

INSPECTION REPORT

IVEGILL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112303

Headteacher: Mrs A Dumont

Reporting inspector: Mr M J Mayhew
22197

Dates of inspection: 5th – 7th June 2001

Inspection number: 192226

Full 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 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ivegill
Carlisle
Cumbria

Postcode: CA4 0PA

Telephone number: 016974 73397

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr J Rickerby

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22197	Mr M J Mayhew	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Children in the Foundation Stage; Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Art; Design and technology; Equal opportunities.	How high are standards? (the school's results and pupils' achievements), How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9895	Mr R Williams	<i>Lay inspector</i>		How high are standards? (Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development); How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work with parents?
23290	Mrs R Wilson	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History; Music; Physical education; Pupils with Special Educational Needs.	How good are curricular and other learning opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the small rural community of Ivegill, in open countryside midway between Carlisle and Penrith. About one third of pupils come from the local surroundings, and the rest from wider afield. Socio-economic factors are judged to be about average. There are 66 girls and boys aged from 4 to 11 on roll, about 20 more than at the time of the previous inspection in 1977. Recent building works have included a new classroom, and specialist facilities for pupils with special educational needs. There are 18 pupils on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs, including one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, or any who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. The current year's intake is about average in attainment overall, although the pupils' writing ability is a little below average. Most children have a good level personal development on entry.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Pupils work hard and achieve well by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven. The quality of education is good. It includes good quality teaching and a curriculum that supports well the school's educational and pastoral aims. The school is very well led and managed. It has made good progress in dealing with the issues raised at the previous inspection, and has maintained the strengths previously identified. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good. When account is taken of all these factors, and the above average costs per pupil for a school of this size, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The school is very well led and managed.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with a high proportion of very good teaching.
- Teachers use assessment information well to group pupils according to their levels of attainment.
- Pupils' performances in music are of high quality; music is a strength of the school.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and with adults, and their attitudes to learning, are very good.
- There is a strong and effective partnership with parents and the local community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The proportion of pupils who reach high levels of attainment in English, and the quality of the presentation of pupils' written work in lessons on a day-to-day basis
- The quality of marking of pupils' work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its previous inspection in 1997, the school has made a good level of improvement and has dealt with all the issues raised at that inspection. Pupils have many more opportunities to undertake art activities, and they achieve well in this subject. Similarly, achievement in physical education for the seven year olds, and history for the eleven year olds, is better than it was at the previous inspection. There are now good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects and styles, although standards overall in writing are still not where they should be. Short-term planning of the work that teachers give the pupils to do in lessons is consistent throughout the school. The quality of teaching has improved. Resources for information and communication technology are now good, and most pupils achieve well in most aspects of this subject. The governors have worked hard and successfully to extend and improve the building, with the result that the accommodation is more beneficial and adaptable to pupils' learning across the curriculum.

STANDARDS

For the past four years, the standards pupils have attained at the age of eleven in national tests in English and mathematics have varied from above to well below national averages. However, the number of pupils eligible to take the tests each year has been too small for valid comparisons with national data, including comparing pupils' performance with those in similar schools nationally. For example, there were only four pupils aged eleven in 2000. Additionally, two pupils in each of the previous four years had moderate or severe learning difficulties, particularly in English, a factor which depressed the overall scores of the school. Nevertheless, too few pupils aged eleven score the higher than expected Level 4 in English. Inspection findings show that most of the current pupils aged seven achieve well and reach the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. They attain well in speaking and listening. Similarly, most current eleven year olds achieve well and reach the nationally expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. These judgements match those made at the previous inspection in 1997.

At age eleven, most pupils achieve well in most aspects of information and communication technology. Pupils at age seven and eleven reach above national expectations in art and design and geography, and well above them in music. Pupils' achievement in history at age eleven is good, as is achievement in physical education at age seven.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards meeting their targets in literacy.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall; most pupils behave very well both in lessons and around the school. A few pupils behave inappropriately from time to time.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. They take responsibility for a good range of tasks, and show maturity in their decisions.
Attendance	Good; above the national average. There are very few unauthorised absences. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	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.

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. It is satisfactory in 20 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent, and very good or excellent in 40 per cent. These judgements reflect an improvement in teaching since the previous inspection, when there were no very good or excellent lessons seen. Teachers relate well to their pupils, and generally manage them well. There are high expectations of pupils to behave well and to concentrate on their work, though this is not always the case. The result is that the misbehaviour of a very few pupils in some lessons occasionally goes unchecked. A notable feature of literacy and numeracy lessons is the way in which teachers use the results of assessments to plan work that is appropriate to each pupil's level of attainment. Most lessons are made interesting to the pupils. They respond well by taking advantage of the many opportunities they are given to mature through working independently. The class teachers make good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to promote pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and interesting, and provides well for pupils' learning opportunities. It is enriched by many whole school learning projects, and by the way teachers use pupils' knowledge and skills learned in one subject to help them learn in others. There is good attention to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, and good opportunities for pupils to apply these skills to learning in other subjects. The local community is used very well to enhance the curriculum. There is a satisfactory range of out-of-school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good support is given to these pupils in lessons, because the teachers know their capabilities well and provide work that matches their needs. Not all pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans that identify precisely their learning targets or the strategies required for them to achieve.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Provision is good for pupils' cultural development, and very good for their spiritual, moral and social development.
Partnership with parents	Parents regard the school very highly. The school successfully encourages parents to become involved in its work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are in place, and there are good systems for promoting pupils' safety. The good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and levels of attainment are used well to group pupils according to their levels of attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. However, there is scope to set some pupils more challenging targets to help raise their levels of attainment to above the nationally expected levels for their ages.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school very well, and has a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve further. She is a very good classroom practitioner who leads by example. She works very closely with her staff, who ably support her in her role.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very well involved in the work of the school. They meet their responsibilities with enthusiasm, skill and considerable success, and work very closely with the headteacher and staff to promote school development. They make important decisions based on secure evidence of the needs of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school management plan is a very good strategic document which gives a firm basis for the staff and governors to measure the effectiveness of the school. It identifies appropriate priorities for development, and good action plans to help the school to achieve its targets. Pupils' performance in tests is analysed and used as a basis for future action. However, the targets set for pupils' attainments in English and numeracy are not always high enough.
The strategic use of resources	The resources available to the school are used well, and the governors are aware of, and beginning to apply, the principles of best value.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teachers, and other members of staff, to provide for the teaching of the National Curriculum to primary aged pupils. The accommodation is good, and is well suited to the needs of the school. There is a good range of educational resources, though there is still a need to improve the quality of library resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children behave well and make good progress.• The quality of teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.• There is a good partnership between the parents and the school.• The school is well led and managed.• They feel very comfortable in approaching the staff to discuss their children's work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of the information given to them in the annual written reports about their children's progress.• The amount of homework given.• The range of out-of-school activities.

The inspectors agree with the positive statements made by the parents. Inspectors also feel that the amount of homework given is appropriate and helps pupils to make progress. There is a very good range of information given to parents, but there were some omissions in some of the written reports given to parents last year about their children's work. Plans are in place to make adjustments this year. There is a satisfactory range of out-of-school activities available to the children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected for their age, although their personal and social skills are above what is normally expected. From this starting point, the children reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, some children are already working in Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum in literacy and numeracy because they have reached the early learning goals during the year. This represents good achievement. Children benefit from being in the same class as pupils in Years 1 and 2. This has a very positive impact on their personal and social development, in which they achieve well by the time they reach the end of reception.

2. Valid comparisons with national averages in statutory tests, at ages seven and eleven, are not possible because the school has only a few pupils eligible to take the tests each year. Likewise, it is not possible to draw comparisons with the results of those schools nationally that take pupils from similar backgrounds. Results vary widely from year to year. In 2000, there were only nine pupils aged seven, and four pupils aged eleven. Out of the nine seven year olds who took the tests, six reached the nationally expected Level 2, and above, in reading, writing and mathematics. Of these, two pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics, and one reached Level 3 in writing. Two of the pupils had special educational needs related to literacy underdevelopment.

3. Of the four pupils who took the 2000 tests for eleven year olds, two reached the nationally expected Level 4, or above, in English, three in mathematics, and three in science. One pupil attained the higher than expected Level 5 in mathematics and, in science, two reached Level 5. No pupils scored Level 5 in English. Of the four pupils who took the tests, one had special educational needs related to literacy, and this factor adversely affected the overall scores in English. Nevertheless, analysis of the results by the school showed that, in English, pupils' attainment in writing was not as good as it could be, particularly in terms of spelling and comprehension. As a result, the school is focussing on improving pupils' writing skills throughout the school.

4. Judgements about pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science at seven and eleven match those made at the previous inspection. The current inspection finds that pupils in the infants make good progress, and a bigger majority of seven year olds, compared with last year, reach the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.

5. Currently, pupils aged eleven are doing better than the eleven year olds did last year. Their overall attainment in English, mathematics and science is in line with national expectations. A larger proportion of pupils should reach the higher than expected Level 5. Pupils make good progress in each of these subjects, and the strategies to improve pupils' writing are effective because of the good, and often very good, quality of teaching. The pupils are, however, taking time to realise their full potential. Additionally, there are pupils in Year 6 who, whilst achieving well in English, will not attain the expected Level 4 by the

time they are eleven. Their performance has the effect of depressing the school's overall score in the tests. Teachers give them very good support in lessons across all subjects, and they receive sound support from a specialist teacher, in groups or individually, to improve their basic literacy skills. No gifted or talented pupils have been identified.

6. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in speaking and listening because they work well together, and because the teachers have high expectations of pupils to listen and to take an active part in class discussions. Similarly, teachers always take time to listen to them, with the result that pupils are confident to air their opinions. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, speak clearly and explain their ideas in complete sentences where required. As they grow older, pupils in the juniors debate their ideas in a range of subjects, and take an increasingly active part in evaluating orally the work they have done in lessons.

7. By the time they are seven, all pupils read clearly and confidently, although a few manage only to read books with simple words and phrases because they have reading difficulties. In the juniors, pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress in reading. Most pupils read with good expression and understanding. Higher attaining pupils read accurately with lively expression, and use dialect where necessary to bring their reading alive.

8. In writing, pupils throughout the school make good progress. This is because the teachers use the National Literacy Strategy to teach pupils the skills of writing, and give them many opportunities to practise their writing skills in subjects other than English. By the time they are seven, pupils write interesting stories and poems, descriptions, letters, and reports. Most write in well-defined sentences punctuated correctly with full stops. Higher attaining pupils write in a lively style and use interesting phrases to enliven their writing. Pupils present their redrafted pieces of writing attractively, but many do not take enough care in the presentation of their daily work. Teachers do not always ask pupils to present their best written work on a day-to-day basis, and the skills of joined writing are not taught early enough. Furthermore, pupils' spelling of familiar words is not as good as it could be. Nevertheless, much writing in the juniors is of high quality, particularly when pupils write extensively for specific purposes, and when they have had sufficient time to evaluate and alter the content and presentation of their work. Their use of computers does much to raise the standard of their writing. By Years 5 and 6, most pupils are adept at using them as a tool to produce good writing.

9. Overall standards in number, throughout the school, match those normally expected of pupils of these ages. The teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well to promote pupils' number skills and understanding, with the result that pupils learn well. They apply their skills to solve mathematical problems. By age eleven, most have a good grasp of the four rules of number, and can work out problems involving large figures, or decimals to convert different currencies. Pupils with special educational needs attain better in mathematics than they do in English, because they have better number skills. All pupils benefit from the arrangements whereby the juniors, and some younger pupils, are taught in groups defined by their prior levels of attainment. In these lessons, the work they do is appropriate to their needs, and challenges them to make good strides in their learning. In the

infrequent lessons when the oldest pupils are taught as one group, regardless of their level of attainment, the lesson is too long, the less able pupils lose interest, and the rate of learning slows. Additionally, sometimes higher attaining pupils are asked to do work that is well within their capability. This does not challenge them to reach higher standards.

10. In science, all pupils benefit from the good range of opportunities to undertake investigations. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific facts. They can explain the causes of the seasons and of night and day by reference to the sun, the moon and the planets. They name the important organs of the mammalian body and some of their functions, and explain the variety of ways in which plants disperse their seeds. The broad and interesting curriculum gives pupils experience of wider scientific issues, such as the profound effect of mankind on the environment, and the resultant depletion of species.

11. The school has put significant emphasis on the development of information and communication technology since the last inspection. New equipment and staff training have been major factors in maintaining the standards noted at the previous inspection, and in some aspects improving upon them. Nearly all pupils work confidently on computers, using them as a tool to further their learning, both in information and communication technology and in other subjects, such as English, mathematics, science and history. By age eleven, most pupils achieve above what is normally expected of their age.

12. In geography, art and design, music and physical education, seven-year-old pupils reach above expectations. They achieve in history what is expected of pupils of this age. Pupils aged eleven attain above expectations in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, and history. They reach well above expectations in music. There is not enough evidence to make judgements about pupils' achievements in design and technology, or those of eleven-year-old in physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have very positive views of the school. Their attitudes to learning are very good, and they enjoy coming to school. These valuable attributes have been maintained well since the previous inspection. Nearly all parents agree that their children are happy in school, even, in some cases, to the point where children want to come despite being ill. Pupils throughout the school show considerable concentration and eagerness to learn. This is especially evident when they are engaged in group tasks and activities. Co-operation and hard work features strongly, especially when pupils are involved in practical activities, for example in science investigations. An instance occurred in a science lesson in Year 2, where pupils worked in a determined manner to find out how to complete an electrical circuit to include a working light bulb. When they had reached the solution they shared their knowledge sensibly with others. Pupils express interest in all aspects of the curriculum, and enjoy the many opportunities arranged for them to learn in situations other than the normal class lessons. For example, some older pupils talk with relish about educational visits they have made, or the opportunity

to take part in a local poetry competition. There is little time wasted in lessons, and pupils in the juniors move quickly and sensibly to different class bases for literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are keen to join in the out-of-school activities the school arranges. These include a variety of sports, arranged with other local schools, clubs for Latin and French, and a Saturday morning club for very able children.

14. Pupils with special educational needs also have very good attitudes to learning. They want to make progress and generally work hard to do so. They respond well to the many opportunities for raising their self-esteem and confidence.

15. As noted in the previous inspection, behaviour is generally good, both in lessons and around the school. There have been no exclusions, and the school has high expectations of good behaviour from its pupils. The positive behaviour code was drawn up after consultation with parents and pupils, and pupils know and understand its expectations. Parents are pleased with the efforts made by the school to encourage politeness and self-discipline and, in these efforts, the school is largely successful. However, some inattention and unsatisfactory behaviour was seen in the inspection, when part-time teachers did not employ the strategies of good class management used by the full-time staff.

16. The school does not tolerate bullying. All pupils are fully aware of this and know what sanctions to expect if it occurs. There were no incidences of bullying seen during the inspection.

17. Pupils show a very good understanding of the impact their actions have on others. They are co-operative both in lessons and at play. They hold open doors for each other and are polite and friendly to their fellow pupils and to adults, including visitors to the school. The pupils are very respectful of the feelings of others, and of their values and beliefs. This respect is reinforced continually by the staff through their high expectations of good relationships, and the role models they provide.

18. Pupils very much enjoy taking on extra responsibilities. The staff encourage them in this from their very first day at school. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils operate equipment for assemblies, serve at tables at lunchtime, and help younger pupils in the school. They carry out these tasks effectively and willingly, often acting on their own initiative. High expectations and encouragement to take responsibility are an important part in the pupils' social education, and parents greatly appreciate this attention to pupils' personal development.

19. Relationships are very good, and are a strength of the school, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Through their use of humour and their good examples as role models, teachers successfully encourage pupils to be sensibly familiar and informal. The school manages this approach in an atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance of the best family values, which leads to an increase in pupils' self-confidence and levels of maturity.

20. The level of attendance is very good and is regularly above the national average. This term, as a result of the foot and mouth epidemic in the locality, several pupils from farming families have had longer absences than is normally expected. It is to be hoped that this pattern of absence, and the reasons for it, is of a temporary nature.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The teaching of children in their foundation stage of learning is good. The teacher, supported very well by the full-time classroom assistant, has a clear understanding of the needs of young children. The children are taught in the same class as older pupils in Years 1 and 2. This arrangement has its benefits, since the staff often plan challenging and enjoyable activities to include all the pupils. The Foundation Stage children are given activities which are similar but adapted to their particular needs. The teacher plans their work carefully, and uses the classroom assistant well to work with them as a group for specific activities, for example to work on basic reading skills. Consequently, children quickly learn to read and write, and some exceed the early learning goals for language and literacy by the time they begin National Curriculum work in Year 1. However, the arrangement does have its disadvantages. Sometimes, the children have to wait to begin activities because the teacher and classroom assistant are busy with the older pupils.

22. Teaching is good across the school, with a significant proportion of very good teaching. This results in pupils achieving well over their time in the school. Teaching is satisfactory in 20 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent, and very good or excellent in 40 per cent. There was one excellent lesson seen in the course of the inspection, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. These judgements represent an improvement on those of the previous inspection, when there was no very good teaching.

23. Nearly all parents who responded in the questionnaire agreed that teaching is of good quality, and all agreed that the school expects their children to work hard. In nearly all lessons, teachers expect, and get, a high level of interest and a good pace of working from their pupils. Consequently, most pupils learn at a good rate. For the most part, in cases where pupils' concentration or behaviour flags a short reminder is usually all that is necessary for the teacher to have total concentration from all pupils. There are, however, exceptions to this rule. For example, in an otherwise satisfactory mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher allowed a few pupils to become too noisy and disruptive. The teacher was not sufficiently firm with her management of the class. She had to repeat instructions, there was too much time wasted, and the pace of learning slowed. Additionally, sometimes lessons are too long, as in a one-hour gymnastics lesson, when some pupils became too tired as the lesson proceeded.

24. The teaching has many strengths, most of them common to all teachers in the school, particularly the full-time teachers. The most important of these is the way in which teachers plan their lessons to take account of the needs of individual pupils according to their levels of attainment. Teachers are able to do this because the school has good information about pupils' progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy, derived from good assessment procedures. Teachers plan these lessons for groups of pupils defined by ability. The planning of lessons for other subjects takes account not only of individual pupils' needs, but also the need for pupils to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, they write at length in geography about the differences between two contrasting places.

25. The school has an extremely positive culture of supporting all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This results in their receiving very good support for their learning, and making good progress. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve well by the time they are eleven. Throughout the school, teachers make very good use

of the assessment and tracking systems to set targets for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers talk about every pupil regularly, know him or her well, and are well advised by the co-ordinator. They have very good relationships with pupils, and work hard to promote self-esteem. The quality of individual action plans, however, is not always consistent. On most days some of these pupils spend some time away from their own class to receive one-to-one tuition. Despite making progress, for example, in developing basic literacy skills in the one-to-one teaching, they often return to their class to find that they have missed out on the substance of the lesson. Teachers make good and successful efforts to ensure that these pupils catch up by giving them individual attention.

26. Two of the three full-time teachers have considerable experience of working in primary schools. This is evident in the very good way in which they manage their pupils and give them interesting work to do, and in the very good relationships they enjoy with the pupils. The less experienced teacher learns effective techniques from her colleagues, and high standards of pupils' behaviour are usually maintained across the school.

27. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in most subjects and is supported well by further training and by the good support given by colleagues. For example, the newly qualified teacher, who is a good classroom practitioner, receives very good support from her mentor. Most teachers consistently use techniques that set good pace, identify clearly with pupils precisely what they are to learn, and then review with pupils at the end of a lesson how their learning has moved forward. For example, in a good history lesson about old toys, given to pupils in the infants, the teacher made good use of explanation and demonstration to show the pupils what she wanted them to do. This meant that they could get on with their tasks without wasting time. At the end of the lesson, the teacher encouraged discussion and the sharing of learning by asking relevant questions, such as "Why do you think it's an old doll?"

28. Most lessons set appropriately challenging tasks because teachers have high expectations of pupils to achieve. Teachers usually demand work of good quality, and often use individual pupils' work in lessons to demonstrate to others. Nevertheless, there are occasions when there is not enough attention given to ensuring that pupils produce their best quality work, for example in spelling and handwriting. Teachers do not always remind pupils to use in their work the skills they have learned in literacy and numeracy lessons. Additionally, teachers sometimes ask pupils to do work in mathematics of which they are already capable. This means that, on occasions, some pupils do not learn as fast as they could.

29. There are good opportunities for pupils to work both independently and in small groups. Teachers recognise that pupils respond well to a variety of ways of working, and ensure that their personal development proceeds well through opportunities for independent work. Thus, pupils regularly use computers for research or do scientific investigations, and they present their findings orally or in written reports.

30. Teachers are well acquainted with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Lessons derived from these strategies are interesting and are clearly making a positive impact on raising standards.

31. All teachers set homework, usually as an extension to class activities. The work is regularly checked, and most pupils enjoy the opportunities for further research that the homework gives them. For example, one pupil was so enthralled by the challenge of her art lesson that she tried out the technique at home, and then brought her work to school to finish in her next art lesson.

32. Teachers often mark work with the pupil present, in accordance with the school marking policy, though a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that much goes unmarked. The current marking system, which is under trial, requires only the writing of a letter grade on the work. This is insufficient for pupils to glean what it is that they have to do to improve; neither does it set pupils targets to achieve in future work, against which they and the teachers can measure their progress.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

33. The school has taken effective steps to make improvements in the curriculum in the few areas of weakness found at the last inspection. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, together with the adoption of national guidance for schemes of work, ensures the teaching in full of all subjects. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well implemented and are having a good effect on pupils' progress, and on the standards they attain. The curriculum for teaching speaking and listening, and for most aspects of information and communication technology, is particularly effective in raising standards. There is now a sound framework for lesson planning, and for ensuring continuity of learning as pupils move from year to year and class to class. This was a weakness in the last inspection. The quality of lesson plans has made good progress since the last inspection. Plans now define what is to be learned in lessons, and a clear structure for teaching.

34. Children in their reception year learn alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum provided for them meets the requirements of children in the Foundation Stage. They take part in whole class lessons, for example in literacy and numeracy, and the tasks they do are usually appropriate to their stage of development. However, there are some weaknesses in the appropriateness of some work they are asked to do because the concepts are sometimes too advanced for their stage of development, for example in history and geography. Children have opportunities to choose their activities from a good range of play equipment designed to improve their numeracy, literacy and creative skills.

35. The school offers a good quality and range of learning opportunities, which are relevant to pupils' needs and meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Overall, pupils' independence in learning, and their capacity to use and extend enquiry skills, is very well developed across the curriculum as a whole.

36. The school seeks to provide a good breadth of experience through regular visits to centres of educational interest. There are good contributions by visitors to the school, many of whom live and work in far off places, and they share with pupils their knowledge and expertise. An interesting programme of extra-curricular activities further enriches the curriculum. These activities include French and Latin clubs, and a Saturday club for high

attaining pupils, where they enjoy working with pupils of similar ability from other small schools in the area. Personal, social and health education is very well planned and is provided in science, physical education, history and religious education. Arrangements for sex education and drugs awareness are satisfactory.

37. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make gains in basic skills and to benefit from the school's curriculum. Teachers know pupils extremely well, and are able to identify needs early. This enables them to frame clear, detailed targets for pupils' learning, and to match work to their needs. The school provides good equality of opportunity for all pupils. It works hard to make sure that pupils who miss planned lessons, for extra provision in literacy, in music or for special educational needs, are given full access to the learning at a later opportunity. No gifted or talented pupils have been identified.

38. The school has developed very good links with the community, which teachers use very well to broaden pupils' experience and bring their learning to life. The church ministers are regular visitors. Volunteers from the community support pupils' learning, such as members of the Mothers' Union, who work every day with a boy with specific difficulties in reading. Parents and community members coach teams in physical education, and the school makes good use of its very good contacts with other small schools to develop further opportunities in areas such as sports and the theatre. Teachers make good use of the local area to enhance pupils' learning, and give them opportunities for investigative field study, for example in history and geography.

39. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development through spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This aspect is a strength of the school that parents value highly, and was acknowledged as a strength at the previous inspection. The school's ethos of mutual respect and concern for others makes a very good impact on its pupils.

40. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual development. In lessons and school assemblies, pupils reflect on religious concepts and ideas on how we should look after our world. In assembly, they pause to think about what might happen in the new day. They consider the ideas of Confucius, for example of how a good life should derive from strong roots, and compare this concept with the strong roots of a tree. Pupils think about developing and building on good principles for themselves. They consider the meaning of Bible stories, such as the 'Lost Sheep,' and come to know that all individuals are equally important. There are good opportunities at such times to listen to the thoughts of others in discussion. Teachers encourage pupils to appreciate a range of music. All pupils take part in music making, whether singing together or playing tuned or untuned instruments. The corporate sounds they make, and the part played by each pupil, are spiritual experiences in themselves, not only for the participants but also for the listeners.

41. There is strong provision for pupils' moral development. The school teaches clearly the difference between right and wrong. Very good guidance is given through the school behaviour code, which is displayed prominently and well known by all. Very occasionally, a few pupils have difficulty behaving properly and exercising self-discipline in some lessons, when they should be listening to their teacher. However, this is not the norm, and most pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations for them to behave. There is an important moral dimension to many lessons. For example, in geography, pupils learn about the effect of

humankind on the world environment, and older pupils talk knowledgeably about the 'greenhouse effect'. They compare their own situation with that of people living in India or Pakistan, and this work promotes them to think about fairness and justice. Similarly, studies in history on the Second World War lead to fascinating discussions about how countries protect themselves. For example, a very good lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 asked them to debate the motion 'Should people govern by military power or respect'. Situations such as these, where pupils are free and very willing to discuss matters of major importance, not only promote their moral understanding, but also bring maturity to their thinking.

42. There is also very good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers regularly encourage them to work together in lessons, often in groups comprising mixed ages, sexes and abilities. Most often, pupils in these situations co-operate and collaborate in their tasks, as they do at other times around the school, such as at lunch. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in school-related activities outside daily lessons. Examples are residential visits to Fellside, May day preparation and celebration in Penrith, and sports activities with pupils from other schools. There are many occasions when teachers ask pupils to take responsibility. In a Year 6 art and design lesson, the teacher asked the pupils to clear up quickly. Each pupil knew what he/she had to do, and although the teacher had set aside 10 minutes for this task in the hall it was completed in three. Through the success of the school's expectations of pupils to be polite and to think of their impact on others, many pupils act on their own initiative when they see that something is required for the benefit of all. For example, they quietly move equipment when it is in the way, and older pupils take on the responsibility of helping younger ones at dinner times, which are social occasions in themselves.

43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about world religions, take part in discussions about them, and talk about the underlying cultures in different countries. A recent in-depth study of Sikhism and teachers' suggestions prompted pupils to write imaginative letters, as though from a Sikh village. The school provides a wide range of cultural activities, in music, art, dance, and language, and pupils recently entered and won a poetry competition, with poems related to local life in farming. Pupils visit the local church, and some major celebrations are held there. Association with minority groups, or with races other than white, is very limited in this part of the country. However, the school does endeavour to address the issues as best it can, for example through a group of Asian drummers who visited the school recently. Multicultural artefacts and resources are borrowed from the local education authority, and the cook sometimes produces food from other cultures at lunchtime. Opportunities to raise pupils awareness are missed, however, when some pupils, through ignorance rather than malice, use inappropriate language about people from other cultures, and their language goes uncorrected. The school library is short of suitable books on a range of cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school makes satisfactory provision for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare, as the last inspection found. Parents express considerable satisfaction with this provision.

45. Up-to-date fire safety procedures are in place following recent building extensions and refurbishment. There is a health and safety policy specific to the school but it is in need of updating and better monitoring, a point noted by the governors in their school management plan. Staff have had training in child protection and first aid, and procedures for both are effective. However, pupils' first aid treatment is not always recorded by the school.

46. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. The co-ordinator for these subjects has put in place a wide range of testing, recording and monitoring procedures. Standardised tests measure pupils' achievement year by year, and teachers maintain good record systems to track their progress. This information is used well to plan groupings to teach pupils literacy and numeracy at the best pace and level for their needs. Each pupil has a tracking file that includes assessment evidence and records, and there are individual targets in literacy. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in other subjects, and teachers make good use of whole-school topics as opportunities to track pupils' achievements and progress. Tests at the end of units of work in most subjects support these assessment procedures, and teachers note this information in their records.

47. The co-ordinator analyses the assessment information well to monitor the progress of pupils. She takes prompt action if any pupils or groups of pupils do not make expected progress. For example, there is additional reading tuition for those pupils not on course to attain expected standards in reading, and support for those not achieving in literacy at similar levels to others of their age. Assessment is well used in lessons in literacy and mathematics to adjust planning to the needs of all pupils, and to arrange pupils in groups according to their levels of attainment.

48. In these lessons, all pupils often work at a similar level of difficulty, except when given opportunities for independent research in projects that extend and challenge them, such as in history and geography. Marking does not usually provide pupils with clear assessment of how well they have done against the intention for learning, or how they could make further progress.

49. Pupils with special educational needs are identified soon after their entry to the school, or when transferred from other schools, and they receive good support. This is one reason why there is a greater than average number of pupils with special educational needs in the school. Indeed, parents of pupils with special educational needs say this is why they have transferred their children to the school, and are pleased with their choice. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies to make sure that procedures meet the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. For example, the educational psychologist is a regular visitor to the school. Progress through the stages of assessment, however, does not always ensure that there is appropriate additional support in the classroom for those pupils with significant learning difficulties, and the quality of individual education plans is inconsistent.

50. Teachers monitor pupils' progress closely to make sure they make good progress towards their targets. They provide regular and sensitive help and guidance for pupils' work and behaviour, in a way that does not damage their self-esteem.

51. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Attendance, registration and related procedures comply with statutory requirements. Registers are kept well and pupils' absence is analysed carefully by the headteacher. There are appropriate procedures to deal with any unauthorised absence, and there is good liaison with the educational welfare officer when necessary. The recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the local community has adversely affected attendance, although the school ensured that affected pupils had a regular supply of work to do at home. Parents are pleased with the efforts the staff make to help all pupils in this way, even sometimes going to visit pupils at their homes to give them support in their school work.

52. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' behaviour. Staff generally apply the school's behaviour code consistently and successfully. It was drawn up in consultation with parents and pupils, and is well understood by them. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Bullying is not tolerated and there is a detailed policy, recently reviewed, to deal with it should it occur.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. There is a very good partnership with parents. As at the time of the previous inspection, parents are very well disposed to the school and what it has to offer their children.

54. Links with parents are good. Parents are very welcome at the school and they respond well to this open approach. All those who responded in the questionnaire, and those who attended the pre-inspection meeting, agreed that the school strongly values the partnership between parents and school in helping to promote pupils' learning. The school makes effective use of parents to help in classes and other times, such as through the rota for volunteers to help supervise pupils when they visit the swimming baths. There is a very active parent association, which raises large sums of money for use by the school, and organises social events for the community. Most parents and carers support school activities, for example by attending open meetings on curriculum initiatives, such as literacy. They respond to surveys carried out by the school. Nearly all the parents are committed to the home/school agreement, and the school makes enquiries of those parents who have not yet signed up to it, seeking their reasons.

55. Parents have a good involvement in the work of the school. They find the school's 'open door' policy very productive in encouraging informal discussion with staff about their children. Indeed, it is noticeable how parents and staff meet comfortably with each other at the beginning and end of school days. Teachers often take such opportunities to discuss any problems, or to share with parents their children's success stories from the day. Parents are successfully encouraged to help their children to develop their reading skills at home, and to do other homework. Good use is made of home/school diaries, which keep parents informed about schoolwork, and act as a further means of communication between home and school.

56. Parents are pleased with the school's good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Some parents seek places for their children in the school because of this. The quality of communication provided ensures that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The school's practice of involving parents in the review and adjustment of pupils' targets meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs.

57. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus is informative and well presented. The governors' annual report to parents is an excellent document, and includes contributions from pupils, staff and governors. It is liberally decorated with pupils' drawings and is a very attractive and interesting publication. There is no formal school newsletter, as such, but parents receive many letters from the headteacher about every matter of importance to them. They feel very well informed about school events and requirements. Parents receive annual written reports on their children's progress, but those in 2000 lacked some information, for example about aspects of pupils' learning that needed development.

58. Strong links with the local community, and the part played by the school as a centre for the village, provide a valuable resource for teaching and learning. The recent building extension includes a room that is designed for use by local groups as well as the school, and local groups have the use of the school photocopier. Members of the community have furnished the school with loans of old toys such as dolls, tea sets, Teddy bears and a pram, which are used in history lessons. Volunteers from the local branch of the Mothers' Union attend school every week to help pupils who need extra reading practice.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. She is a very good classroom practitioner who leads by example. Through her practices and adherence to policies, the headteacher successfully promotes in her staff high expectations for pupils to achieve. She and her staff are very clear about what they need to do to improve standards. She guides the formulation and monitoring of the school management plan and works very closely with other members of staff and the governing body. There is effective delegation of subject responsibilities to other members of staff.

60. The aims of the school are clear and refer equally importantly to pupils' educational and personal development. The school is substantially successful in meeting its aims, particularly with reference to the breadth and richness of the curriculum. It identifies pupils' needs, builds their confidence and self esteem, and helps them to value the growth of their own achievements and those of others. Parents are supportive of the values taught in the school.

61. The school has introduced well the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, which are having the desired effect of raising pupils' levels of attainment. Nevertheless, there is still more work required to raise pupils' standards in writing at age eleven.

62. The governing body discharges its duties very well, and fulfils all statutory requirements. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, although the quality of their individual education plans is inconsistent. A conscientious, knowledgeable and capable

chairperson leads the governing body. An efficient subcommittee structure has oversight of the curriculum, finances, premises and staffing. Governors undertake regular training to give them the skills and confidence to make purposeful visits to the school. The governors regularly receive sound and reliable reports from the headteacher. The information invariably focuses on school development, and forms a good basis for taking decisions. There is a very good level of involvement by the governors in the daily life of the school, particularly through regular visits by the chair of governors, and informal consultations with the headteacher. Consequently, the governors understand sufficiently the work of the school, and play an active part in shaping its future.

63. The governors have dealt effectively with all the issues raised at the previous inspection, and made other decisions that have had a major influence on school improvement. For example, since the previous inspection, the governors, with the support of the staff, parents and local community, have succeeded in making improvements to the building. These improvements mean that the school can fulfil strategies to cater more effectively for pupils with special educational needs, and arrange pupils in groups according to their levels of attainment for literacy and numeracy lessons.

64. The headteacher has good oversight of most teaching and learning in the school. She monitors the teaching and learning through direct and formal observation of lessons and sets appropriate targets for teachers to achieve, sometimes through further training. She shares the results of her observations with her staff, and the quality of teaching benefits, as shown by the improvement in teaching since the last inspection. However, constraints on her time mean that she is currently unable to monitor the work of the part-time teachers. This aspect of her work requires attention to ensure the maintenance of good classroom practice across the school.

65. The school development plan is a good working document that identifies the needs of the school, and appropriate priorities and targets for the school to achieve, such as higher standards in pupils' writing. A number of detailed supplementary plans support the document, giving a firm basis for staff and governors to evaluate the effectiveness of the school and to make improvements.

66. The performance of pupils in statutory and non-statutory tests is carefully analysed, compared with national and local results, and used as a basis for setting new targets and the means to achieve them. However, the targets set last year for pupils to achieve at age eleven in English are not sufficiently challenging, particularly with regard to the proportion of pupils who could reach the higher than nationally expected Level 5.

67. There are sufficient teachers appropriately qualified to teach the requirements of the National Curriculum, and there is a good balance on the staff between long established and experienced teachers, and those new to the school. Induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers are good; they receive close attention. There is a good quality staff handbook for teachers new to the school, and those employed on a temporary basis. The practice of employing some teachers on a part-time basis to teach specific subjects is effective, through their management of pupils in lessons is not always as good as that of the full-time teachers. The school makes very good use a full-time classroom assistant in the infants. She and the teacher work very well together, and the pupils benefit greatly from her work. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff and the governors, many of whom are parents

of pupils in the school. All display commitment to the school and its pupils. There is a good capacity for the school to improve further.

68. The accommodation is good. Whilst compact, the building is adaptable to the school's needs. Classrooms are of adequate size for the numbers of pupils in each class. However, there is a lack of space in the infant classroom to provide fully for the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. There are good facilities for pupils with special educational needs, and the school makes good use of the nearby village hall for some aspects of physical education. The teachers and pupils use the internal walls to display colourful and informative samples of pupils' work from most subjects of the curriculum. Resources for learning are generally plentiful. For example, resources for information and communication technology have improved considerably since the previous inspection. However, the small library arranged at one end of the hall lacks books of sufficient quantity and quality. The books are not arranged well, with the result that pupils do not develop the library skills that they should.

69. The school makes good strategic use of its resources. It is beginning to pay greater attention to spending in relation to standards achieved. Governors make their decisions to spend money after carefully considering all the options. The school uses its specific grants to good effect for designated purposes, which include staff training. The money the school receives for pupils with special educational needs is spent to enhance staffing and to comply with the Code of Practice and local education authority procedures. Financial control and administration is effective and efficient, and there is good use of new technology. The school applies well the principles of best value when evaluating its work and making decisions about its future strategies and development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. The headteacher, staff and governors together should:

- strive to increase the proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels of attainment in English, and improve the quality of pupils' written work in English and other subjects on a day-to-day basis by:

(Paragraphs: 3, 8, 9, 28, 61, 66, 95, 96, 121)

- * using the good assessment data to set all pupils more challenging targets to reach at age eleven;
 - * giving all pupils work that consistently challenges them to achieve higher levels of attainment;
 - * insisting that all pupils pay close attention in all their writing to presentation, spelling and handwriting in order to produce work of the highest quality;
 - * introducing at an earlier age the teaching of skills in joined writing;
- consistently apply, across the school, a marking system which is easily understood by the pupils, and sets targets against which pupils and teachers can measure progress.
(Paragraphs: 32, 48, 98)

- * The governors should also include in their action plan the need to:

(Paragraphs: 25, 43, 49, 62, 64, 68, 99, 111)

- review the usefulness of the current practice of regularly withdrawing pupils with special educational needs from their class lessons;
- improve to a consistently high quality the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs;
- find more time for the headteacher to monitor the work of all her teachers;
- improve the library facilities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	36	40	20	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)	70
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	70
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)	3.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff:

YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24.3

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	0
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	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	156,038.00
Total expenditure	147,309.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,231.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,200.00
Balance carried forward to next year	0.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	66
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	64	14	0	0
The teaching is good.	68	25	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	39	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	46	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	43	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	32	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	64	14	0	4

Other issues raised by parents

Parents of pupils with special educational needs are particularly pleased with what the school provides for their children.

Parents agree that the quality of music in the school is a strength.

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

71. Children join the school at the beginning of the academic year in which they reach the age of five. Before starting school, most children have attended the adjacent 'Inglewood Nursery', run separately on the school site. There is a close working relationship between the school and the nursery. This benefits the children when they transfer to the foundation stage of their learning in the school. They already know the layout of the building and they have good relationships with the adults in school and with some of the older children.

72. There were eight children in their foundation stage of learning at the time of the inspection. The school makes good provision for them. Although they share a classroom with pupils in Years 1 and 2, they spend most of their time doing work that is specially arranged to meet their needs. Supervised by the class teacher, a competent full time classroom assistant works very well with the children. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is usually about that normally expected for children of this age. In this year's intake, most children have average levels of ability, although most have above average personal and social development. This is shown in the initial assessments made when they entered the class. Good teaching has a positive effect on the children's learning. Most of the children will attain the standards expected for each area of learning by the time they start Year 1.

73. Children are taught alongside older pupils for literacy and numeracy each day, but staff organise them in groups to help them learn at the level appropriate for their stage of development. At other times, the children choose from a variety of suitable activities, when they experiment with different resources. These learning situations are carefully prepared, but teaching plans do not identify in sufficient detail the particular skills to be developed. This makes it more difficult for staff to assess exactly what children have learned, in order to plan for the next stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. By the time they complete the reception year, the children have developed very good skills in this area. Most exceed the early learning goals, and this represents a good level of achievement. The children behave very well, whether listening to staff or working and playing together. They learn much from the older pupils in the class. Staff make their expectations very clear about how they want children to behave. The few simple school rules about caring for others and being polite show the qualities of behaviour encouraged by staff. Children are friendly and very polite when they speak to each other and to adults. This reflects the courtesy and respect seen between members of staff, and towards children. Children take turns and share amicably when working together or using materials. They look after equipment well and know how to put things away carefully after using them. They find and use resources independently, and take part confidently in whole class discussions.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Staff give good opportunities in a variety of settings for children to listen to adults and to each other. Children learn to listen quietly with other classes in assembly. In their smaller class groups they enjoy responding with their own suggestions or ideas to stories such as ‘The Patchwork Quilt’.

76. The reception class teacher follows the literacy framework used by the rest of the school, grouping the children according to their stages of learning development. Within this arrangement, children practise letter sounds and learn to write letters correctly with pencils. The effectiveness of phonics teaching is evident in the children’s good efforts at writing simple sentences. In lessons led by the classroom assistant, the children show developing understanding of how to relate initial word sounds to letters. For example, they play enjoyable games, such as ‘jump in the hoop’, which help them identify the ‘c’ and ‘s’ sounds at the beginning of ‘clip’, ‘cup’, ‘scissors’ and ‘spoon’. This gives the lower attaining children confidence in their early reading and writing skills, and shows more able children the differences between initial-letter sounds. They all make good progress in this kind of activity. For example, by the time they finished a ‘hoop’ game, all the children recognised the initial-letter sounds of objects, such as a comb or some soap, and then placed them in a hoop to make a collection.

77. By the time they reach Year 1, about two thirds of children already read and write with some competence. Higher attaining children independently write simple sentences, producing well-formed and easily recognisable letters. The same pupils read simple texts accurately and confidently, and talk about what they have read. The least able children are at the early stages of letter recognition and have difficulty writing more than a few letters correctly. They read a few words with which they are familiar. All children like books and some have preferences, making comments such as “I like farming books.”

Mathematical development

78. By the time they are five, most children make good progress in attaining the early learning goals for this area of learning. They take part enthusiastically in well-prepared numeracy activities and games, responding to questions such as ‘Where will I be when...?’ As with literacy, the children learn in different groups, within the full class, appropriate to their level of understanding. Higher attaining children count forwards to 30. They begin to add together two numbers or amounts of money, using coins up to 10p to make totals up to 20p. Most children can add and subtract digits up to nine. The more able children record their simple sums clearly, using correctly written numbers, such as $3 + 2 = 5$. The teacher plans useful and enjoyable ways of learning. She has very good understanding and knowledge about the mathematical learning needs of children in the Foundation Stage. In one practical lesson, she made very good use of the outside area to do number lines with the children. This lesson included an energetic activity, which the children thoroughly enjoyed, made their learning fun, and ensured that they made very good progress. By the end of the activity, most children could record their answers, and use a number square to ‘count on’ in threes and fours.

79. Children recognise and name some common shapes, such as a square and a triangle, and they know what is meant by ‘more than’ and ‘smaller than’.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. Teachers provide an interesting range of practical experiences for children to develop an understanding about the world around them. By the end of the reception year, children achieve the level of understanding expected for their age. They make very good progress in their use of computers, and control the mouse and keyboard well, for example to enter information about what they find out about magnets.

81. Children identify objects according to their different characteristics. They write their findings in simple lists, which include items such as paper, wood and metal. By the end of an activity to investigate magnets, some children could talk about what is, or is not, attracted by a magnet. They know that plants need water and light to grow, and can name living and non-living things. The teacher makes good connections with children's developing literacy skills when they assemble a story about 'Jasper's beanstalk.' They develop a sense of distance and place when they talk about going on holiday to different places, and draw their own simple maps that show roads and important buildings. The staff help the children to learn about time when they look at everyday artefacts from around the time of the Second World War, displayed in the classroom, and go on a visit to a museum in Carlisle.

Physical development

82. There were no planned physical education activities seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about children's overall physical development. There is no secure outside space specifically designed for children to use large play equipment. However, as most children have spent some time in the adjacent nursery, they have had good opportunities before starting school to use such equipment. There are regular physical education lessons that include work with the older pupils in the class. Children look forward to these lessons and enjoy them, saying, "I like to run and jump with the others." The children's confident, well co-ordinated movements in and around the school suggest that they are developing appropriately.

83. The staff help to develop children's fine movement skills by providing a variety of drawing, writing and model making activities. Children learn to use scissors safely, cutting card and paper to make robots. They control pencils, paint brushes and crayons to write and to make pictures. They carefully manipulate magnets to see how closely they can place paper clips before they move.

Creative development

84. Children make good progress towards meeting, and exceeding, the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. They have many opportunities to develop their creative skills. Children choose from a suitable range of tools and materials to make colourful and attractive pictures to express their ideas. They mix different coloured paints on paper and see the effects. Some paintings have no particular form, but are attractive and interesting features in themselves. For example, some pieces show rippling watercolour effects. Other paintings are

good representations of real things, such as daffodils, or of penguins, which the children cut out when the paint has dried. The teacher sets them challenging and enjoyable tasks. For example, they practise using pastels to create textured drawings, in the style of Monet's painting of the 'Seine at Bennecourt.' They further investigate texture when they make collages out of a good range of papers and cloth.

85. Children develop musical skills from a detailed music curriculum, taught by a part-time teacher who is the music co-ordinator. With older pupils they play percussion instruments and try to keep a steady pulse. They sing with pleasure songs that they learn by heart, for example 'Three sailors went to Sea.' They pretend to run a shop in the classroom, 'Ivegill Market,' and use their imagination to buy and sell a range of goods.

Teaching

86. All the teaching in lessons was judged to be good. There are very good relationships between the teacher and the classroom assistant, who work together very well in their consistently high expectations of behaviour from the children. Management of the literacy and numeracy groups is well organised. These qualities of good management and relationships make a positive contribution to the quality of teaching overall. As a result, children are well motivated and achieve well in their learning.

87. One important aspect of the class arrangement is the social benefit that children in the Foundation Stage get from working much of the time with older ones. Occasionally, however, there are times when they do not receive the attention that they should. This is because the teacher has to cater for all the needs of her pupils. Some aspects of lessons are too challenging for the reception age children, and they are given tasks and activities that do not reflect their needs, and time is wasted. This is often because the children are expected to work on whole school topics that are beyond their comprehension, such as life in Britain during the Second World War. The staff make best use of the available classroom space, but there is not enough space to put out at one time all the equipment required for children of this age.

ENGLISH

88. Four pupils entered the year 2000 tests, of whom one had severe learning difficulties in literacy. Results show that two of the remaining pupils attained standards expected for pupils their age. The number of pupils entering the tests over the past four years has been too small to allow valid comparisons with national data. Standards fell in the year 2000, and have been below the national average for the past four years. This is because one quarter or more of pupils each year have been on the school's register for special educational needs, and two pupils in each of the years from 1997 to 1999 had Statements of Special Educational Need. Analysis of pupils' work during inspection shows that all pupils, including those with special

educational needs, are making good progress. There are eleven pupils in the current Year 6. The eight pupils in this group who do not have special educational needs are attaining standards expected nationally. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectation for pupils aged eleven. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

89. In the year 2000 tests, two thirds of pupils aged seven attained standards in line with those expected for their age. This was below the national average. Nine pupils took the tests, but two had specific learning difficulties in literacy. Six pupils attained the national average in both reading and writing. All six achieved the nationally expected Level 2, or above, in reading, and three in writing. Two pupils attained the higher than expected Level 3 in reading, and one reached this level in writing. Above average numbers of pupils aged seven attained above expected standards in speaking and listening. Analysis of work seen during inspection indicates that standards have improved since the year 2000 tests. The number of pupils attaining nationally expected levels in the current Year 2 is at the national average, and has improved significantly since last year.

90. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening in the infant classes because they work collaboratively with others, discussing their ideas and listening carefully to their friends. Teachers question them skilfully to help them to give more information in their answers. Pupils speak clearly and confidently, often explaining their ideas in extended sentences. They listen attentively to teachers, so that they understand what they have to do, and ask questions to make sure they have understood.

91. Pupils continue to make good progress in speaking and listening as they move through the juniors, so that standards attained at age eleven remain above those seen nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, talk confidently and clearly, expressing their points of view and explaining their ideas in extended answers. They listen attentively to their friends and teachers, asking relevant questions to clarify their understanding. Pupils respond to the ideas of others and will change their opinions when necessary. They learn to debate their ideas in a range of subjects, such as the way life might have been for the mother in a novel that they are reading to support their learning in history. In their discussion, they use vocabulary such as 'emotional', 'determined' and 'depressed', and speculate by saying, "She may not be alive; we do not know if she is still alive." By age eleven all pupils learn to speak confidently in front of the whole school. For example, they offer the prayer before lunch, and make contributions in assembly, in role play and in drama.

92. Throughout the infants pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. By the time they are seven, all pupils read clearly and confidently, and correct their mistakes without help, though a few read books with only simple words and phrases because they have reading difficulties. Pupils enjoy reading and being read to, and all talk about stories they have enjoyed, although most cannot name favourite authors. Most pupils retell stories in detail and suggest what might happen next. A few pupils suggest alternative endings, for example "They might earn the money or Dad might give them the money." Pupils understand how books work and handle them with care. They recognise information on the cover of books, and know the meaning of 'author' and 'title'.

93. All pupils make good progress in reading throughout the junior department and, in Year 6, all children can read clearly and confidently. Pupils with special educational needs continue to read less difficult texts. Most pupils read with good expression and without making mistakes. They understand what they have read, and can outline main points of the story, say what main characters are like and explain reasons for main events. The higher attaining pupils read accurately with lively expression, using dialect where necessary and laughing at the humour in the text. These pupils use parts of the text to support what they say. They can name preferred authors, such as Terry Pratchett, and titles they have read. In retelling a novel read previously, one boy laughed as he said, "... and Death is a character in Terry Pratchett books; he comes up quite often. Whenever anyone's dying he comes up behind them and says, 'Could you come down here please? Don't you know you've died!'" Many pupils are beginning to see hidden meanings in what they have read, and make sensible predictions of what might happen next. All pupils understand the organisational features of books, such as the title, author, contents page and index, and most talk about the way a library works. A few pupils understand how the cataloguing system works, but none could name it. By age eleven, many pupils provide their own reading books from home. Most pupils use comprehension skills well to extend their vocabulary because teachers challenge them to identify unknown words in text, and to use the meaning of the passage to attempt a definition. For example, Year 6 pupils read and correctly define words such as 'serenity' and 'mirage'.

94. Pupils make good progress in writing, and by the time they are seven most reach standards similar to those attained nationally. They write for a range of purposes, which include their own stories and poems, descriptions, letters, reports, and retelling of stories. They complete grammar exercises and comprehension exercises, such as sequencing sentences. All pupils develop skills well, with the result that, by Year 2, most pupils write confidently in sentences that are usually punctuated correctly with full stops. Most pupils join sentences with words like 'and' and 'but', and some use different words like 'because' and 'if'. Pupils who reach the higher standards write in a lively style, and can open sentences in interesting ways, for example "If you go in it you will get a virus." Many pupils develop neat handwriting by aged seven, but do not often use a confident cursive style in their daily work. Although spelling is not always accurate, all pupils use phonic skills to try to write unknown words. Most use a range of word-building strategies to attempt harder words.

95. All pupils continue to make good progress in writing in the juniors and, by age eleven, most pupils put interesting ideas or details into their work. Pupils write for many reasons, including stories, letters, poems, book and theatre reviews, newspaper reports, descriptions, and reports on research or investigations in many subjects. They complete exercises in handwriting and grammar, such as the use of speech marks and commas in lists. By age eleven, most pupils write in extended sentences and use interesting vocabulary such as 'commotion'. Lower attaining pupils do not allow their spelling levels to deter them from writing expressively, and use the skills they have, for example, "I thought once more..." Higher attaining pupils use language creatively and sensitively, sometimes opening sentences with subordinating clauses, for example, "As the cockpit edged towards the ground..." By the time they are eleven, pupils edit their work thoughtfully and confidently, making improvements in grammar, punctuation and style. For example, one boy changed the word 'walked' to 'stomped ferociously'. All pupils write poetry with confidence. By age eleven,

they show very good standards of poetic language and pattern, for example “The stone walls fly into the distance/ Leaving the mountain at a standstill.” Pupils make good progress in using a range of punctuation, some accurately, including commas, exclamation marks, speech marks and apostrophes. However, many pupils in the juniors do not use neat, joined handwriting confidently enough in daily work.

96. In the infants, teaching seen in the inspection was good and one lesson was very good. In the juniors, teaching was satisfactory in English lessons, and very good in the Literacy Hour sessions. Teachers’ planning is good, including their organisation and subsequent management of time. Most lessons progress briskly, and teachers move smoothly from one teaching part or activity to another. This leads to pupils staying interested and often excited by what they are being taught. When the teaching seen was not of the same high standard, it was during separate lessons for pupils with special educational needs, and the lessons had not been adapted sufficiently to the needs of the group or pupil. The lessons did not have the same interest or excitement for pupils as the very good literacy lessons, and sometimes they found work too easy. A few pupils became restless and sometimes behaved unsatisfactorily for a short time. The pace and change of activities was too quick in one lesson seen, so that the pupil did not understand all that was taught.

97. There is a whole-school commitment to improving standards, and teachers use the Literacy Hour very well to raise pupils’ levels of attainment. They use a good range of well-prepared materials and resources that increase pupils’ interest and help them to understand and extend their learning. For example, one teacher used a balance scale and weights to teach the writing of a balanced argument, so that pupils could see the importance of putting both sides of the argument at each stage. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan work thoroughly to give all pupils their best chance to learn. Teachers provide good demonstrations, examples and structure for writing, resulting in very young pupils, and pupils with special educational needs, achieving similar standards to other pupils. For example, a Year 2 pupil, writing her first balanced argument, used the enlarged text as a model and said, “I am going to write an ‘If only....’ sentence now.” Teachers expect all pupils to work hard and behave. In literacy lessons, they expect pupils to understand the correct vocabulary in the subject, and to use it as they make progress. For example, pupils in Year 2 understand and use terms like ‘connectives’ and ‘adjective’. Pupils aged eleven talk confidently about enjoying finding homophones and using alliteration in their descriptions. Teachers question pupils all the time, matching the difficulty of the question to the child’s ability, and helping them to think more deeply, adding information to their answer. A teacher challenged one pupil in Year 6 to extend his answer, saying, “Come on – like a SATs question, can you justify? Give reasons for your answer?”

98. Homework is used well to reinforce or extend pupils’ learning, and teachers link it well to their lessons. The quality and use of assessment in literacy lessons is good. Teachers open the lesson by telling the children what they expect them to learn and be able to do by the end of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, they help pupils to evaluate what they have learned. However, marking does not always help pupils to know how well they did, or how they could do better next time. All pupils have personal targets in Literacy and, as they move through the school, they understand how to use them to improve their work. All teachers track children’s progress, and use the information from analysis of assessment data to plan the groups children need to work in, and what they need to do next. They provide very good

opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills, and their literacy skills, in other subjects, such as history, geography and mathematics. For example at the end of a numeracy lesson the teacher asked pupils aged seven to say how they felt about what they had learned, and made good links to discussions they had had that morning in a 'debate'.

99. The co-ordinator for English makes very good use of assessment data to track pupils' progress, including the analysis of the progress of different years and groups, such as girls and boys. She studies pupils' work and observes lessons, giving teachers thorough feedback. She has very good understanding of what needs to be done to make further improvements. The school provides a very good range of learning experiences for pupils, including such celebrations as 'World Book Day,' and theatre visits, such as an outdoor performance of Romeo and Juliet. It uses visitors to enrich pupils' multicultural understanding, for example storytellers from Nepal, India, Israel and Pakistan. Resources are good, except in the library, where many books are in need of replacement. There are not enough appropriate choices for junior pupils in fiction or non-fiction, and very few examples of literature from different cultures.

MATHEMATICS

100. It is not possible to make reliable comparisons with national data about pupils' attainment in mathematics at ages seven and eleven. This is because there is only a small number of pupils of the relevant ages in the school. For example, in 2000, there were nine pupils in Year 2 and four pupils in Year 6, the points when pupils in all schools take statutory tests. Of these, six pupils aged seven scored the nationally expected Level 2, or above, in mathematics. At age eleven, three of the four eligible pupils reached the nationally expected Level 4, or above. At both ages, the proportion reaching the nationally expected levels matched the national average, although the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was below the average.

101. Results of national tests vary considerably from year to year, depending upon the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. For example, in the three years leading to 2000, two pupils in each Year 6 class had Statements of Special Educational Need. Currently, there are eight seven-year-olds in Year 2, and 11 pupils aged eleven in Year 6. An unusually high proportion of the current Year 6 pupils have special educational needs that adversely affect their attainment in mathematics.

102. The inspection finds that the proportions of pupils reaching the national expectations are average for pupils aged seven and eleven. This judgement matches that made at the previous inspection. Nearly all pupils achieve well, including those pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress.

103. By the age of seven, the average and more able pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. The least able pupils can add and subtract numbers up to ten to give answers up to 20. Average and more able pupils know some of the properties of common 2-dimensional shapes, but only a small proportion of pupils apply this information to classify these. Pupils use number lines competently to count on in 3s and 4s, and some do this quickly and accurately without needing the number line to help them. All pupils record their answers up to 30, and explain what they are doing and why. "We are counting in threes to 30, making jumps

in our heads,” one pupil said. Pupils soundly communicate information in tables and simple block graphs. For example, they record the weights of pupils in the class, and then compare the results. They weigh objects in kilograms and grams, and accurately measure short distances in centimetres.

104. By Year 4, pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimals. They all understand that $\frac{1}{2}$ and 0.5 represent equivalent amounts, and more able pupils understand equivalents that are more complex. By the age of 11, pupils understand the relationships between decimals, fractions and percentages. They quickly work out in their heads answers to number problems. For example, they round decimals up or down to the nearest tenth, changing 1.67 to 1.7. The more able pupils can round hundredths to the nearest tenth. Pupils’ ability to apply their number skills is developing well. For example, they apply their knowledge of co-ordinates to translate shapes correctly on a grid, using positive and negative numbers. Their understanding of place value is good. When their teacher reads out numbers that include tens of millions, most pupils write them correctly, though the average and higher ability pupils do this more easily.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. It is satisfactory in 20 per cent of lessons, good in 20 per cent, and very good in 60 per cent.

106. Teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy well. They are secure in the elements of the strategy and make effective use of it in structuring the lessons and planning the content. Nearly all lessons begin with a brief and brisk session of mental mathematics. This is followed by the main lesson activity. Teachers use effective methods when explaining ideas to move pupils’ learning on.

107. The school arranges numeracy lessons in such a way that some pupils in Year 2, and nearly all the pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, are taught in two groups timetabled separately. The headteacher teaches the groups. This is a helpful arrangement because the headteacher knows her pupils very well, maintains consistency in teaching methods across the groups, and gives the pupils appropriately challenging work to do. The teacher of the infants teaches other Year 2 pupils, and all Year 1 pupils. Lessons are of at least good quality. The headteacher keeps pupils’ interest at a high level because she tells them at the beginning of the lessons what they are going to learn. She draws pupils into the lesson through careful questioning, and her expectations of all pupils to contribute their ideas. As a result, pupils listen carefully to their teacher and to each other, and try hard to give detailed answers. The quality of learning in these lessons is good because they move at a demanding pace and the work is ever more challenging. For example, in one very good lesson about currencies, given to the more able and older pupils, the teacher asked them to convert decimals comprising thousandths to the nearest hundredth (2.619 to 2.62). This led to more demanding work, with currency tables as reference points, and the construction of currency conversion graphs. The pupils responded very well to the challenge of the lesson. They worked hard because the teacher related the work to real life situations, such as the need to use foreign currency on holidays abroad, and because pupils of differing levels of ability had tasks suited to their needs. Pupils feel comfortable and inspired in lessons of this calibre, and they make very good strides in their learning.

108. The less able pupils in Year 2 and pupils in Year 1 enjoy their lessons because they tend to be of a practical nature. There is very good planning of the numeracy structure, so that lessons are well organised and managed, and pupils learn at a good pace. The teacher of these younger pupils makes very good use of the classroom assistant to work with small groups and individuals. She often focuses on the less able pupils so that they can do work at a level more appropriate to their needs. Pupils respond well to this and take pride in their achievements, especially when they share them with the rest of the class near the end of the lesson.

109. In one mathematics lesson seen in Years 5 and 6, not taken by the headteacher, the pupils took a long time to settle and a few became disruptive, calling out needlessly. There was too much time wasted because the pupils were not clear about what they had to do. The lesson was well planned and, as in the other lessons, the work was demanding, but the management was not as tight as in other lessons, and learning was only satisfactory. The school should review its arrangements to ensure that pupils learn at a good or very good rate in all lessons.

110. The last part of the lessons is used well to revisit the lesson content, and sometimes to introduce elements of a subsequent lesson. For example, in the lesson about currencies, the teacher led discussion about the euro, and referred to a newspaper graph that started above zero. This led to more detailed discussion about graphs, and the posing of more questions to make pupils think hard.

111. The use of information and communication technology is good, for example in drawing bar charts and assembling or interpreting spreadsheets. There is satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects, for example in producing graphs and making measurements in science. The assessment arrangements are good, although the use of this information for curriculum planning could be improved further, for example to overcome those occasions when the more able pupils are asked to do work of which they are already capable. Monitoring of teaching by the headteacher takes place, but she needs more time to monitor those lessons taken by teachers new to the school, to ensure that pupils learn in consistently well-managed lessons.

SCIENCE

112. Too few pupils took the statutory assessments and tests in 2000, for pupils aged seven and eleven, to enable valid comparisons to be made with national averages. However, in the teacher assessments for seven year olds, only five of the nine pupils reached the nationally expected Level 2. In contrast, of the four pupils who took the tests for eleven year olds, two reached the higher than expected Level 5.

113. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. On the evidence of these lessons, and from looking at samples of pupils' work and talking to pupils, it is judged that pupils meet national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. This judgement reflects that made at the previous inspection, and shows an improvement on last year's assessments for seven year olds.

114. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in acquiring a good scientific knowledge and understanding.

115. Pupils in Year 2, studying electrical circuits, satisfactorily identify that a circuit needs to be complete before a bulb will light. They work well together in pairs to assemble their circuits, and follow the good guidance of the teacher in their investigations. Pupils work hard at their tasks, and learn well because they concentrate on what they have to do. By Year 6, pupils know that having more than one bulb in a circuit affects the amount of light they make. Higher attaining pupils explain clearly the differences between placing bulbs 'in series' and 'in parallel', and that the latter arrangement does not affect the light intensity of each bulb. Some pupils in Years 3 and 4 explain that electricity can sometimes produce heat as well as light, for example when the electricity from a battery lights a bulb.

116. Pupils aged seven use thermometers to measure temperature in different places. They take readings from the thermometers to the nearest degree, and record their findings. They investigate ways of keeping things warm or cool, and from their investigations find out about the efficiency of insulators, such as 'bubble wrap' and tin foil. Pupils know that materials can change their properties when they are subjected to different temperatures, such as water changing as it is heated from ice, to liquid, and then to vapour. Pupils of this age know that life is dependent upon a range of suitable factors, such as water, light and heat.

117. By age eleven, most pupils have added satisfactorily to knowledge they acquired lower down the school. For example, they explain the structural and protective functions of bones, and some of the functions of important organs of the mammalian body. The more able pupils know that blood circulates from the heart to the lungs, to exchange carbon dioxide for oxygen, before passing back to the heart for pumping around the body. However, most are unsure about this process, and understand only that the heart beats faster during body exercise because it needs more oxygen. They can name gravity, magnetism and air resistance as examples of forces, but only the most able pupil explains that friction is a retarding force that produces heat, as in car brakes. Year 6 pupils have good understanding of the world in relation to the planets. They use this understanding to explain 'day and night,' and how the year moves through four seasons.

118. Of the three lessons seen, one was very good, one good, and the other satisfactory. In the satisfactory lesson, given to pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, the teacher prompted eager discussion about electricity, using a tape recorder as an example of a machine that would not function without switching on. This approach successfully involved the pupils in their learning because most listened to one another's comments and ideas. The teacher planned the lesson well, with resources available that excited the pupils and focussed their attention when it came to the practical session. Pupils busily joined wires in different ways to make bulbs light. By the end of the lesson, some pupils in Year 2 learned well and proudly described five combinations of connecting components successfully. However, despite most pupils being engaged well in the practical activity, some progressed at a slower rate because the teacher failed to emphasise sufficiently the need to listen and to behave. Too little attention was given to overall class management.

119. In the good and very good lessons, the teachers managed their lessons well, and had very good relationships with their pupils, who all responded by working sensibly on their practical tasks. For example, in the Year 5 and Year 6 lesson about dissolving different kinds of sugar, the teacher made very clear what the pupils were required to do. She explained the task in detail and ensured that pupils fully understood, before letting them gather, sort and use

equipment. The pupils responded with enjoyment and interest. Working in small groups of four, the pupils made predictions, thought carefully about the aspects of ‘constants’ and ‘variables’, and began to draw conclusions from their observations. Behaviour was good, and pupils learned much.

120. It is in investigations that pupils make the most strides in their learning. The school pays closer attention than it used to this aspect of science. The effects of this approach are apparent in the way the pupils make connections between different aspects. For example, pupils in Year 6 remember their investigations into air resistance to help them explain some characteristics of seed dispersal.

121. There are examples of good writing when pupils record and write up their investigations, but most present their writing in a scrappy form. The specific skills of succinct and clear writing in science are not sufficiently developed, notably in recording and reporting. Pupils are not sufficiently using in science the skills they acquire in literacy lessons for writing for special purposes. Pupils use their numeracy skills in science when conducting experiments, for example when they carefully measure out quantities of solvent and solute.

122. Pupils are enthusiastic and show enjoyment in science lessons, largely because of the enthusiasm of the teachers, and their opportunities to do investigations. National guidelines are used as a basis for planning the science curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by the good attention the school pays to consideration of the environment. For example, there is good involvement in the ‘Environmental Agency’ through projects on pollution. Pupils write moving poems about the need to keep rivers clean. From this work, they explain that rivers are essential to life in Nature, and describe the drastic effects of pollution. At present, there are assessment procedures in place but teachers do not use them regularly enough to identify gaps in pupils’ learning. Resources in science are good for the needs of this small school and they are well stored and maintained.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY AND ART AND DESIGN

123. There were no lessons seen in design and technology, and there is not enough evidence to make judgements about pupils’ achievement in this subject. Similarly, there were no lessons seen in art and design in the infants, and only one lesson in the juniors. From this one lesson, and from a scrutiny of pupils’ past work and talking to pupils, it is judged that pupils aged seven and eleven make good progress and achieve above what is normally expected for pupils of these ages. This judgement reflects a good improvement since the previous inspection.

124. Work in sketchbooks shows that teachers give pupils many opportunities to try out different techniques in art and design. These opportunities include whole school topics such as the designing, making and wearing of giant ‘serpent heads’ for use in a local May Day celebration, and the creation of large maps following a visit to a museum in Carlisle.

125. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have practised techniques in colour ‘washes’, tackled the difficult skills of drawing tree shapes, and drawn pencil portraits from real life subjects. For example, pupils studied a mother with her baby to produce detailed portraits of a ‘Madonna and Child’. This work was ably extended when a father came to the school to help pupils represent the same subject using other materials, such as string on card.

126. The school makes good use of art and design to supplement work in other subjects, and this approach strongly supports pupils’ learning across the curriculum. Good examples include the drawing of silhouettes, with the use of a projector, as part of science work about light. A history topic is enhanced when pupils carefully draw in pencil very clear studies of timber frame houses, typical of the Tudor period. There is an environmental dimension to pupils’ work, for example when they design and colour posters that remind us to follow the country code.

127. Teachers cleverly use the work of famous artists to promote pupils’ interest in trying out different techniques. Pupils discuss the work of Vincent van Gogh, L S Lowry and Monet. They look at pictures such as those of Monet’s garden at Giverny, and try out his brush techniques. Older pupils produced fascinating pictures in the style of Jan Pienkowski. This gave them the opportunity to try out ‘marbling’ techniques behind carefully cut out silhouettes of fairy tale figures.

128. Work in design and technology also often enhances work in other subjects. For example, as part of a science topic on sound, pupils used items such as flowerpots, plastic bottles and horseshoes to design and make a range of musical instruments. After making and trying out their instruments, they evaluated and altered them to improve the sounds they made. Similarly, older pupils rolled out clay, and then cut out and decorated squares to make clay tiles in the style of those made by the Ancient Greeks.

129. Pupils’ creative ability greatly improves as they move through the school. They use their improving skills to combine the visual and tactile elements of what they see. For example, there were some attractive, painted representations of stained glass windows on paper printed with hessian, and these gave texture to the work. Similarly, the thoughtful application and merging of oil pastels brought alive some drawings of flowers.

130. In the very good lesson seen in Years 5 and 6, the teacher had high expectations of pupils to produce their best work. Following revision of previous work and designs done in their sketchbooks, the pupils set to with a will to produce posters proclaiming such announcements as ‘Dig for Victory’ or ‘The railways are still running.’ The pupils were particularly interested in the work because the teacher showed great enthusiasm, and because the subject matched work they were currently doing in history, the Second World War. Most pupils produced a good standard of work because they had developed the creative skills necessary and applied them to their work. For example, some used ‘colour washes’ as a base, and others used techniques of collage to give their posters depth.

131. The teacher managed the class well, and had high expectations of pupils to behave. They got out and put away materials quickly and efficiently so that they wasted no time. The teacher is very knowledgeable in the subject. She used the last part of the lesson to evaluate with the pupils the work they had done. Discussion suitably centred on the quality and effect

of shading, the choice of materials and the positioning of the contextual items. Pupils responded sensibly and made informed comments about the effectiveness of their work. Indeed, pupils respond very well to their tasks in art and design and design and technology, by producing work of high quality.

GEOGRAPHY

132. There were no lessons seen during inspection. Judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, photographs and displays, and discussion with pupils and teachers.

133. Standards of work seen in geography have been maintained since the previous inspection and remain good. Pupils in the infants make good progress, and by the time they are seven their knowledge and understanding of the subject is above that usually expected for pupils of this age. They write about places studied, such as the Falkland Islands and the Rhone Valley, and make comparisons between life in far away places and their own lives in Cumbria. Pupils in Year 1 talk about life on an island and say what would be different for children there. They name features of the school environment, the local area, and places abroad. By the time they are seven, pupils use correct geographical language to talk about features of the environment, such as 'irrigation' and 'pollution', and most pupils can explain in simple terms what they mean.

134. Pupils continue to make good progress in junior classes because they are given very good opportunities to use a range of sources. These include books, photographs, the Internet, questioning of visitors, field study and independent research. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas, and to question what they find. By the time they are eleven, most pupils work on their own, or collaboratively, to research and record findings in a wide range of ways, including letter writing, reporting, maps, data analysis, and charts. When their literacy skills are not restricted by use of worksheets and formats, they write thoughtfully about such subjects as features of contrasting localities and environmental issues. For example, following a talk and slide show by a teacher visiting from the Falkland Islands, a pupil in Year 6 wrote, "There is grass growing out of the sand because (1) The birds need to rest in it. (2). The grass is there to keep the sides from wearing away." Pupils' independent study gives them good opportunities to use their range of literacy and numeracy skills. One boy reporting on transport in the Falkland Islands wrote, "Horseback is the most popular way of travelling. It's easy, quick and you don't get stuck in a hole!" Pupils present data from their studies of the weather and pollution, and they research causes and effects of the 'greenhouse effect.' Pupils' map work is good. They identify and name a wide range of features, using their knowledge to compare old and new maps of Carlisle to support their learning in history. They write letters in religious education lessons as though they were residents of India. The cover illustration of a book published by the Geographical Association recently celebrated the quality of work of the juniors.

135. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to conduct their own studies, including field study at the Fell Side Residential facility, Derwent Water, the Environmental Agency, Sheep Folds, and places near and far, such as Carlisle and Bradford. The teachers bring in visitors from organisations in England, and from overseas locations, such as Nepal and the Falkland Islands. They make good use of the scheme of work from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority to plan in geography, and provide good resources for study. Pupils in

Year 6 talk enthusiastically about their learning in geography, describing in detail how houses are built in Pakistan, and features of the rainforests in Brazil, including the impact of their destruction on the environment. They describe features of the environment and life in Australia, and compare features in other places, such as the lengths of rivers and their influence on the lives of people in the area. Pupils talk with each other about rivers changing over time, and one pupil said, “They get eroded, like they make an ox-bow lake.” There are good opportunities through project work for pupils to extend their literacy skills and to develop their speaking and listening skills in debate.

136. The co-ordinator is well qualified to lead the subject, and uses whole school topics to ensure pupils cover the full curriculum. This sometimes means that very young pupils are required to study a number of other countries before they have developed good understanding of features of England, and their local area.

HISTORY

137. By the time they are eleven, most pupils have historical knowledge and understanding above that expected nationally for their age. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were similar to those of most pupils nationally. It results from the excellent opportunities pupils are given to discuss and debate issues, and to investigate their ideas.

138. Most pupils in Year 2 attain standards expected for their age. They use sources such as videos, books, photographs and artefacts to find out about life in the past. They talk confidently about similarities and differences between life in the past and life now, and can recall facts from different times, such as the Tudors and the Second World War. All pupils develop a sense of time passing, and most put in chronological order simple events in their own lives and those of others. They record facts and thoughts in simple words and phrases, though they do not always have enough opportunity to write fully about their findings. By the time they are seven, pupils can discuss historical artefacts confidently, and are beginning to give reasons for judgements they make. When one girl was asked why she thought the doll she was handling was old, she said, “Because it’s dirty and it’s got cracks in it.”

139. Pupils continue to make very good progress as they move through the school, and the range of opportunities for them to record their own thoughts and ideas increases. However, higher attaining pupils are still sometimes too limited by the formats given them to work on. When pupils are given opportunities to carry out their own research projects, the quality of their work is good. Pupils visited an exhibition of old maps at Tullie House Museum in Carlisle, and used old and new maps to pursue a study on ‘How Carlisle Has Changed.’ Pupils used a performance of Romeo and Juliet as a stimulus to research historical information and to write newspaper articles for “The Verona Times”, as though they were there on the day of the battle. Pupils develop a secure sense of chronology, and by the time they are eleven they use time lines confidently to record significant periods and events within them. They understand the nature of history. One eleven-year-old boy said to an inspector, “Tomorrow you will be gone and you will be part of our history.” Pupils in Year 6 can recall very well the knowledge they learned earlier in the school. They talked with great enthusiasm about burying time capsules during the millennium year, what they had chosen to put in them, why they had done this, and what the reaction of people opening them in the future might be.

140. The teaching of history is good because teachers have very good subject knowledge and great enthusiasm for the subject, which motivates and excites their pupils. Teachers provide a very good range of experiences and opportunities for pupils to interpret information they have collected themselves. These include collaborative research, the studying of artefacts, role play, field study, and study sources that include videos, books, photographs and the Internet. Pupils aged seven prepared questions to ask an elderly visitor about toys she received as a child at Christmas, and borrowed old toys from local community residents and grandparents to compare with their own toys. Teachers challenge pupils to think deeply about the issues discussed. For example, when prompted to say which toy she thought was mainly used outside, one seven-year-old girl said, "I think definitely the doll's pram because the wheels are dirty and jagged." By the time they are eleven, many pupils share a sense of wonder at change over time, which goes beyond the usual interest of many pupils their age. In recalling a visit to Beamish Museum to experience life as a Victorian school child, pupils in Year 6 were amazed at the strictness of the teacher, and that girls "got into trouble" for talking to the boys at playtime. Pupils in Year 6 recall a wide range of knowledge from studies that include the Vikings, Romans, Tudors, and life since the 1930's, and the Second World War. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to link their learning in history with literacy lessons, and to develop further their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing. For example, junior pupils are reading 'The Silver Sword', a novel based in the Second World War, and have good opportunities to use historical knowledge in their analysis of the novel.

141. The co-ordinator has had a good impact on the subject in the year since she took leadership. She has contributed a wide variety of her own relevant artefacts to the very good resources supplied by Tullie House Museum. The school makes good use of facilities available, such as the Lancaster Museum, the Sheep Folds, Beamish Museum and Tullie House Museum. History is taught through whole-school topics, so that the co-ordinator can monitor pupils' access to the full curriculum, and track their progress within it as they move between mixed-age classes. Tests are used at the end of each unit of work to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. These topics give very good opportunities for the whole school to share the excitement of learning together. However, the range of experiences offered to young pupils within these whole school topics is not always appropriate. For example, they sometimes study aspects of history that are hard for them to understand, such as when they use worksheets showing where bombs fell on Great Britain during the Second World War.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

142. Standards of attainment in this subject are above national expectations for pupils at eleven, and they make good progress in their learning. This judgement is the same as that made in the previous inspection. There is not sufficient evidence to make a judgement about the attainment of pupils aged seven, although they do make good progress in some aspects of the subject. The school has maintained standards through improving resources, staff training, and good teaching, which includes regular and consistent experience for all pupils, both boys and girls, throughout the school. The school has worked hard and successfully to keep its information and communication technology curriculum up to date. For example, there are many occasions when the subject is used to enhance learning in other subjects. The pupils

benefit from a very good range of computers and software. Three classrooms have computers, and there is access to the Internet. In addition, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good use in most other subjects of the information and communication skills they learn.

143. Most children have already learned in the Foundation Stage to control a computer mouse and, as a result, pupils in Year 1 show confidence in what they are doing. Pupils in Year 2 move around on the screen sections of a poem by Roger McGough. They alter the style, colour and size of font to make their work attractive. Pupils share information about themselves when they write letters and send them, by email, to pupils in another school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use a CD-Rom to research information about the Ancient Egyptians, and then use this information to help them with their history topic. They confidently draft pieces of prose, and then use this as a basis for organising their ideas and making alterations. They use a spellchecker to improve their spellings.

144. There were only two specific lessons seen in the inspection; both were of good quality. A Year 4 lesson built well on pupils' good learning about databases, because the teacher taught the skills required effectively. She explained about 'fields' and the need to be accurate in the collection of data. She provided simple data collection sheets and used them well to focus pupils' attention on their task. Her high expectations for pupils to listen ensured that pupils knew exactly what to do, and they pursued their task with interest. There was good explanation about how to enter data into the computers, although a shortage of time did not permit this to proceed.

145. By age eleven, pupils use spreadsheets well to enter and retrieve information. For example, they collect information about the relative costs of school equipment, such as pencil sharpeners and pencils. Pupils who are more able sort information about the costs of journeys run by an imaginary bus company. As part of their work in geography, they use a spreadsheet to compare the lengths of major world rivers. They transfer the information to bar graphs, which they print out to use for further analysis. A study of the Ancient Greeks prompted artwork on computers to represent Greek temples. Similarly, pupils in a mathematics lesson used computers confidently to try to gather information from the Internet about currencies.

146. The teacher in a Years 5 and 6 lesson created a good working atmosphere when she explained the purpose of the lesson: to understand that information must be read carefully, and essential messages extracted. The emphasis and regular repetition of the key word 'skim' gave a strong focus to pupils' learning. Consequently, when presented with substantial information about life from 1930 to 1950, the pupils approached their task of identifying key messages with rigour and concentration, working happily both independently and in pairs. The teacher made good use of pupils' suggestions in discussion, thus raising their confidence and sense of achievement. This approach carried through effectively to the last part of the lesson, when the class reviewed together what it had learned. Pupils showed at this point their good speaking and listening skills. Throughout the practical part of the lesson, the teacher skilfully gave attention to those pupils who had some difficulty, and successfully encouraged some pupils to work faster to improve their rate of learning.

147. The teaching of basic skills in the subject overall is good, and teachers check that pupils can carry out the procedures asked of them. Teachers are good at ensuring that pupils understand the words they are using within the lesson and check that pupils use them

correctly. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour, and good management techniques which contribute to the good behaviour in classes. They develop very positive relationships with pupils which encourage them to extend their efforts. Analysis of pupils' work in individual folders shows that teachers cover all relevant strands of the information and communication technology curriculum. However, the aspects of control and sensing are underdeveloped. The school is aware of this. The good scheme of work, developed as a result of a thorough analysis of what the school provides, should take account of the need to raise the level of pupils' attainment in some aspects of the subject.

MUSIC

148. By age eleven, pupils achieve standards well above average in their ability to sing and play a range of instruments confidently and accurately. This is an improvement on the good standards seen at the last inspection.

149. Pupils in the infants make good progress and achieve standards in music that are above average. They hold and play percussion instruments carefully, and perform simple accompaniments with a good standard of rhythm and beat. Many pupils are beginning to use expression in their playing of instruments. They can sing together clearly and tunefully, showing good awareness of others and a sense of melody. Pupils listen carefully to each other and to the teacher; for example, they copy patterns accurately, and most work hard to improve their performance.

150. A few pupils use technical language correctly to explain what they are playing or hearing. For example, one seven-year-old pupil said the atmosphere in a piece "...is made by the pace and the melody." Pupils compose their own music and make very good progress in recording compositions in notation form.

151. Pupils in the juniors make very good progress, and by the time they are eleven their attainment exceeds that expected of pupils their age. They have a very good understanding of beat and rhythm, and sing syncopated melodies well. The majority of pupils maintain pitch and rhythm at an ability level well above that usually found in eleven year olds. They perform four-part rounds confidently and accurately. All pupils play tuned and untuned percussion with good dynamics and tempo. They compose an ostinato accompaniment to a known song, and many pupils define the term 'ostinato' correctly. All pupils in the junior classes read and interpret music to play keyboards, stringed, brass or woodwind instruments, and most play in the school orchestra, performing to a very high standard.

152. The quality of teaching in music was satisfactory. It was good in two lessons for Year 2 pupils, and very good in Years 5 and 6. Teaching of pupils in the orchestra was excellent. The specialist teacher of music has high expectations of pupils' performance and sets them high challenges. Consequently, they make very good progress and attain very high standards by the time they are eleven. The teacher's subject knowledge is excellent, and she shows great enthusiasm which excites and motivates the older pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory, most pupils learn very well and make good progress. However, a few younger

pupils and pupils with special educational needs spend too long performing as part of a controlled group. They do not have enough opportunity to investigate their own ideas and creativity. This leads to a small number of pupils losing concentration and trying to distract others.

153. The teacher has high expectation of pupils' understanding and use of the language of the subject. A pupil in Year 4 explained why all the accompaniments the pupils had composed were effective, by saying, "It's a pentatonic scale". The teacher questioned her skilfully and the pupil extended her answer by adding, "Pentatonic scale means all the notes work well together whatever sequence is played."

154. Pupils in Year 6 talk about music with great enthusiasm, describing their lessons as 'fantastic'. They particularly enjoy composing their own music in groups, and playing games, such as the playing of their instruments 'loud or soft' to tell a pupil whether they are getting 'warmer or colder' in 'hunt the instrument'. By the time they are eleven, all pupils confidently name a range of instruments they play. All but one have additional music lessons within school to learn their own choice of instrument.

155. The co-ordinator is very well qualified and provides very good leadership in music. The school has a wide range of musical instruments, including strings, brass and woodwind, for pupils to learn and practise upon, both at home and in school. Very good use is made of peripatetic teachers to teach these instruments, and the school staff supplement this provision, for example with recorder lessons. There are very good opportunities for pupils to listen to the works of other musicians, including a very popular visit to the school by a musical ensemble composed of their own specialist teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Only one lesson was seen in physical education during the inspection. Judgements are based on observation, discussion with teachers, parents and pupils, and photographic and media sources.

157. Pupils are agile and most move with good control and understanding of safety. In the lesson observed, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 showed very good control in balancing and stretching, and were able to make sensible choices about the level of challenge they would attempt. They could explain what they were doing and why they had chosen it, and a few were beginning to evaluate their own work and that of others.

158. Teaching in the lesson observed was good, and all pupils made good progress in developing skill in balance and stretch. They worked well with partners, discussing what they were doing and helping each other to improve. The teacher questioned pupils skilfully, so that their knowledge of the range of body parts used in balances was used to describe what they and others had done. She had high expectation of behaviour and safety procedures, so all pupils were dressed appropriately and handled equipment carefully. The teacher often demonstrated three skill levels for a balance, and pupils selected themselves the level they would work to. However, there was little opportunity for pupils to link balances or stretches

into sequences. Time was not used to increase the opportunities for creativity, so a few pupils lost concentration for short periods, and distracted others. Teaching is well planned, focusing on skills, and the organisation of resources is good. Pupils talk enthusiastically about lessons in physical education, especially the opportunities to design their own challenges, such as special 'circuits'.

159. The temporary co-ordinator has provided clear leadership, recruiting outside experts to teach specific aspects, such as netball and football, and improving resources to meet the needs of the curriculum. For example, a teacher and a member of the school's catering team trained the pupils who participated very successfully in the local cross-country event. All staff have had national training for teachers in physical education, and the newly qualified teacher is attending a physical education course organised by the local authority. The school has adopted the scheme of work provided by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority, and has used this and the National Curriculum to identify areas where further support or training is needed. The co-ordinator monitors the performance of pupils through observation. The school is a very active and successful participant in local events and competitions, entering mixed teams of girls and boys. Resources are good and facilities are very good, with a field, hard court, and use of the large village hall.