pupils in Year 2 in the summer of 2004 were above average but those for reading and writing were below and well below the standards seen in the current Year 2. There were only five pupils in that group and with very small numbers of pupils in year groups, it is expected that results will fluctuate from year to year, which can be seen in the school's results. The results over the last three years have not been as good as those seen in Year 6. However, the standards seen in the current Year 2 are above average in all three subjects.
2. The results of the English, mathematics and science tests for pupils in Year 6 were high in comparison with other schools nationally. In English they were in the top five per cent in the country. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher level 5 was well above the national average for all three subjects. Boys and girls did equally well in all three subjects. Crucially, the year group achieved high results when compared with their own previous attainment in Year 2. Although with small numbers of pupils in year groups results do tend to fluctuate, standards in 2004 were the highest for three years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4 (27.5)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.1 (28.1)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.9 (31.9)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3. The school has set challenging targets for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 to reach by the summer of 2005. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are well on course to achieve them.
4. Standards in ICT, have continued at a similar level to those seen at the last inspection and are well above expected levels. Religious education was not inspected during this inspection. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in other subjects of the curriculum. Overall, standards have improved since the school was last inspected.
5. Achievement by Year 6 is very good in English, mathematics and science. Very good progress can be seen in the lessons in the oldest class when the high quality of teaching inspires pupils to great effort. Pupils with special educational needs and those of higher ability

achieve equally as well as all other pupils as their needs are very well met. Achievement for pupils by Year 2 is good in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress made in the youngest class is good. The difference in the progress made in the two classes is linked to the differences in focus, pace and challenge in some lessons.

6. Although some children in Reception start school with higher skill levels than expected nationally, overall standards are broadly average. Children develop well in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum inspected and a significant number are on course to exceed the early learning goals expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1. They make good progress overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Overall, this aspect continues to be a very strong feature of the school. Pupils' cultural development is much improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are excellent.
- Pupils reflect the school's strong Christian ethos and show high levels of care and concern for each other.
- Very positive attitudes are established and pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Attendance rates are very high.

Commentary

7. Pupils are keen to come to school and they are proud of all it has to offer. They are happy, eager to learn and concentrate very well in lessons. Staff value each one as an individual and actively work towards the school's aim of 'fostering pupils' self-esteem' in order for them to be able 'to deal with both success and failure'. Pupils respond very positively to staff's high expectations. They develop high levels of confidence and they accept responsibility in a very mature way. A noticeable example of their confidence was when the pupils in the oldest class very effectively contributed to a whole school assembly telling visitors about their school and their responsibility is evident from the way they help the young children at break times.
8. Relationships are excellent and founded on mutual respect. Older and younger pupils work and play together very well in a family atmosphere and show concern for each other. Older pupils act as 'play leaders' and help to ensure that everyone has a happy playtime. In lessons, pupils work together very effectively in pairs and groups, and their level of co-operation is very high. Support for pupils who are new to the school is very good. The school's behaviour policy is operated consistently by all staff and pupils' behaviour is very good. The pupils are well-mannered and school is a harmonious community, free from bullying.
9. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school provides many rich opportunities for them to develop their spiritual awareness and reflect on their own values and beliefs as well as those of others. Times for quiet reflection and prayer occur at different times during the school day. These are handled very sensitively and pupils respond with a very real sense of reverence, for example when the headteacher read out a poem encouraging the pupils 'not to let anyone steal their dreams' they sat very quietly, listening intently. Pupils' moral development is very good. They learn to be responsible members of the school community and readily follow the school's rules. They are self-disciplined, thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of others.

10. Social development is very good. Adults know the pupils very well and there is a very good rapport between them often referring to friends and family who are known to each. Pupils of all ages learn from each other and they enjoy those occasions where the whole school operates as group. The many out-of-school events, including residential visits for the older pupils, play an important part in fostering pupils' social development. Pupils' cultural awareness is extended well and this aspect is much improved since the last inspection. Pupils show very good levels of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They benefit from the increased range of activities, including visitors to school and visits out of school that help them to understand about different cultures.

Attendance

Attendance rates are very high in comparison with similar schools. Pupils come to school on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/4

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Provision is very good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Curricular provision is very good. The school makes very good provision for the care and welfare of all its pupils. Teachers know pupils very well and provide very good support and guidance. The school has developed strong links with parents and values the support that it receives in return.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good, with particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science in the older class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work is matched very carefully to pupils' ages and ability and they are able to make very good progress by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers use detailed, supportive dialogue with their pupils to indicate how they can improve their work.
- Pupils learn very effectively. They are very well behaved, and work hard to meet the many intellectual challenges they are given.
- Teachers use ICT very well to support pupils' learning.
- The arrangements for assessing pupils' work are very good.

Commentary

11. All teaching seen during the inspection was at least good and a high proportion of lessons were either very good or outstanding. The quality of teaching has maintained the high standard seen at the previous inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3	5	6	0	0	0	0

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

12. Teachers plan very carefully, and will adjust their lessons if they find that pupils need more time to understand a particular point or are ready for more challenging work. This increases the progress pupils make. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subjects they teach and expect the pupils to work hard. Pupils respond positively because they respect their teachers' knowledge and ask questions confidently so that they can understand more clearly. All teachers use the computer linked interactive whiteboards very well to add stimulus and excitement to the introductions to lessons. Most lessons include a range of activities that is very well matched to pupils' different abilities, enabling everyone to be fully involved and consequently to be successful in their work in groups. Teachers make effective use of their knowledge of pupils' progress to set work at the correct levels of difficulty and to adjust the pace of learning. The key to the very good and excellent teaching is the very clear focus on the lesson objectives, careful explanation and attention to detail so that all pupils understand the concept, and a high level of pace and challenge. This results in pupils of all abilities achieving as well as they can. For example, in an excellent English lesson pupils were reading and interpreting challenging poems, analysing the messages and moods conveyed by the author. The structure of the lesson and the quality of teaching meant that pupils were able to express their ideas and opinions with a high degree of confidence. Not all lessons seen had the same high level of focus, pace and challenge. The well-trained and skilled teaching assistants play a very important part in supporting individual pupils or groups within the classroom or in a quiet area where they can work uninterrupted. They give particularly good support to pupils with special educational needs who consequently achieve very well.
13. Pupils learn effectively because they are very well taught. Most lessons move forward briskly, but with sufficient time for each activity to be completed in sufficient depth. Pupils find the resources teachers use very stimulating and in discussion said that they particularly enjoyed using the internet to find out information for their topics. All teachers use ICT very well to support pupils' learning and make lessons interesting. Pupils are very well behaved, want to learn and work hard to meet the many challenges they are given. During discussion pupils said they are expected to work hard and know how the school helps them do well.
14. Homework is set on a regular basis and in accordance with the school's published policy. Parents at the meeting felt that homework played an important part in their child's learning and high standards. The level is similar to that found in many schools, and many of the tasks are opportunities for research or individual investigation, and play an important part in consolidating class learning and giving pupils opportunities to extend their knowledge.
15. The results of regular assessments are used effectively to set targets and measure pupils' progress towards them. Books are marked carefully, and contain comments that show the pupils how they can improve. Teachers take time to explain to pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Pupils have individual targets in English and mathematics and know that they need to work hard to achieve them. Pupils with special educational needs have clear individual education plans which set out the steps they need to take to improve. These are shared with parents as well as pupils, and are reviewed on a regular basis.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is very good. It is fully inclusive and is very well enriched by many opportunities and activities. The accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is very well organised to take account of the small school situation.
- A wide range of interesting and enjoyable opportunities are provided and the curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors.
- Very good account is taken of individual pupils' needs.

Commentary

16. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is very well matched to individual pupils' needs. There is a systematic teaching of skills and knowledge in all subjects through the school with full account taken of individual pupils' abilities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils are very well supported. Individual Education Plans are carefully worked out to ensure that pupils' needs are met and they make progress. Very good provision is made for those pupils who are more able by planning work that is always challenging.
17. The curriculum is very well organised to suit the small school situation. Planning is carefully worked out to cover the expected areas set out for the Foundation Stage and for Years 1 to 6 of the National Curriculum in classes containing many different year groups. Opportunities for older and younger pupils to learn from each other are used to advantage so that both age ranges gain. For example, when children in Reception told the older pupils in the class how they had made symmetrical shapes with coloured tiles.
18. There is a very good range of activities which enrich the curriculum. Visitors, such as the Life Education Bus, the circus workshop and the local clergy, and visits out, such as those to Hadrian's Wall, Tullie House and St Bees, add depth and relevance. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument and take part in the school's dramatic or musical productions. The school has recently gained the Activemark Award and involves pupils in a wide range of sporting activities. There are also a good range of clubs run by staff and also parent volunteers. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for their move from a very small primary school to a large secondary school environment, a fact remarked on by parents.
19. The provision made for pupils' personal development is very good. There are effective drugs awareness and sex education programmes as well as a wide range of other activities that successfully promote pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils of all ages are encouraged very well to become responsible members of the community. The school's link with the parish church plays an important part in developing pupils' understanding of Christianity.
20. The school is very well staffed with teachers and other staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is good. The school grounds provide a valuable resource for play and learning and are used to good effect. Resources for learning are good. The range and variety of books available in the school library are good. Resources for information and communication technology are good and improved from the previous inspection.
21. Overall, the school has maintained the positive picture noted at the previous inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school pays very good attention to the care, safety and well being of all its pupils. They are well guided, advised and supported throughout their time in school. The school involves pupils very effectively in its continued development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for children starting school are very effective in helping them to settle in quickly.
- All staff support pupils very well so that they are able to learn quickly and do their best.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to say what they think about their school.

Commentary

22. All staff have very successfully created a warm, friendly family atmosphere where pupils are very well cared for. All necessary health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out regularly and staff are trained to provide first aid. The headteacher has undertaken child protection training and has ensured that other members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. Pupils indicate they feel safe in school and particularly value the fact that there is always an adult to turn to in time of need. They say they like being part of a small school because 'we all look after each other'.
23. Induction arrangements for children starting in Reception are very good. Children have the opportunity to visit the school several times before they start in their Reception year. This helps staff get to know the new children very well before they start school and helps the children develop very good, trusting relationships with staff and to feel secure. Pupils who join the school later on are also well supported. They are paired up with another child who has responsibility for showing them around and helping them to settle into the daily routines.
24. Pupils' personal and academic development is well monitored. All staff know the pupils very well as individuals. Staff are skilled at analysing the outcomes of tests and use the results to set challenging individual targets. Teachers use marking and discussion successfully to help pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to achieve their targets and improve their work. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have a tight focus so that pupils are able to learn effectively in small steps. The pupils and their parents are fully included in setting new targets and reviewing progress towards those previously agreed.
25. Although there is not a formal school council, the pupils are very well involved in the running of the school. The family atmosphere and excellent relationships ensure that pupils feel comfortable in raising issues during class discussion times, confident in the knowledge that their views will be listened to and valued. For example, the pupils have contributed to the development of the playground, and older pupils have attended training to be playleaders. They wear distinctive blue caps and help the adults by looking after younger children and organising playground games. This helps to raise the self-esteem of the older pupils as well as helping the younger children. Pupils' responses to the questionnaire and discussions with pupils during the inspection indicate that they feel happy and safe in school and that they trust their teachers and would be happy to approach them for help and advice.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents support the school very well.
- The school keeps parents well informed about school events and their children's education.
- Very good links with the community enhance pupils' learning.
- Some reports to parents are not very informative.

Commentary

26. The school has successfully created a very good partnership with parents that significantly benefits their children's education. A high proportion of parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and were extremely supportive of all aspects of the school, with no significant concerns. A number of parents help out in school regularly and run activities such as the football club, art club and cycling proficiency. Parents give good support at home by listening to their children reading and ensuring that homework is completed. The school encourages and supports parents to further their qualifications and some parents have trained as better reading partners. An active parents' group organises a range of social activities which also raises money. This additional funding has been used to purchase items such as mathematical toys and atlases.
27. The school keeps parents very well informed about school life. A weekly newsletter is clear and easy to read. It also celebrates pupils' achievements in and out of school and contains a useful summary of future key dates. A summary of what the children will be doing in each curriculum area is sent out to parents at the start of each term. This enables parents to plan ahead and to support their children's learning at home. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when it was identified as a key issue. The school also helps parents to understand what their children are learning by providing courses for parents from time to time. Currently six parents are attending a course called "Keeping up with your children". Child care is available for those who need it.
28. Pupils' annual written reports vary in quality but overall they are good. The best contain a number of clear targets and details of the levels achieved in the core subjects. Some, however, are not so informative because they do not have this level of detail.
29. The pupils' learning is enhanced by the school's very good links with the community. Local clergy come into school and the pupils visit the church, taking part in events such as Christingle. The school supports the Charter Fair held in a nearby village. People from the community help in school and run clubs for the children. For example, pupils from the school have met visitors from Japan as part of an Anglo-Japanese initiative organised by a major local business. Staff from the company have also provided high quality education about electricity for the pupils. One local business is sponsoring the school's sports kit.
30. Pupils also benefit from the school's very good links with other schools in the local consortium. These links allow the school access to additional funding as well as the opportunity to work on projects such as the Primary Network Learning Strategy. Pupils also receive specialist teaching from staff of the secondary school and the opportunity to share resources and specialist facilities. This link helps pupils make the transfer from a small to a large school successfully.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher, key staff and the governing body is very good. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good. The management of the school and the leadership of the governing body are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a very effective leader who has very high aspirations for all pupils.
- The school has a high commitment to the inclusion of all as important members of the school community.
- Key staff make an important contribution to the overall development of the school.
- The governing body is effective and along with the headteacher has a shared vision for the school and a clear understanding about how it can develop and grow.
- The monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous to improve the good teaching in the younger class to very good.

Commentary

31. The overall leadership and management of the school continue to be very good as at the last inspection.
32. The headteacher is a very effective leader who actively works to promote the school's strong Christian ethos. Her vision, strong sense of purpose and commitment to the inclusion of every child as an important member of the community underpins all of the school's work. She has very high aspirations for pupils and as a result they learn that the 'only limit is the sky'. She is very effective as a team leader in expecting and enabling colleagues to take part in and achieve the school's aims. She leads very effectively by example and has ensured the staff team's commitment to continuing improvement. As a result all staff are enthusiastic about their role in future developments.
33. The headteacher is very ably supported by key staff. Together they have successfully overseen developments particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT since the last inspection. The co-ordination of special educational needs is very effective.
34. Governors work closely with the headteacher. Although many are new to the work, they have a clear view of the needs of the school and what must happen to promote further development. They are actively involved in all aspects of the school's work. Suitable procedures are in place to ensure that major decisions are well thought out and in line with the school improvement plan. In a general way, governors are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses but, taken overall, their systems for checking on the performance of the school are too informal. For example, much of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is informal and not based sufficiently on in-depth observations. As a result there has been insufficient opportunity to enhance the already 'good teaching' in the younger class to raise it to an even higher level. Very efficient systems ensure that the budget is used to best effect and in line with educational priorities. Performance management procedures are in place and they are closely monitored by the governing body. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are successful. There is full compliance with all statutory requirements.
35. The quality of management is good. The school has effective systems that help it understand its current position and plan for improvement. The school sets challenging targets, particularly in the core subjects, for individual pupils' progress resulting from a careful analysis of their results. Administration is very effective and the budget is managed very well. The headteacher and governors are very careful in applying the principles of best value and, overall, the school provides very good value for money because resources are used very effectively and pupils achieve very well by the time they leave.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	141,850
Total expenditure	133,342
Expenditure per pupil	2,963

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,330
Balance carried forward to the next	8,508

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall, the provision is good.

Children start in Reception at the beginning of the autumn term following their fourth birthday. On entry, their skills and knowledge are generally in line with those expected. Overall, children's achievement is good and almost all meet the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical learning by the time they start in Year 1. A significant number attain above this. In the area of personal, social and emotional development children achieve very well and most exceed the early learning goals. Children with special educational needs are very well supported so that they attain the targets set out in their education plans.

The school has maintained the positive picture noted at the last inspection. Teaching overall is good and staff work closely as a team. There has been significant improvement in the provision made for children to undertake climbing and balancing activities. Planning is detailed and good links are made between the areas of learning through the use of different themes. The progress made by all children is very carefully monitored and assessed. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and a very good partnership is established with parents.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well.
- Relationships between children and adults are excellent.
- Children work together well in groups and show good co-operation.
- All adults promote learning consistently in all activities.

Commentary

36. As a result of very good teaching, children achieve very well. The adults work very well as a team. They provide good role models and they work consistently to develop children's understanding, encouraging them to take turns in activities, play together and share resources. Praise and encouragement are used very well, raising children's confidence and self-esteem. Relationships are excellent and children enjoy coming to school. Children behave very well, encouraged by the consistent and fair management of behaviour. Routines are well organised and children have good opportunities to make choices and work independently through a range of interesting activities. Children develop independence in their personal hygiene very well. The school provides very good opportunities for the children to develop an understanding that people have different needs, views and beliefs that should be respected.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Most children are on course to attain the expected standards by the end of the year.
- Children can achieve more in writing.

Commentary

37. Achievement in reading and speaking and listening is very good. In the early stages of writing it is good. Staff have a good knowledge of teaching children of this age, and there is a suitably high focus on this area of learning. Activities are well planned and adults guide children through them ensuring that their progress is very carefully monitored and provision builds on the children's previous learning. The careful and consistent way in which children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills is a strong feature of the teaching. This was especially noticeable in the outdoor play associated with 'a road traffic accident'. Staff engage children's interest in books very well, for example when the teacher discussing one entitled 'Monkey Puzzle' used the very colourful pictures to talk about different animals. In a range of situations children are introduced to good quality books and texts, and the opportunities for them to handle and enjoy books independently are well developed. Writing skills are developed well through a number of activities including writing in the role-play area and writing about events in the children's own lives. There is good teaching to ensure children develop good letter formation. There are occasions, however, where children of this age work for too long on writing activities that are directed by an adult rather than as a result of their own thinking.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on numbers and children achieve particularly well in this aspect of mathematics.
- There is a good pace to children's learning and they enjoy mathematics.
- Children learn well in all aspects of mathematical development.
- Occasionally too long is spent on activities directed by adults.

Commentary

38. Teaching is good and children of different abilities achieve well. Effective planning ensures that there is a structured and systematic approach to the teaching of mathematics. Staff ensure that there is a good sense of purpose to children's learning, for example when they learnt about symmetrical shapes by making patterns with different shaped tiles. Occasionally, however, the children's independent thinking is not fully extended since they spend too long on activities that are directed by adults. Nevertheless, children talk with good understanding about the properties of different shapes, using the correct mathematical language. There is a particularly good emphasis on number work and as a result many children count confidently and reliably. They learn to carry out simple calculations, such as when adding or taking away 'one'. Many recognise numerals and use their correct name. All learn to record their thinking in a variety of ways and classroom displays effectively reinforce children's knowledge of and familiarity with numbers. A majority of the children are on track to reach the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the school year, and a significant number are likely to attain beyond this.
39. In the short time available for the inspection it was not possible to observe three areas of learning in depth, namely knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Teachers' planning and a consideration of pupils' work shows that a suitable programme is in place for each area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good** and standards have continued to rise since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain high standards by Year 6.
- Pupils of different abilities make very good progress over time.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall.
- Leadership is very good.

Commentary

40. Standards are above average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievements are very good by the time they leave the school.
41. Standards in speaking and listening are high by Year 6. Pupils of all ages listen carefully in lessons and contribute ideas with confidence. They show respect for each other's ideas and are prepared to accept advice about improving the ways in which they communicate. Older pupils are prepared to express their opinions and ideas openly, and are keen to 'have a go' even when discussing complex text. A particularly good example was when pupils gave explanations for the meaning of words such as 'to ravish the sensuous mind' and 'stilly couches she' taken from Thomas Hardy's poem about the 'Titanic'.
42. A strong emphasis is given to reading throughout the school and pupils develop a good sense of enjoyment in reading. They learn to read with accuracy and understanding. At an early age pupils can explain that different books are organised in different ways and that some are story books and others give information. By Year 2, many read fluently and with suitable expression and are good at predicting what might happen next in the story. In Year 6, pupils show very good levels of comprehension and are developing clear ideas about their favourite authors. Most appreciate the underlying ideas and subtleties in text. Pupils can explain clearly why they like certain books giving informed reasons for their choice, for example, about the way the author uses situations to create suspense. Pupils of different ages use a library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages successfully to find information from books.
43. Writing is developed very well by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils of all ages are benefiting from the school's recent focus on improving writing. In Years 1 and 2, they develop good understanding about the need to include different characters to make a story interesting. Most pay good attention to letter formation and present their work very well. Spelling is usually good. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' writing is developed very effectively. Pupils further develop their understanding about the need to write in different styles for different purposes and show good understanding of this in their work. Progressively they learn to draft and redraft their work in order to achieve a final copy. Care is taken with presentation and handwriting is good. Pupils use vocabulary in imaginative ways, for example when writing about fables.
44. Teaching is very good overall. The teaching seen was excellent in the older class and good in the younger class. Staff are very secure in the subject and use the technical vocabulary associated with it well, for example when describing grammatical structures. A strong focus is given to teaching reading and pupils receive a significant amount of individual attention from adults in learning to read. There is a well thought out approach to encouraging pupils' independence in reading. Good attention is paid to the wide range of levels of understanding in the classes and activities are set which are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. All pupils are given targets to indicate how they might improve their work and pupils try hard to achieve these. Pupils concentrate very well throughout lessons. They respond particularly

well to the very high expectations which are made of them, and also the excellent range of teaching and learning strategies used, in the older class. By contrast, there is not always sufficient challenge to fully extend the learning of all pupils in the younger class. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work very well together and pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and these support teaching and learning very well, for example when staff and pupils enjoy a moment of humour together.

45. Leadership of the subject is very effective. Teachers work together on subject development. They have achieved good improvement since the last inspection and have clear ideas about the next steps forward. Resources are good and the library is used effectively to support learning. Information and communication technology is used very well to support teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented and adapted successfully to suit a small school situation. Cross-curricular links are strong. Pupils often write creatively and at length in other subjects. High level skills of discussion are evident in subjects such as science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils are very well taught and make very good progress.
- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- The subject is very well led.
- Good use is made of assessment to modify the curriculum, to track individual pupils' progress and to set targets.

Commentary

47. Standards in Year 6 are well above average, and pupils are on course to achieve very good results in the 2005 national tests, especially at the higher levels. This is because they are taught to a consistently high standard and the teacher has high but realistic expectations of what the pupils can achieve with effort. The pupils themselves enjoy mathematics and are very keen to be successful. They talk about how they like having to solve problems and working out the correct solution. Pupils' books demonstrate very good progress within lessons and assessments indicate very good progress term by term against challenging targets. Pupils demonstrate a very good knowledge of all areas of the mathematics curriculum. They have good computation skills and work with a high level of accuracy.
48. The quality of teaching is very good because teachers have a very secure mathematical knowledge, plan very thoroughly, drawing on the guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy, and take great care to set work that challenges and interests pupils at the correct level of difficulty. Pupils learn very effectively because they are taught to understand mathematical concepts and ideas, rather than just learning the mechanical processes that will get a correct answer. Teachers use mathematical language extensively in their teaching. Pupils listen carefully, and use the 'new' vocabulary accurately in their own answers. Pupils in Year 6 were observed working on an investigation of angles confidently using the correct terms for the different types of angle and the shapes within which they were contained. In this lesson the teacher was very clear that the measurements had to be 'within one degree'. This increases their mathematical understanding and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs receive individual help when needed, are fully included in all lessons, and make very good

progress. Pupils who are more able are given very challenging work that requires them to use their knowledge in a flexible way. For example, during the lesson on angles they moved on to seeing the relationship between the angles being measured, the sum of the angles at the particular point.

49. The subject is very well led and managed. School and national tests results are analysed carefully and changes are made to the curriculum where necessary. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully year by year, and targets are set that are realistic as well as challenging. Information and communication technology is well used to support pupils' understanding in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Pupils make very good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects by, for example, making accurate measurement in science and understanding the sequence of historic events on a chronological time line. The science books of pupils in Years 5 and 6 show how they use their knowledge of mathematics to support their investigations about forces and the effect of friction. Other work shows pupils using different types of graph to record the effect of temperature on the germination of seeds.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain high standards and achieve very well by Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall.
- There is a strong emphasis on investigational science.
- The subject is very well led.

Commentary

51. Pupils of different abilities achieve very well in all aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school. Standards are above average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6.
52. Pupils achieve a particularly high standard of investigative work with increasing development of scientific skills of observation, prediction, testing, recording and analysing as they move through the school. As they progress they learn to communicate their findings by drawings, diagrams, bar charts, graphs and short and increasingly well thought out reports. Their recorded work shows a developing understanding of science with noticeably improved recording of results as pupils move through the school. Older pupils identify patterns in data and give reasons for their conclusions. They can explain the need for fair testing and also the importance of undertaking tests more than once to see if results are replicated. Pupils developing knowledge of scientific vocabulary is evident and older ones explain scientific concepts such as 'adaptation' and 'classification' very well.
53. The quality of teaching in science is very good overall. Excellent teaching was observed in the oldest class. Good teaching was observed in the younger class. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and teachers know their pupils well, and capture and sustain their interest very effectively. They plan interesting activities with very effective use of resources, including information and communication technology, so that pupils are enthusiastic about science. Planning is carefully thought out so that questioning and tasks are matched to pupils' different abilities. This ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to make progress at their own rate, building up their knowledge and understanding in science. Learning is also very effective because teachers use questioning particularly well to establish how much pupils have remembered from earlier lessons and to ensure they understand the scientific vocabulary they will be using. In the excellent lesson, the teacher set a particularly high

expectation of the pupils in terms of work and behaviour and the pupils responded to this very well indeed. In the younger class not the same level of challenge and expectation was set and as a result pupils' learning was not fully extended, though the lesson was still good.

54. The subject is led very effectively and overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The teachers plan together and plans provide good working documents. Assessment is very effective and the information used to guide future work. The outdoor environment and good resources in school are used very well to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used very well to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils achieve very well.
- The ICT resources are used well.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above those expected nationally which is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
56. By Year 2, pupils learn the basic operations of switching the computers on and off, loading and saving work, and controlling the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse. The school has developed a good range of appropriate software so that pupils enjoy using the computer. Pupils use the computer for a wide range of purposes, for example to write, draw pictures, analyse data, make music and play games. By Year 6, they use ICT very competently, for example to present information, such as when using a multi-media package, exchange information and ideas with others in a variety of ways, including through the use of e-mail and the internet, and also to note patterns and trends in data. They learn to control events, such as a lighting system in a model Christmas tree or juggling clown. Throughout the school, pupils talk very knowledgeably about the use of ICT in everyday life.
57. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are very confident in the subject. Pupils learn very well because they are given clear instructions and plenty of opportunities to experiment, practise and learn from their mistakes. They also learn quickly because tasks are interesting and teachers' own positive approaches and interesting ideas catch their attention. For example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were planning how to control the lighting on their own model, the teacher used one of her own to demonstrate the task and also showed how evaluation improves the finished article. The teaching assistants support the quality of teaching very well as they have a good knowledge of the subject and confidently work with pupils extending their knowledge and helping with any minor difficulties with the programs. There is a clear system of assessment in the subject.
58. The subject is very well led with significant improvements since the last inspection. Resources are much improved and used very well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Staff use ICT very well in all areas of the curriculum especially in the way the computer linked interactive white board is used to add interest and excitement to the start of many lessons and to provide further stimulus and maintain interest during lessons. Examples of work seen include the use of computer generated Rangoli patterns to support a lesson in religious education, graphical representation of the results of research on mountains and the combination of text and graphics to produce posters to advertise the Christmas Fair.

HUMANITIES

60. No observations could be made of geography or history so these subjects were sampled using pupils' work, discussions with pupils and school planning. It is not possible, therefore, to judge provision, standards or the quality of teaching.
61. A scrutiny of pupils' work in **geography and history** and discussions with them show an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' practical understanding of the subjects which supports their learning very well. Leadership of the subjects is good with a clear programme based on national guidance that ensures that pupils are gaining appropriate skills and knowledge. A wide range of visits out of school, such as the residential for older pupils, and visits to Hadrian's Wall and local places of interest, supports these subjects very well.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. It was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education so these subjects were sampled. It is not possible, therefore to judge provision, standards or the quality of teaching.
63. An examination of the range of work on display and planning indicates that in **art and design** the school provides pupils with a good range of experiences and opportunities to develop their imagination and techniques. From the work seen it is evident that pupils build up good skills as they move through the school using a variety of media. The subject is well led. There is a good scheme of work that takes account of national guidance and the mixed aged classes.
64. In **music**, from the small amount of singing seen during an assembly it is evident pupils enjoy this and do it well. Planning shows a good range of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills and imagination. Specialist music teaching supports the curriculum very well and many pupils have opportunities to learn an instrument. The subject is well led with a good scheme of work.
65. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that in **design and technology** due weighting is given to each element of the process. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of planning out their work in advance, the need for accuracy when making items and critical evaluation in order to improve their work. All of the work seen shows pupils are developing their making skills effectively as well as their creativity and imagination. Teachers' planning and records show there is a suitable range of activities undertaken that includes producing food, working with textiles and creating objects from paper and wood. The subject is led effectively.
66. In **physical education**, there is suitable coverage of all areas of the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to participate in an appropriate range of physical activities, including games, swimming, dance and athletics, outdoor and adventurous activities and also some gymnastics. Teachers' planning shows that the National Curriculum requirements are met. The lack of a school hall places restrictions on gymnastics in particular but the school manages the situation well and makes good use of a nearby community hall. The subject is well led.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

67. No overall judgement of provision is possible because no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, pupils' personal development is a very high priority within the school and they are given a wide range of opportunities to discuss ideas, feelings and matters of importance within a context of trust and mutual respect. Pupils of all ages are mature and articulate, and discussions with them about their work indicate that they hold firm personal views, but respect those of others with different opinions. Pupils are made fully aware of social and moral issues appropriate to their ages and levels of understanding, and are actively encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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