

INSPECTION REPORT

MONTREAL C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cleator Moor

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 132170

Head teacher: Mr H Blair

Reporting inspector: Mr R S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 10 - 13 February 2003

Inspection number: 248918

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ennerdale Road Cleator Moor Cumbria
Postcode:	CA25 5LW
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev R Bowlzer
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	Mr R S Moseley	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Physical education	How high are standards?
				How well are pupils taught?
			Educational inclusion	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
19443	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15474	Mr J Fairclough	Team inspector	English	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Religious education	
			Citizenship	
18819	Mr J Atkinson	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
			Mathematics	
			Information and communication technology	
			Geography	
			History	
24031	Mrs I Idle	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage	
			Art and design	

			Design and technology	
			Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Montreal C of E Primary School is bigger than other primary schools, with 290 pupils, consisting of 152 boys and 138 girls from four to 11 years. An above average number of pupils, 29 per cent, are entitled to free school meals. The school serves the small town of Cleator Moor and some surrounding villages, which have a wide variety of mixed social backgrounds, with a majority of local government housing. The area is classified as an area of multiple deprivation. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. There are two pupils with English as an additional language but they do not require any special support. There are four pupils who have ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 24 per cent, which is above average. There are 12 pupils who have statements of special educational needs, which is above average. This is a new school, formed from an amalgamation of an infant and a junior school in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound school with a number of good and very good features. There is a good climate for learning. The pupils have developed very positive attitudes to their work. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults. The teaching is good overall, with some that is very good. Although pupils are beginning to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in lessons, pupils are not yet achieving as well as they should in English, mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are now below average. Leadership and management are satisfactory with some weaknesses. The head teacher, who has ably set the tone and ethos of the school since it opened, has clearly identified what needs to be done to bring about the required improvements. However, most subject co-ordinators in the school and the deputy head teacher, are not yet deployed fully to monitor and evaluate the teaching and the curriculum. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching, which is mainly good, is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning
- Provision for children in the reception is good so children achieve well.
- Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.
- The curriculum is enhanced well by the provision of many additional activities to improve learning opportunities for pupils. Extra-curricular activities are very good.
- The head teacher has ensured this is a strongly caring school that provides very good provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral and social development. This has resulted in the pupils developing very good relationships, very positive attitudes to their work and a great deal of self-confidence by the time they leave the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Assessment procedures and the use of the information, to plan work that is more closely matched to the needs of pupils.
- The monitoring and evaluating role of the head teacher, deputy head teacher and subject co-ordinators.
- The role of the governing body in ensuring the arrangements for performance management is fully in place.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the first time the school has been inspected.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	N/a	E	E	E
mathematics	N/a	E	E*	E*
science	N/a	E	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Standards for pupils in Year 6 in mathematics were very low in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, putting the school in the bottom five per cent nationally. In English and science, they were slightly higher at well below average. For pupils at the end of Year 2, in the 2002 National Curriculum tests and assessments, standards in mathematics were also very low, putting the school in the bottom five per cent nationally. In reading, writing and in science, they were slightly higher at well below average. When the 2002 results are compared to similar schools, they show similar results, apart from in mathematics in Year 2, where they were slightly higher. In 2001 and 2002, the school did not meet the targets it set. It must be recognised that in both years there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Thirty-one per cent in Year 2 and 20 per cent in Year 6, which depressed the school's performance in the tests. Nevertheless, the pupils did not achieve as well as they should when considering the below average attainment on entry to the school. However, staff are now settled, work well as a team, and standards have improved.

Attainment on entry to the reception class is below that expected nationally for typical four-year-olds. Many children have language skills, which are below average when they start school and their personal and social skills are weak. The provision for children in the reception classes is good and they get a good start and make very good progress in their creative, personal and social and their physical development. The majority of children are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they enter Year 1. Children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and a majority are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they enter Year 1. This good provision in the reception class has only been in place a short time and older pupils in Years 1 and 2, have not had the benefit of the quality of teaching and the curriculum that the current reception classes are receiving. This is one reason why standards are lower than they could be at the end of Year 2. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs in the reception classes is good.

The inspection findings show that for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 classes, standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, in comparison with the 2002 tests. They have risen particularly well in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards are now below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and pupils are now making satisfactory progress. These improvements are due to the fact that all staff are now working together well as a team following an unsettled period following amalgamation. They are also due to good teaching and the pupils' very good

attitudes to their work. These improvements have not been in place long enough to bring about even higher standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.

By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils attain standards in line with those expected in information and communication technology, art and design and physical education. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in design and technology, history and geography are below those expected for pupils' ages, but pupils make satisfactory progress. In music and religious education, standards at the end of Year 6 are also below that expected for pupils' ages. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Almost all pupils are very eager to learn and give of their best at all times. They are responsible and show very positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Many pupils develop a great deal of confidence by the time they leave the school. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The level of attendance has improved since the last reporting year.

A very small number of pupils demonstrate emotional and behavioural problems on occasions. These pupils are well supported by the teacher with care and sensitivity. There were five short term and one permanent exclusion last year, due to the persistent poor behaviour from two pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 is good, so pupils acquire basic skills, knowledge and understanding in the subjects they are studying.

Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the good methods and the exciting ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them well to the end of the lesson. The management of pupils is very good so pupils behave well and concentrate hard. The pace of lessons is good, resulting in pupils making good, intellectual, physical and creative effort. The level of discussion, during question and answer sessions is usually good, helping to develop pupils' listening and speaking skills, as well as strengthening their confidence and personal development.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of most subjects is good. However, their knowledge and understanding of the teaching of music is weaker. This is due to a number of changes in the subject leadership over the last two years. Throughout the school, the teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy is usually good. However, there are aspects of literacy teaching, such as the development of writing skills, which are not always used effectively in other subjects, such as in history and geography so pupils miss opportunities to practise the skills learned in English lessons.

A weakness in the teaching is that specific work to meet the needs of the different abilities of pupils is not always planned. Although this is done well on occasions, in many lessons, pupils do the same work. This means that in these lessons, pupils do not always make as much progress as they could. The main reason for this weakness is that the school does not yet have assessment procedures fully in place. Teachers therefore do not always have a clear picture of the attainment and progress made by each child, and therefore cannot always plan work that specifically meets their needs. There is a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching due to the introduction of tasks, which fail to challenge pupils to produce their best.

The quality of teaching in the reception classes is good. Both teachers plan well together and have a very clear understanding of how young children learn.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is enhanced very well by a very good range of visits out of school and visitors into school, making pupils' learning experiences both rich and purposeful. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff work closely together. However, on a small number of occasions when pupils are withdrawn for special support, they get effective help in English and mathematics but miss valuable learning experiences in some other subjects, although, this withdrawal is mainly limited to just one term.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils do not require any additional help and make similar progress to their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Many aspects of school life develop pupils' confidence and the skills of friendship very well. The school has a very good 'Buddy' system where older pupils develop their responsibilities to younger ones very effectively. Provision for cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Within this, the procedures for child protection are excellent. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the use of assessment information to guide teachers' planning are unsatisfactory. The progress pupils make is not therefore always as good as it could be.

Many parents of reception children and pupils in Years 1-2 are contributing well to children's learning, both at school and at home. However, the school has given only a little information to parents about what happens in lessons in order that they might be more effective in helping their children with their homework. Although pupils' reports give a clear picture of the progress pupils are making in English, mathematics and science, they do not always do so in other subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Within this, the head teacher has ably set the tone and ethos of the new school by ensuring this is a strongly caring school, improving pupils' self-confidence and developing very good attitudes to work and relationships. He has created a strong team of teachers who are now working together well after an unsettled period following amalgamation. Standards have strengthened and he has identified what needs to be done to move the school forward and raise standards further. However, the monitoring and evaluation role of the deputy head teacher and some curriculum co-ordinators, has not been clearly identified or fully developed by the senior management team. Other co-ordinators are beginning to develop their leadership roles soundly.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The chair and vice-chair of governors are very supportive and work closely with the head teacher. Some other governors also provide effective support. However, a small number of statutory policies and arrangements are not fully in place.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has identified on its school development plan, the main things it needs to do to improve, but it has not yet had time to fully implement all the proposals.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Learning resources, the teaching staff and accommodation are used well. All money available to the school is spent very wisely and carefully. In all spending the school operates the principal of getting the very best value for its pupils. However, best value is not yet obtained from some of the leaders in the school, who are not yet deployed as well as they could be.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good. • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best. • The school is helping their children to become more mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities provided outside school hours. • A few parents were not happy with the amount of work pupils have to do at home.

Inspectors support parents' positive views about the school. They agree with parents that reports do not always give a clear picture of the progress pupils are making. They disagree with parents about the range of activities outside lessons, which inspectors judge to be very good. They also judged that homework was satisfactory.

PART B COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Children's attainment on entry to the reception classes is below that expected nationally for typical four-year-olds. Many children have below average language skills when they start school and their personal and social skills are weak. Children get a good start in the reception classes and make very good progress in their creative, personal, social and in their physical development. Most children are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they enter Year 1. Children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they enter Year 1. This good provision in the reception classes has only been in place a short time and the pupils who are in Years 1 to 6 have not had the benefit of the quality of teaching and the curriculum that the current reception children are receiving. This is one of the reasons why standards are not as high as they could be. The overall standard of work seen at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is below average. However, pupils are now beginning to make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in a majority of subjects.

2 In the National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven-year-olds in 2002, standards in mathematics were very low, indicating that they were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. In reading, writing and in science, they were well below average. When compared to similar schools, the school's results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, in 2002, pupils' standards in mathematics were very low and well below in English and science. The results were the same when compared to similar schools. It must be recognised that in both years, there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Thirty one percent in Year 2 and 20 per cent in Year 6, which depressed the school's performance in the tests. Nevertheless, pupils did not achieve as well as they should when considering the below average attainment on entry to the school. In 2002, boys did not achieve as well as girls. However, there is no evidence that there is any difference in attainment between boys and girls in this year's group of pupils in Years 2 and 6. A closer inspection of the 2002 results shows that, although a good proportion of pupils reached the expected levels, only a very small proportion reached the higher levels. One reason for this is that in the past teachers did not plan work that specifically challenged the different levels of abilities in the class. Although this is still not strong, it has improved in literacy and numeracy. In 2001 and 2002, the school did not meet the targets it set. It must be pointed out that the school went through a very unsettled period, over the two years from amalgamation, with a number of staff changes and staff absences, which the school and the inspection team feel affected the results considerably. The staff are now settled, work well as a team and standards have improved.

3 Inspection findings show that, for this year's pupils, in Year 2 and Year 6, standards are improving in English, mathematics and science, in comparison to the 2002 tests. Although they are still below average, pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards have improved particularly well in mathematics. These improvements are not only due to improvements in the quality of the teaching and the attitudes of the pupils to learning, but also to the fact that teachers are setting some work that is more closely matched to the needs of the different abilities of the pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons and in science. Although this is beginning to challenge pupils of all abilities, this type of planning is not yet fully established in all lesson planning.

4 In English, standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. Most pupils listen attentively and many are keen to answer questions and do so satisfactorily. In reading,

standards are in line with that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 6. All pupils like reading and a good proportion have advanced reading skills. Their reading is expressive because they use punctuation well. Reading skills for pupils in Year 2 are below expectations. Although higher attaining pupils read fluently, they do not fully understand the meaning of what they are reading. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant readers and do not use letter sounds well when attempting new words. Attainment in writing is below that expected for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A lot of work is in the form of worksheets that require the insertion of single word answers and there are not enough opportunities for the development of longer examples of writing. For pupils in Year 6, opportunities to extend writing are limited outside literacy lessons. Also, although higher attaining pupils use speech marks and paragraphs well, sentence structure is still basic, handwriting is not always joined and spelling is sometimes weak. Much of the written work is in the form of formal exercises, with limited opportunity for pupils to use their own ideas and to express their opinions.

5 In mathematics, standards are below average for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 confidently count to 20 but by Year 2 they count in 10's and 100's and back to nought and have a secure understanding of their times tables of two and ten. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and apply their knowledge to working out mathematics problems well. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of the properties of different shapes and are able to work out the perimeters of different shapes soundly. They recognise right angles, acute and obtuse angles.

6 In science, standards are below average for pupils' ages by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress and achieving soundly compared to their attainment on entry. Pupils in Year 2 have a basic understanding of all the aspects of science. For example, they know about the importance of healthy foods and link it well to an understanding of the importance of exercise. By the end of Year 6, although pupils investigate many aspects of science and carry out experiments, their ability to set up and devise their own investigations, is weaker. Pupils' ability to write up their investigations in a clear and logical manner is also weak at times, as pupils are not always given consistent guidance by teachers on how to do this.

7 In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils attain standards in line with that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6 and they are making good progress and achieving well. Pupils use computers and computer software confidently. Older pupils use the Internet successfully, as well as a range of other technologies, including a sound sensor and a digital camera.

8 In religious education, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with that expected for their ages in the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools and they are achieving well. At the end of Year 6, it is below the expectations for their ages. Although pupils have a satisfactory basic knowledge of the main religions, they have limited understanding of more complex ideas, such as marriage or death and how these are viewed differently by Christianity, Sikhism and other religions.

9 Pupils' attainment in history and geography is below that expected for their ages at the end of Years 2 and 6, as some pupils do not yet have the depth of knowledge required to reach average levels. However, pupils now make satisfactory progress. For example, in geography, the school makes good use of visits to develop pupils' interest. This results in pupils developing their appreciation and respect for the natural environment and how it may be protected.

10 In design and technology, pupils' attainment is below that expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Younger pupils have a limited understanding of how to develop a design. This means they are less clear about what they are to make. Older pupils are able to design and make carrier

bags that include a gusset. These were of sound quality and had appropriate decoration. However, there was a lack of variety because pupils were given little opportunity to develop individual ideas.

11 In music, standards are below that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 6. The co-ordinator, who is well qualified and new to the school, is beginning to bring good improvement and is aware that some teachers lack confidence in teaching music. This subject has been identified by the school as an area for further development in the school development plan. Pupils understand rhythms well. They are able to use un-tuned instruments but have not worked with tuned percussion instruments. Their singing in assembly is generally in pitch with accurate rhythm.

12 In art and design and physical education, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils are making satisfactory progress.

13 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. All these pupils have individual educational plans that include a range of specific targets and therefore it is clear as to what pupils need to learn. The early identification and thorough assessment of pupils are well established, which is helping pupils to make progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14 Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their learning. Most parents say their children are happy to come to school.

15 In reception, children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They get on well together and are beginning to work in pairs and co-operate successfully. They have very good relationships with adults in school and are confident to talk to visitors. They work well on their own and persevere for extended periods of time.

16 Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions promptly. They are very interested in what is going on in lessons and they enjoy the recognition and praise they receive from teachers and so they work hard and are keen to do their best. There is very good attendance at the many activities after school and pupils participate enthusiastically. As a result of these very good attitudes, pupils are able to take advantage of what the school has to offer and so they make progress.

17 Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly and polite to one another and to visitors. They know the rules and routines and they follow them well so there is a calm and orderly environment where everyone can feel comfortable and are able to get on with their work. Even when adults do not closely supervise pupils, they continue to behave well. Pupils say behaviour is improving. During the last reporting year there were five short-term exclusions and one permanent exclusion, owing to persistent unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons.

18 Pupils develop well as individuals and grow into mature and sensible young people. Relationships throughout the school are very good. This is a significant strength of the school. Pupils confidently take on responsibilities. An example of this was seen when older pupils used a computer program to present a selection of photographs and narrative to the whole school about their recent skiing trip to Italy. They did this well. Pupils have a good understanding and respect for other people, their values and beliefs. For example, in an extremely moving assembly, pupils were clearly reflective and talked afterwards about the plight of others less fortunate than themselves and the importance of helping others. Pupils respect their teachers and they want to please them and pupils are very supportive of one another and delight in each other's successes. Of particular note is how very well

the older pupils work and play as ‘buddies’ with younger pupils. They are very proud of these responsibilities and do all they can to nurture their younger friends.

19 Attendance has improved over the past two years and for the current school year it is satisfactory. Pupils arrive on time and most pupils achieve very good attendance rates and it is only a very small number of pupils whose attendance adversely affects the school’s overall figure.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20 The overall quality of teaching is good. This is mainly because teachers use very well thought out ideas to motivate and interest pupils. These ideas, linked to pupils’ very good attitudes to their work, is ensuring pupils are now making satisfactory progress in lessons and evidence in pupils’ books indicate that in English, mathematics and science, standards have improved since last year.

21 The teaching of literacy has been a major focus for the school over the last few years and it is well established. The teaching is good overall, with some that is very good. Where it is very good, the planning shows very good preparation and lessons are delivered with very good pace. Particular strengths are to be found in the development of pupils’ speaking and listening and reading. The development of pupils’ writing is not as strong. In some lessons, too few opportunities are given for pupils to practise the skills in writing they have been taught. Also, the assessment information is not always used to plan work, which sufficiently challenges the whole range of abilities in each class although, on occasions, this is done well. In numeracy, teachers have good mathematical knowledge, plan interesting, often exciting lessons and give clear explanations and demonstrations of what pupils are about to learn. However, as in literacy, assessment information is not always effectively used, pupils are not always set work that challenges the different abilities in the class. Consequently, pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

22 The main strengths in the teaching throughout the school are the very well thought out, often exciting, ideas, which motivate and interest pupils and keeps their interest very well to the end of the lesson. This was seen to good effect in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 1. The teacher was sharing the story of “Farmer Duck” with the pupils. She asked different pupils to take and act out the different parts, such as the farmer and the duck. It was made more effective because the teacher produced a set of clothes and hats so that the pupils could dress for the part. This ensured that the two leading readers, read with care and with good expression. Also, other pupils addressed their questions to ‘the duck’ and ‘the farmer’ in a much more realistic way. All this motivated the pupils well and they persevered well to the end of the lesson. Another example was seen in a swimming lesson. Before the lesson started, the teacher extended her science work on sound by demonstrating that, although sound travels through water, it is very different to how it travels through air. This very good idea meant the science lesson taking place later in the same day, was more effective and well linked to pupils’ own experiences, giving motivation and interest.

23 Very good relationships exist between the teacher and the pupils. Teachers also have very good class management skills. Consequently, pupils’ behaviour is good and they develop very good attitudes to their learning. This means that pupils want to learn and give of their best at all times. Lessons are brisk and productive. Teachers also take every opportunity to praise their pupils when they have done well. Pupils’ achievement is not only celebrated by the teacher during the lesson, but also in front of the whole school during celebration assemblies. This develops pupils’ confidence and helps them to make good, intellectual, physical and creative effort.

24 Teachers’ knowledge and understanding of most subjects is good. Most subjects have a good scheme of work and some co-ordinators have been able to develop and extend teachers’

knowledge, for example, in English, mathematics and in ICT. This good knowledge helps teachers plan lessons using a well thought out and exciting range of ideas. However, their confidence in the teaching of music is not as good. This is because the school has gone through an unsettled period of leadership in this subject and the new co-ordinator has only been in the post for a few months.

25 A weakness in the teaching is unsatisfactory use of assessment information. Consequently, when teachers plan, they do not always prepare different work for the full range of abilities in each class. This is done well on occasions but is not done consistently throughout the school. This means that the learning needs of some groups within the class are not always met and the rate of progress in lessons is variable. The school has already recognised this weakness and has outlined ways to improve this area in its 2002-2003 school development plan.

26 Support staff are well deployed and are well briefed about what they are to do and which pupils they will be working with, so that they make a good impact on pupils' learning. Resources are used well. Teachers display pupils' work effectively. These displays contribute a great deal to the good climate for learning and show that teachers fully value the efforts of pupils.

27 The quality of teaching in the reception classes is also good, with some that is very good. The planning is stronger than in the rest of the school as it is more consistently based on established assessments of children's learning. Although this is in the early stages of development, it is beginning to be used to plan work closely matched to the needs of children.

28 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. A strength of the school is how additional staff have been deployed to support targeted groups of pupils through specific literacy and numeracy intervention programmes. They do this well. As a result, pupils' progress in the basic skills of reading, writing and number is sound and their confidence is growing. Teachers provide pupils with special educational needs appropriate work matched to their abilities. Class teachers, with the collaboration of the special educational needs co-ordinator, write detailed plans, which set out specific targets. The teaching and management of pupils with behavioural problems by all teaching and support staff is very good.

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

29 The school offers a good range of learning opportunities for all its pupils. There are many visits out of school and visitors into school, so that pupils' learning experiences are linked well to the local and wider community. Residential visits for older pupils develop their independence and self-reliance effectively. Visits enhance learning in subjects such as English, art and design, history, geography and religious education. They reflect the good contribution that the community makes to pupils' learning. There are visits to the local shops, visits from local clergy and local characters for history lessons. There is good involvement with local traditions and celebrations. The provision for children in the reception classes is good and provides for teaching and learning in all the areas of learning.

30 The range of activities outside lessons is very good. The school has a very wide range of activities with clubs for football, netball, information and communication technology, choir and First Aid. There is a ski-ing trip for older pupils and good links with local sports clubs, such as in rugby league, which offers a wider range of opportunities for those pupils who attend.

31 Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are mainly good. There are, however, limited opportunities to practise literacy skills in other subjects, therefore, pupils do not get enough

experience in implementing the skills learned in literacy lessons. Evidence in the displays around the school and in pupils' workbooks demonstrates the good use of computer skills across the curriculum. A few examples of expressive writing were seen in history and religious education displays and ICT is used frequently in the presentation of pupils' work in literacy. Numeracy skills, such as the use of graphs, are used in science and geography.

32 The school has taken positive steps in developing its provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and this provision is good overall. Residential visits offer older pupils opportunities for independence and self-reliance. Awareness about drugs is developed in science lessons for older pupils, and the dangers of the misuse of medicines are discussed with younger pupils. There is a very clear policy about sex education for the older pupils and health visitors support this provision. The school policy for PSHE is very clear and well structured. It recognises delivery of this provision in assemblies, within lessons and through discussions that offer pupils opportunities to explore their personal feelings. However, although time is allocated for the delivery of this provision, the school does not yet have a scheme of work for PSHE. This means that there is sometimes a confusion of objectives between the teaching of religious education and PSHE periods. Few lessons were observed and although teaching was effective in focussing the attention of younger pupils on their hopes and ambitions, the skills of debate were not sufficiently well established. As a result pupils were not able to explore the deeper issues involved in a discussion to establish that every pupil has a contribution to make to the life of the school.

33 Relationships with other schools and educational institutions are very good. A valued initiative with local schools develops the skills of speaking and listening, self-esteem and structured talk through the 'West Cumbria Excellence Cluster'. Links with the nursery school have resulted in a sharing of resources, expertise, experience, ideas and the planning of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Resources are also shared with the local secondary school and links have developed in English, science and physical education, which help pupils to get to know the school they are to attend.

34 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All targets are reviewed on a regular basis and annual reviews are undertaken. The school soundly embraces the principles of the 2001 Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. A weakness is one of inclusion and equal opportunities. For example, pupils are withdrawn on occasions for extra help and support in literacy and numeracy. This support is good, often very good. However, these pupils sometimes miss other subjects of the curriculum, such as physical education and music. The school tries to minimise the effect of this by rotating the lessons from which withdrawal takes place and by confining these sessions to just one term.

35 The overall provision by the school for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

36 Assemblies make a very important contribution to the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. They are sensitive in their content and encourage depth of thought in the pupils. For example when using a computer image of a painting entitled 'The Light of the World' pupils were shown the symbolism in the, 'opening of the door to our hearts'. They were then allowed to absorb ideas related to the painting and to reflect upon the key thought of deciding for themselves how it could change their lives. Displays celebrate pupils' work, teaching is enthusiastic and seeks to raise pupils' self-awareness and merit awards in assemblies celebrate the personal qualities of the pupils and focus on giving pupils a secure self-image.

37 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Throughout the school, adults are very good role models for pupils and have consistently very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, they learn to behave well and develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong.

The 'West Cumbria Excellence Cluster' is contributing much to the development of very good relationships. For example, the 'paired talking' strategy is used well to enable pupils to discuss learning points in lessons as well as moral points in stories. Assembly themes focus on responsible behaviour and the benefits of working together. Discussions, as part of the schools' provision for PSHE, examine ways in which awareness of others can be improved. An emphasis on characters found in stories in literacy lessons, examines the feelings of individuals.

38 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school has a very effective 'Buddy' system that gives older pupils a sense of responsibility and supports younger pupils in their learning and their development of relationships. For example, a shared art lesson involved older pupils in helping younger pupils in the painting of a pattern. The residential visits make a good contribution to the development of pupils' mature and responsible behaviour. Involvement in local celebrations such as harvest festivals and carol singing at Christmas develops the pupils' sense of community responsibility. Charity links with a school in Tanzania, give an international dimension to the pupils' social development and their responsibilities to other people.

39 There is good provision for the pupils' cultural development. Assemblies, visits and visitors all make a valuable contribution. Geography and history topics combine in studies of the local area to increase pupils' understanding of the development of the local community. The 'Groundwork Trust' introduces younger pupils to local crafts and skills. History topics introduce pupils to the heritage of their country and local mining traditions and the art curriculum makes links with famous painters, such as Lowry, who spent some time in the locality. However, whilst the religious education curriculum establishes strong links with Christian churches such as York Minster and Carlisle Cathedral it does not develop pupils' awareness of other world religions as strongly. Factual knowledge is superficial and there is little depth of study, to examine the similarities and differences in the ways in which major life events such as marriage, death and maturity are dealt with, by other cultures and religions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40 The level of care for pupils is very high. This promotes pupils' emotional and physical well-being very well. The head teacher is the driving force behind this very strong feature of the school and together with his staff and governors has worked extremely hard and successfully to provide a very safe and supportive environment where all pupils feel welcome and happy and are keen to attend. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Consequently, pupils are well behaved and respect each other.

41 The school's child protection arrangements are excellent. The head teacher has an excellent knowledge of the categories and symptoms of abuse. He is extremely vigilant in following up concerns with the relevant professional agencies and his determination and success in ensuring pupils get the best possible help is commendable. Other members of staff are also well aware of all child protection procedures and they do not hesitate in reporting concerns. There are good procedures for the storage and administration of medicines and pupils receive appropriate first aid care should they become ill or injured. There is a very high level of expertise and understanding in health and safety amongst the senior management team and the governing body. Together with the local authority, they have carried out very thorough inspections of the school site and its practises and have taken every necessary remedial action. There are also very good procedures to ensure pupils are safe on visits out of school. Risk assessments are carried out on the intended activity and venue and staff are very thorough in their observations and methods to reduce or remove any potential risk to pupils' safety. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Consequently, attendance has improved.

42 The school has a number of procedures for assessing pupils and maintains some information about the standards that pupils achieve. This is done soundly in literacy and numeracy. However, the school has not yet established a fully effective and consistent method of assessing pupils' abilities. The school analyses the results of previous national assessment tests and uses this information to identify areas that are a priority for improvement. Although the school has set targets for overall improvement, it does not always do so for individual and groups of pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and occasionally plan work matched to pupils' ability. However, it does not monitor the progress of pupils on a regular enough basis for teachers to systematically amend their planning and grouping of pupils, which is one of the reasons why standards are not as high as they could be. This means that pupils, themselves, are not always aware of what progress they are making and what they need to do to improve.

43 The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. The provision outlined in statements is fully implemented and carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator through regular review meetings.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44 Parents hold the school in high regard and they are pleased with a great deal of what the school does. In particular, they are pleased with the school's expectations of their children to work hard and to do their best, and with what the school does to help them to become mature and responsible young people. However, a few parents are not happy with the amount of homework set for their children but inspectors disagree, and have found the amount and type of homework to be adequate. A similar number of parents do not feel that the school informs them sufficiently well of their children's progress and inspectors believe they are partially right in their view as reports do not always give a clear picture of progress in a majority of subjects. Some parents feel that the number and range of extra-curricular activities is limited but these are judged to be good.

45 The majority of parents show a good level of interest in their child's education. A particularly good feature of the school is that parents in the reception and Years 1 and 2 classes are invited to stay with their child for a few minutes at the start of each day to join in the learning activities. Many of them do so and they give good support to the teacher and their child. Over 80 per cent of parents attend parents' meetings, and they are keen to attend special assemblies involving their children's achievements. Many parents listen to their children read regularly at home, and the majority of parents support the school in other areas such as standards of uniform, behaviour, and attendance.

46 Good relationships exist between staff and parents and so parents feel very welcome and comfortable in coming into school to help in classrooms or for discussions. The school is quick to inform parents if they are concerned about a child's well-being or progress. However, the written information that the school provides for parents is sometimes insufficient to encourage them to be involved further in their child's education. For example, newsletters do not tell parents what is being taught in lessons or the purpose of visits or visitors. The quality of the information in the end of year reports for parents is satisfactory overall but in most subjects, there is often too much emphasis on what work has been done rather than what the child has learned and understood. Consequently it is not clear to parents what progress their child has made in all subjects. This is not the case in English, mathematics and science, where progress is made clear.

47 The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed from the earliest stage of concern and are given good guidance as to how they can help their children at home. Parents are appropriately involved in reviewing their children's progress towards the targets outlined in individual education plans.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48 Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The head teacher has worked hard since the amalgamation of the two schools in 2000 to forge a new school where the staff work together effectively. He has been very successful in a relatively short time in setting the tone and ethos of the school, which is based on very good relationships so pupils develop very good attitudes to their work, within a good climate for learning. He has ensured that this is a very caring school, where the provision for pupils' personal development is good and pupils grow in confidence and maturity by the time they leave the school. However, within leadership and management there are some weaknesses. For example, although some monitoring and evaluation of the teaching by the head teacher and the subject co-ordinators in English and mathematics has been carried out, this has not been systematically and consistently planned by the senior management team in all subjects. This means that leaders in the school are only partially aware of the strengths and weaknesses within teaching or the curriculum. The school has been aware of this weakness and has identified in its 2002-2003 school development plan that the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching is an area that needs to be fully developed. The deputy head teacher supports the head teacher well in a number of ways. For example, she liaises with outside institutions, such as St Martins College, to arrange for student placements in the school. She leads staff meetings and assemblies and she is closely involved in child protection arrangements and home/school agreements. However, her role in monitoring and evaluating the teaching or aspects of the curriculum is not clearly defined.

49 Governors fulfil their role satisfactorily. The chair and vice-chair of the governors are fully committed to the school and work closely with the head teacher. The chair is involved in the life of the school, visits often and engages in professional dialogue with the head teacher on very regular occasions. A small number of other governors visit the school often and support the school. For example, the governor for special educational needs and the governor who is responsible for the

school's finances, are particularly effective in supporting the school with their expertise. Governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are very closely involved in the production and evaluation of the school development plan. However, a small number of statutory requirements are not fully in place. For example, the school's policy on race equality and for the provision for sex education is only partly in place.

50 The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is only partially developed. The school has focussed on some subjects and in these areas, the roles of the co-ordinators have developed soundly. For example, the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have been involved in some observation of lessons, with the help of the head teacher. There has been an agreed, but limited, timetable of observations set against an established range of criteria. Feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation discussed with teachers, together with written evidence. This has been partly effective in improving the quality of the teaching and standards in English and mathematics have improved since last year's National Curriculum tests. However, there is no consistent approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by the subject co-ordinators throughout the school. Consequently, although teaching is largely good, there are aspects like the setting of work more closely matched to the needs of pupils, which are not as strong. Other co-ordinators have yet to develop their role fully. The science co-ordinator for example, is aware that before amalgamation, she only worked with Years 3 to 6 and not with reception children or pupils in Years 1 and 2. She has visited the classes in this area and talked to the teachers and is building up her understanding of the requirements. She has not yet been able to monitor the teaching, introduce in-service training, or give full support to the teachers.

51 The management and leadership of special educational needs by the co-ordinator is good. Parents are fully informed about any progress these pupils are making. Good advice is given regarding the planning of individual educational plans and records of pupils' progress are well maintained. There is good liaison with, and good support from, the governor who has responsibility for this area, so that the governing body is kept fully informed of the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

52 The schools' arrangements for appraisal and performance management is only partly completed, owing to a late start in implementing the strategy due to the amalgamation of the two schools. Consequently, careful evaluation of the effectiveness of leadership and what would be the training requirements has only just begun.

53 The school's ethos of care and the aims of the school as set out in its mission statement, are implemented well. It is committed to providing equal opportunities for all of its pupils. However, the head teacher is aware that removing a few pupils from subjects like music and physical education to give them extra tuition in English and mathematics does not fit this commitment. He has limited the effect by confining most of this withdrawal to one term. The yearly school development plan is of good quality and has clearly identified the main things the school needs to do to improve. For example, to develop and use assessment information to plan work in lessons more closely matched to the needs of pupils, to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more effectively and consistently and to continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.

54 The accommodation is good. Classrooms are sufficient for the current number of pupils and the school makes very good use of additional space to create extra learning areas. For example, the junior and infant sections of the school each have their own central ICT area and a sound-insulated quiet room. There are also two separate halls for physical education, assemblies and lunch. Consequently, staff are not restricted by the accommodation in how they organise lessons and activities or how they arrange for groups of pupils to work together. In addition, the school is able to enhance what is being taught in classrooms by having the space available to provide very many

additional activities and this is something that pupils particularly enjoy about their school life. There is sufficient equipment to be able to teach all elements of the National Curriculum. ICT equipment is very good in quality and in quantity and this is helping pupils to gain confidence in using computers and they make good progress in this subject. The school is staffed with a good number of appropriately qualified teachers. A good number of support staff work closely with class teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

55 A strength within the management of the school is that very careful financial planning supports educational development very effectively. For example, the school has used various grants to create a very good computer suite with a very good range of hardware and software. This has been very effective in ensuring that pupils are achieving well. The school uses all money at its disposal very wisely and the head teacher, chair of governors, financial committee and the school secretary are aware of the need to get the best value for pupils through its spending. In this they are effective. The quality of financial control is very good. However, the school is not at present getting the best value from some of its subject co-ordinators and deputy head teacher. They are not yet fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and the curriculum in order that they may better identify what needs to be done to drive up standards. School administration by the head teacher and school secretary is good. The management systems now in place, have ensured some good and some very good features of the school since it opened. The head teacher and the senior management team, even though it has only partially monitored the quality of teaching has identified clearly what needs to be done, especially to drive up standards. At the moment, the school has a sound capacity to bring about these improvements if it implements its school development plan effectively.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- (1) Raise pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
further development of assessment procedures to monitor and track the progress made by pupils;
using assessment information to plan activities in lessons that are more closely matched to the needs of pupils of different ability;
further developing the monitoring and evaluating role of the subject co-ordinators in these subjects.

In addition, in English:

- Increase opportunities for pupils to write more extensively and independently, both in literacy lessons and in other subjects, with less reliance of worksheets.
- Develop a structured and planned approach for the improvement of handwriting and spelling skills.

In addition, in science:

- Provide clearer guidance for pupils to write up the results of their investigations in a more structured way.
- Ensure more opportunities, where appropriate, for pupils to set up and devise their own investigations less directed by the teacher.
(These are outlined in paragraphs 4, 6, 21, 25, 31, 42, 53, 87, 88, 90, 91, 95, 96, 100, 114, and 118)

- (2) Improve leadership and management in the school by:

- Clarifying more effectively the role of the head teacher, deputy head teacher and curriculum co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and the teaching. Through this, to have a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensure that the items outlined in the school development plan are fully implemented.
(These are outlined in paragraphs 48, 50, 55, 91, 111 and 138)

- (3) Ensure that the arrangements for performance management are fully in place in order that the school is regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the leadership and teaching and outlining what further training is required.
(This is outlined in paragraph 52)

ISSUES 1 AND 2 HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED BY THE SCHOOL AS AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

57 In addition to the above issues, the following more minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Improve pupils' reports so that they give a clearer picture of attainment and progress in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

- Raise standards further in history, geography and design and technology throughout the school and in religious education by the end of Year 6.
- Continue to develop teachers' expertise and knowledge in the teaching of music in order to raise standards further.

(These are outlined in Paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 24, 44, 46, 111, 116, 128, 134, and 138)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

59

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	30	16	2	0	0
Percentage	2	17	51	27	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

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)	290
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Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	84
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
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Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	68
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English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
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Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3
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Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National Comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	16	15
	Total	28	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78% (83%)	78% (89%)	75% (88%)
	National	84% (84%)	86% (86%)	90% (91%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	11
	Girls	16	14	16
	Total	29	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81% (91%)	69% (86%)	75% (95%)
	National	85% (85%)	89% (89%)	89% (89%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	28	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	14
	Girls	22	16	21
	Total	29	24	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62% (67%)	51% (63%)	74% (69%)
	National	75% (75%)	73% (71%)	86% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
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Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	12
	Girls	22	18	24
	Total	29	28	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62% (70%)	60% (70%)	77% (65%)
	National	73% (72%)	74% (74%)	82% (82%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	286	5	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
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Financial year	2001 - 2002
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Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	24.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210.5

	£
Total income	715,715
Total expenditure	736,922
Expenditure per pupil	2,432
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,743

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	270
Number of questionnaires returned	150

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	42	6	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	5	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	49	4	4	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	51	10	5	2
The teaching is good.	47	47	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	40	12	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	35	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	37	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	47	9	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	47	41	6	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	52	0	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	49	7	4	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58 When children start in the reception class, their attainment is below that expected for typical four-year-olds. The majority begin with communication, language and literacy skills that are below average and their personal and social skills are weak. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. As a result, the majority are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. In their creative, personal and social and their physical development, the majority of children make very good progress and are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. These strengths have not yet been in place long enough for pupils to attain higher levels of achievement at the end of Year 2. The Foundation Stage, in the reception classes, is a strength of the school and this supports the view expressed by parents at the parents' meeting.

59 All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress because the teaching they receive is good. Teachers' planning is good with very good planning for their work in the role play areas and in their creative work in a 'buddy' system with pupils from the Year 4 class. The planning focuses clearly on the Early Learning Goals and offers a wide range of exciting learning activities. All the staff know the children very well and good planning allows children to work closely with adults, both in small and larger groups. The staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. The teachers in both reception classes are new. They work very well together as a team even though they have only been together for six months. The teaching assistant and other support staff contribute considerably to children's learning. Children's successes are celebrated and rewarded. Their work is very well displayed at an appropriate height for the children to enjoy. Parents support the work in the reception classes very well and the majority stay for the "start of day" activities with their child. A range of activities are displayed and parents support their child's learning well for the first half hour of the day. Sound assessment of children's learning is in place. This builds on the records passed from the nursery and is used well to enable children to make good progress. However, there is a need for more focussed assessment to ensure that all children are appropriately challenged and that their learning is extended in the tasks set. The behaviour of the children is very good, they are keen to learn and respond well to the challenges set. Children need more opportunities to express themselves through their own choice, from a range of activities during the day.

Personal, social and emotional development

60 The level of personal, social and emotional development of the majority of children when they start school is weak and below that expected of their age. The teaching in this area of learning is good and children's very good relationships with adults help them to make very rapid progress. This means that the majority are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.

61 Teachers use the good routines established in the nearby nursery very well, to help children to settle quickly in their new classes and develop a sense of belonging. There is a very strong focus on caring for each other and the children understand that they are all special. All the children have very positive attitudes and are keen and enthusiastic in all they do. They are very independent and confident to talk to adults and visitors. For example, they return their letter cards to the right place, after a noisy letter game, and go back to the carpet without any reminders. They know that their ideas and efforts are valued and appreciated.

62 Their behaviour is very good. They respond with keen interest to all their activities, listen carefully, concentrate well and are fully involved. They get on well together and are beginning to work in pairs, particularly when sharing travel books and when collecting litter together in the nature garden. Children stay on task for extended periods of time when they use construction materials to make a model cave and when they sequence events in the story of 'The Little Red Hen'. Very few children need support when dressing and undressing or when taking part in physical activities. Good opportunities are planned for children to learn to take turns and share equipment when playing outdoors. They are encouraged to help each other. For example, in music outdoors, one child held the drum whilst another child played the rhythm. They did this because they were aware that the ground was uneven. All the staff have very good relationships with parents and this has a very positive impact on children's learning.

Communication, language and literacy

63 On entry, the majority of children are below the levels expected for typical four-year-olds in communication, language and literacy. The good teaching and planning means that they make good progress and are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

64 At this stage of the year, the teaching of literacy is planned in a similar pattern to the older classes in school, although the use of time is much more flexible. Activities are well matched to the needs of the children and they thoroughly enjoy working in this way. Children have plenty of very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They show this when they discuss, in small groups, the similarities and differences in two versions of 'The Little Red Hen' story. Good use is made of masks to give children the confidence to take on the role of different characters and act the story. Teachers in the reception classes identified the need to further develop children's vocabulary and to help them they are working with a nearby university as part of the 'Excellence cluster' to encourage this through work in the role-play areas in each of the teaching areas. Their planning for this area of children's learning is very good. Children also have, 'talking partners' to help to extend their language skills. Children love the noisy letters game where they have to listen very carefully to match their own letter card when three letter sounds 'l,r,h' are said at the same time. Weighing activities, also encourage the children to talk together when they predict which fruit is the heaviest and why they think this is so. On-going assessment of children's progress ensures that carefully planned activities extend their speaking and listening skills. All staff have high expectations and are very good role models. Their very good questioning skills encourage children to think carefully and respond well.

65 The majority of children are able to recognise their own name and write their first name. They find forming their letters more difficult. They need more regular opportunities to practise writing and an area in the classrooms where this is one of a range of free choice activities. This will help them to develop their letter formation with a purpose and will also improve the quality of their developing writing. Good opportunities are planned in small groups to write simple rhyming words such as 'hen, pen, ten and ben.' Children use whiteboards well to copy the examples demonstrated by the teacher.

66 Children enjoy listening to stories and have very good opportunities to hear different versions of 'The Little Red Hen' story. They identify the difference and know that "there wasn't a goat and a rat in the story yesterday." They know the story well and finish the sentences correctly when asked. They remember the regularly repeated sentences in the story and join in well when the teacher reads these. Children put the four pictures in order, showing different parts of the story successfully, and explain clearly what is happening in the pictures.

67 They enjoy looking at books. They turn the pages from left to right and enjoy sharing books with adults. They know the difference between text and pictures and talk happily about what is

happening in the pictures. The more able children are beginning to read individually with increasing confidence. They identify the first letter and sound of simple words and understand that pictures can help them to read the text. When they read “Greedy Nelly,” in their guided reading time, they know that the reason her face turns green is because she has eaten too much. Children take their reading books home on a regular basis and parents support their learning very well, both at home and in the classroom at the start of each day.

Mathematical development

68 Children make good progress in this area of their learning and the majority are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

69 The teaching in this area of learning is very good and every opportunity is taken by all staff to develop children's understanding of numbers. An hour each day is given to the teaching of mathematics but these skills are also developed in other areas of the children's work. For example, when they use chalk to complete the number grid or the snake in their outdoor play area. The majority of children count accurately to 20 and correctly identify a number missing or in the wrong order. They count forwards and backwards accurately from a given number between 1 and 20. The teacher challenges them well to try to identify the number she is thinking about. For example, "it is a half of 20 and after the number 9." When they still find this difficult, an extra clue, "it is before number 11" helps them to identify 10 as the answer. Many are able to recognise correctly that, in a selection of numbers, such as 7, 13, 16, 10 and 5, 16 is the nearest estimate to 20.

70 Good opportunities are planned for children to estimate which is the heaviest and lightest in a group of different fruits. They estimate successfully that the melon is the heaviest and that the grape is the lightest but find it more difficult to decide between a kiwi fruit, banana or apple. They know that there are different types of scales. For example, they know that floor scales are 'to stand on to weigh people' and that the heaviest side of a balance scale, goes down. They check their estimations and are surprised to find that the banana is the heaviest after the melon. Their language skills are also being developed through the understanding of 'heavier, lighter, balance and weight.' Good use is made of plastic building blocks for children to reinforce their understanding of numbers from 11 to 20 when they build towers to show the difference. The less able children love to use the puppet to help "him" to count to five and beyond. This is developing their confidence to count aloud successfully in a small group. ICT is used well to extend their sorting skills when they sort fruits into their different groups.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71 Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The teaching is good and the majority are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

72 Children understand the need to care for their immediate environment and know that many materials can be recycled. They know where to take their collected materials and match the material accurately to the correct recycling bank. When they look at their nature garden, they comment that "it is tidy, it has trees, plants are growing and we will have some flowers." The teacher uses their observations well to show the difference between caring for this area and not being so careful when they close their eyes as she throws 'selected' litter around the garden. The children really show their disgust when they see what has happened and comments such as "Oh! Mrs . . !" "That's naughty" and "Shall we tell the head teacher? You'll be in trouble" are made. They understand that they don't touch litter 'because it is dirty and may be smelly.' Children soon learn to manipulate a special tool to help them collect the litter and work well in pairs to collect it, as one holds the plastic bag, while the other puts the litter in. They develop early scientific skills well when they identify materials, such as metal, glass, fabric, plastic and paper found during their litter collection.

73 Children develop their understanding of the different tasks in a 'café' and in a 'greengrocer's shop' during their role play activities. They know that customers need to see the menu and that they have to write down what the customer orders. They design and label things on the 'sweets, snacks and specials' boards and use salt dough to develop their understanding of different types of bread.

They begin to understand how real bread is made when they make it, using a bread making machine. Good use is made of learning opportunities in the locality. Visits have taken place to local shops to purchase fruit and children have visited both the Indian and Chinese restaurants to see how they operate and to taste food from other cultures.

74 'The Little Red Hen' story is used well to encourage children to sequence correctly the story of eggs. With some initial support, they put the objects given by the teacher in order. They explain the links between the hen and the egg, the van taking it to the shop, customers buying eggs and taking them home and know that they have to be cooked before they are eaten. Children are developing early computer skills well and demonstrate good hand and finger movement as they manipulate the mouse. They give good explanations to the teacher of how to find the program they need. They use their skills well to develop their work in sorting fruit, designing a cave picture and when they create a simple rhythm to fit the words "Little Red Hen." Children practise their computer skills on a rota system during their "start of the day" time. Lots of opportunities are provided to use construction materials to make a range of models.

Physical development

75 Children make very good progress in their physical development and the majority are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.

76 Children use the hall very well and clearly understand how to move in space. Very good teaching was seen in this area. Children fully understand the routines in place and respond well to these. They find their own space quickly and know how to make an interesting shape with two parts of their body touching the floor. Good links are made to the buttons on a video recorder and they move appropriately to "fast forward and rewind" instructions. Children add a number of movements together when they balance, turn and jump using the benches. They know that they have to bend their knees when they jump off and that the next child doesn't start until the other is at the end of the waiting line. All the children are fully involved and children with special educational needs are very well supported. Children have good opportunities to experiment when rolling and happily demonstrate to others rolling with their knees bent and using their elbows to move them over. The very good teaching extends this when they are asked to roll as smoothly as they can. They confidently move the benches and mats and know that 'one lifts at each corner of the mat,' children climb steps with confidence and enjoy sliding down the other side. They understand the difference between rolling and sliding when moving on the mats,

77 Analysis of photographic evidence shows that children have good opportunities to develop larger hand, body and leg skills when moving and controlling balls outside and moving the wheelbarrow safely. Children show a wide range of skills when using cycles, go-carts and tractors. Planning shows that in their weekly lessons they cover dance, gymnastics and games.

78 Children's fine hand skills are developed well through a range of activities. They show good skills when using pencils and crayons and good brush control when painting. Children enjoy using salt dough and stretch, squash, roll, pat and shape this into different bread shapes for their 'café.' They use scissors well when cutting out shapes to create collage pictures. A wide range of small and large construction materials are available to help children to further develop their hand skills.

Creative development

79 Children make very good progress in this area of their development. The teaching is good and the majority are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

80 Very good provision is made for children to use crayons, pencils, glue and paint on a regular basis. The learning environment, the good planning and teaching enables children to have very good opportunities to explore and use natural materials such as fruits, berries, chalk, stone and charcoal to make a range of colours. They use these to paint on different coloured paper, muslin, fabric and stones to create large-scale cave pictures. This work was particularly successful as the children worked in small groups with their “buddies” from Year 4. Good opportunities to look at pictures of cave art help children to realise that ‘we can’t use bright colours because there aren’t any on the pictures.’ Sticks and feathers are used to put on the colour and children really enjoy mixing the juice of berries with mud to make their own colours. They think that ‘squashed berries look like blood.’ This work is linked well to their work on the computer. They create cave pictures, again remembering to use the colours they have seen in the original pictures. The analysis of work shows that a range of opportunities is planned for children to develop different skills and techniques. They make collage pictures when learning about 2D shapes in mathematics. Good observation skills are being developed when they use pastel crayon to draw the inside view of fruit. After a visit to the local park, children make their own slides and develop sound folding and fixing skills working with card and cellotape.

81 Children have very good opportunities to develop their creative skills through music activities. For example, excellent teaching was seen in an outdoor lesson where movement and rhythm were combined. Children use different parts of their body to create a rhythm. They stamp their feet, clap their sides and tap the floor with their finger while counting 1,2,3 very well, to keep a steady beat. Very good use is made of previous learning about “The Bear Hunt” to help them to identify correctly the words ‘swishy swashy, when moving through grass, ‘splish splash’ through water and ‘tiptoe’ through the wood. Children move very well to represent these different movements and change the movement and rhythm appropriately to match the words they say. Children show good recall of the words of the chorus to ‘The Little Red Hen’ song, and clap and play un-tuned instruments to show their good understanding of the rhythm of the words. The teacher carefully assesses their knowledge of the names of the instruments when she asks them to, “bring me the castonet basket please.” The children identified this immediately. Very skilled teaching keeps them focused and totally involved throughout the lesson. They hold and play a range of instruments well with no silly responses or behaviour. This is extended to include singing and movement and they achieve this well. Children begin to understand volume when they shout, talk and whisper words to a rhythm successfully.

ENGLISH

82 Standards in English are below the levels expected for seven and 11-year-olds by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a good improvement on the standards attained in the 2002 National Curriculum tests. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making satisfactory progress. This improvement is mainly due to an improvement in the planning for literacy, stability in the teaching and the impact of pupils’ very good attitudes to their learning.

83 Speaking and listening for pupils at the end of Year 6, is in line with the expectations for pupils’ ages. This illustrates the impact of the ‘West Cumbria Excellence Cluster’ in raising standards in speaking and listening. Most pupils are confident in expressing ideas and supporting these with clear reasoning, but only the higher attaining pupils can adapt questions in order to develop reasoning further. For example, in a lesson to develop an imaginative story opening, a lower attaining pupil read the passage with a clear and confident voice. Most pupils listened closely and many were able to spot deliberate mistakes in punctuation. One higher attaining pupil suggested the re-arrangement of a sentence to read ‘Someone brave, strong, noble and mighty would need to volunteer.’ However, the majority was not confident in deciding the direction of the story or in projecting the structure of the plot.

84 Speaking and listening for pupils at the end of Year 2, is also in line with the expectations for pupils' ages. Pupils readily speak out in response to questions and make observations. Explanation is used when requested, but pupils do not always develop their ideas readily in support of their thinking.

85 Reading skills for pupils in Year 2 are below expectations. All pupils like reading and can speak of their favourite books but lower attaining pupils have few books at home and do not read for pleasure. Although higher attaining pupils can read fluently they do not fully understand the meaning of what they are reading. A good sight vocabulary allows expressive and fluent reading but unfamiliar words are mispronounced without sufficient regard to the actual letters in the word. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant and do not use letter sounds well when attempting new words. Letter names are used instead of letter sounds and combinations of letters such as '...ea...' and 'ch...' are not clearly understood.

86 Reading skills are in line with the expectations for pupils' ages at the end of Year 6. All pupils like reading and are familiar with the use of the contents and index pages when researching information. Higher attaining pupils' use advanced reading skills well. Their reading is expressive. The structure of complex stories is used well in suggesting possible future incidents in the plot. Average attaining pupils do not skim and scan easily when researching information but they do read stories fluently and with expression. They use details of the character well in giving opinions about the direction of the plot and draw on the significance of incidents in the story to project likely future events in the story. Reading for lower attaining pupils is hesitant, but generally accurate, with effective use of 'sounding out' to interpret the text. As a result, the story line is well understood, and the story can be summarised well.

87 Writing skills are below expectations for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2. Spelling is broadly in line, with one pupil showing above average skills in spelling such words as 'cubicle' and 'terrible'. Other spelling is mainly accurate for average attaining pupils. Only simple words are spelt accurately for lower attaining pupils. Pupils use very basic sentence structures. One higher attaining pupil uses speech marks and a variety of introductions, but both average and lower attaining pupils write in simple repetitive sentences with inconsistent punctuation. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects.

88 Writing skills are below expectations at the end of Year 6. This has been identified by the school and is the focus of recent initiatives. Extended writing is not encouraged extensively, except as part of the literacy hour. Although opportunities for the use of literacy skills in other subject areas are planned and used occasionally in subjects such as history and religious education they are more in the style of model copy writing and pupils get little opportunity for free expression. The use of factual knowledge is not evident. Some good ideas were used with computers to present interesting, imaginative and effective news reports. However, although higher attaining pupils use speech marks and paragraphs, sentence structure is simple, and handwriting is not often joined. Spelling is sometimes weak. Average attaining pupils, complete a higher volume of writing and have better structure with a variety of introductions to paragraphs, but their sentences are also of a basic structure with simple letter formation in handwriting. Lower attaining pupils use very basic sentence structure and punctuation is weak with poor spelling and weak letter formation with a simple style of handwriting.

89 Teaching and learning are good overall with some that is very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. All teachers are using the 'talking pairs' strategy well from the 'West Cumbria Excellence Cluster' initiative. This is helping the development of speaking and listening well. The very good teaching shows very good understanding of the pupils' learning needs and so very good preparation and planning mean that lessons are delivered with very good pace. The use of a quiet yet convincing voice conveys a clear expectation of pupils' success in the lesson. As a result pupils concentrate and listen

carefully. For example, pupils in Year 4 listened with eyes closed in order to visualise the images in a story that was read expressively by the teacher. The teacher then shared discussions with the pupils and re-read sections of text with pauses to examine the vocabulary. This meant that pupils were able to offer many colourful words for description, in response to the challenge of painting a picture with words. Tasks for each ability group were clearly explained and real challenge was evident for all abilities. Lower attaining pupils were to use more than one descriptive word for each specific feature of a character selected. Higher attaining pupils were challenged to use words that were concerned with feelings, thoughts and speech as well as with appearance. Classroom support was used well to support low attaining pupils. The teacher monitored the work of others and so ensured very good learning by the pupils as they produced phrases such as ‘Beaming blue eyes like a Spanish sea’.

90 Where teaching and learning was less effective the teacher frequently followed a style of writing and assumed that pupils were able to transfer the ideas into their own work. But in most lessons the pupils were not fully involved in the process and had too few opportunities to use the writing skills that were being demonstrated. This illustrates the school’s weakness in fully developing its use of assessment as a means to identify what it is that the pupils need to know. Assessment information is gathered conscientiously and some records of pupil attainment are kept but this information is not always used to identify specific learning objectives for the pupils. For example in a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher read an enjoyable selection of humorous epitaphs that had the form of short poems about a character. She then asked the pupils to attempt similar poems without clear emphasis on the use of rhyme and the link between characters and the incidents in the poem. Most pupils were taking the same approach. Consequently, pupils struggled for words to rhyme with ‘man’ and produced poems about ‘a worn out old man, beaten to death with a frying pan.’ Few pupils used other words such as ‘child’, ‘daughter’ or ‘girl’. One pupil did succeed in linking the fact that a child who never listened died “by going wild”. The lack of a clear idea on what the pupils could achieve means that the plenary of the lesson does not always explore the learning that had taken place but introduces the next lesson about a different style of poetry.

91 The subject co-ordinator for English is new. She has only been in place for a few months and has not had the opportunity to make an impact on the subject. The senior management team has no systematic structures in place yet that would enable the teaching and learning of the pupils to be monitored and evaluated fully. The role of the subject manager is not yet clearly defined. As a result, the school is implementing a variety of ‘good ideas’ on an unstructured basis. For example, there is no structured approach to the teaching of spelling or handwriting.

MATHEMATICS

92 Standards in mathematics are below the levels expected for seven and 11-year-olds at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are improving because of the consistency in the thoroughness of the planning of numeracy, the emphasis on using number skills in practical situations and the very positive attitudes shown by the pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Teachers’ expectations of what pupils can achieve do not take sufficient account of the assessments of pupils. Therefore they do not always set work that is matched to the learning needs of different abilities of pupils. Pupils understand angles such as acute and obtuse angles and are able to estimate and draw angles accurately using a protractor. Pupils in Year 5 have sound skills in measurement and make satisfactory progress in constructing, collating and analysing bar charts, line graphs and pie charts. There are good opportunities for Year 4 pupils to carry out mathematical investigations and use and apply their mathematical understanding in a variety of contexts. Pupils know how many right angles are in a rectangle and the number of degrees equivalent to each turn from North to East to South to West. Year 3 pupils have good mental mathematical skills and are able to plot routes using co-ordinates.

93 The overall quality of teaching is good. The strengths in the teaching are the very good relationships between teachers and pupils which lead to very good behaviour and very enthusiastic attitudes of the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils will behave, capture pupils' attention with their own enthusiasm and exciting ideas and provide good opportunities for pupils to learn. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They get additional support in classrooms and structured learning programmes are taught in small groups by specialist classroom assistants.

94 Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 build upon the good start made in the reception classes where pupils acquire an interest in and enjoyment of mathematics. Year 1 pupils can count to 20 with confidence. Most pupils are competent with simple number bonds and are able to carry out addition and subtraction sums with numbers up to ten. By the end of Year 1 the majority of pupils can sort, count, match, identify and sequence numbers up to ten. They recognise coins up to 10 pence and work out which coins make up a particular total. For example, 14p can be 10p and two 2p pieces. They recognise two dimensional shapes such as a square, a triangle and a rectangle but have difficulties in recognising three dimensional shapes. By Year 2 pupils have a sound understanding of their times tables of 2 and 10. Pupils are very enthusiastic about mental arithmetic and number work. For example, in counting in 10s to 100 and back to nought. They recognise the features of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils know that a solid square is a cube. Pupils are developing skills in working with money and can calculate the cost of a number of items that they could purchase for up to 50 pence and work out the change. A strength of the work done in Years 1 and 2 is the many opportunities given for pupils to work on interesting mathematical problems.

95 In Years 3 to 6, the implementation of the numeracy strategy is effectively contributing to improving standards. Year 6 pupils are given very clear guidance on solving problems and use a range of strategies to make calculations. This is having a positive effect on pupils' confidence with number and improving their ability in mental calculations. Pupils have a sound understanding of the properties of different shapes and can work out the perimeter of such shapes. They recognise right angles. This results in pupils participating willingly and enthusiastically in oral and mental calculations. Teachers have good mathematical knowledge themselves. They plan lessons soundly and give clear explanations and demonstrations of what pupils are about to learn. Teachers make very effective use of ICT in their lessons and this helps pupils to sustain their interest and concentration. However teaching has some weaknesses. Although assessment procedures are being developed, the information they give is not always used consistently to plan appropriate work for different abilities of pupils or set individual targets. This means that pupils are not always set work that challenges them fully. Occasionally, when pupils quickly finish the task set, they are not set further work that would challenge and help them to reach higher standards. Teachers focus very much on creating a very positive climate for learning but do not always place an equal importance on the level of challenge for different pupils. However, on a few occasions, this is done well.

96 The procedures for monitoring the curriculum and teaching are thorough but the evaluations do not identify clearly what are the strengths and areas for improvement. The school analyses the pupils' test results very thoroughly. However this information is not consistently used to set targets that will help individual pupils to improve their standards of attainment. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress during the year is not fully established and pupils are not always made aware of what they have to do to improve.

SCIENCE

97 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards that are below those expected for seven and 11-year-olds. Nevertheless, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving soundly from their level of attainment on entry to the school. Also, these standards are an

improvement on the levels attained in the 2002 National Curriculum tests and assessments. These improvements are mainly due to the introduction of a good scheme of work, teachers' good class management skills, the use of well thought out ideas, pupils' behaviour and their very good attitudes to the work.

98 By the end of Year 2, most pupils have some knowledge of all the components of science. For example, within life processes and living things, they know about the importance of healthy foods and exercise. They explain the differences between objects, which are alive, and those which are not. Within physical processes, they have a basic understanding of how sounds are made and relate this well to the sense of hearing.

99 By the end of Year 6, pupils are working towards a sound knowledge of materials and their properties, physical processes and life processes and living things. For example, they use scientific names for some major organs of the body. They have studied the working of the human heart and are able to name the different parts and know the differences between what the left side and the right side does. Pupils get plenty of opportunity to develop their scientific enquiry skills. For example, by the time they are in Year 6 they know how important it is to make the test fair and are able to explain the importance of predicting what might happen. However, pupils' ability to set up and devise their own individual experiments, with less direction from the teacher, is weak as they get no opportunity to do this.

100 The quality of teaching and learning is mainly satisfactory, with some that is good. Teachers are well supported by a good scheme of work, which ensures that lessons are interesting with some well thought out ideas, which motivates pupils and keeps their interest to the end of the lesson. Particular strengths are found in the way teachers ensure that the subject matter of the lesson is closely linked to pupils' own lives. For example, in a lesson on sound for pupils in Year 5, the teacher demonstrated well how walls, windows and doors in the classroom, linked well to those in pupils' homes, have different capacities to transmit sound. Teachers have very good class management skills and very high expectations of behaviour. This ensures that pupils bring very good attitudes to their work and behave well. The teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of pupils' work in their books. There is, on occasions, an overuse of work sheets, which gives pupils little opportunity to practise their writing skills. Also, the school does not yet have a consistent approach or formula to guide and support pupils when they are writing up the results of their investigations. However, the teachers provide many opportunities to reinforce numeracy skills through measuring opportunities and the use of graphs. ICT is used well to support learning in science. For example, pupils use the Internet and CD-ROMS to carry out research. Very good use was made of a sound sensor, working through the computer, to measure and record the level of sound. A weakness in the teaching is the limited amount of work specifically planned to meet the needs of the different abilities in each class. The main reason for this is that sound assessment procedures have only recently been introduced and the information this is providing is not yet used in lesson planning. Consequently, although pupils are making progress, they are not achieving as well as they could.

101 The co-ordinator, who worked in the previous junior school, is beginning to support the subject throughout the school. She is trialling new assessment procedures and has been on courses to develop her knowledge of infant science teaching. Resources are satisfactory. A good strength is the way the science curriculum is enhanced by a large number of visits to places of scientific interest. For example, most pupils visit the Rosehill theatre annually, where they view presentations on electricity, light and colour, healthy eating and sound. Pupils in Year 5 visit the science museum in Halifax. Pupils go regularly to the visitors centre at the British Nuclear Fuels Limited station at Sellafield. The school grounds are used on occasions for scientific studies and there is a close link with the Groundwork Trust, where visitors into school give pupils 'hands-on' opportunities to improve the

natural history of the local area and school grounds. Living things and contrasting habitats are studied by pupils in Year 6 during their residential visit to the mountains.

ART AND DESIGN

102 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for seven and 11-year olds. As no teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching in these years. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching was satisfactory and pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory, sometimes good, progress.

103 The work sample seen shows that younger pupils have sound opportunities to use a range of medium including pastels, pencils, paint and natural materials. Children collect natural materials and observe them closely using magnifying lens. They develop their observation skills well by comparing the texture of different leaves and represent this successfully in their drawings. They develop understanding of pattern appropriately, when they arrange these to make a collage. Their work in art is enhanced well by two visitors from the Groundwork Trust personnel. One demonstrated how willow, cut from the school hedge, can be used to make animal shapes, such as a deer. The other visitor demonstrated felt making and the finished piece will be displayed in school. Some pupils had the opportunity to create their own small felt pictures, some of these were good quality.

104 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate pattern and create their own symmetrical pattern using the computer. They use their computer skills well to reduce and repeat their pattern. They select the number of repeats and this work links well to their project when they create wrapping paper and book marks. Pupils look at the pictures of Cleator Moor painted by the artist, L.S.Lowry who lived in the village and they produce good pencil sketches of moving people in the same style as the artist. They create their own printing block by sticking a string pattern onto card and by using pencils to press out a pattern in a piece of polystyrene. Although the string blocks printed well, pupils were disappointed with the poor print when using the polystyrene block. The teacher closely directs the work seen in these classes and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their own ideas and express themselves through their art work. However, this did happen well for pupils in Year 4 when they worked as, "buddies" to paint cave art pictures, together with reception children. The results achieved, using similar materials to those of the cave people, were good. Experimentation with paint enabled them to find ways of making blue, using red cabbage and chalk.

105 In Years 5 and 6, pupils study the unit, 'A Sense of Space' and one class look at unusual photographs taken inside the school building. Pupils showed sound understanding of tone, light, shadow and texture when they discussed the view. Good use is made of the digital projector by the class teacher to enable everyone to see patterns and colours. This is also used well to demonstrate the main lines within the view by drawing over the image on the whiteboard and then turning off the projector. All pupils do the same work and copy the pattern created. The other Year 6 class, however, looked at the same theme but used the local environment as their stimulus, which helped to create individual ideas. Good use is made of local pictures to develop pupils' understanding of distance, low and high horizons and perspective. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils develop a sound understanding of a range of materials including working with salt dough to create three dimensional wall plaques of important buildings, people and objects to show Cleator Moor in the past. This work was of a high quality. The Year 5 class work with clay, to make models of monsters or masks. This is linked well to their work on the Greeks. Satisfactory results are achieved with a few pupils producing monsters showing good detail including curled hair. Pupils with special educational needs particularly enjoy this type of creative work and work very well.

106 The co-ordinator has been responsible for this subject since the opening of the new school and has had a number of opportunities to extend her own skills through training on glass painting, willow craft, Christmas crafts and working with an artist in residence. She has a keen interest in art and design and has an enthusiastic approach to the subject. The school uses a good nationally agreed scheme on a two-year rolling programme. There is an art club in school. The co-ordinator has had no opportunities to observe others teach and therefore is unable to ensure appropriate coverage of aspects of the scheme. Pupils have many opportunities to be involved in art by entering many local competitions and working on projects in the community. Good links are made between art and ICT and good use is made of the local environment. Teachers state that they need further training to develop their confidence in this subject area and have identified drawing and sketching skills as a particular area for this training.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107 Standards are below those expected nationally by the ages of seven and 11. As only one lesson was seen during the inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making slow but broadly satisfactory progress from their level of attainment on entry to the school.

108 The work sample of the younger pupils shows that they have limited opportunities to develop an understanding of the design aspects of designate processes using a range of materials. The focus of their work is Healthy Eating. They taste a range of fruits and make fruit salads and punches as part of their food technology work.

109 In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop their understanding of levers, slides, hinges and linkages using cardboard and brass fasteners. They use these appropriately to create owls, Father Christmas images and pop-up books but the quality of this work shows that pupils of different abilities are not being challenged as well as they could and the standard of work achieved is weaker than it could be. Pupils have only a limited understanding of how to evaluate their work. Their understanding of textiles is developed through sewing Christmas stockings and money containers. Suitable materials are selected and used for decoration. Pupils in Year 3 work well with children in the nearby nursery to help both ages develop their skills, using construction materials. Year 4 pupils create pop up books and they demonstrate this well to pupils in Years 1 and 2 through the school's effective, "buddy" system.

110 The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have limited opportunities to work with a range of materials. One Year 6 class designed and made carrier bags that include a gusset. These are of sound quality and appropriate decoration has been added but there is a lack of individual flair and variety in the carrier bags they produce. During the inspection, both Year 6 classes examined a range of slippers, looking at the materials used and possible materials to make their own slippers. They remembered looking at threads and fibres during their visit to Beamish Museum two years ago. They recalled well, their work on carrier bags and know that the first task is to make a prototype in order to sort out the difficulties before making their actual slipper. Although they did not design the slippers on paper, they used newspaper to make their mock-up. Opportunities to try ideas, make mistakes and learn from these are limited. Although pupils have the opportunity to make, pupils have limited opportunities to work with collectable materials to create three-dimensional moving models. Pupils have not used hacksaws and bench hooks. They have not worked with resistant materials such as wood.

111 The co-ordinator has been responsible for this subject since the new school opened. He has sound subject knowledge and has completed a ten-day training course. The school follows a sound nationally agreed scheme of work but the co-ordinator agrees that there is a need to look closely at the value of this scheme and its appropriateness for this school and this has been identified in the school's

development plan. Units of work are selected but no consideration is given to the planned progression of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in this subject. There is no monitoring and no planned assessment. Not all classes have design and technology sketch books and the work of parallel classes is not always consistent. Resources are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

112 Attainment is below that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. The school makes good use of visits to develop pupils' interest in and enjoyment of geography. This results in pupils having good opportunities to develop their appreciation and respect for the natural environment and how it may be protected. A strength of the school is the work that pupils have done in collaboration with the Ground Work Trust and the impact that this has had on pupils' understanding of the needs and dangers in the local environment.

113 Pupils in Year 1 are able to plan a route to school and compile a simple graph to show the different ways that members of the class travel to school. Pupils in Year 2 are able to identify the different buildings in the community and identify their favourite part of where they live. They undertake a traffic survey and try to work out why some roads are busy and some are quiet. Pupils in Year 6 have a secure knowledge of the water cycle and river systems. Pupils use the Internet to help them understand the routes of rivers. They understand terms, such as tributary and meander. Pupils have good opportunities to investigate their local area and consider ways to improve the environment. They are conscious of how pollution can affect people's lives and translate this into action by collecting data about litter in the school and deciding what should be done to reduce it. By making a visit to York pupils are able to contrast their home area with another part of the country.

114 Teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have a sound knowledge about the topics they study and plan lessons thoroughly. Consequently pupils listen attentively, respond enthusiastically and are eager to contribute to discussions. Teachers make very effective use of visits to stimulate the pupils' interest and as a result pupils are motivated to search for information about the topics, making good use of the Internet. Good use is made of field work in and around the school. The tasks that pupils are set are not always challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils and more demands need to be made in the amount and detail of the recorded work that pupils do. There are only a few opportunities for pupils to engage in writing at length in geography or to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons.

115 The co-ordinator's role in supporting the subject is in an early stage of development. She has clear plans to introduce procedures to monitor the planning and teaching and assess the pupils' progress and standards of achievement across the school.

HISTORY

116 Attainment is below that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' interest in and enjoyment of history. This results in pupils having good opportunities to explore their topics through real experiences. However a number of the written tasks that pupils undertake do not develop pupils' skills of enquiry, as well as they should. Also, pupils get only a little opportunity to evaluate the value of any evidence they obtain.

117 By Year 2 pupils understand the difference between past and present and old and new and this understanding is enhanced through the visit to the toy museum in Cockermouth. They have a sound knowledge of famous events and people from the past. For example, pupils in Year 2 know the causes of the Great Fire of London and where it began. However their explanation of why it spread so quickly is lacking in detail. By Year 6 pupils are only just beginning to evaluate evidence. For example, they can discuss the similarities and differences between life in Ancient Athens and Sparta but find it difficult to present their arguments in a coherent manner. Pupils are aware of how sources of evidence can inform them of the past. For example, pupils in Year 4 spoke to local residents to find out about the history of the area. Pupils find it difficult to organise, evaluate and present information derived from historical sources, for example, the work done on Egyptians in Year 3 did not require pupils to develop their understanding of the period in sufficient depth.

118 Teaching is satisfactory, mainly because teachers plan and prepare lessons well with interesting and motivating ideas, make effective use of artefacts and resources and have a secure knowledge about the topics being taught. However teachers do not place a sufficient emphasis on looking for evidence to justify opinions and develop written statements. As a result although pupils are well motivated, listen attentively and are enthusiastic to participate in discussions, the standard of their written work is below what they are capable of. There are only a few opportunities for pupils to engage in writing at length in history or to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons.

119 The co-ordinator's role in supporting the subject is in an early stage of development. The co-ordinator has clear plans to introduce procedures to monitor the planning and teaching and assess the pupils' progress and standards of achievement across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120 By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. The school's resources are very good and are used effectively by all teachers in all subjects of the curriculum. There is a strong culture of staff development which is very well supported by the co-ordinator. This leads to good teaching with pupils having good basic skills and an enthusiasm for and confidence in information and communication technology

121 Pupils in Years 1 to 2, make good progress in their learning. They are able to log on to the school's network, have good keyboard skills and are confident in using the computer for word processing. Pupils learn the basic skills of how to move the mouse and choose options on the screen. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to communicate their ideas using text and graphics and able to enter, store, retrieve and print their work; for example pupils can draw pictures and add text to describe their work. Pupils use their ICT skills to improve their literacy and numeracy skills; for example pupils in Years 1 and 2 could enter and store information and represent their findings in a bar graph.

122 In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress. In Years 5 and 6 pupils extend their skills in word processing and are able to store, retrieve and amend data and enter sequences of instructions. They can create a data base on a spread sheet, analyse the information and draw valid conclusions from the information. There is good evidence of pupils using the Internet in Year 4 when pupils investigate the facts about the Carlisle cathedral and Tudor homes for their history topic. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are confident in the use and application of a range of technologies, including for example the digital camera and a sound monitor, and use their good skills in a number of different curriculum areas to help with their learning.

123 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of ICT and use it effectively in many subjects, for example in mathematics, art and geography. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve and provide good levels of individual support to ensure that they do. As a result pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and they are able to work with commitment and concentrate for sustained periods of time. This leads to pupils making good progress in their learning and being enthusiastic to further their skills by developing their use of the range of information technologies that are presented to them. They listen to instructions carefully, treat equipment with absolute respect and are eager to improve. Lessons have thorough introductions with clear explanations of what pupils are expected to do. Teachers have established effective routines of working that lead to time being used well and pupils working independently with minimal supervision. Pupils with special educational needs receive additional support from teaching assistants which leads to improved confidence and the making of few mistakes in their application of skills.

124 The ICT curriculum is very well led and managed and the co-ordinator is a driving force in the pursuit of raising standards. The outcomes are that pupils are very well prepared for the technological challenges that they will face later on in their education and that they have a strong desire to gain more knowledge and develop further skills.

MUSIC

125 A judgement on attainment and progress at the end of Year 2 could not be made as no lessons could be seen during the four days of the inspection. Standards in music are below those expected for pupils' ages by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sometimes slow but usually satisfactory progress from their level of attainment on entry. This judgement is made on evidence from three lesson observations and discussion with pupils.

126 Pupils in Year 3 have sound opportunities to listen to two pieces of music portraying different moods. They listened well and described the first piece appropriately as 'making them feel happy, cheerful, brilliant and joyous.' They use good describing words such as 'relaxing, calm, romantic and secure' to reflect their feelings about the second piece of contrasting music. After each piece of music, pupils make several sketches to illustrate the ideas that the music portrayed to them. Much of this lesson was spent sketching rather than developing their musical skills and their understanding of composers was not extended. Pupils in Year 4 soundly develop their understanding of ostinato rhythm using the words from "This Old Man" and "Go and Tell Aunt Nancy." They clapped the rhythms accurately using their hands and un-tuned instruments. They clapped a small phrase that included both quavers and crotchets but found semi-quavers more difficult as the taped music was too fast. In one class, the pupils having guitar lessons used these effectively to play the rhythm. Two rhythms were put together but pupils found it difficult to hold their own rhythm whilst half the class played a different one. In two of the lessons seen, there was a lack of pace, and many pupils in one class found it difficult to keep in tune when singing. There is a lack of challenge in the rhythm presented to some pupils who are clearly already confident with the rhythm being demonstrated.

127 It was not possible to observe music in Years 5 and 6. Discussion with pupils revealed that they were learning traditional songs such as 'John Brown's Body' and 'Speed Bonnie Boat.' They describe their music lessons as 'boring because we repeat the songs too many times' and feel 'it will be better when we start to use the instruments.' They have used un-tuned instruments before but have not worked with tuned percussion instruments. They have not composed their own music using these instruments but use computers and a music program to create their own tune from given phrases. This program uses pictures that they select to choose a beginning, middle and ending for their tune. It helps them to further develop their listening skills and think about phrase patterns. However, it only prints out pictures for someone else to follow. This is not extending their understanding of notation or allowing them to create their own music individually or in small groups.

128 The co-ordinator who is well qualified, has only had this responsibility for six months and therefore has not yet been able to form a clear overview of music through the school. Teachers knowledge and understanding of the teaching of music is generally weaker than other subjects. The school has recognised this weakness. Training for teachers in Years 1 and 2 is planned to take place soon. There is no monitoring of teachers' planning. Teachers work to a good nationally agreed scheme supported by other materials but this does not ensure that pupils progressively develop their musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Twelve pupils have instrumental lessons given by visiting teachers. These include guitar, trumpet, clarinet and flute. There is a school choir of pupils selected from the older pupils. They rehearse weekly and their singing is tuneful. There are missed opportunities in assembly to contribute to pupils' music experience. The music used is not introduced or discussed, therefore pupils do not know the title or who composed the music. The singing in assembly is generally in pitch with accurate rhythm. Resources for music are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129 It was not possible during the inspection to see all aspects of physical education. Nor was it possible to make a judgement over the full range of the curriculum. However, from the lessons seen and from the evidence obtained from the subject co-ordinator, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages in gymnastics, games and swimming at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are progressing soundly in these areas. A number of pupils are achieving well.

130 Most pupils demonstrate sound co-ordination. The performance in gymnastics shows development of precision, control and some fluency. For example, pupils in one of the Year 6 classes were able to develop a good sequence of actions with turns, rolls and spins, incorporating a change of speed and direction. This finished with the development of a dynamic bridge with a partner where the force exerted by the two pupils produced balance and stability. Pupils are also able to sustain physical activity over a good period of time. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to invent ways of moving a ball around the room and passing it with great care to another pupil. Pupils copied others, improved their ideas and developed their skills well. They worked very hard and persevered well to the end of the lesson. Some improved their techniques and skills considerably. Pupils' capacity to sustain physical activity was demonstrated also during a swimming lesson for pupils in Year 5. They worked hard to improve their performance, using a range of different swimming strokes. By the time pupils leave school, a good majority swim at least 25 metres and some, much further.

131 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with some that is good. Teachers demonstrate that they have sound knowledge of how to teach physical education. Teachers have a good warming up session and a cooling down one at the end. They take opportunities to link physical education lessons with science by referring to how bodies change during vigorous exercise. They also make sure that safety precautions are met and that pupils are dressed appropriately. Teachers give

good demonstrations themselves and use others also to demonstrate. They encourage pupils to evaluate their own performances and state how they think it could be improved. This was seen to good effect in a lesson given by one of the Year 6 teachers. She had high expectations of two pupils working with a partner on a mat. They had to start and finish a circle roll appropriately. Pupils discussed the merits or failures in the performance of others well. Teachers' planning shows a step-by-step approach so that pupils build on their previous skills in a slow but steady progression. The teaching is enhanced further by the very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils, which motivate them and encourage the very positive attitudes pupils make to physical education.

132 The subject co-ordinator is very new and has only been in post since September. He has had little opportunity to monitor or evaluate the subject. He has, however, checked and evaluated the resources, which are good. He has set up training and coaching links with the secondary school. He has organised further in-service training for the teachers in dance, which are starting very shortly. The subject is enhanced with sporting links with other schools, such as in football, netball and rugby. The pupils participate in netball and quick-cricket tournaments in the summer. Outdoor and adventurous activities take place during residential visits to different areas in the mountains for pupils in Year 6 and to the Kingswood Centre for pupils in Year 4.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133 Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools for pupils at the end of Year 6. They are in line with expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2.

134 Pupils in Year 6 have mainly factual knowledge of religions that is superficial and lacks depth. This means that there is satisfactory factual knowledge in learning about religions such as Christianity and Sikhism but that learning the value of religion in peoples' lives is not well developed. Pupils have little experience of the more complex ideas in religion such as the similarities and differences in the ways in which major life events such as marriage death and maturity are dealt with. Much of the pupils' work is recorded on simple worksheets that do not require more than labels and occasionally, colouring of pictures. Other examples include only copy writing of class text from the board.

135 Analysis of pupils' work shows teaching and learning in Year 4, provides challenging work that is both factual and interpretative. These pupils consider the feelings of individuals and seek explanations for symbolism when comparing Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism. They explore the idea of membership and friendship and there is clear evidence of pupils learning from religion as well as learning about religion. Weaker teaching for pupils in Year 3 makes excessive use of worksheets that require mainly simple labelling and colouring-in. There is a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching that does not challenge pupils well, to extend their thinking. It does not develop the pupils' awareness of respect for the holiness of religious places and icons and misses the opportunity to develop ideas of a higher being.

136 Pupils in Year 2 are able to retell stories such as the parable of Jesus healing the servant. They offer reasoned explanations during lessons about Christian ceremonies and about guilt and forgiveness. Workbooks show factual knowledge about religion as evidenced by a number of worksheets but although the recording is spasmodic there is also evidence of learning about the significance of religious ideas and the personal qualities that are found in all religious thinking. However, there is some confusion of objectives with personal social and health education being mixed in with religious education lessons on occasions.

137 There was good teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 as they read and discussed the story of the prodigal son. The teacher used the story well to pause and involve the pupils in explanation of how the different characters must be feeling. They offered answers that used the word 'because' in their explanations as they drew on information from the story to support their views. The lesson made a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills of speaking and listening as the teacher used the strategy of 'talking pairs' for pupils to evaluate the thoughts of others. As a result they were confident about making constructive observations about each of the characters in the story. The idea of family being more precious than money was not as well developed in this lesson as it could have been and the idea of God as a forgiving father figure was undeveloped.

138 Evidence from pupils' books indicates that the very good policy for teaching religious education has not yet been fully implemented. The syllabus is followed carefully but the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to support the teachers fully or observe any teaching. However, she has developed an assessment structure for the subject that offers pupils opportunities for self-evaluation. It also offers teachers a list of skill criteria that are linked to learning from religion as well as factual information about religion. The subject is enhanced by visits to York Minster and Carlisle Cathedral to study the layout and function of a large church and its place in religion.