

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Penrith

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112305

Head teacher: Mr R Gaizely

Reporting inspector: Mr R Moseley  
16686

Dates of inspection: 23 - 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 182629

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Drovers Lane Penrith Cumbria
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. T Walsh
Date of previous inspection:	May 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
R Moseley	Registered inspector	Science	Characteristics of the school
		History	The schools results and pupils' achievements
		Geography	How well is the school led and managed
		Equal Opportunities	
T Bradley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
P Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
		Information technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Music	
S Jones	Team inspector	English	
		Art	
		Physical Education	
		Special Educational Needs	
		The Foundation Curriculum for reception pupils	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average Primary School with 127 pupils. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. A slightly below average number of pupils, 12 per cent, are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 32, which is above average. There are three per cent of pupils with statements of special educational needs, which is above the national average. The school also accepts voluntarily a number of additional pupils with special educational needs from other schools. Attainment on entry to the school is variable but often well below average. In addition, the school has, at present, 19 pupils from the travellers' community on the school's roll. These children are well catered for but some have learning difficulties associated mainly with the many weeks they are absent from the school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a successful school with many good features. Pupils have made good progress in a number of subjects by the time they leave the school. Teaching is good overall and the pupils have developed very positive attitudes to their learning. Leadership and management is satisfactory overall and the school provides good value for money. The moral and social provision within a strong Christian tradition is a strength of the school.

#### **What the school does well**

- It provides a sound climate for learning and pupils have developed very good attitudes to their work. This is resulting in good progress in mathematics, science, information technology, art, physical education and in aspects of English by the time the pupils leave the school
- Teaching is good overall, with nearly three out of five lessons being good or better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
- The school is a caring establishment and makes very good provision for pupils from the travellers' community and its pupils with special educational needs.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils' behaviour is mainly good and relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The school's links with its parents are good.
- The head teacher and governors have established a clear educational direction for the school and there is a commitment to improve standards and provision further.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in writing throughout the school.
- The opportunities for pupils to develop the skills needed for independent learning and personal research.
- The quality and consistency of the teachers' short-term lesson planning for the non core subjects.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1995. It has overcome many of the weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection and has improved in a number of other ways. With regard to Key Issues in the last report, the leadership has been successful in balancing all areas of the curriculum in Key Stage 2, although, recently, design and technology has had less curriculum time because of the new arrangements for literacy and numeracy. Secondly, standards in information technology have risen throughout the school. Standards in art have also improved by the end of Key Stage 2. Curriculum planning and the co-ordination of subjects has improved in the core subjects since the last inspection. It is, however, still weaker and inconsistent for the non-core subjects. The support for literacy is now good and all spending initiatives are now cost effective. Finally, all attendance registers are now completed according to statutory requirements.

In addition, the leadership has introduced other improvements. For example, the quality of teaching has improved. This is due, in part, to the successful introduction of the literacy hour, the numeracy strategy and the improved provision for science and information technology. The role of the governing body has been strengthened in line with improvements to the yearly school development plan, which is now an effective management tool. The provision for spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and there is now a more systematic analysis of all examination and assessment data at the end of Key Stage 2. The school is well placed to maintain these improvements and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	C	E	E*
Mathematics	D	B	E	E
Science	A*	A*	E	E

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The results of the National Curriculum tests over the last three years vary widely from year to year. This is due to low numbers of pupils in some years, often with a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs or pupils from the travellers' community who are actually absent for the test. For example, in 1999, there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This makes comparisons with the national averages and with similar schools more difficult to make and was the reason for the poorer result. However, over the last three years these results indicate good, or in some years and in some subjects, very good progress from the well below average attainment pattern on entry to the school.

The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils, in Year 6, attainment in mathematics and science is in line with national expectations. In English, although attainment overall is in line with the national expectation, nevertheless it is below the expectation in the writing element. This improvement when compared to last year's results, is due in part to a lower percentage of pupils with special



educational needs, a more average number of pupils in Year 6, but also to improved teaching and the effects of the new strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations by age 11. Attainment in art and physical education is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are eager to learn and enjoy school. They are responsive and show very good attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils are well behaved in the classroom and playground. They are usually polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Levels of attendance are below the national average.

Pupils are very happy at school. Most pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to all aspects of school life. They care about each other, respect each other's views and many show a great deal of confidence by the time they leave the school. Attendance is unsatisfactory mainly due to the numbers of pupils from the travellers' community who are absent for long periods over the summer months.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Satisfactory overall. On occasions, very good.	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is mainly good. Almost three out of five lessons are good or better, with just over one out of five being very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This level of teaching ensures that pupils' learning is good in many areas and they successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in the subjects they are studying. Particular strengths in the teaching are the teachers' subject knowledge, especially in English, mathematics and science. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is mainly good. This enables most teachers to give clear instructions, determine precise learning targets and devise work suitable for the wide range of abilities in each class. A significant strength is the teachers' ability to maintain high standards of discipline, which leads to good behaviour, hard work and sustained levels of concentration. Although teachers' short term written planning is satisfactory overall, it is weaker in the non core subjects where a variety of planning formats are used, often with no clear targets and failing to indicate previously learned skills. This can lead to slower progress at times in pupils' acquisition of skills and knowledge.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and generally well balanced, although the teaching time available for design and technology is limited in Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual development is good. For cultural development it is satisfactory. The provision for social and moral development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring establishment that gives good educational and personal support to its pupils. There is very good provision for the children of the travellers' community.

There are effective links with parents and most parents agree that the school is very good. Parents are involved in the school and their contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is good. The quality of information provided for parents about the school and the progress made by their children is good overall, although there are a very few items missing from the governors' annual report to parents. The quality of pupils' reports is excellent.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Overall, leadership is satisfactory. The head teacher, with the help of the deputy head teacher and staff, have created a successful school where pupils want to learn. Some aspects of the head teacher's and co-ordinators monitoring and evaluating of the teaching and the planning are not yet effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are developing their role well and more governors are now effectively involved in aspects of the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The head teacher, staff and governors are fully aware of the school's performance and have a clear idea of what they want to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are satisfactory, readily available and used well. The match of the teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum.

The leadership has been good in deciding and implementing its priorities for development. For example, it has introduced the literacy hour and numeracy strategy soundly and raised standards in information technology throughout the school. It has also placed a high priority on giving very good support to pupils from the travellers' community and pupils with special educational needs. The school spends the money available to it wisely and applies well the principals of obtaining best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fact that their child likes the school.</li> <li>• That their child is making good progress.</li> <li>• That the teaching is good.</li> <li>• That they can approach the staff with any problems.</li> <li>• That their children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• That the school is well managed.</li> <li>• That the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• That they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• That behaviour is good in the school.</li> <li>• That their child gets the right amount of work to do at home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very few parents felt that behaviour was poor.</li> <li>• A very few parents felt that they were not well informed about how their child was getting on.</li> <li>• A very few parents felt that the amount of homework was inconsistent.</li> <li>• A large minority of parents felt that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements support all the parents' positive views about the school. They also judge that behaviour was mainly good, the parents were kept very well informed about their children's progress and that the amount of homework was adequate. They agree with parents that the range of extracurricular activities provided is limited.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1 In the latest National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 1, in 1999, pupils' attainment in reading was broadly in line with the national average. In writing, it was below the national average and in mathematics well below. When these results are compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, the reading and writing results were below average and for mathematics well below average. The teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1, in 1999, indicated that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was well below the national average but the percentage reaching Level 3 or above was above the national average. However, there were only 13 pupils in the year and with a small number, it is more difficult to make accurate comparisons with the national averages. Also, the school has a proportion of pupils from the travellers community who are absent from the tests. The results over the last three years have been very variable with very high results in some years. This variability is again due to changes in numbers of pupils in each year and a variable number of children from the travellers' community and pupils with special educational needs.

2 In the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, in 1999, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. It was the same for mathematics and science in comparison with similar schools, although very low in comparison for English. However, it must be borne in mind that there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a number of travellers' children who were absent. There were only 15 pupils, which is a much lower than average number of pupils in most schools. In some years, the school has achieved much higher results, with some very high results in English and science.

3 The inspection findings for this year's pupils in Year 2, where there is a more average number of pupils in the class, indicates that in English and science, standards are in line with the national expectation. In mathematics and the writing aspects of English, they are below the national expectation. In Year 6, although attainment in writing is lower, overall findings for English indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectation. It is also in line for mathematics and science. These results reflect well on the school. They demonstrate good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school, from low attainment, or in some years, very low attainment on entry. The school has made good progress to reach its targets in English and mathematics.

4 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national expectation. Their vocabulary is good and they speak with interest and clarity. For example, this was seen in an assembly when pupils were addressing the whole school. Reading standards are in line with the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Seven year olds are developing a keen interest in literature and they enjoy reading a range of books. Older pupils read poetry well and a Year 5 group read and appreciated the rhythmical use of language in "The Night Mail". Standards in writing are below the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Pupils have limited opportunities in Key Stage 1 to develop extended writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, a significant minority of pupils lack confidence in their writing skills and are inconsistent in spelling and the use of punctuation, especially when writing independently. They also make insufficient use of dictionaries and thesauri when writing. Standards in literacy, however, are close to the national expectation by the end of both key stages and literacy skills are developing satisfactorily in other subjects.

5 Attainment in mathematics is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. By age seven, only just over half of pupils

recognise, count and understand numbers up to 50. A number of pupils are confident with money, adding and subtracting accurately up to 50p, giving the correct change. A majority of pupils in Year 2 name a range of shapes. Pupils' learning of data handling is less well developed by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in all aspects of number. For example, many pupils know how to convert simple fractions into percentages and successfully use these skills to solve everyday problems. Pupils also display a sound understanding of reflective and rotational symmetry, accurately rotating shapes. Pupils have developed a good understanding of co-ordinates and angles to 360 degrees. Pupils use statistical information well. Standards in numeracy are below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 but in line at the end of Key Stage 2.

6 By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in science is satisfactory in all the components of the National Curriculum. Pupils identify a range of common materials and know about their properties. They have a basic understanding of living things. For example, they investigate the life cycle of a sunflower by growing plants from seed and studying the plant's progress to producing more seeds. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectation in life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. For example, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how sound and light travels through the air. They are able to link this well to a study of the solar system and to explain how light travelling from the sun affects the earth. By age 11, pupils have a sound understanding of experimental and investigative science. For example, they understand the need for a fair test and they usually predict what might happen before carrying out their work.

7 In information technology, attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers confidently to communicate information. For example, in word processing they have learned how to use the arrow keys to move the cursor around the screen. They use graphics programs to produce good pictures. Pupils save and edit work with support. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have sound word processing skills and are systematic in their approach, planning their work before going onto the computer. They combine information from different sources. For example, they import pictures from a graphics program to illustrate their word-processed writing. Pupils' use of information technology for data handling in science is more limited.

8 Within the remaining subjects, there are particular strengths in art and physical education in Key Stage 2, where attainment in these subjects are above the expectations for their ages. For example, in art, pupils' current project is 'Round the World' and they have produced an impressive array of stencil and screen prints. Their observational drawings are good. In physical education, good standards were evident in sessions based on the development of throwing skills in athletics. These pupils have good co-ordination and throw a range of different shaped objects with confidence.

9 Throughout the school, pupils' skills in listening and speaking are good. In reading and numeracy, they are satisfactory. Pupils' presentation skills are satisfactory and, on occasions, good. The use of information technology to support other subjects is limited. For example, they are underused in science to record the results of investigations and pupils get little opportunity to use CD-ROMs for collecting information linked to history, geography and science. The skills needed for independent learning are generally weak and underdeveloped. Pupils get few planned opportunities to use computers or books for personal research. This weakness is also linked to the poor range of the non-fiction books in the school library.

10 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school towards meeting the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Targets are realistic and reflect the needs identified in statements and through regular observation and assessment. Progress towards meeting targets is especially good in listening, speaking, social and personal development.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11 The previous inspection report describes behaviour in school as generally good. This level of behaviour continues and is enhanced by very good relationships and positive attitudes to school life.

12 Parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school and take pleasure in learning. The attitudes of pupils are very good and at times exemplary. For example, the Key Stage 2 pupils taking part in their morning assembly, showed themselves to be mature in their attitudes towards school life and able to demonstrate a deep understanding of the needs of others and a trust in prayer. They participate well in the school's daily routines, showing good common sense and respect for the values and ethos of their school.

13 Behaviour is good. Pupils know how to behave in an acceptable manner and their response in the classrooms and on the playing field is appropriate without being regimented. When behaviour is occasionally unacceptable, the teachers deal with it both swiftly and fairly and any exclusions are dealt with by the head teacher in the appropriate manner. There was one permanent exclusion in the last school year.

14 Personal development is good. The school encourages its pupils to be responsible and aware of the needs of others. Pupils respond well and accept responsibilities willingly. Older pupils take an effective role in supporting and encouraging the enjoyment of information technology by pupils in the reception class. Pupils are polite, well mannered and keen to talk to visitors.

15 Relationships in school are very good. The youngest pupils listen and respond to their teachers well and show empathy with their peers. The courtesy and understanding of other companions and the sensitive handling, by adults in school, counteract any isolated incidences of unkindness on the playground. Pupils do understand the impact of their actions on others and are willing to apologise for any wrongdoing. Pupils confirmed that property is generally safe in school and that their belongings are treated with respect. Warm and caring relationships exist between pupils and there is consideration for the different culture of the children from the travellers' community. Pupils are confident to discuss their problems with their class teachers.

16 Although pupils undoubtedly enjoy school and their lessons, the attendance figures are well below national levels and attendance remains unsatisfactory overall. While there is little unauthorised absence from truancy, low attendance figures are explained by the long periods of absence of the many pupils from the travelling community, during the summer months. Non-travelling parents occasionally condone unnecessary absence from school to extend the weekend or take their children on holiday during term-time. Such interruptions to pupils' education result in gaps in their learning and a negative impact on their potential attainment. Attendance registers comply with statutory requirements.

17 Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school, enjoy very good relationships with all adults involved in their provision and are fully accepted by their peers.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18 Throughout the school, nearly 60 per cent of the teaching is good or better, nearly a quarter is very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. For those pupils under five, all the teaching was good or better with two out of three lessons being excellent. In Key Stage 1, nearly two out of five lessons was good or better, with a quarter of the teaching being very good. In Key Stage 2, just over three out of five lessons are good or better with just over one in ten lessons being very good. The quality of the teaching is the major factor in the good overall progress which pupils make.

19 Particular strengths are in the teaching of literacy, numeracy, science, art, and physical education, which support pupils' achievements in these areas. However, the good progress made in mathematics with the reception pupils is not always maintained throughout the rest of Key Stage 1 due to weaknesses in the planning at times. Very good relationships generally support high standards of discipline. Weaknesses in teaching that detract from lessons that are satisfactory overall include weak subject knowledge and insecure consolidation of pupils' previous learning.

20 Teachers' subject knowledge, while good overall, is variable between teachers and subjects. In mathematics and English, following extensive attention to these subjects and the implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, it is far more consistent and good overall. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were involved in the various activities relating to the interaction of parallel and vertical lines. The teacher's very good understanding of mathematics enabled her to give very clear instructions in appropriate terms to pupils of differing abilities. The teacher ensured that all the pupils understood the tasks to be undertaken before moving forward to the next activity. Specialist teachers are effectively used in Key Stage 2. The subject co-ordinator for mathematics teaches mathematics in the majority of classes in the key stage. In information technology, very effective support and training from the co-ordinator has raised teachers' skills and understanding so they are now generally competent and confident in teaching the basic skills of information technology.

21 Planning is satisfactory overall. Good quality daily planning positively supports teaching in English, mathematics and science. This good planning is characterised by the choice of different work for different pupils; more able pupils are given more challenging work and those who find certain work difficult are given work appropriate to their individual needs. The work planned also builds on pupils' previous knowledge and pupils gain in the development of skills and understanding. Good planning in lessons ensures that lessons are stimulating; pupils work hard, they want to learn and they enjoy lessons. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They often share this with pupils so that they are clear about what they are hoping to achieve, gaining a sense of success when they do, thus improving their motivation. Planning is less well focused in the non-core subjects, where a variety of planning formats are used with no clear learning targets identified, often failing to indicate previously learned skills.

22 A significant strength of most of the teaching is the management of pupils. This is usually very good and is based on high expectations, clear routines and very good relationships. This results in good behaviour, hard work and sustained levels of concentration by the pupils, so that in most lessons they make good progress in their learning. Teachers make consistent use of the school's mission statement relating to expected levels of acceptable behaviour.

23 Time and resources are used well. In particular, the school effectively deploys the skilled support staff and they contribute significantly to pupils' learning, especially the pupils receiving additional support for special educational needs. A brisk pace is maintained in most lessons, for example, the mental arithmetic sessions observed in upper Key Stage 2. Good use is made of a range of strategies, including practical work, although opportunities for pupils to undertake open-ended investigations are limited throughout the school. All of the skills needed for independent learning are underdeveloped throughout the school. For example, very few opportunities are planned for individuals or groups to carry out research using books and computers. Homework is used satisfactorily and is based on a clear policy and supported positively by the majority of parents. For example, staff ensure that homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

24 Sound use of ongoing day to day assessments ensures teachers are fully aware of pupils' individual needs. The marking of pupils' work is often inconsistent in quality. However, there are some good examples where teachers' comments are constructive, helping pupils to improve their

performance.

25 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good, both when receiving support in class and in individual and small group sessions. Staff are very well supported by visiting specialists who share skills, provide ideas for teaching and additional resources. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well and frequently engage in activities with enthusiasm. They complete tasks and achieve good levels of independence as they work alongside their peers.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

26 The provision for children under five is very good and reflects all the expected areas of experience. Planning is of good quality. It provides good experiences for developing language, literacy, mathematics, knowledge of the world and children's personal and social education. This supports the overall good progress which children make in the reception class.

27 At both key stages the school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and generally well balanced. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and current statutory requirements are met. The school has reviewed the amount of teaching time devoted to each subject and that devoted to literacy and numeracy has been increased significantly. The school is soundly implementing the national strategies in these subjects and standards are improving. However, the teaching time available for design and technology in both key stages is relatively limited, leading to a lack of depth of study in the subject. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully addressed the additional provision for information technology and art and this has resulted in raising standards.

28 Appropriate policies and schemes of work to support pupils' learning are in place for most subjects. The school is aware of the need to develop a school-based scheme underpinned by the National Numeracy Strategy to provide a more secure base for monitoring learning and progress throughout the school. All pupils have good access to the curriculum available.

29 Only a limited range of extracurricular activities is available to pupils, reflecting the concern raised by parents. However, the school organises a satisfactory range of educational visits to support ongoing work in the classroom. For example, younger pupils are offered an opportunity to experience local farms and parks. Older pupils value their visits to a local wildlife park where they were able to study the animals in a natural environment. A highlight of the school's year is the annual residential visit to Ireland for the older pupils. This visit provides a valuable cross-curricular experience for pupils, as well as enabling them to learn and develop by living and working together as a team and in acquiring the necessary social skills to make the visit a success.

30 Extra music lessons, sports lessons such as football and netball and the opportunity to participate in an inter-denominational youth club with members of the Methodist Church, form part of the school's provision to support the curriculum.

31 The school provides after school classes for Year 6 pupils in preparation for national testing. The school's contribution to personal and social education through circle time is currently underdeveloped, although sex education is taught in school and pupils receive some teaching on drug awareness.

32 The school's partnerships with the local secondary schools are satisfactory and include specific learning opportunities for Year 6 pupils, such as introductory lessons to information technology and science. The schools work together for the smooth transition of Year 6 pupils. There is continuous liaison, which provides pastoral support for these pupils as they progress through secondary school.



33 A strength in the school's links within the community is the sound working relationship between the school and the specialist teachers supporting pupils with special educational needs. These specialists work alongside the class teachers to advise and identify the most beneficial means of support for their pupils.

34 The school has the co-operation of the Travellers' Support Service, which works within the community with the pre-school children and their families. Together, their aim is to encourage full-time education for all the children of the travellers' community from an early age and to promote the importance of primary and secondary education.

35 Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and a strength of the school. The school's provision for spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and the school is very well placed to maintain this provision.

36 Spiritual development is good and whole school assemblies play an effective part in its' promotion. Pupils and teachers share the celebration of being part of the school community and opportunities are provided for pupils to pray and reflect on assembly themes and how they relate to their own lives. Prayers at the end of assembly provide periods of calm with a spiritual element. Works of art, for example, the pencil drawing of two hands in upper Key Stage 2, helps pupils' appreciation of beauty. Teachers use many suitable opportunities but provision for pupils' spiritual development is not planned systematically in all relevant subjects. Pupils have ample opportunities for self-knowledge and their self-esteem is promoted well. Teachers' high expectations of pupils are matched by much praise and pupils' work is valued. This is seen in the quality presentation to be found in most pupils' books, which is often good.

37 The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development and the results are very evident in the positive attitudes of pupils and their understanding of appropriate behaviour and good levels of self-discipline. Staff provide a very strong moral code based on Christian values. They provide clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and take opportunities to make pupils aware of differences between right and wrong. A sense of fair play is fostered effectively in the playground and during games lessons. The school rules, written and agreed by pupils, are well understood and consistently applied.

38 The school provides very well for pupils' social development, teachers provide many good opportunities in lessons for pupils to learn to co-operate and collaborate. Adults provide good role models of co-operation, teamwork and supportive relationships. Pupils learn from example. For example, older pupils support younger pupils using the computer. The school's house system is implemented positively and pupils are encouraged to be mutually supportive in striving for good standards of work and behaviour. Older pupils are given responsibilities for aspects of school life, such as preparing chairs for assembly, assisting at lunchtime and answering the telephone. Pupils are actively involved in supporting a number of local charities, including a sponsored walk. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets for improvement, prominently displayed in all classrooms. However, opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and work on their own investigations, are limited.

39 Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound overall. Pupils are introduced to the richness of their local culture in historical work. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are taught about different cultural traditions for example, Japanese writing to illustrate certain events. The art curriculum introduces pupils to work by artists from a range of cultures and periods. Visits to other non-Christian places of worship do not currently form part of the curriculum. There is a very limited range of books, including stories and poems, from other countries to develop pupils' cultural awareness. The school makes good use of the educational visit to Ireland to enrich the pupils' awareness of their own culture.

During the inspection, contact via e-mail to Russia supported a range of photographs and class work in Year 2. Such activities support pupils' cultural awareness, however they are not coherently planned throughout the school.

40 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school and covers many aspects of need. Staff with specialist skills, deliver booster classes in Key Stage 2, as well as continuing to support pupils with statements and individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the whole curriculum and receive the appropriate level of support to enable this to occur. Where possible, they attend literacy and numeracy sessions with their peers and on other occasions receive individual programmes that involve specialist provision, such as speech therapy. All aspects of provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are relevant to the pupils with special educational needs in this school as they are all full members of the community regardless of the severity of their special problems. Their peers benefit from learning to tolerate other people's problems and to recognise achievement at an individual level. Pupils with special educational needs gain self-esteem from contributing to the life of the school and sharing experiences with their peers and adults.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41 The last inspection report places a high value on the welfare, health and safety of pupils and describes a high level of pastoral care and a clear ethos of care and support. The school continues to be a caring establishment, which maintains the satisfactory level of support and advice for its pupils, identified by the previous inspection.

42 Although the school has not yet drawn up its own child protection policy, local authority guidelines are in place and provide satisfactory arrangements. The head teacher is the nominated person responsible for implementing any procedures and, together with a member of the non-teaching staff, has received training to identify the symptoms of abuse. Training has not yet been made available to other members of staff.

43 Adults in the school are familiar with the needs of individual pupils and their families. This knowledge is central to the school's success in supporting and caring for pupils as they develop. The school has good routines at the end of the school day to ensure the safe hand over to parents and carers of the youngest children leaving the building. During the school day, the dinner supervisors follow road safety procedures rigorously in order to ensure the safety of all the pupils transferring to the school's playing field.

44 The school is very much at the heart of the catholic community and its open door policy is very relaxed. The safety routines, such as fire drills, continue to be built into school life but they are not always frequent enough. The emergency procedures used to treat pupils with specific medical conditions such as asthma or diabetes, are known and understood by the current staff but there are no formal records to inform and guide supply staff of the emergency treatments.

45 The school monitors pupils' absences satisfactorily with the support of parents and the education welfare officer. Certificates are given at the end of the year to pupils who have achieved full attendance but the school prefers to encourage good attendance by ensuring that pupils enjoy their lessons and the very good relationships to be found in school.

46 There are very good measures in place for monitoring and promoting the good behaviour of pupils. The school now has very good discipline and bullying policies, which are guided by the school's mission statement and focus on raising the self-esteem of its pupils. Good behaviour and academic effort are also promoted through the house system and pastoral assemblies, which are

designed to encourage pupil participation and develop confidence.

47 The school monitors pupils' academic performance satisfactorily. Pupils and teachers discuss and identify educational targets, which are conveyed to parents through the annual progress reports.

48 The informal systems in place to monitor pupils' personal development are good. These systems include the use of house points to promote a pride in team and individual success. Pupils are active fund-raisers and take responsibilities in order to assist their teachers. However, these systems are still under developed and do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake independent learning in their studies or to take part in regular and constructive personal and social education through circle time.

49 The school has a satisfactory range of procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and makes appropriate use of them to support curricular planning in core subjects. There have been some improvements since the last report, especially in the quality of individual pupil records, beginning on entry to reception and updated each year. Staff know their pupils very well and use this informal method of assessment to underpin their planning for literacy and numeracy alongside guidelines in the National Strategies, which the school has implemented. The school analyses the results of national tests for seven and 11 year olds and compares the results of the informal tests for Years 4 and 5 to national standards. This information has been used to identify a weakness in attainment in writing through the school and especially at Key Stage 2. An action plan has been drawn up to address this weakness and made a priority in the current school development plan. This level of analysis and its use is an improvement since the last inspection. Most of the children from the travellers' community are not present for annual or national tests and do not feature in this analysis other than by their absence.

50 Individual target setting has just been introduced this year but there is a loose framework in place to ensure that targets are regularly reviewed and updated. Targets are set for different areas of development and each child has a specific target for literacy and numeracy. Reading records are thorough and used to progress skills and understanding for each pupil. There is a lack of rigour in the marking of written work and pupils are not always helped to identify what they can do and what they have to do to improve. There is a comprehensive marking policy that has received a brief review but is not monitored regularly to assess the consistency and quality of its implementation. This was a concern in the last report and has only been partially addressed. The school continues to update its portfolio of work for moderating assessment in the core subjects.

51 Children under the age of five are assessed on entry to the school using a standardised baseline system. This is analysed and built on to keep very full records of each individual child's progress and attainment across all areas of learning. Judgements are supported by samples of work and observations are used to plan the next steps in learning. Record keeping for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all assessments are used to help individual education plans to be written that have realistic targets for each pupil, depending on need and priorities. Statutory reviews are well organised and parents fully involved. Outside agencies are involved appropriately in the assessment of needs and reviews of statements and provision. These very good quality assessment procedures and their rigorous use, provide pupils with special educational needs the opportunity to learn, progress and achieve.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52 The previous inspection report described the school's links with parents, the community, agencies and church as good. The school has maintained its good partnership with parents and a strength of this partnership is the very positive perceptions of the parents about the school.

53 The school continues to work in close partnership with its Parent Teacher Association which provides good support both financially and socially whilst adding to the friendly atmosphere in school and helping to provide additional resources. This, together with the contribution of parents and governors in the classroom has a positive impact on the work of the school.

54 The very good relationship between the school and the travellers' community is a strength in the school's partnership with parents. Travelling parents are encouraged to join the school community and their children are welcome in the classroom at any time throughout the school year.

55 Most parents are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves for their children. They also feel well informed about their children's progress and the inspection confirms this. Overall, the school has provided very good information to parents. Parents were consulted about the literacy and numeracy strategies to be used in school and the annual reports to parents are of excellent quality. These reports provide all the information for parents to understand and support their child's learning, as well as providing for parental suggestions or comment. However, a few items of information were missing from the school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents for the last academic year.

56 The use of reading diaries promotes a very good dialogue between parents and teachers to support the contribution to pupils' learning at home. However, diaries and homework are not consistently used to their full potential to support pupils' learning at home.

57 The school has adopted a home school agreement to support its partnership with parents. Through this agreement, parents understand the importance of assisting their children at home with reading or specific school projects. Some parents were unhappy with the level of homework their children are required to do and the school has clarified its policy to follow government guidance concerning homework. However, homework is used as a positive means of support in some year groups.

58 Parents of pupils with statements of special educational need are kept informed through a daily diary to which both parents and support staff contribute. All other parents of children on the special educational needs register are informed regularly of their child's progress and are welcome to discuss any matter on a daily basis. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning, especially at home. Many make a very positive contribution and receive ideas and support from school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

59 Leadership is sound overall. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. The school benefits from effective leadership of the head teacher who has helped to create a good ethos in the school. He has developed a good climate for learning, very good attitudes to learning and very good relationships and there is a commitment to raise standards for all in a climate of equal opportunities. The head teacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. All staff have a commitment to improve and a good capacity to succeed. The head teacher and the governing body ensure that the school's priorities for development are appropriate. The implementation of the literacy hour and the numeracy strategy and the raising of attainment in information technology are successful examples of these

priorities.

60 The governing body is supportive in many ways. The chair and vice-chair of the governing body are fully committed to the school. A number of governors visit the school and support classroom activities from time to time. However, the vice-chair is anxious to extend the role of the governors to be more active in the curriculum aspects of school life. The support from the governors with responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, has been effective. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are closely involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly development plan and the longer-term vision for the school. The governing body fulfils most of its statutory duties, although there are a few aspects that are missing from the governors' annual report to parents. For example, it does not, at present, contain details of the progress made with the action plan related to the last inspection, information about school security or details of facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with disabilities. It lacks full details of attendance records. The school has a long history of providing good quality support to pupils with special educational needs. The new special educational needs co-ordinator is continuing this well respected tradition and has already drawn up an action plan to move the service forward in consultation with support staff.

61 The head teacher is involved in some monitoring and evaluation of the teaching. However, this aspect of his leadership is underdeveloped. This is partly due to the high teaching commitment undertaken by the head teacher at present. However, the governors have already put plans in place to reduce this teaching commitment. The head teacher does examine the teachers' planning. The effectiveness of the subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the curriculum is variable. In a small school, some teachers have a responsibility for more than one subject. This makes effective management more difficult to achieve. It has been done well in English and in aspects of science and mathematics. The monitoring and support for the development of information technology is particularly effective. Only a small amount of monitoring of teaching and planning is carried out in the other subjects.

62 The aims of the school, its values and policies are implemented well. The policy for sex education is in need of review. The yearly school development plan effectively supports management. It gives a very clear framework for action and is carefully costed. Funding is linked to educational priorities and there are clear strategies in the plan for implementation. Those responsible for carrying out the developments are identified. The head teacher and the governing body regularly evaluate the plan.

63 There are sufficient numbers of qualified teaching staff to teach the National Curriculum. Effective use is made of specialist teachers in mathematics, English, science, art and physical education. Class teachers and support staff work very well together. The contribution by the support staff is of high quality. The teachers' appraisal scheme is appropriate. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and has recently been enhanced by the completion of a new roof on the hall. This has resulted in the hall being used effectively. Resources are mainly satisfactory and good in history and art. They are unsatisfactory in design and technology. The resources are used effectively to support the teaching in most subjects. The school grounds are laid out as a resource for learning with a nature garden and an ecological pond, which is being re-constructed at present.

64 Very careful financial planning support educational developments and priorities very well. The school uses the money at its disposal wisely and the chair of the governors' financial committee is very aware of the need to get the best value for pupils, linked to the priorities of the school development plan. The school provides good value for money. For example, a special grant was used effectively to gain an extra teacher for one year. This has helped to maintain a good pupil teacher ratio. Also, money spent on computers and computer software has helped raise attainment in information technology. The school's finances are in very good order and a good reserve is in place to deal with

changes in the future due to enforced staff reductions. The quality of financial control and school administration by the school's two secretaries and chair of the governors' financial committee are very good. The governors run the school efficiently, they take a keen interest in the performance of the school and the way it is perceived locally. The governors and the head teacher are committed to improving their effectiveness. For example, the governors have set performance management targets for the head teacher and deputy head teacher. The head teacher is committed to attend the national head teachers' management course. The management systems now in place have ensured a number of improvements since the last inspection and have a good capacity to maintain a successful school and introduce further improvements.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65 To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

- Improve attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1, by:
  - 1) establishing a scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the curriculum and gives the teacher a clear picture of what is to be taught;
  - 2) implementing a more effective system for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in the classroom.  
(These are indicated in paragraphs 88 and 89)
  
- Improve the quality of writing throughout the school by:
  - 1) giving pupils more opportunities to write independently about their own thoughts, interests and experiences for a variety of audiences;
  - 2) improving the quality of the marking to give pupils guidance on how to improve their writing skills;
  - 3) setting and reviewing targets for each pupil in writing based on information gained from marking and assessment records;
  - 4) planning the use of dictionaries and thesauri into all writing tasks.  
(These are indicated in paragraphs 4, 77 and 79)
  
- Improve pupils' independent learning and research skills by:
  - 1) planning more opportunities in all subjects for individuals and groups to carry out research using books and computers;
  - 2) encouraging pupils to devise and set up their own investigations in subjects, such as mathematics and science;
  - 3) improving the quality and range of non-fiction books.  
(These are indicated in paragraphs 80, 83, 89, 91, 94, 106, 109 and 119)
  
- Improve the teachers' written planning for lessons in non-core subjects by:
  - 1) detailing more fully the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in each lesson;
  - 2) standardise the format of the planning so it can be more easily evaluated;
  - 3) extend the monitoring role of the subject co-ordinators to ensure quality and consistency in the planning.  
(These are indicated in paragraphs 21, 61, 102, 106, 107, 111 and 112)

In addition to the issues above, the following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Consider ways of increasing the time given to the teaching of design and technology.
- Continue to find ways of improving attendance.
- Provide more opportunities to prepare children for living in a multicultural society.
- Ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff are provided with some training to increase their understanding of child protection.
- Ensure that the few minor items of information not listed in the governors' annual report to parents and in the prospectus are included.

(These are included in paragraphs 16, 39, 42, 45, 55, 60 and 99)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	16	35	42	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	127
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	4	4
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	11	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85% (76%)	69% (81%)	85% (82%)
	National	82% (80%)	83% (81%)	87% (84%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	6	4
	Girls	6	6	5
	Total	11	12	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85% (73%)	92% (78%)	69% (78%)
	National	82% (81%)	86% (85%)	87% (86%)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	9	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	4	4
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	8	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53% (77%)	60% (81%)	73% (96%)
	National	70% (65%)	69% (59%)	78% (69%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	4	5
	Girls	7	5	7
	Total	9	9	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60% (66%)	60% (81%)	80% (96%)
	National	68% (66%)	69% (66%)	75% (72%)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

### Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

## Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

## Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	235,906
Total expenditure	225,659
Expenditure per pupil	1,777
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,000
Balance carried forward to next year	5,247

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	69

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	43	7	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	41	16	0	1
The teaching is good.	59	36	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	38	9	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	19	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	22	3	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	39	6	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	49	41	4	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	42	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	43	12	7	7

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

66 Children are admitted to the combined reception and Year 1 class at the beginning of the year in which they are five and attend full-time. There were 20 children in this class at the time of the inspection, five of whom were still four years old. Just under a third of these children have some learning difficulties and there is a small group of children from the travellers' community who only attend for part of the school year.

67 The children's attainment on entry to the school, is well below that for four year old children in the local authority and nationally. Only a third achieved average or above average scores in language, mathematics and personal and social development in the baseline assessment results. In this group of children there is a very wide ability range, with a few high achievers and a much larger number who have very poor skills on entry, especially in language. Provision is planned for all areas of learning and, though older children are prepared for the demands of the National Curriculum, four year olds have good opportunities to learn through creative and structured play. Planning for English and mathematics includes appropriate elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Assessment procedures are very good and a profile of each child is built up over time, with examples of work to support judgements on attainment and progress. Excellent home/school links have been established with all parents. Parents accompany their children into the classroom each day at the beginning of each session and home-school diaries are used to communicate with parents of children with severe learning problems. All children take a selection of books home daily and parents are encouraged to make comments in their child's reading diary. This helps many children to make very good progress in their early reading skills.

68 Nearly all children achieve, and frequently exceed, expected standards of attainment by the age of five in social and personal development. The school gives personal development a very high priority, which is reflected in its ethos of care, co-operation and encouragement. All staff are consistent in helping children work and play together in harmony. They are excellent role models for the children, through the high quality of their own personal relationships and the very good team spirit that underpins all their practice. Children care for equipment, keep their classroom tidy, work happily in groups and share their skills willingly. For example, children set up carpet games independently, once they had completed their literacy task and took turns to match cards to pictures. They are sociable and listen carefully to questions and instructions. Staff are very good at identifying children who need some extra help to participate fully in activities and provide this support sensitively and unobtrusively. The children are very mature for their age and are tolerant and supportive of their peers who find learning and co-operating difficult. Both the quality of teaching and the provision are very good in this area of learning.

69 Most children enter the school with very limited skills in language and literacy. Though the majority of children achieve the nationally agreed standards by the age of five and sometimes exceed them, a significant minority do not and attainment overall is below expectations. Children are most successful in speaking and listening especially in shared reading and language work. They re-tell stories such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and join spontaneously in the rhyming parts they recognise. These children answer questions appropriately and most children speak in well-structured sentences. They speak clearly and are beginning to ask and answer questions. The planning of language and literacy is well structured and enables children to do work that is challenging and designed to meet their particular needs. All children make good progress in acquiring basic reading skills and a few higher attainers are already reading simple texts with confidence and accuracy. The majority can recognise some letters and read phrases that they have learnt but lower attainers have few reading skills,

especially those with learning difficulties and infrequent attendance at school. Writing skills are the least developed by the age of five but the children quickly learn to control pencils and have made considerable progress during their time in the reception class. The high attainers are writing simple phrases and sentences independently but the majority need support to form letters and words up to the age of five. Children with special educational needs receive very good support in language and literacy. All staff have high expectations and good knowledge and understanding of both the children's needs and how to meet them in language and literature. The quality of both the teaching and the provision is good in this area of learning.

70 Teaching in mathematics is excellent. Children are helped to understand the importance of mathematics. They use it consistently in a range of tasks. Though attainment is below expectations for their age, their achievements in number are good. Most children can count to 20 with the highest attainers able to write higher numbers by the age of five. They sing number rhymes with confidence and most children can count objects to ten independently. The majority of children have a sense of addition or subtraction by the age. Every opportunity is taken to develop an understanding of the value of numbers and children are encouraged to record their work using pictures and numbers as they learn to form them. Some children recognise the value of different coins but most develop their skills in measuring and shape recognition after the age of five. Children use the computer to help them recognise and select numbers, both independently and with support. They use language appropriately when talking about number and understand words such as 'before' and 'after' when sequencing numbers. A plentiful and attractive range of resources are used positively to support learning in mathematics.

71 The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Younger children benefit from interaction with older children in most aspects of this area of learning. Attainment overall is below expectations by the age of five. However, in information technology and in aspects of science and construction some achieve the expected level. They learn that plants need water and light to grow and planted seeds as part of an experiment to prove this theory. High attaining children match parts of a flower to words on a worksheet. The majority need support to record work up to the age of five but develop these skills rapidly while in the reception class. Children talk about their environment with confidence and make model houses to a simple plan. Their construction skills are good, especially their ability to select materials and use implements such as scissors. Most have an idea about their place in the family and are beginning to learn about themselves and their bodies. All use the computers with confidence and have good mouse control. Teaching is very good and children are encouraged to use their literacy and numeracy skills in the wide variety of tasks they undertake in this area of learning.

72 All children reach the expected standards of agility and co-ordination by the age of five and carry on to use these skills in team games and movement lessons. Their maturity and control in working with other children, using bean-bags and cones, is remarkable for such young children. They use their very good listening skills and lively imaginations to make and hold interesting body shapes in statues and balance expertly. Simple rules are followed and understood and children of all abilities and skill levels work with confidence in the hall. Their spatial awareness is very good and they rarely need to be told 'to find a space'. They are beginning to learn how to improve a movement through observation and challenge themselves in their choice of balances. Their very good knowledge of activities and about moving safely but with courage, is inspired by the excellent teaching in this area of learning. They develop practical skills well, especially pencil control and the use and control of materials and implements. All but a few children who have learning problems achieve well in their physical development by the age of five.

73 The provision for creative development is good and staff are ably supported by parents in helping children to complete challenging tasks, such as making and decorating mini-beasts. They mix colours and create collages using a range of materials. They draw objects and their self-portraits have

an appropriate amount of detail for their age. Simple songs are sung tunefully and children understand words of rhymes relating to the topics they are studying. They have a good sense of rhythm, which is evident in the confident performance of actions to songs and rhymes. Children use their singing skills in assembly and are sensitive to the mood of the tunes they sing. Movements are imaginative, as in the game of statues, and they can move in time to a beat. Overall the provision for creative development is very good and is enhanced by the many opportunities for creative role-play. Most children achieve the levels expected in creative development by the age of five. Teaching is very good and carefully planned. Activities are very well organised and managed and staff have high expectations that children will learn to appreciate their own work and that of their peers.

## **ENGLISH**

74 In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, in 1999, standards in reading were close to the national average for those achieving Level 2 or above but below for those achieving Level 3. The writing results were mixed but below the national averages for seven year olds overall. Pupils achieved below average results in both reading and writing when compared to similar schools. The results in English for 11 year olds in 1999 were well below the national average and very low when compared to similar schools. There was an improvement in comparison to results for 1998 at the age of seven but a marked decline in attainment at the age of 11 when compared to national averages. Results in this school are very much affected by the numbers of pupils in each year. In 1999, there were only 15. Also, the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs was very high in last year's small group of 11 year olds. The number of travellers' children in each year group affects the pattern of results, as many are not present for the National Tests. Travellers' children who attend school regularly have the same pattern of attainment in English as their peers. Attainment in English observed during the inspection showed a marked improvement in comparison to 1999 at the age of seven and very good improvement at the age of eleven. Speaking and listening skills are above the national expectation for both seven and 11 year olds. Reading is in line with national expectations and, though writing is below this standard, there are higher attaining pupils in both these cohorts. There are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls. Standards in literacy are broadly in line with national expectations.

75 Pupils, at the end of Key Stage 1 are very good listeners and articulate speakers. Attainment in speaking and listening is above national expectations at the end of the key stage. They attain well for their age especially in the quality of their contributions during literacy hour. Seven year olds were composing lines of poetry in their heads as a shared activity and spoke their ideas confidently. Contributions to a poem on 'summer' were, 'Sun in the sky shining brightly' and 'Maybe there are strawberry plants'. These pupils can think up riddles and ask their peers to solve them, adjusting clues as part of their questions and answers. Their vocabulary is good and they speak with interest and clarity when addressing the whole school as in the celebration of Holy mass and assemblies. Pupils aged 11 are confident in talking to visitors and understand how to adapt their language to the occasion. They express their ideas clearly and use speaking and listening skills well to develop their learning across the curriculum. Their knowledge of technical language is good in information and communication technology and science. All pupils enjoy performing for a range of audiences and school productions give them the opportunity to learn how to project their voices and speak with meaning and expression.

76 Reading standards are in-line with the national expectation for both seven and 11 year olds. Higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression by the end of both key stages. Seven year olds have a good knowledge of letter sounds and can build words, as well as using pictorial and contextual clues to help them read new words. Their interest in literature is growing and they enjoy reading a range of books. They are developing an awareness of the different purposes for reading books, especially for information. Some pupils learned to use a glossary while others used simple dictionaries

to help them spell. The majority of pupils are very competent readers by the end of Key Stage 2. The higher attainers can discuss the plot and characters of the stories they read and are beginning to identify differences in styles used by such authors as Jacqueline Wilson and Henry Potter. Lower attainers have adequate technical reading skills for their age and those with special educational needs have met targets in response to the very good quality of the support they receive. Reading is important to pupils in this school and they keep a thorough record of what they have read. They are encouraged to use their reading skills in other subjects, as well as to develop their knowledge of language. Pupils enjoy reading poetry and a group in Year 5 appreciated the rhythmical use of language in 'The Night Mail'. Year 3 pupils enjoyed reading about the loneliness of the boy in an extract from 'The Butterfly man', which they used as the basis for creative writing. Shared and guided reading in literacy hour has extended pupils' experience of reading, through the use of big books in Key Stage 1 and the wide range of extracts from literature used in Key Stage 2.

77 Writing at Key Stage 1 is below the national expectation in the quality of extended writing. Pupils can construct sentences and they spell frequently used words correctly. Simple punctuation is used appropriately by most pupils but speech marks are used infrequently, even by the higher attainers. Limited opportunities for pupils to write independently, means that pupils do not attain as well as they could by the age of seven. There is evidence that some pupils are writing well for their age, which is an improvement since last year when no above average scores were achieved by seven year olds. The writing skills of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are much better than in 1999 when results in English were very low in comparison to similar schools. High attainers are achieving above average standards in their writing both in the analysis of work and in classes observed. They write at length and can model stories on books that they read. Some good writing was displayed based on the story of 'The Canterville Ghost' and some pupils had developed their own ghost stories. These had a clear structure, used paragraphs and were enriched by a good use of words and punctuation. However standards in writing are still below national averages overall, as a significant minority of pupils lack confidence in their writing skills and are inconsistent in spelling and the use of punctuation when writing independently. They make insufficient use of dictionaries and thesauri when writing and have limited opportunities to write for a range of audiences. Lower attaining pupils are very well supported and benefit from the good support they receive in carefully targeted booster classes.

78 Pupils have positive attitudes to this subject and really enjoy reading. Their skills in listening and speaking are well used in all subjects and enhance their very good social and personal development. They work well in class, complete tasks and are supportive of each other in group work.

79 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Year 1 pupils benefit from very good literacy teaching when they work with the reception class on two mornings a week. Good teaching is based on a comprehensive knowledge of how to teach literacy and an enthusiasm for the subject, which is shared with the pupils. Planning is satisfactory and follows the National Literacy Strategy, but there is insufficient attention given to incorporating the use of dictionaries and thesauri into sessions where independent writing is the focus. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write independently about their own ideas and interests for a variety of audiences. Teachers manage pupils very well in class and group work is carefully organised. Pupils in mixed age classes are planned for appropriately and work matches the needs of different groups. The targeting of extra support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who need a boost to improve is very good. The quality of this support is very high and pupils benefit in all aspects of reading and writing. Very good use is made of the additional resources acquired to support the literacy hour. This helps pupils raise their awareness of the range of literature available and particularly enhances their reading opportunities. The quality of marking is variable and does not always help pupils to improve their writing skills. The setting of individual targets is a new initiative and is not used consistently to help raise standards in writing. Teachers keep very good reading records for each pupil and have a constructive dialogue with home through the reading diary that each pupil keeps.



These records enable pupils' attainment and learning in reading to be tracked consistently over time. Attainment in writing is not tracked so regularly or systematically.

80 There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 since the last report and the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and reviewed. The subject has been well managed by the co-ordinator. Pupils with special educational needs and travellers' children continue to receive very good support and the excellent skills of the special educational needs team are used currently to implement national initiatives to boost attainment in reading and writing. Though English is well resourced in classes, the non-fiction library is unsatisfactory and not organised to enable pupils to gain skills in retrieving information that are transferable to public reference libraries.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81 Overall, standards in mathematics show an improving picture. This is due to the school's commitment to raise standards in the subject by giving more teaching time and a curriculum planned within the National Numeracy Strategy framework. Also the good and sometimes very good and excellent teaching in the reception and Key Stage 2 classes is assisting progress.

82 The results of the national assessments in 1999, for pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1, indicate that pupils' attainment was well below expectations for their age when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 pupils are currently attaining standards below those expected nationally. The very good and sometimes excellent teaching in the reception class supports rapid learning and progress, however this level of learning is not maintained throughout the key stage. Pupils fail to build successfully on previous learning and, on occasions, there is a lack of challenge, pace and vigour.

83 The results of the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, in 1999, indicate standards that were well below the national average. These results, when compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, also indicate standards well below average. However, it must be remembered that results are very much affected by the number of pupils in each year and in 1999 there were only 15. Also, there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a number of travellers' children who were absent from the test. The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils, standards are now in line with national expectations. Many improvements are due to the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress due to consistently good teaching and support. However, there is a need to extend pupils' individual skills by a more open-ended approach to problem solving, an issue raised in the last inspection report. At present this is restrained by the use of commercially produced worksheets. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and are very well supported by positive teaching in smaller lower ability groups. Realistic targets set by the school to raise attainment between now and 2002 should be more challenging, to support the already positive upward trend in mathematics standards. During the inspection, no discernible trends were identified between the performance of girls and boys. When compared with the findings in the last report, standards have been maintained in Key Stage 2. However standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have fallen.

84 Most pupils enter school with well below mathematical skills appropriate to their age. By the end of the reception class, pupils have a good knowledge of numbers up to ten with the more able having a secure knowledge of numbers up to 20 and sometimes well beyond. The majority use a range of developing strategies to answer simple addition and subtraction problems with totals to ten. Most pupils count in twos to at least 20. By the end of Year 2 just over half of pupils recognise, count and understand numbers up to 50. Most pupils confidently count numbers between 0 and 100 in tens. Pupils are generally confident with money, adding and subtracting amounts up to 50p, giving the correct change. Many pupils are aware of odd and even numbers and are able to predict patterns.

However, standards in numeracy are below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1. Throughout Key Stage 2, most pupils talk confidently about their mathematics work, using the correct mathematical vocabulary to explain clearly how they reached a particular answer. All pupils are encouraged to use a range of strategies, however, planned opportunities to talk and share various possibilities of solving the same problems is underdeveloped. Pupils in Year 3 confidently record fractions of a whole when measuring capacity. By the end of Year 4 many pupils mentally add quickly two two-digit numbers and by Year 6 the more able pupils are mentally adding and subtracting decimals and are accurate to two decimal places. Most pupils in Year 6 confidently recall multiplication facts and this is a strength throughout the key stage. Many pupils know how to convert simple fractions into percentages and successfully use the skill to solve everyday problems. Standards in numeracy are above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2 and often these skills are used in other subjects well.

85 Pupils make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure. Pupils in Year 2 confidently name a range of shapes, correctly identifying square, triangle and rectangle with an awareness of their individual properties. By Year 6, as observed in a class lesson, pupils display a very sound understanding of reflective and rotational symmetry, accurately rotating shapes. Pupils have developed a very good understanding of co-ordinates and angles to 360 degrees.

86 Pupils' learning in data handling is less well developed in Key Stage 1. Pupils draw and read simple block graphs. However, the use of information to give predictions is less successful. Pupils in Year 6 understand statistical information, such as range and average and use this knowledge to calculate trends. The use of information technology to support skills in data collection is not well developed and, at present, is insufficient to enhance this area of mathematics. Pupils have a confident understanding of probability, for example, they make sensible decisions about whether something is certain to happen or there is no chance of it happening.

87 Pupils' response is very good and most show an enthusiasm for learning, trying to do their best work for their teachers. This has a positive effect on their learning. The presentation of work in pupils' books is generally good, supporting accurate answers. Pupils concentrate well during mental and individual work sessions. Behaviour is good and pupils display very good levels of confidence and motivation.

88 The quality of teaching is good overall. Some excellent teaching was observed in the reception class and very good teaching in Key Stage 2. In these lessons, teachers explain clearly and logically at the beginning of the lesson what pupils are going to learn. This clear understanding motivates and challenges pupils very effectively, and has a positive influence on the quality of learning for all pupils. Teachers' understanding of mathematics is good, thus enabling challenging questions to be directed at higher attaining pupils at an accelerated rate. Overall, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the basic skills in mathematics is good. The subject co-ordinator responsible for the majority of mathematics teaching in Key Stage 2 has successfully focused on the teaching and learning of mental and oral mathematics in numeracy lessons. Pupils' ability to work out quite difficult problems accurately and quickly mentally has improved as a result. Activities in these sessions are challenging and lively and pupils are motivated and enthusiastic to answer. However, pupils are usually expected to work individually and, while this is entirely appropriate for some tasks, pupils need further opportunities to investigate number in pairs or groups. Planning for mathematics is mainly good. However, it is weaker at the end of Key Stage 1 and a scheme of work to support this teaching is not yet in place. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very good throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and their very good management of pupils enables them to maintain good levels of behaviour. This motivates pupils well and they work hard and concentrate well until the end of the lesson. Lessons usually start on time and all mental sessions proceed at a quick pace and interest. The final sessions at

the end of lessons are well planned, giving good opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers use day to day assessment soundly, however, the marking of pupils' books is inconsistent and not always helpful in indicating what a pupil needs to know to improve learning.

89 The management of mathematics is influential in lifting standards, especially in Key Stage 2. Monitoring and evaluation of work is developing slowly. However, the school is aware of the need to monitor more closely the quality of teaching and standards in Key Stage 1 to build upon the very good foundations laid in the reception class to raise attainment. The school's strategy for the development of mathematics is well focused and appropriate. There are developing procedures for the assessment of standards throughout the school, focused mainly in Key Stage 2. The school has yet to develop systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the subject so that all staff are given the opportunity to review quality and standards throughout the school, thus improving the consistency of the very best teaching. The school held a successful parent consultation meeting about mathematics earlier this school year in a bid to seek the support of parents to work more closely with their children. The regular undertaking of homework has a positive effect on supporting pupils' learning, consolidating what they have learnt in class lessons. A recently updated subject policy is awaiting discussion by teaching staff. The school is aware of the need to develop a new scheme of work incorporating the National Numeracy Strategy and is planning to do so. There is a sound range of resources to meet the needs of the subject overall, however, additional large measuring equipment is needed in Key Stage 1. Information technology is used to support ongoing work as observed during a lesson related to reflection in Year 6, however, it is insufficiently integrated into the subject at other times.

## **SCIENCE**

90 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds shows that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average and those reaching Level 5 or above was well below the national average. When compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, the results were again well below average. However, in this particular year, there were a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and only 15 children in total, making comparisons with the national average and similar schools more difficult to make. Over the last few years, the trend in science has been upwards. In 1997 and 1998, for example, the results were very high in comparison with the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards for this year's pupils in Year 6, are in line with national expectations. It was a similar picture in the last inspection.

91 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and they achieve particularly well in the early stages of Key Stage 1. They have a satisfactory knowledge of all the components of science. For example, they know about a range of different materials and their properties. Pupils can explain the difference between living things and non-living things and stage what living things require to survive. They have a basic understanding of the life cycle of plants. For example, they can describe the life cycle of a sunflower from seed to plant and to the production of more seeds. Pupils' standards in experimental and investigative science by the end of Key Stage 1 is sound. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment for 11 year olds is in line with national expectations. They have a satisfactory grasp of scientific vocabulary, a broad and secure base of knowledge and are developing a good approach to investigating. Pupils make well-informed predictions when carrying out experiments. For example, written work shows that before investigation into suitability with different materials, such as sugar, salt and washing powder, pupils tried to predict the outcome. By age 11, pupils have a sound understanding of materials and their properties, physical processes and life processes and living things. For example, they understand the human skeleton, its importance and can explain different types of joints and the muscles that operate them. Pupils' abilities to set up their own investigations without direction from the teacher, is however, less well developed. Their ability to use books and CD-ROMs for independent learning and research is also weaker.

92 Literacy and numeracy skills are used soundly to discuss, record and measure scientific findings in experiments and observation. Listening and speaking skills are always good in science lessons and pupils measure with accuracy. The presentation of their work in books is of a high standard and investigations are recorded in clear, logical fashion. There are clear headings, stating the purpose of the investigation, what apparatus is required, the procedure and the results. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by appropriate work and classroom helpers and this helps them to make good progress.

93 Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They demonstrate a sound enquiring mind and are happy to work with other pupils to produce results. They enjoy finding out things and their response in question and answer sessions in science lessons is good. Their behaviour is mainly good.

94 Only three lessons could be seen during the course of the inspection but these lessons, together with an investigation of teachers' planning and an analysis of pupils' work in their books, indicates that the quality of teaching in science is mainly good. This is an improvement on the last inspection, where there was some unsatisfactory teaching. Most staff have a secure and confident subject knowledge that extends pupils' thinking well. There is a good focus on developing key vocabulary and clear scientific language. This was particularly well done in a Year 3 class where pupils were studying living things such as snails and caterpillars. The teacher insisted on the use of correct scientific words like habitat and camouflage. In most lessons, short term lesson planning is sound and developed in clear steps to ensure that pupils have made gains in knowledge, skills and understanding by the end of the lesson. However, the planning does not provide enough opportunity for pupils to gain their knowledge by independent learning using books and computers. The planning for the year and the term is of good quality and this results in good coverage of all aspects of science. The management of pupils in all science lessons is good. This results in productive lessons, with pupils applying themselves well throughout the period and concentrating on their work to the end of the lesson. Clear targets are often set and pupils in many lessons are fully aware of what they are to learn. A high proportion of lessons is used to establish assessment tasks and the records kept are good and used in future planning. The teachers' question and answer sessions are usually particularly effective and this consolidates learning at the start of the lesson and indicates at the end just what pupils have learned. Teachers link their science teaching to examples from everyday life and this helps pupils realise the relevance to their own lives. This is done well in Year 1 where pupils' written work indicated that basic work on electricity was strongly linked to the dangers of electricity around the home. Teachers also indicate to pupils the importance of presenting the results of their investigations in a logical and clear fashion. This results in many pupils taking a pride in their written work, which is generally well presented in science.

95 The quality of leadership to support the subject is satisfactory. The scheme of work and policy are good. The co-ordinator however has a wide range of subject responsibilities and has had little time to monitor the other teachers' short term planning or the quality of the teaching. She has, however, developed a good system of assessment and the resources for science are satisfactory and stored well. The non-fiction library has an inadequate range of books for scientific research. The school grounds are being developed as a resource for learning with a nature reserve and an ecological pond. The subject is enhanced by a number of out of school visits to places of scientific interest, such as Sellafield Nuclear Power Station and the Bird of Prey Sanctuary. This school also participates in competitions with the Environmental Agency.

## **ART**

96 There has been considerable improvement in this subject since the last inspection, especially in Key Stage 2, where attainment was below national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy designing and making large and small animals based on their mini-beast project. Textures, shape and colour are explored through this task. Pupils are attaining appropriately in drawing skills and their knowledge of colour, by the age of 7. Pupils are attaining standards that are above expectations for 11 year olds. They are adept at using a wide range of techniques when handling different media. Year 6 pupils painted in watercolours as they composed designs based on Japanese writing. Their current project in art is 'Round the World' and they have produced an impressive array of stencil and screen prints inspired by the work of Jamaican artists. Their observational drawing is good and tonal works in pencil are displayed showing still-life objects in black and white. Sensitive drawings of inter-twined hands have been produced by Year 5 pupils. Year 4 pupils have made puppets and performed plays with them in assembly. There is a good range of two and three-dimensional work.

97 Art work is valued and pupils enjoy having their work exhibited around the school. A recent painting competition was very popular and prizes were awarded for originality as well as skill in drawing and painting. Their study of art works from different cultures raises their awareness of the richness and diversity in art around the world.

98 The quality of teaching was good in the one lesson observed and pupils benefit in Key Stage 2 from some specialist teaching. Sketch books have been introduced and are used for preparation and experimentation. All aspects of art are covered through the school and the work planned in Key Stage 2 builds on previously learned skills. Pupils' work adds considerably to the learning environment and pictures are used to illustrate work in many subjects across the curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99 The previous inspection judged that standards in design and technology were sound at both key stages with some weaknesses in overall provision at Key Stage 2. Due to time tabling constraints very limited progress has been made at Key Stage 2. No lessons were observed during the inspection and information was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, planning and from displays in classrooms and around the school. An overall judgement could not be made about the level of attainment.

100 At Key Stage 1, pupils design a model vehicle using a variety of materials to represent major features. This work shows an appropriate use of tools and equipment and some accuracy in shaping and joining of materials. Pupils' work shows evidence of planning the designs of mini beasts before construction.

101 At Key Stage 2, pupils design and manufacture papier-mâché puppet heads. On completion, costumes are designed prior to a school performance. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils undertake a range of work involving the manufacture of Indian braiding and musical instruments in the form of rattles. Overall, pupils have a limited depth of knowledge in planning their own designs or carrying out tests to evaluate them due to the lack of time allocation given to the subject.

102 Leadership of the subject is ineffective. A satisfactory policy and scheme of work are in place. The co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor the subject directly and there is no clear focus for development. Although design and technology is often linked to other subjects, for example, mathematics with the accurate measuring in centimetres and the cutting out of material to the desired length, there are many missed opportunities to give the subject a higher priority. Resources are unsatisfactory, access is restricted and a very limited range of construction kits is available to support pupils' independent learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was obtained from analysing pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff, to enable secure judgements to be made. Standards of work are broadly with those expected for pupils at the end of both key stages. It was a similar picture for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in the last inspection.

104 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an understanding and knowledge of their local area. For example, pupils know that their town has areas set out for different purposes and services, such as supermarkets or a hospital. They have a sound understanding of what it means to go on a journey and can use descriptive words well to explain the imaginative journey of Little Red Riding Hood. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are able to compare the development of a town like Kingston in Jamaica and compare it with their own town of Penrith. They are able to draw and use maps in a satisfactory way and can undertake a sound study of the physical features of the Lake District, indicating the mountains and river systems. The pupils have written extensively in their books about European Countries, such as France, Spain and Switzerland. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have an extensive knowledge of the geography of Ireland, which is strengthened by a yearly residential visit for pupils in Year 6. Literacy skills are satisfactory in geography to ensure sound presentation and descriptive work.

105 In the lesson seen, pupils enjoyed their geography lesson. There were good relationships between pupils and their teacher. They behaved well and were able to work collaboratively.

106 In the one lesson seen, the teaching used the familiar story of Little Red Riding Hood's journey well with the pupils placing signs and directions at suitable locations. The quality of the short term lesson planning is very variable. In some cases it is developed in logical steps to indicate the progress expected in the lesson. In other cases, the planning is weak and lacks details. Another weakness in the planning is the lack of opportunity given for pupils to develop the skills of independent learning by research with books and CD-ROMs. Pupils' written work shows that the teachers concentrate on the reasons for change and development on an area studied. This gives the pupils a deeper insight into land use and why changes occur in one area and not another.

107 The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership, although, because of her commitment to the leadership of a number of subjects, has got little time to monitor the teachers short term planning or the quality of the teaching. She has produced an effective scheme of work and policy for geography. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the provision of specific work on occasions and classroom support and this helps them to make progress. The resources are in need of further development. For example, there is a shortage of up to date maps and globes. The subject is enhanced by a number of visits out of school to place of geographical interest, such as the local environment and a particular study of the local town. The yearly residential visit to Ireland enables pupils in Year 6 to study the rivers and coast of a different country.

## **HISTORY**

108 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning provided further evidence. Standards of work are in line with those expected for their ages at the end of both key stages. It was a similar picture at the last inspection.

109 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a basic knowledge of chronology. For example, they are developing an understanding of growth and development of babies, children, teenagers, adults and old people. They are able to describe differences between old toys, clothes and kitchens and those of today. Older pupils in Year 3 have a basic but satisfactory understanding of ancient Egypt. For

example, pupils in Year 3 could explain how the ancient Egyptians developed the preservation of bodies by mummification after realising that their very dry hot climate already helped to delay decomposition. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied the Tudor period, Victorian England and life during World War I. They know details of the Tudor characters of Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. They can explain major differences between life in Victorian England and life today. For example, they can describe differences in children's dress and the working conditions of children and adults. Pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily developed in history. Work in their books is laid out well and most pupils take a great deal of pride in presenting their work clearly and neatly. However, the work seen in their books indicates that pupils get little opportunity to carry out their own research into books, old documents and the skills of independent learning are weak in history.

110 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour was good in the one lesson seen. The majority of pupils worked hard and displayed positive attitudes to their work.

111 In the one lesson seen, the standard of teaching was satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour was managed effectively through clear instruction and carefully structured discussion. Resources were chosen carefully to help stimulate learning. At times, the pace of learning was too slow, however, at other times, especially during question and answer sessions, progress was more rapid. The teachers' knowledge was good and through his own enthusiasm, pupils were generally well motivated to learn. Teacher's short term lesson planning is often weak throughout the school and does not demonstrate progression and progress. Also, little opportunity is planned for pupils to develop their independent learning skills by carrying out their own research.

112 The experienced co-ordinator gives satisfactory leadership. A good scheme of work has been developed, together with a sound history policy. However, there is little monitoring of teachers' short term planning at present by the co-ordinator. Resources have been developed well and they are good. The subject is enhanced by a number of out of school visits, including a history study of the local town. Visits to places of historical interest include Tullie House in Roman Carlisle and Vinderlanda on Hadrian's Wall.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

113 Only a few short sessions of direct teaching were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on the teaching and incidental work observed discussions with pupils and staff and examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In the last inspection, attainment was in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Information technology is a rapidly developing subject throughout the school and pupils are making sound progress. The school is making good and effective use of its computers in upper Key Stage 2. The curriculum for information technology is good and effectively supports pupils' learning and achievements, including those with special educational needs.

114 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers confidently to communicate information. For example, in word processing, they have learned how to use the arrow keys to move the cursor around the screen. Pupils use shift and delete keys confidently. They use graphics programs to produce good pictures, of which they are justifiably proud for example, when they make Christmas cards. Pupils save and edit work with support.

115 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils undertake word processing and are systematic in their approach, planning their work before going onto the computer. Most pupils have mastered keyboard skills and combine information from different sources, such as importing a picture from a graphics program to illustrate their word-processed writing. Pupils' use of information technology for data

handling is weak. However pupils use CD-ROMs on occasions to find information relating to events in history. Pupils have a very good understanding of the potential of the Internet as a source of information. They use data handling programs to produce graphics in various forms. The school is aware of the need to develop pupils' experience of using computer programs to control events remotely. At the end of Key Stage 2, a few pupils have limited information and communications technology skills for their age. These insecure skills are largely due to limited access to computers in previous years. Since the arrival of new resources, pupils are endeavouring to catch up to the levels expected for their age.

116 Since the previous inspection, the school has enhanced the quality and range of resources for teaching the subject. It has recently used government grants to invest in up to date computers and suitable programs. However, as yet there are no suitable resources to teach pupils in Key Stage 2 how to use information technology to monitor external events, such as the weather. This limits the use of information technology in geography.

117 Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They work very sensibly on computers with little direct supervision as observed during a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2, where pupils were able to print out their work unaided. Pupils have good opportunities to work co-operatively during lunchtimes, contributing effectively to their social development. Pupils in Year 6 share computer expertise with pupils in the reception class, working alongside them and supporting their learning.

118 Curricular planning is sound overall. However variations in the quality of short term planning results in the ineffectual use of information technology to support skills across the curriculum. This means that it is not entirely clear to the teacher which aspect of the curriculum is being covered by the work undertaken, and what skills and knowledge are to be taught. This is most evident in the plans for supporting information technology in other subjects. Consequently, the curricular guidance is not as useful as it could be for the non-specialist teacher.

119 Information technology is used effectively to support literacy and numeracy work. Pupils produce a range of graphs in mathematics and employ word-processing skills appropriately in English. The use of information technology to support the needs of pupils with special educational needs is very good, having a direct effect on their spelling and writing skills. In upper Key Stage 2 there are limited opportunities for pupils to undertake independent work.

120 Only a very limited amount of direct teaching was observed, but the levels of pupils' attainment indicate that teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is at its best, teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and high expectations of what a pupil can achieve and direct pupils' efforts well by making it clear to them what they are to learn. A system of record keeping enables teachers to keep good records of pupils' achievements in the subject. These records are of a good quality, enabling the teacher to monitor effective learning and progress.

121 The quality of leadership in the subject is good. The subject policy and scheme provide sound guidance to teachers. Recent staff training has successfully developed staff confidence in using computers. The subject leader is aware of pupils' standards of attainment and where improvement is needed, and has a commitment to continuing development and improvement.

## **MUSIC**

122 As only two music lessons were observed during the inspection, it is not possible to make any specific judgements on attainment or progress. In the last inspection, it was above the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the expectation at the end of Key Stage 2.



123 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have learnt the words of a variety of songs and accompany them using actions as observed in a lesson in the reception class relating to number rhymes counting up to ten. Pupils sing enthusiastically and quite well in tune. Pupils listen well to different types of music and notice differences between ‘loudly’, ‘softly’ or ‘quickly’. Most pupils have developed an awareness of beat and rhythm.

124 Key Stage 2 pupils sang songs associated with the Second World War in a lesson involving the use of pre-recorded music. These sessions did not provide any evidence of pupils’ altering breathing or portraying subtle differences in volume or texture to enhance their performance. The school has a limited range of music from other cultures. Pupils’ understanding of composers and music from other cultures is very limited and overall the potential offered by the subject to develop pupils’ cultural awareness is limited.

125 Pupils enjoy singing and most are attentive and responsive to instructions. Behaviour is good. Pupils choose musical instruments carefully, giving thought to the quality of their performance. In selecting instruments to accompany a story, pupils give good attention to the quality of sound they produce, its duration and effect. Pupils listen sensitively to the contributions of others.

126 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers’ planning is soundly prepared and clear objectives established. There is only a limited increase in challenge in work to develop pupils’ skills as pupils get older. The lessons are conducted at a good pace and questions are successfully used to focus direct learning effectively. Pupils are well managed and appropriate use is made of day to day assessment to help pupils improve their performance.

127 The music curriculum is enhanced by the pupils performing at festivals and community events. Groups of musicians occasionally visit the school to perform a range of musical activities. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by adults and fellow pupils. They play a full part in lessons and make similarly sound progress to the rest of the class.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128 Pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving levels of skill that are appropriate for their age. They dribble the ball skilfully round cones and play games with enthusiasm. Pupils in both Year 1 and 2 understand the need for simple rules to make team games fair and competitive. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve levels of skill and understanding across a range of physical skills that are good for their age. This was particularly evident in sessions based on the development of throwing skills in athletics. These pupils have good co-ordination and throw a range of different shaped objects with confidence. They used quoits, balls and short javelins to improve their throwing techniques with practice, competed against their own measured throws. They use their observational skills effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance. For example seeing that releasing an object at the right moment can result in a significant increase in the length of a throw. Warming-up exercises are performed methodically and pupils understand the effect of exercise on the body. There are good links between science and physical education to promote the understanding of healthy living through diet and exercise. Pupils in Year 3 attend swimming lessons at the local baths and the vast majority achieve national curriculum expectations by the end of the year. Swimming is a very popular activity in this area and a number of pupils are members of the local swimming club.

129 All pupils have good observational skills and describe the movements they are doing with clarity. The last report indicated that there was some under-achievement in Key Stage 2 but this was not evident during this inspection. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 during the last inspection was above the national expectation for their ages.

130 The quality of teaching was always good in the small sample of lessons observed with some very good teaching seen at Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good knowledge of this subject and there is some specialist teaching for older pupils. Staff update their teaching skills systematically across all areas of the physical education curriculum and professional development in the teaching of gymnastics is planned for the autumn term. Teachers attend sessions on games such as tag rugby. These teaching sessions are led by a specialist and teachers share what they have learned with colleagues. Lessons have a good pace and challenging content. This was evident in an excellent lesson, where Year 1 pupils were taught with reception children and explored a range of activities involving both games and movement skills. This subject is well resourced and accommodation is satisfactory now that the hall has been re-roofed and floored.

131 Pupils thoroughly enjoy this subject which makes a positive contribution to their moral and social development. They learn good sportsmanship and understand the need to keep rules in team games while trying their best. They also learn to be good losers and to congratulate the winners. The co-ordinator has led the subject well and gives good support to colleagues. Pupils with special educational needs have access to all lessons and receive very good support, which enables them to make good progress. There is a range of extracurricular activities, including football and netball, which give pupils the opportunity to develop interests and talents in games. The school has had considerable success with its football team. The annual sports day is well organised and enjoyed by the school community.