

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BISHOP HARVEY GOODWIN SCHOOL
(Church of England Voluntary Aided)

Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 133727

Headteacher: Mrs. I. Roberts-Green

Lead inspector: Mrs. D. J. Brigstock

Dates of inspection: 14th-16th March 2005

Inspection number: 273995

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: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 422

School address: Harold Street
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Cumbria
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: The Reverend Jim Hyslop

Date of previous inspection: No previous inspection

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Bishop Harvey Goodwin is a large voluntary aided primary school with 422 pupils on roll. It is the only voluntary aided Church of England primary school in Carlisle. The school was created in 2002 by an amalgamation of an infant and junior school. It received an Investor in Excellence award in 2002, and in 2004 it received two more awards: the Cumbria Healthy Schools award and Investors in People. The school has well-established 'Before and After School Clubs,' and is registered for childcare provision. The socio-economic profile of the immediate area is below average and 34.5 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Twenty seven per cent, which is an above average proportion of pupils, have special educational needs (SEN) and 2.4 per cent have a statement of special educational needs. This is also above average. Nearly half of the children with SEN have moderate learning difficulties and just over a quarter of these have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Other pupils with SEN have severe learning problems, problems with speech and communication, or are on the autistic spectrum. Almost all pupils are of white British origin and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Due to the recent establishment of the school, there are no reliable figures to indicate the level of pupil mobility in or out of the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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30691	Mrs. K. Yates	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Special Educational Needs, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is very effective and provides very good value for money. Pupils' achievement is very good overall due to the very good quality of leadership and teaching, and pupils' good personal development.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent vision of the headteacher and governors raises expectations of pupils and staff.
- Key staff are very effective in their roles.
- Very good teaching and learning enable pupils' very good achievement in English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Children's achievement in the foundation stage is good overall and very good in the nursery.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not developed well, nor used enough to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Assessment is very good in English, and good in mathematics and science, but underdeveloped in all other subjects.
- Permanent members of staff manage pupils' behaviour very well.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which are very well attended.

This is the school's first inspection. Therefore there is no judgement on improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals; as this is a new school, the usual comparison against schools with similar standards in Year 2 is not made.*

Pupils' achievement is very good overall. Current standards in Year 6 are well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English and geography (the only other subject where secure judgements could be made), and this reflects very good progress from children's well below average standards on entry to the school. Pupils' achievement throughout Years 1 to 6 is very good in English, mathematics and science, and good in geography; it is also very good in PSHE. Standards in the current Year 2, where one third of the pupils have SEN, are below average in English, and average in mathematics, science and geography. Standards in reception are below average; children's achievement is good overall and very good in the nursery because of the very good quality of teaching and planning in all areas of learning. Despite their good learning, few children are expected to reach the goals expected nationally by the end of the foundation stage.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well throughout the school when supported by their own teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) because these staff are very skilled in managing pupils' learning needs and their relationships with pupils are very good.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' attitudes towards school are good and behaviour is satisfactory overall. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good overall. Teaching and learning are very good, and consistently very good in the nursery and in Year 6. Lessons are very thoroughly planned and support staff are closely involved in pupils' learning, particularly for pupils with SEN, and these are significant factors in pupils' achievement. The very good provision in PSHE has raised pupils' self-esteem and belief in their capacity to learn. Teachers' expectations are high, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' marking is effective in showing pupils how to improve their work, but they do not use ICT frequently enough in lessons and some teachers lack confidence in this area. Assessment systems are effective in English, mathematics and science but are underdeveloped in other subjects. The curriculum is good and is enriched very well. The school cares for its pupils very well. The accommodation is good overall, although the school recognises that some areas in the foundation stage need refurbishment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Overall the governance of the school is very good, and the governors' work in promoting and driving the school's vision forward is excellent. All statutory requirements are met. Through a detailed and very well planned school improvement plan and programme of monitoring, the headteacher, in partnership with a very strong senior leadership team, has successfully raised the quality of teaching and learning. Leadership and management are very good in the foundation stage, English, PSHE and SEN, and good in science and assessment. Other subject co-ordinators are still developing in their roles, and their leadership and management are currently satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents are very positive about the school. A minority are concerned about pupils' behaviour. The inspection team found that skilled, permanent staff consistently manage some challenging behaviour from a few pupils very well. During the inspection, the employment of some temporary teachers at very short notice meant that the continuity of the school's normally strong behaviour management strategies was disrupted, and as a result a minority of pupils misbehaved in lessons. With the assistance of school-based classroom assistants and LSAs, behaviour in these rooms improved over the three days of the inspection. Pupils have a very good opinion of the school. They are positive that they learn well and recognise that most pupils behave well most of the time. They know that there are adults to turn to if they are in trouble.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise the profile of ICT, and improve teacher confidence in using it throughout the school.

- Develop and implement assessment systems in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Current standards are below average in reception, improving to average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6 overall. From their well below average attainment on entry to school this represents very good achievement, overall, for all groups of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in the nursery and in Year 6 is consistently very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well in Years 1 to 6 and well in the foundation stage.
- Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics, science and PSHE.

Commentary

1. In the Year 6 national tests in 2004, results in English and mathematics were average. They were above average in science. Compared to similar schools, they were above average in mathematics and well above average in English and science. A well above average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 5 standard in English and science and an above average proportion attained this higher standard in mathematics. Pupils' achievement was very good in all three subjects.
2. The current Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Their achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science. During the inspection, pupils' achievement in Year 6 was consistently very good because of high quality teaching. Teachers' very good use of assessment information and the school's provision of booster classes are effectively raising standards, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.1 (25.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In Year 2, pupils' results in the national tests were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics compared to schools nationally. In science, teachers' assessments indicated that almost all pupils attained the expected levels and an above average number of pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard. This is above average overall. Compared to similar schools, results were well above average in writing and science, above average in reading and average in mathematics. Pupils' achievement

was very good in reading and writing and good in mathematics. Some of the success in science is due to teachers' targeting of higher attaining pupils through testing. The results of these assessments are used to plan more challenging work for this group of pupils.

- In the current Year 2, a third of the pupils have SEN, and their main learning difficulties are in English. Currently, they are attaining average standards in mathematics and science and below average standards in reading and writing. The achievement of this group of pupils is very good in reading and writing, mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.2 (15.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.9 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Achievement in the foundation stage is good overall. It is very good in the nursery, where the quality of teaching is consistently very good. The children's attainment on entry to school is well below average, and this shows most clearly in their poor skills in language and communication. Teachers' assessments and the findings from this inspection indicate that, despite their good learning, few children are likely to reach the goals expected nationally.
- Achievement of pupils with SEN is very good throughout Years 1 to 6. Pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs) have specific short-term targets and teachers use these well when planning class work. In addition, very good use is made of learning support assistants (LSAs), who are very well qualified and contribute very well to pupils' learning. The outcomes of assessments are used successfully to plan the next stage of learning for individual pupils. In the foundation stage, children with SEN achieve well. This is because the children in the nursery are only in school for half the day, so the impact over time of the very good teaching for this group is less than it is in the rest of the school.
- PSHE has the status of a core subject, such as English or mathematics. Children enter the school with well below average standards and by Year 6 their achievement is very good. This is reflected in their willingness to take responsibility, their attitudes towards learning and their self-belief in their abilities. It is also seen in the very good relationships they have with the permanent staff and other adult helpers in the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Behaviour, attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils show very good interest in school life and the range of activities provided.
- Permanent staff manage pupils' behaviour very well but pupils do not respond well to changes in teachers.
- The school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment.

- The PSHE programme has had a positive impact on attitudes to learning, which are good.
- The pupils are very well aware of the principles that distinguish right from wrong.

Commentary

8. The majority of pupils enjoy school; they concentrate well, are interested in lessons and take part in many of the after-school clubs. Pupils are proud of their uniform and understand the symbolism and colours it represents. They act as monitors in class and at assemblies. The older pupils know that they are responsible for the well-being of younger pupils. Younger pupils identify Year 5 and 6 pupils by the colour of their uniforms and expect them to help them out of any difficulties. In assemblies (Worship Time), older pupils show great sensitivity as they shepherd younger ones into the hall, sit with them, and are responsible for caring for them. Older pupils are included in a rota of responsibilities, such as manning the outside doors at playtimes and lunchtimes, and looking out for minor accidents, which they report to adults. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to join the very democratic school council.
9. Permanent staff have very good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour very well in stimulating lessons where behaviour is often very good. Behaviour is also good around school. Pupils are polite and open doors ahead of you. They are proud of their tidy school. No graffiti or vandalism was witnessed. However, the school is constantly aware that it does have a number of pupils with challenging behaviour who can disrupt lessons, and this was evident where classes were taken by temporary staff, at very short notice. These teachers did not know the pupils well or the strategies for behaviour management that worked well with individual pupils, resulting in some low-level disruption to other pupils' learning. This is why behaviour is satisfactory rather than good. With support from the senior leadership team and permanent classroom assistants and LSAs, behaviour did improve during the days of the inspection. All staff in the foundation stage have high expectations of all children. They are well behaved because teachers manage them well and they display positive attitudes to learning. Despite this, most children are unlikely to meet the goals expected for them in personal and social education. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into classes. They behave well as a result of good management by teachers and support assistants. They display good attitudes to learning.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	419	5	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0

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

10. Relationships are very good and bullying and racist problems are rare. The school has very good procedures to deal with either. Through the extensive PSHE curriculum, pupils are given confidence to report problems to an adult, and staff are aware of strategies to 'nip incidents in the bud.' Pupils gain in confidence throughout their school life.

11. Pupils' spiritual development is good. The school allows occasions for good spiritual awareness, whether in worship through the creed or a minute's reflection. The children are aware that they are in a safe environment and grow in self-knowledge. For most, the colourful stained glass doors and gallery and the daily use of classical music also add to this ethos. Pupils respect each other and their teachers. They are aware that we are not all brought up in the same way or have the same beliefs. This was clear from a good Year 4 geography lesson seen, about life in India.
12. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. It is clear that pupils distinguish right from wrong. Part of the school ethos is 'Respect for all by all' and most pupils do abide by this. Pupils realise that they live in a community of not only their own school but also the local area. Older pupils realise that they are good role models for the younger ones. All pupils are expected to negotiate disputes, such as falling out with others. This aspect of pupils' education is promoted very well in the PSHE curriculum and is a prime factor in raising standards and pupils' attentiveness in lessons.
13. Pupils' cultural development is good. Beyond school, pupils regularly enter The Carlisle Music Festival. Pupils are well aware of their own culture and enjoy the school based 'Borders Curriculum,' for learning. They are aware of William Wordsworth's poetry and some have visited his home. Regular visits are made to the Roman Wall, Vindolanda and The Lakes. Fell Walking is also taken up by older pupils. Multicultural visits have been made to the local Buddhist monastery and in addition pupils study Judaism and Islam. There have been Indian speakers from Madras, with which the school has a twinning arrangement.
14. Most pupils come to school on time and lessons commence promptly. The school has good procedures, such as giving pupils attractive gifts and award certificates, to ensure satisfactory attendance. The efforts parents make to ensure their children attend school and arrive on time are satisfactory. Attendance has improved substantially this year and is now in line with national averages, because of the school's sustained drive to improve attendance and the pupils' increased interest in coming to school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good overall. Teaching and learning are very good and assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is good and the range of extra-curricular activities is very good. The quality of care given to pupils is very good. Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very thorough planning for different groups of pupils results in very good achievement.
- Planning for the use of ICT in lessons is inconsistent between classes.
- Teachers' management of behaviour is skilful and gives rise to positive relationships and very good learning.
- Assessment systems in English are very good and they are good in mathematics and science, but are underdeveloped in other subjects.
- The quality of teaching has improved because of the constructive monitoring and evaluation by senior members of staff.

Commentary

15. There is a high proportion of very good teaching where assessment information is used thoroughly to plan work and learning activities for different groups, and some individuals. These learning activities take pupils' learning forward at a very good rate. There is some very good teaching in every year group, but the quality of teaching seen in the nursery and in Year 6 is consistently very good. Teaching is very good overall in English, mathematics and science. Teachers plan the use of resources, including additional adults, very well. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2, the teacher had devised games for pupils to play as a class, and in groups, to support their work in multiplication. Pupils with SEN were helped by a very good LSA, who modelled mathematical language very well, and who used a wide variety of visual and practical equipment, plus her knowledge of pupils' individual needs, to ensure their good learning. The teacher worked hard with another lower attaining group, also using pictorial resources, whilst the other groups were provided with whiteboards and pens. Using these, plus some support from the teacher, helped them to complete challenging work set for them on prepared worksheets, and took their learning forward at a very good rate. This example of planning work for different groups of pupils is a feature of all the very good and good lessons seen in school. Also, teachers use a strategy, promoted by the local education authority, of splitting lessons into five parts, asking pupils five questions and recording five pieces of information they know. This strategy is designed to promote boys' learning. It is applied consistently throughout the school and, in lessons seen, boys' engagement in learning matched that by the girls. The impact of this initiative is yet to be measured through analysis of data.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23 (46 %)	17 (34 %)	10 (20%)	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.

16. In some classes, ICT is used to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, in a science lesson in Year 3, pupils recorded the results of their experiments using a computer, so that each of them had a clear report to add to their work. There are occasional examples of word processing in English. In Years 5 and 6, teachers use interactive whiteboards well to start lessons or to illustrate key teaching points. Those teachers who are most confident in ICT use computers well. However, overall, ICT is not used well enough to support pupils' learning on a regular basis, and, too often, classroom computers are left idle.

17. The permanent staff, including teachers, LSAs and classroom assistants, have very good relationships with pupils. Some pupils have challenging behaviour. This behaviour is managed skilfully and, because of adults' knowledge of pupils' learning difficulties, and the way they are supported in the classrooms, the pace of learning for all pupils is unaffected. When teachers are absent, the school does all it can to minimise disruption, sometimes drafting in additional adults to support temporary teachers. Nevertheless, some pupils do not respond well to change, and low-level disruption of learning occurs. Temporary staff are not fully aware of the strategies employed to support individual pupils. This was clear on the first day of inspection when two temporary teachers were brought in to cover for absent teachers. By the third day, these teachers were better informed, and behaviour in these two classes improved.
18. Teaching for pupils with SEN is very good. Very good use is made of LSAs, who have high levels of qualifications and contribute very well to pupils' learning. Class teachers and the co-ordinator regularly review the pupils' IEPs. Clear targets are set, progress towards them is assessed and the outcomes of such assessments are used successfully to plan the next stage of learning.
19. The quality of teachers' marking is very good. Teachers make comments and assessments on pupils' work that are designed to take pupils' learning forward or to correct misconceptions. In English, mathematics and science, pupils take regular tests, and the results of these are recorded in the school's tracking system. These results are analysed and intervention strategies are applied for groups of pupils at risk of underachieving. In addition, booster classes in English and mathematics are provided, using assessment information to target specific groups of pupils. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining above average standards has increased. There is a system of self-assessment in ICT. Pupils make their own assessments of their learning in each aspect of the curriculum. This is good personal development for pupils, but does not provide teachers with level statements to match pupils' attainment against national expectations. Assessment systems in all other subjects are at a very early stage of development, and this is why assessment overall is satisfactory rather than good.
20. Senior staff set a very good example to teachers in the quality of planning, delivering and assessing the effectiveness of lessons. There has been a planned and rigorous programme of monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff since the school opened, focusing mainly on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The success of this can be measured in the standards being attained, the proportion of very good teaching to be found in school, and in teachers' very positive attitudes towards suggestions on how their lessons could improve even further, evident during the inspection. Teachers are confident in their work and, on several occasions, sought out inspectors to ask them to monitor their lessons. Teachers' training needs have been clearly identified and appropriate courses attended. The success of these courses is evaluated well by teachers and senior staff in the outcomes in pupils' learning.

The curriculum

Curricular provision overall is good with a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. The school's accommodation is good overall and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for PSHE has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which are very well attended.
- The foundation stage curriculum is well designed to meet individual needs of children and give them a very good start in learning.
- The outdoor learning environment for nursery and reception children is underdeveloped.
- The curriculum provided for pupils with SEN is very good and helps to ensure that such pupils are taught the skills to participate fully in lessons.
- The quality of accommodation is good and used well to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is enriched very well by a strong focus on personal development, including teaching about sex and relationships and the dangers of drugs, which prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. The curriculum provided for children in the foundation stage is good and ensures that all children, including those who have learning difficulties, are well provided for. The youngest children also benefit from a well-designed programme that builds a true foundation upon which they enter into the life of the main school. There are very good arrangements for the smooth transition of children from home to nursery. The induction of children into the 'Rising Stars' pre-nursery class is sensitively handled and the curriculum carefully tailored to the needs of young ones.
22. The school has recently introduced its own 'Borders' perspective to the curriculum, beginning with history, so that pupils learn more about their own local heritage and culture. Such innovation demonstrates how the school is striving to make the curriculum as meaningful and relevant to pupils as possible.
23. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a wide range of relevant visits and visitors to extend their learning. Good examples include the 'Literacy Island' club for reception children and the Year 6 residential visit to Robinwood, both of which contribute much to the social development of pupils. Support for pupils outside the school day is very good. The 'Before and After School Clubs are very well attended. Extra-curricular provision covers many areas, including cookery, guitar, art and dance classes. These bring learning to life and make a lasting impression on pupils' minds. The extent to which pupils participate in extra-curricular activities is very good.
24. For pupils with SEN, the provision in the foundation stage is good, and for pupils in Years 1 to 6 it is very good. The school is meeting all the legal requirements. A number of intervention strategies are helping to raise standards in English and mathematics at a very good pace. Pupils' IEPs have specific short-term targets and teachers use these well when planning class work. The school regularly involves support from outside agencies and this assistance is used effectively to ensure that what is provided is entirely appropriate. Accommodation for the teaching of pupils in small groups in the SEN department, the 'Rainbow Suite,' is very good.
25. The school has a good blend of experienced and newly qualified teachers, the latter receiving good mentoring. The staffing of the school is appropriate to ensure that the curriculum is well delivered and pupils receive good levels of adult support. Teachers

and teaching assistants benefit from a very good programme of ongoing professional development.

26. School accommodation is good with appropriate disability access. The two spacious halls are well used for curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils are encouraged to walk slowly through the very attractive school gallery, containing works of art, beautiful stained glass panes, church symbols, and interesting displays. In providing an environment for reflection and thought, the gallery contributes well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The headteacher has led the decision-making process of choosing the colours for the school, which are reflected in the names for different buildings and classes and in the school uniform. These colours, of gold and royal blue, were chosen to reflect the school's links with the cathedral and add a further spiritual and cultural dimension to the school. The school has an appropriate three-year plan (2004-07) to make the extensive school grounds more attractive. Facilities for outdoor play in the foundation stage are currently limited because of the fears of vandalism, although there are plans to improve fencing. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Interactive whiteboards and a set of new laptops have been recently introduced and these are being used well.

Care, guidance and support

Very good steps are taken to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. Support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are good. The way in which the school seeks pupils' views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Care and protection of pupils are very good.
- Pupils' access to well-informed support, advice and guidance is very good.
- Pupils are known very well as individuals by all staff.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good.

Commentary

27. Child protection has a very high profile and the best interests of children are central to all decision-making, which is handled sensitively, effectively and promptly. Very good attention is given by all staff to all health and safety issues to safeguard the welfare of all pupils. Risk assessment procedures are thorough, with appropriate recommendations implemented.
28. The school provides a very secure, supportive and caring environment where pupils feel very safe and happy, and they have a high opinion of their school. Relationships with adults are very good and characterized by an ethos of trust, which helps pupils to respond readily, and raise their self-esteem. The school makes very good use of outside professional help including the police, the school nurse, educational psychologist and behavioural support teams, who regularly visit the school to talk to pupils and parents in order to meet their varying needs. Parents of pupils with SEN are consulted and invited to attend meetings on a regular basis. Teachers and LSAs support pupils with SEN very well and this is a significant factor in their very good achievement.

29. All staff have a very high regard for each individual pupil and this is helping pupils to become increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about their capabilities. In turn, pupils are confident that if they have a problem, they all have an adult to whom they can turn for advice on their work, or personal problems. Pupils discuss their academic and personal targets with their teachers, and these are clearly written down in class for them to see and negotiate. Careful analysis of data for different pupil groups gives good access to guidance and support as to their progress. Pupils with challenging behaviour have target books on which they can be given award points and thus improve their behaviour. Support before and after school is very good. Pupils can have a good breakfast or snack and take part in a variety of games and interests at the special clubs.
30. Induction into school and between classes is very caring and effective and ensures all pupils settle quickly and happily. The school involves its pupils very keenly in class and school councils. This year, the school council has arranged a toy auction to raise money for the tsunami and Carlisle flood appeals.
31. Support, advice and guidance to pupils are well organised and effective. There is very good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views. Provision for the care and safety of pupils is very well managed by the headteacher, whose drive and determination to ensure the well-being of pupils is a prime factor in the existing caring and safe environment within which learning can flourish.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is good. Links with other schools and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work very hard to support all parents to the benefit of their children.
- Information to parents gives them a good insight as to what is going on in school.
- Some parents miss opportunities to contribute to children's learning.
- Links with the community are good, and contribute well to pupils' learning.
- The school has very good procedures for transfer to secondary schools.

Commentary

32. Staff have established very productive partnerships with most parents, some of whom say that they had poor experiences of school when they were younger. The majority of parents say they are happy with the school and its work. They feel comfortable to approach the school with a complaint or suggestion and consider that staff treat their child fairly. A few parents stated that pupils did not behave well and implied that their child had been bullied. Inspection findings are that the school does its utmost to care for all pupils and deals very well with any complaints and concerns. Incidences of poor behaviour or bullying are very well managed, recorded and reported.
33. Parents receive good information from the school in the form of newsletters, the prospectus and the governor's annual report. Pupils' annual reports are clearly written; they cover all subjects, say what a child can do, give realistic targets and are easy for parents to understand. The school has an open door policy to talk to parents, and regularly seeks, values and acts on their views, which are sought on many aspects through questionnaires, home visits and meetings. Parents have directly had an

influence on the formation of the 'Before and After School Clubs', which are very well led and attended and further enhances the school's support for families.

34. The headteacher is constantly trying to engender more interest from parents in their children's learning, for example, through 'confidence boosting' classes. Some parents do help with various extra-curricular clubs, reading in class and on school visits and these opportunities raise parents' awareness of the importance of these links to learning. The energetic 'Goodwill Group' raises money for Harvest Festival gifts and children's Christmas presents. While some parents appreciate the home/school reading books and help with homework projects and topics, the contribution of many parents towards their children's learning is minimal.
35. The school has close links with the local churches, and representatives regularly attend school worship. Links with playgroups are good. Local businesses provide free blooms for the school, and have sponsored the football team. Children raise money for the local hospice and Red Nose Day and visit local pensioners at harvest and Christmas. Governors have excellent plans to build and manage a community sports centre within the school grounds.
36. The school shares good links with other schools in the area and the very good relationship with the neighbouring school, to which most pupils transfer, ensures that pupils settle well. Year 7 teachers come in during the previous summer term and children attend secondary school prior to admission for workshops in design and technology, ICT and science. Trainee teachers and work experience students are welcomed at the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and the leadership of senior staff is very good. Management is highly effective. Governance of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's outstanding leadership is enabling the senior leadership team to fulfil their roles very effectively.
- The professional development of staff and the creation of effective teams are given a very high priority.
- There are very effective systems in place for the school to monitor and improve its performance.
- Governors have a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and areas for development; they are wholly involved in strategic planning.
- The school has a budget deficit, but efficient systems are in place to clear it.

Commentary

37. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership to the school and is very ably supported by the three assistant heads. Since the amalgamation of the two schools, the head has empowered the senior leaders to articulate her clear vision of the school so that all staff work towards the same goals. A very effective structure has been developed to lead and manage the different sections of the school. As a result, there is a shared commitment to continuing improvements and an ethos for striving for high

standards, and including all pupils in everything the school has to offer, that is very much at the heart of everything that is done in the school.

Example of outstanding practice

The headteacher has an imaginative vision and drive for excellence.

She is dynamic and inspirational in drawing the best from everyone. Her infectious enthusiasms have united the staff and are motivating all who are involved in the school. The headteacher has put into effect excellent strategies for communicating her clear vision, such as the choice of school colours, forward improvement planning, governors' meetings, continuing personal and professional development, information for parents and the highly effective school council for pupils to participate in the school life. She innovates improvements in a practical way, empowering people to take responsibility and developing high expectations both professionally and personally. The 'Investors in Excellence' programme is being successfully implemented, raising standards across the whole school community. There is a noticeable sense of purpose and determination, constantly affirming 'that the children are at heart of the school'. The governing body share in the head's vision and very effectively enhance the work of the school, through their expertise and involvement in school improvements.

38. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance are very good overall. The senior leaders and subject co-ordinators for English, science, PSHE and the foundation stage monitor learning very effectively. This monitoring is very well planned and clearly aimed at raising standards. The leadership and management of SEN are very good. The leader supports pupils, teachers and parents well. Pupil reviews take place regularly and good efforts are made to keep parents fully informed. The leadership of the foundation stage is very good and is helping to create a very effective first stage of children's learning. Curriculum co-ordination and management of other subjects are satisfactory, because these responsibilities have only recently been allocated. Nevertheless, roles are beginning to be effectively developed to enable co-ordinators to lead their subjects as part of school improvement.
39. The professional development of staff is given a high priority, is managed carefully and is available to all adults in the school. As a result, all adults, including voluntary helpers, feel valued and appreciated by the headteacher. All senior leaders, including the senior LSA and senior teaching assistant, support newly qualified and short-term temporary staff very well through providing advice on planning, teaching and behaviour management strategies. When necessary, the headteacher re-locates non-teaching staff on a short-term basis, to support temporary teachers in the classroom. There is a very good induction procedure for newly qualified staff. They have a mentor who provides guidance and support, and time is made available for new teachers' professional development. The headteacher has developed an impressive unity of purpose among her colleagues, which is centred on giving pupils every opportunity to reach their potential academically, while developing into confident and caring young people.
40. The school is very self-evaluative, and its identification of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate and reflected in the findings of the report. The development of assessment systems has a high priority in the school improvement plan and the school is already improving provision in ICT. Efficient systems are in place to identify areas for development, taking action and then monitoring the effects. Some very good analyses have been carried out of the results in the national tests in order to plan for improvements. These analyses are effective in providing the school with areas for improvements, such as weakness within writing and some aspects of numeracy. These areas are being addressed very well. The school improvement plan is an effective working document created after wide-ranging discussions and consultations. The achievements of the previous plans are taken into account before planning new targets.

41. The work of the governing body is very good. Their help in shaping the vision and direction of the school is excellent. They promote change very well, after reflecting on what needs to be done, and how best to achieve it. They are fully involved in every aspect of the school, because they take an active role in its management. The pattern of the governing body's work complements the development cycle. They are very well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, they are highly influential in the school improvements. A very significant planned development is the provision of a sports centre in the school grounds. The governors plan to run this as a charitable trust and the long hours of governor time that this development will consume is an indicator of the governors' commitment and excellent vision for the future of the school and its place in the community. The governors ensure that the school complies with legal requirements.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,012,942	Balance from previous year	-23,448
Total expenditure	1,014,462	Balance carried forward to the next	-24,968
Expenditure per pupil	2,825		

42. After amalgamation, the school's budget was in deficit. The management plans to clear it are well in hand and appropriately monitored and approved by the local education authority.
43. The very good leadership and management enable pupils to achieve very well from entry into school to leaving it. The very good quality of education and care that the pupils receive and the very good teaching that they enjoy represent very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Provision for children in the foundation stage is good. The foundation stage comprises 48 nursery children who attend part time and 55 reception-aged children. In addition to this, an unusual and quite exceptional feature of this school is the very good provision made, since January 2004, for a small number of 'pre-nursery' children in 'Rising Stars'. Here, two small groups of children benefit greatly from the very good teaching of two well-qualified nursery nurses, who plan a very exciting and imaginative curriculum, where children achieve very well in all areas of learning. Teaching is consistently challenging, and there are excellent relationships within the classroom so that these very young children are provided with very good opportunities to make choices, and to explore their environment.
45. Overall, the attainment of children when they enter the nursery is well below the expected levels, especially in speaking and listening and in personal and social skills. Children achieve very well in the nursery, where staff work very hard and plan very well for the varying abilities of all children including those with SEN. However, the relatively short amount of time children spend in the nursery (sessions are only for morning or afternoon, not both) means that they do not have time to make up for their low starts so that by the time they enter reception, the attainment of many of the children remains well below the expected levels. Procedures to assess the attainment of individual children are thorough throughout the foundation stage, and contribute well to the good achievement children make.
46. While accommodation and resources in the purpose-built nursery and open-plan reception classes are satisfactory overall, the outdoor area is underdeveloped. The school is hampered in its desire to improve this feature by a great deal of vandalism. Many carpets in the foundation stage are stained and unattractive for children to sit or play on. The school has recognised this and they are to be replaced very shortly.
47. Leadership and management of the foundation stage are very good. The co-ordinator is a very good role model for her colleagues and there is a strong sense of teamwork among all staff. Very good relationships and the highly trained teaching assistants contribute significantly to the very happy atmosphere evident in all classes and to the good progress made. Parents are very appreciative of the school's induction arrangements and home visits made by school staff are well established and assist children to settle very happily into school. Very good links within the school ensure children transfer smoothly into the reception class and into Year 1. Parents are well informed by regular newsletters and homework books, which show them clearly how they might contribute to their children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships are established which ensure children get off to a very good start.
- Staff plan for many opportunities for children to develop independent skills and to work cooperatively.

Commentary

48. In the nursery class teaching and learning are very good and all children achieve very well. Daily routines are consistently applied and these help children to feel happy and secure in a very caring environment. Children's self-esteem is boosted by the very high quality of the attention they receive and this helps them to grow in confidence so that most are eager to tackle all the exciting activities on offer. Children in the nursery only attend part-time so despite their very good achievement, standards are well below average.
49. In reception classes, where teaching and learning are good and children achieve well, teachers continue to insist on high standards of behaviour and encourage all children to work well together. Staff work hard to develop these qualities, but because children arrive in school with low self-esteem, only half are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of reception and this is below average. This is, however, an improvement on previous years.
50. Children develop their independent and collaborative skills well through being allowed to explore and experiment with different materials and resources. For example, in the nursery, after sharing the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' story with their teacher, one boy practised using garden tools outside. He could show, but not explain, how a trowel is used, how to sweep the path with a broom, and how to flick unwanted insects away from his 'plants.' Meanwhile, two girls collaborated well to plant 'seeds' in fresh garden compost, sharing the flowerpots and taking turns well. In reception, most children can dress and undress themselves independently but are willing to help other children who haven't mastered this skill. They work well in pairs, as seen in a PE lesson, and teachers constantly remind children to say, 'please' and 'thank you.' This insistence on good manners is promoting children's development well. These opportunities to reinforce children's learning are itemised clearly on teachers' planning documents.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers place great emphasis on speaking and listening skills in the nursery.
- Writing is at a very early stage of development.

Commentary

51. In the nursery, where teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well, all adults are very aware of the poor speaking and listening skills of the majority of children. Consequently all activities are very carefully planned to develop these skills. Teachers have very high expectations of children and place high emphasis on the introduction of new vocabulary. For example, as they ask children questions, they speak very distinctly, so that almost all respond even if this is only in single words.

More able children are beginning to listen keenly to short stories and join in enthusiastically with action rhymes, while less able children point to features to indicate their understanding. Children's experience in the nursery is part-time, and because of this, and despite the very good learning that takes place, standards remain well below average.

52. In reception classes, where teaching, learning and achievement are good, more able children are becoming confident speakers, and know the significance of speech bubbles as they read stories alongside the teacher. The progress they make in writing is limited and restricted by the lack of wordbanks available. Less able children enjoy looking at stories through pictures and are learning to form letters and recognise initial sounds. Overall, standards are below average as few children are on course to meet the goals expected for their age, despite their good learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide variety of learning experiences contribute to children's learning.
- Higher attaining children are not provided with sufficient challenge in reception.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery, where children achieve very well because adults have high expectations of children and set challenging and interesting tasks for them. More able children confidently recognise and order up to 8 flowers, while adults emphasise good mathematical language, and encourage children to do likewise. Staff interact very well with lower attaining children as they investigate the position of various articles. In reception classes, where teaching and learning are good, activities are well prepared and children make good progress in comparing the length of different objects, except, on occasion, for the higher attaining children, where expectations of these children can be too low. This limits their progress as they repeat known tasks with which they are already competent. Lower attaining children are well supported and actively involved as they use terms of shorter/longer in familiar contexts. Overall achievement is good, but few children are on course to meet the goals expected for their age and standards are, therefore, below average.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

54. This area of learning was sampled. Not enough teaching could be seen in reception to make overall judgements, but a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with children indicate that they are provided with a good range of learning opportunities. Provision is very good in the nursery, where activities are very purposeful, and very good teaching and learning using a wide range of resources lead to very good achievement.

Example of outstanding practice

Children achieved very well in a lesson that skilfully combined knowledge and understanding of the

world with language and literacy development.

The lesson began with great excitement as the nursery nurse called everyone outside to see '*something she had found*'. All the children eagerly went out to see her heaving a large box. Not a sound was to be heard as the children gazed in awe as a huge watermelon was lifted out. The interaction between the teacher and nursery nurse was so skilful that their carefully focused questions enabled the class to use all of their senses to examine its proportions, feel the skin and imagine what it looked like inside. Many of the children have poor language skills and so this introduction captured their imagination very well, and staff asked very simple questions such as 'is it hard/soft?' to encourage the lower attaining children to repeat these words and extend and enhance their vocabulary in meaningful ways. Higher attaining children described the skin as 'smooth' and the inside as 'squashy'. The pace of learning was very rapid and it was fun! The class read an extract from a book: 'the water melon grows *big* and *sweet* and *juicy*'. This was repeated and all children were encouraged to join in, with very good emphasis on raising the interest and curiosity of the children in knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All lessons have a clear focus and good links are made to other areas of learning.
- The outdoor area lacks stimulation to enhance development in all areas.

Commentary

55. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and reception classes and all children achieve well. Nursery children show increasing control when operating equipment by means of pushing and pulling in the outdoor area. Most are confident to engage in working with malleable materials as they demonstrate and name actions of rolling and shaping as they create watermelons. In reception, children are keen to demonstrate their ability to catch and throw a ball, following the teacher's clear instructions and demonstrations. The outdoor area has little outdoor cover to protect children from the heat of the sun or inclement weather. The school has rightly identified the outdoor area as a priority for development to provide a more interesting and attractive environment for children to learn in. Despite children's good achievement, most are unlikely to attain the nationally expected goals by the end of the year, and standards are below average.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

56. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning but all teachers plan thoroughly for a wide range of creative activities. Most children in the nursery join in the choruses of songs although the less able remain silent. In all classes, teachers use role-play well to promote speaking and listening skills, for example, as they enact the characters in 'The elves and the shoemaker'. In reception, children experimented with joining techniques as they made a variety of shoes. They are given good opportunities to select from a wide range of materials to decorate them. Children were very proud of their achievements and adults praised them appropriately and celebrated their work by displaying the finished shoes, attractively, in a glass cabinet for all the school to admire.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching enables pupils to achieve very well and reach nationally expected standards in reading and writing by Year 6.
- Pupils with SEN achieve very well because of high quality teaching and support.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good: the teachers' marking of pupils' work is of a high standard and the progress of pupils is monitored carefully.
- The quality and range of pupils' work in non-fiction writing are good.
- Pupils' library skills are underdeveloped.

Commentary

57. Children enter the school with very limited skills in communication and literacy. Given these starting points, by Year 6 pupils do very well to reach standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening that are broadly in line with national expectations. Compared to schools in similar circumstances, all pupils in the school are achieving very well. This is due to the high quality of teaching, care and guidance.
58. A third of the pupils in Year 2 have SEN, and teachers are careful to match tasks to their capabilities. As a result, although standards of work in Year 2 fall below national expectations in all language skills, pupils are working near their capacity and are making very good progress. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn the basic strategies of reading so that they can capitalise on these later in the school. Higher attaining pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and how to use a contents page to find information. Year 6 pupils read a range of texts and are able to discuss the main plots and characters in stories with the confidence and expression normally expected of their age.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Planning is thorough and includes precise learning objectives, which are shared with pupils so that they have a clear focus in lessons. Teachers are adept in providing opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills. For example, in one very good Year 1 lesson, pupils rehearsed what they had to say with their 'talking partner' before sharing their ideas about a fairy tale with the rest of the class. They also practised their questioning skills when they quizzed the LSA, who appeared in the guise of a princess. On other occasions, teachers use puppets, drama and other approaches to sustain interest. As a result, standards are steadily improving in speaking and listening skills. Pupils' work is often marked with constructive, helpful comments to enable pupils to move forward in their learning. One weakness in teaching, however, is that pupils are not taught to use classroom libraries sufficiently to develop independent research skills.
60. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of writing opportunities. Because writing is often given a meaningful context, pupils respond well in their non-fiction writing and produce good character profiles, invitations, informative reports, short biographies, and factual accounts. Pupils in Year 6, for example, had clearly been motivated by the task of writing a risk assessment report for the nursery teacher who planned to take her class to a local park. Pupils are less confident and able when it comes to writing stories and imaginative pieces. Teachers are rightly seeking to address this by extending opportunities for writing across the curriculum, although it is too early to judge the impact of their efforts. Spelling is well taught as pupils are encouraged to apply patterns and rules when writing. Computer programs are occasionally used to reinforce the teaching of spelling and punctuation, as seen in one very good Year 1 lesson.

However, opportunities are often missed to use the classroom computers to aid pupils in the writing process.

61. The subject is very well led and managed. The two co-ordinators set very good role models in their teaching, evaluation and development of the subject. They take the lead in sharing good practice and through their monitoring programme keep pupils' progress under close review. Assessment procedures are very rigorous and give teachers a clear picture of where to improve provision. For example, recent analysis revealed that some older pupils found it difficult to 'read between the lines', so a programme of measures has been introduced and is beginning to strengthen this aspect of the English curriculum.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Pupils make satisfactory use of their language and literacy skills to enhance learning in other subjects. For instance, Year 4 pupils write in pop-up books, made in their design and technology lessons, while Year 6 pupils compile short historical biographies from the timelines of famous people, such as Anne Frank. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed very well by teachers throughout the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in the subject because of very good teaching.
- Pupils' positive attitudes contribute greatly to their overall achievements.
- There are good systems for assessment and target setting.
- The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory.
- Pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects.

Commentary

63. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average, reflecting very good achievement as a result of very good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils with SEN receive effective assistance from teachers and teaching assistants and consequently achieve very well. The school's provision is fully inclusive. Standards in Year 2 are average and this also represents very good achievement from pupils' well below average attainment on entry to school.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well planned and structured with clear learning objectives. These are shared with the pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. A particular strength of these arrangements is the way teachers provide the pupils with opportunities to evaluate their own learning. Teachers provide very good explanations and demonstrations in mathematics, which enable the pupils to make very good learning gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils are attentive and work hard in lessons. Teachers identify the key vocabulary for lessons and ensure that the pupils learn and use these words with understanding. A very good example was observed in Year 1, when the teacher asked the pupils to 'explain the strategies used' to solve a subtraction calculation. The very

strong focus on speaking and listening across all subjects is paying dividends in raising standards.

65. The LSAs and classroom assistants support pupils' learning very effectively. This is achieved through the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher, who ensures that all staff are involved in her drive for excellence. The impact of their assistance is seen in the interaction with the pupils, challenging them to greater endeavours. In a very good lesson in one of the Year 4 classes, the LSAs unobtrusively supported pupils during the introduction on sorting data. They then worked with different groups in a practical session, skilfully asking questions and providing clear explanations as necessary. In consequence, the pupils' learning was very good. In a number of lessons teachers were observed using interactive whiteboards to enhance learning but overall, insufficient use is made of ICT as a learning tool in lessons to consolidate mathematical skills and understanding.
66. Scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons show that tasks are very well matched to pupils' attainment and needs. In addition, the flexible setting arrangements for older pupils provide further enhancement to their learning. As a result their needs are very well met, because pupils of all abilities are set consistently challenging tasks. There are effective systems for assessing pupils' individual progress, and tracking is now in place throughout the school. Good use is made of assessment information to set individual learning targets. The school is implementing the policy for marking well. In the best practice, marking is both diagnostic and helpful. Pupils are praised for effort and comments to help improvement are provided.
67. The co-ordinator for the subject has only recently taken over the role of leadership and management, which is why the impact of her work is currently satisfactory. Nevertheless, in the very short time since taking up her appointment, she has enthusiastically approached her responsibilities and much good work has already taken place. She has reviewed provision and:
- chosen issues for monitoring and evaluation;
 - provided support for the newly qualified staff;
 - analysed test results;
 - used the information gleaned to identify weaknesses, such as the need to improve subtraction skills, and set plans to address them;
 - undertaken 'mathematics recovery training,' which the teaching assistants use with individual pupils to accelerate learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Good use is made of mathematics in other subjects. There are good opportunities in science in Year 6 to use a forcemeter and record results. Pupils draw line graphs to show results of an investigation to test elastic band stretch. Year 2 pupils make a block graph to show where they like to go on holiday. Mathematics skills are well used in Year 5, where the pupils have made a scale model to show the sizes of the earth, the moon and the sun and distances between them. Data handling, such as collecting information about favourite football teams or meals, is occasionally represented using ICT, but generally ICT is underused.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school because the quality of teaching is very good.
- Very good attention is given to scientific enquiry and practical work, which helps pupils understand their learning.
- Assessment procedures are good, and the results are used well to plan lessons.
- ICT is not used well enough by pupils for research, or to record their investigations.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

69. Standards are average for most pupils in the current Year 2, and in Year 6 they are well above average. In relation to their attainment on entry into school, the achievement of all pupils, including those with SEN, is very good. This very good achievement is a direct result of the quality of planning and teaching throughout the school and the very good emphasis placed on scientific investigation.
70. Over half of the lessons seen were very good. Teachers' planning of lessons is very thorough and the very good lessons contained a very good proportion of lively, practical work, which engaged pupils very well. For example, in Year 3, pupils were investigating the properties of rocks. The teachers provided a very good range of different rocks such as sandstone, chalk and marble and provided the equipment for pupils to test whether the samples were permeable or impermeable. Teachers stressed and explained the scientific language well, so all pupils could use the correct terminology by the end of the lesson. Although all pupils had the same objective, their recording of the work was slightly different for each group in the class, so pupils who had difficulties with writing were not de-motivated by the recording task, and some groups had additional adult support. One group in each class recorded their results in a table, using ICT. In a very good lesson in Year 1, where pupils were investigating waterproof materials, their learning was promoted very well through very clear explanations, classroom management, use of support staff and a very good emphasis on first-hand learning through investigations.
71. From a scrutiny of work, most pupils in Year 5 are already working at the expected levels for Year 6 pupils. In Year 6, pupils conduct investigations at least fortnightly, and teachers' expectations are very high. By Year 6 a large proportion of pupils are working at standards that are well above average for their age. On three occasions, teaching was satisfactory rather than good. In one lesson, led by a supply teacher, pupils did not respond well to the change of teacher, who had to spend more time in managing pupils' behaviour than usual, in the second the investigation took too long, whilst conversely, in another, too much time was spent in planning an investigation rather than carrying it out.
72. Teachers' marking is very good. Comments made in pupils' books ask questions of pupils, which they sometimes answer in writing, and the amount of support given to pupils and their levels of understanding is recorded. At the end of each unit of work, teachers make assessments as to how well individual pupils have understood the concepts taught. These assessments are used well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and can be clearly tracked in teachers' planning documents. The quality of marking and assessment is a key factor in pupils' very good achievement.

73. In Years 5 and 6, teachers use interactive whiteboards well to illustrate scientific processes. Occasional use of class computers to record findings was also seen. However, from a scrutiny of work, ICT is not used well enough by pupils for research, to record their findings in graphs or tables, or to import pictures or diagrams into their work. Currently, there is not enough software available in school to specifically support learning in science.
74. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of her role. She has led the whole staff in monitoring pupils' work and made lesson observations, and the headteacher has held discussions with pupils about their learning; these observations are shared with the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator analyses teachers' assessments of pupils' learning and from these, targets areas for future development. The previous focus, on raising the quality of pupils' learning in scientific investigations, has clearly been met and is now embedded into teachers' practice.
75. The co-ordinator's current priorities have been set through her audit of provision and are to:
- support staff by providing additional training;
 - complete evaluations of pupils' learning after workshops and visits;
 - raise the profile of science through display work;
 - continue lesson observations and feedback to teachers;
 - re-write schemes of work to reflect the school's needs, and
 - purchase ICT resources in science.
- These priorities are appropriate but, in addition, there needs to be a greater emphasis on pupils' use of ICT in lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

ICT was sampled, as no lessons could be seen in Years 3, 4 or 6 during the inspection.

76. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, standards by Year 6 are below average. Some pupils' work is kept in folders on classroom computers but these folders are disorganised and a complete record of individual pupils' learning and their competence in using ICT is missing. Pupils in Year 6 have experimented with using the 'Publisher' program, but there are no examples of work to the expected standard. They have also used word processing programs, and, in lessons, are becoming familiar with interactive whiteboard technology. In Year 5, pupils are attaining average standards in using spreadsheets and are confident to save their work.
77. In Year 2, pupils are learning to change the size, type and colour of fonts in a word processing program. The higher attaining pupils can use the Caps Lock key to change the case of letters, but lower attaining pupils need support to use the space bar. Standards seen were below average in Year 2 but average in Year 1, where pupils could log on and off computers, print their work and use the spellcheck function on their classroom computers. There are too few examples of pupils' work completed before the inspection.
78. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher's subject knowledge was very good, and she clearly demonstrated how to construct a formula to total numbers in columns and rows on a spreadsheet. Through preparing and introducing gradually more challenging work,

pupils' learning and interest in their work were maintained and their achievement in this lesson was very good; standards were average. Of the two similarly planned lessons seen in Year 2, one was very good and the other satisfactory because of the difference in teachers' confidence in using computers. In the satisfactory lesson, pupils were not given enough opportunity to experiment and learn for themselves and those who did not complete their task were not told to save their work, with the result that they lost it. In lessons in other subjects, pupils throughout the school do not make enough use of ICT to practise or refine their skills.

79. There is an assessment system in operation where pupils from each year group assess their own progress after completing each part of the scheme of work. Pupils have individual log books, which show that all areas of the curriculum are covered. But samples of this work are not stored well enough, and the results of the assessments do not give information on how well pupils are doing compared to national expectations.
80. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator took on the role this year and has used her time to improve her own knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, give staff training, improve resources and learn about and access sources of funding. The impact of her work has yet to be translated into higher standards. Due to the focus on monitoring teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science since the school opened, there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning in ICT. The quality and quantity of hardware in school have increased since the two schools amalgamated. All classes in Years 5 and 6 have interactive whiteboards and more have been ordered. There is now a set of laptops that is in use throughout the school. All classes have working computers and in some areas these have been organised into 'mini suites.' However, during the inspection, few of the classroom computers were in use. There is not enough software to support learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.

HUMANITIES

Collective worship and religious education were not inspected because of the Voluntary Aided nature of the school. These are inspected separately under a Section 23 inspection. Geography was inspected in full and is reported below. History was sampled.

81. One lesson was observed in **history**, in Year 2. It was very good. Pupils deepened their understanding of the sequence of events in the life of Florence Nightingale. The teacher's very good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it enabled pupils to make very good learning gains. Analysis of pupils' work shows that there is appropriate coverage of the curriculum. News reported nationally and locally is well used to teach that history is happening now and that the pupils are very much part of it. Recent reports of the 'Cursing Stone,' brought from Scotland to Carlisle, provided opportunities for animated debates.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well through the good teaching they receive.

- Pupils' knowledge of local geography is good.
- Pupils' understanding of human effects on the environment is good.
- The 'Borders' curriculum innovation, recently introduced, is beginning to make good links with local geography and history.

Commentary

82. Standards in geography are average in both Year 2 and in Year 6. All pupils achieve well in the subject as a result of good teaching.
83. The quality of teaching is good and has resulted in pupils' good learning, shown by their knowledge and understanding of local geography. Through the studies of Carlisle, the pupils in Year 6 show good understanding of grid references. The majority know how to locate places and provide oral and written explanations of how to move from one place to another. The teacher provided them with real-life problems to investigate and to learn mapping skills. The pupils used their developing mathematical skills effectively to record the co-ordinates of a variety of places in Carlisle.
84. The pupils have good understanding of the human effects on the environment. In a lively lesson in Year 4, the pupils discussed how people improve or damage the environment. In this highly effective lesson, the pupils prepared their points of view of an Indian tribe, considering rights and responsibilities, firstly recording their points of view in writing. They enlarged these when discussion started, counteracting courteously with an opposite view. The pupils put forward valid and well thought out arguments. This is just one example how the school links identified areas for improvements, such as speaking and listening, across other subjects.
85. The school has recently put into effect an innovative 'Borders' curriculum, which is beginning to enhance teaching and learning in the humanities. Through these studies, the pupils are learning to understand their own locality and to begin to appreciate it. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are currently satisfactory, because the roles of the co-ordinators are not yet fully developed. The two co-ordinators have good plans for developing the subject. Towards this end, they have sensibly adapted the national guidelines to the school's needs and to accommodate the 'Borders' curriculum. The co-ordinators have developed assessment procedures for humanities, which are to be implemented shortly.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled.

87. In **art and design** pupils in Year 2 have been enthused by a visiting artist to produce attractive mosaics, of birds & animals with kaleidoscopes of radiant colours in the style of Gustav Klimt. Pupils in Year 4 had recently visited a local workshop and gained a good understanding of the work of a sculptor. In the lesson seen, where teaching and learning were satisfactory, there was a limited range of materials for pupils to choose from and this detracted from the sculptures pupils were creating.
88. In **music**, two short singing sessions were observed where infant and junior pupils came together in the separate halls. Reception children were also involved in the infant

session and this is one of the ways in which the school is preparing them for moving smoothly into the next stage. All pupils joined in happily to the tuneful singing of Easter hymns where good links were made to religious education. The subject is enhanced by a variety of music specialists who visit the school to share their enthusiasm for the subject with pupils.

89. In **design and technology**, pupils in Year 2 have explored textures, designed puppets and practised running stitches to join the puppets together. In the lesson seen in Year 3, where teaching and learning were satisfactory, good links were made to science and English as pupils discussed the appearance, texture and taste of sandwiches and gained a clearer understanding that different ingredients and preparation can affect the end product. Discussions with Year 6 pupils revealed they had investigated a range of shelters and had a satisfactory understanding of how to strengthen a structure.
90. Only two full lessons were observed in **physical education** and these were in Year 1 and Year 4. Both of these were well taught and pupils made good progress in the respective gymnastics and dance observed. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a secure overall judgement about provision in the subject, there are examples of good quality work and evidence shows that teaching enriches pupils' broader education. For example, pupils in the Year 4 lesson helped to choreograph their dance steps, designed their outfits and created pictures for an official programme, following their recent participation in a Cumbrian dance festival. In both lessons, teachers set suitable role models in their expertise, enthusiasm and energy. As a result, pupils were keen to do well and responded with high levels of fitness and concentration. Their standards of movement were in line with national expectations. The weakest element in learning relates to pupils' limited skills in suggesting how they might improve their performances.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a well-developed life education programme, which includes appropriate sex and relationships teaching for Year 6 pupils.
- A very good range of visits, specialist visitors and workshops enhances provision.
- The assessment of pupils' personal development is underdeveloped.

Commentary

91. By the end of the reception class, despite their good achievement, few children are at the expected standards for their age. There are no other agreed descriptors for standards in the national curriculum in later years. However, from talking to pupils and from observations of lessons and pupils' interactions with each other in Year 6, achievement in Years 1 to 6 is very good.
92. This highly inclusive school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. This policy is successful in that pupils become confident, relate well to others, and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. During the inspection, this was manifested in a small way when Year 6 pupils sensitively lent a hand in directing reception children into assembly. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well in the nursery class and good attention is maintained through the school.

93. Permanent and experienced teachers create very good relationships with pupils, to form a very secure foundation for their personal development. Pupils are encouraged, consistently, to think about what impact their actions have on others, to explain their choices and to reflect on significant issues. The school's over-arching ethos of fairness, tolerance and equality of opportunity shines through and is reinforced in lessons.
94. Over the last year or so, provision has been enhanced by:
- the updating of long- and medium-term plans,
 - the acquisition of new resources, and
 - specialist input from visitors.
95. The school has a good racial equality policy which teachers implement with conviction. Year 6 pupils talked knowledgeably about the problem of racism in society following a workshop on the subject. They were quick to show inspectors their 'Kick out racism' badges, linked to a current national football campaign.
96. The school does much to encourage pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle through such initiatives as its fruit scheme and a range of sporting activities. Moreover, the school has a well-planned programme of health education, and sensitive issues such as sex and relationships education are handled very well following consultation with staff, parents and pupils. The school nurse makes an important contribution to the education of older pupils, when she visits them to discuss healthy relationships within the family unit, in line with the ethos of this church school. Issues of drugs and harmful medicines, as well as smoking and peer pressure, are also woven into the programme.
97. Teaching is of a very good quality and ensures that pupils make very good gains in their personal development. 'Circle time' discussions provide opportunities for pupils to explore feelings. There are also good arrangements for pupils to discuss issues that crop up in their day-to-day lives, either in confidence or in open forums. The recent school emphasis upon developing speaking and listening skills has meant that pupils benefit from sharing ideas in a range of contexts. Teachers have worked hard to provide increasing opportunities for whole-class discussion and they frequently ask pupils to discuss answers or opinions with a partner. Occasionally, pupils' misbehaviour impedes their listening and slows their progress in lessons. This occurred in one Year 6 lesson in design and technology, taught by a temporary teacher, when pupils took too long to settle for the conclusion and missed some of the key teaching points.
98. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and to represent other pupils through the well-organized school and class councils. These arrangements play an important role in representing pupils' opinions and contribute effectively to pupils' citizenship education. Pupils' involvement in the school development plan is very good.
99. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator is pro-active, has a clear sense of direction and plans to address the lack of formal assessment in pupils' personal development, a present shortcoming.

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	0
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).