

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CALDEW LEA SCHOOL**

Carlisle, Cumbria

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112237

Headteacher: Mr N Tucker

Reporting inspector: Mr J Heap  
18824

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 November 2002

Inspection number: 252224

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ashley Street  
Carlisle  
Cumbria

Postcode: CA2 7BE

Telephone number: 01228 607 538

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Donaldson

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18824	J Heap	Registered inspector	Physical education Education inclusion	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9974	D Singh	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?
19709	J Fisher	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31175	A Allison	Team inspector	English Art and design Music English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
30724	D Hiscock	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	

30439	M Heyes	Team inspector	Science Geography History Special educational needs	
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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Caldew Lea is a primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven. It is situated near to the centre of Carlisle. There are 313 pupils on the roll of the main school: 161 boys and 152 girls. This is an above average sized school in England. The roll has decreased a little in recent years. Pupils arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels, but overall attainment on entry is well below average. Pupils are organised into 12 classes, three of which have more than a single age group of pupils. The pupils come from a large, inner-city catchment area which has areas showing significant signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to private individual dwellings. It is also an area which has a moderate turnover of pupils. The vast majority of pupils are white and the rest come from a small range of ethnic heritages. Two pupils (0.6 per cent) have a first language other than English which is a lower figure than most schools. They are at an advanced stage of English acquisition. There are 82 pupils (26 per cent) entitled to free school meals: this is above the national average.

The school has a 52-place nursery. Children enter the nursery at the age of three years, and the children in the most recent intake have low scores on the English, mathematics and social skills indicators.

In the main school there are 43 pupils (13 per cent) on the register of special educational needs and the majority have moderate learning difficulties. This is broadly in line with the national average. Fifteen pupils (4 per cent) have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is above the national average.

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

This is a good and caring school that continues to make improvements. Overall, standards are average and this is due to good achievement across the school. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils relate very well to each other and show good attitudes and behaviour, because the school is very successful at developing their social skills. Pupils benefit equally from the school's effective provision. Overall, leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and, overall, attain average standards.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes, behave well and develop very good relationships.
- Provision and progress for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are effective.
- Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with social development being particularly strong.

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

- Standards in English are not high enough.
- Governors role in strategic planning is not strong enough and they need to look at the school's aims on a more regular basis.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998. There has been a satisfactory improvement since then. In relation to the key issues identified:

- all subjects have a scheme of work;
- monitoring generally has improved satisfactorily;
- targets for achievement are now clearly set out in the school development plan.

Teaching has improved, results in national tests are better and the strengths identified in the last report have been maintained. In science there has been a good improvement in the pupils' ability to investigate and problem-solve. The school has improved its approach to management, but there are important areas for development in the work of governors and in using the school's aims to make evaluation more focussed on the contemporary changes in education, for instance multicultural awareness.

## 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	C	D	E	C
Mathematics	C	E	E	C
Science	C	B	C	B

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

By the age of 11, results are well below average in 2002 for English and mathematics, and in science results are average when compared with all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, English and mathematics results are average and science results are above average. Overall, results are below average in comparison to all schools and average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5, was below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Over the last three years, the trend in results is a little inconsistent, but there is strong evidence of improvement, particularly in science. There are no significant differences in the results of boys and girls. The overall trend in attainment is similar to the national one.

Standards of seven year olds in 2002 were average in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools; reading results are above average, writing is below average and mathematics results are average. The proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, are average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. Teacher judgements of pupils' attainment in science are well below average. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics results are below average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Results are on the upward trend, most particularly in mathematics.

Children come to the nursery with low standards, particularly in spoken language. They achieve well and by the time they are six they are still below average. In Years 1 and 2, they continue to make good achievement and by the age of seven standards of work seen are generally average. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and standards of work seen are at the expected level. The difficulties that the pupils face in literacy means that standards are not as high as they ought to be and remain below average, throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress towards their targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are appreciative of the efforts made by staff to give them a rich experience.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Inside and outside the classroom pupils behave in an orderly and respectful manner. On the very few occasions when these high standards drop it can usually be traced to less effective class management. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very good relationships with each other and adults. Personal development is good and pupils show respect, good sense and responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory and improving.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and all lessons seen were, at least, satisfactory. Almost eight in ten lessons are good, or better. This leads to good achievement across the school.

In the nursery and reception classes, the teachers plan and organise their lessons well. They make good use of the information they gain from judging pupils' work and their levels of attainment. The nursery is particularly strong and the staff have good knowledge and understanding of the government guidelines and the way that the youngest children learn. Consequently, expectations are high.

In Years 1 to 6, there are strengths in planning and, particularly, the setting of clear learning intentions that are informed by accurate judgements of pupils' attainment and the setting of challenging targets for each pupil. Management and control are strong and relationships between pupils and with adults are also strong. Homework is set regularly and it makes a good contribution to learning.

Teaching is good in the majority of subjects, the exception being information and communication technology where it is satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well-organised, extra support is effective and the outcome is that the pupils make good progress. These pupils benefit from the very good system of early identification used in the nursery and reception classes.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum. Particular strengths are the nursery, personal, social and health education and the activities outside lessons. Pupils benefit equally from all that the school offers.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall good. Pupils are well-supported by the special educational needs team and, as a consequence, make good progress. The co-ordinator is very effective.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school identifies difficulties early and pupils are well supported. Consequently, pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, provision is good. Particularly strong is the very good provision for social development which enables the pupils to build very strong relationships. Cultural development is satisfactory. Further work is needed to improve pupils understanding of a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school that provides a safe and secure environment. Good procedures are in place to promote behaviour and pupils' progress, most particularly those who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.
Relationship with parents	Good and effective relationships between parents and school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a strong and clear vision for the school and this is shared by senior colleagues. The majority of subject co-ordinators are managing their subject well. There is now an opportunity to give staff even more responsibility in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Overall satisfactory. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfil the majority of their statutory responsibilities. However, their role in shaping the direction of the school is unsatisfactory, not least because there are significant omissions in the school's aims.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are many useful procedures for measuring and checking on attainment and achievement. The development identifies priorities well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial management is efficient and careful. Specific grants are used properly to benefit pupils and improve provision. The school has good systems to ensure value for money when acquiring resources and services.

The school has adequate levels of staffing, learning resources and accommodation.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The approachability of staff.</li><li>• The expectations the school places on pupils of hard work and achievement.</li><li>• The quality of teaching.</li><li>• Leadership and management.</li><li>• The progress their children are making.</li><li>• The help their children receive to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Behaviour.</li><li>• The information they receive.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>No major issues</i></li></ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive comments from parents.

### **Several written comments were also sent in**

- Several comments about the good qualities of the school.
- An isolated indication about behaviour not being all that it might be, particularly bullying in some classes. Some doubt from the writer as to the quality of response from the head teacher. Inspectors judge that behaviour is good and that the staff deal effectively with incidents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall, standards are at the expected level and pupils' achievement is good. The early judgements of children's levels of attainment indicate that they enter the nursery with well below average standards. By the end of the Reception Year they have achieved well to reach below average standards. However, there is a need for the Reception Year children to start independent writing sooner. The children are likely to reach the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and creative and physical development. Standards are below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. At the age of 11, results in the 2002 national tests for English and mathematics are well below average when compared with all schools nationally. Science is average. In comparison with similar schools, English and mathematics results are average and science results are well above average. Overall, results are below average in comparison to all schools and average when compared with similar schools. When looking at the results of this group of pupils when they were seven, improvement in science is well above average and it is average in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Over the last three years, results are below average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The trend is a little inconsistent, but there is strong evidence of improvement, particularly in science. Boys and girls attainment is similar. The overall trend in results is similar to the national one.
3. By the age of seven, standards in 2002 national tests are average in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, reading results are above average, writing is below average and mathematics results are average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, is average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. Teacher assessments in science are well below average. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. National trends have remained steady and slowly rising. The school has been inconsistent, with 1999 being the weakest year recently. However, results are on the upward trend, most particularly in mathematics.
4. Overall, standards of work seen during the inspection in Years 3 to 6 are at the nationally expected level. These standards represent satisfactory achievement. Standards are higher than expected in science because of the good work done in the investigatory and problem-solving aspects. Standards are also higher than expected in physical education and this is mainly due to the good, well-organised and enthusiastic teaching throughout the school.

5. By the age of seven, standards of work seen during the inspection are at the nationally expected level. Standards in physical education are above expectations. Overall, pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and the very few children learning English as an additional language.
6. In English, by the ages of seven and 11, attainment in speaking and writing is below national expectations, whilst standards in listening are in line with the expected level. Reading standards for seven year olds are typical for their age, though shortcomings in the development of library skills means that 11 year olds just about reach the expected standard. Despite the lower than expected standards in writing, attainment is higher than in the 2002 national tests and the improvement is due to the successful implementation of strategies, such as increasing opportunities for drafting and re-drafting pupils' original work. However, standards in writing are not high enough and this is due to low expectations of the work that the highest attaining pupils are capable of producing.
7. In mathematics, attainment judged by inspectors at ages seven and 11 is similar to nationally expected standards. This is above the level of results in the 2002 national tests because of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and the consequent development of pupils' attitudes to the subject. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils have the expected skills, knowledge and understanding in number, shape, measures, data handling and investigating/problem-solving.
8. In science, attainment judged by inspectors for seven year olds is in line with national expectations and at 11 years of age standards are above expectations. The good achievement in Years 3 to 6 is based on good teaching and an increased emphasis on practical and investigatory work, most particularly in the older classes. Throughout the school most pupils have good skills, knowledge and understanding of problem-solving, materials, life and living things and forces.
9. In information and communication technology, standards are below expectations at the age of seven and 11. Achievement is satisfactory and the pupils are benefiting greatly from the much improved recent provision. This is particularly noticeable in Years 3 to 6, where standards are close to national expectations in the skills and knowledge taught. Pupils in Year 6 search, retrieve, manipulate images and transmit information. The enhanced provision is inspiring pupils to greater effort and expectation, and this is increasing learning in the subject and in other areas also.
10. In religious education, standards for seven and 11 year olds are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Seven year olds know a range of Bible stories and understand their significance to everyday life. They have a growing understanding of several faiths and successfully compare and contrast the values, customs and symbols. By the age of 11, the knowledge, skills and understanding are successfully built on. Pupils learn about other faiths in greater depth, for instance the Buddhist symbolic use of light. There is also greater understanding of issues relating to moral development, such as human rights.
11. Literacy and numeracy are promoted soundly throughout the school. Opportunities are found in a range of subjects to practice and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding in these areas of learning.
12. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because throughout the school there are good systems for judging attainment and supporting their needs. By the time they leave the

school, many of these pupils achieve the standards expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. All these pupils have individual educational plans that include a range of specific targets in literacy and numeracy and personal development. Each target derives from well-kept records and ensures the right level of expectation so that the pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. The pace and quality of learning of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs are consistently very good, whether in whole-class or small group sessions, because specialised programmes are well tailored to fit each pupil's needs, and very well supported.

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

13. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. This is complemented by their good behaviour and very positive and constructive relationships. These positive characteristics are a significant strength of the school and have been maintained since the last inspection, and are reflected in the parents' views of the school. Attendance is satisfactory and has been sustained since the last inspection.
14. Most pupils display positive attitudes to school and good attitudes to learning. This is evident in many lessons where pupils consistently approach their tasks with enthusiasm, interest and generally sustain good levels of concentration. Pupils value the opportunity to work independently, sharing ideas and information, which is promoted by effective teaching. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and value and appreciate the time and commitment that teachers give outside of lessons. They use informal opportunities with visitors to pose interesting and thought-provoking questions, for example, a significant number of pupils questioned a Sikh inspector about his faith and the wearing of the turban. Pupils' inquisitive nature is a significant feature of their learning, which also supports pupils' spiritual and multicultural development.
15. Pupils also enjoy activities after school. During the inspection, pupils were observed playing chess in the chess club and singing in the choir. They also spoke favourably about the opportunities to practice football. These activities:
  - enhance pupils' achievements;
  - contribute extensively to their social, physical and mental development;
  - create a warm, friendly and stimulating environment for learning.
16. Most pupils behave well and follow the code of conduct. They are polite, friendly, considerate and listen to their teachers. Outside the classroom, they move around in an orderly manner and show consideration for all. During the inspection, pupils were observed opening doors for visitors and speaking to all adults in a courteous manner. In the playground, behaviour is often friendly and pupils enjoy their leisure activities and make effective use of the adventure play equipment. Inspectors frequently observed younger and older pupils, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds playing together in a friendly and harmonious manner. Throughout the inspection there were no visible signs of bullying or other types of anti social behaviour. Although a very small number of parents and pupils report occasional incidents of bullying, they are adamant that these incidents are appropriately dealt with. In recent years there have been no exclusions. Occasionally behaviour is lively in the playground and there are some disagreements between pupils, which are often resolved by pupils themselves.

17. Relationships in the school are very purposeful and constructive. Most pupils work effectively in groups sharing ideas, information and resources. Most teachers establish good relationships with pupils, promoting mutual respect and a good working atmosphere inside and outside the classroom. The quality of relationships has a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and standards.
18. Pupils' personal development is good, particularly in relation to:
- the responsibilities they exercise as class and school monitors and as lunchtime helpers;
  - raising funds for the wider community through activities organised by the Friends of the School;
  - delivering and collecting registers for teachers and older pupils helping lunchtime staff with clearing up and serving water.
- These opportunities promote their sense of community and citizenship and enable them to serve their school and wider community in a mature and responsible manner.
19. Attendance at the school is generally satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are well below the national level.

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

20. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and this leads to good achievement overall. All the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and eight in ten lessons were good, or better. This confirms the views expressed by parents in their meeting with inspectors and in the returned questionnaires. Performance has also improved since the last inspection; the amount of good and better teaching has increased from about 50 per cent to almost 80 per cent. There is also an increase in the amount of very good teaching and two lessons were judged to be excellent.
21. In nursery and reception, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Five in eight lessons are good and better. The strongest teaching is in the nursery class where the overall standard is very good. Particular strengths include:
- The very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop. For example, in a creative development lesson children were encouraged to experience the qualities and properties of paint and satisfy their curiosity for its feel, smell and look;
  - Linking teaching to the children's own experiences. For instance in a literacy lesson, the children bathed the doll. Use of vocabulary was enhanced through the gentle encouragement of natural talk that extended and linked with home experiences.
22. Occasionally, in the Reception Year, expectations are too high and this leads to confusion in children's learning. An example, in mathematics, was seen where the children were pushed too soon to record their work on a prepared worksheet. Furthermore, this reduced the amount of time the children could spend working directly with the adult and this made for fewer opportunities to develop language. Writing skills are less developed in the Reception Year, because of a lack of opportunities to write on their own and producing labels, lists and messages.
23. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils achieve well. Over three-quarters of the lessons were good or better. Planning is strong, relates

well to national guidance and requirements and promotes well-organised learning. Lessons are well-managed and pupils put a great deal of effort into their work. Resources are used well to motivate pupils and the strong subject knowledge of the teachers ensures that opportunities for learning are not missed. In the very best lessons, learning is consolidated in the discussion at the end, as in a Year 2 mathematics session where the teacher returned to the lesson objectives to check on pupils' grasp of repeated addition. In the vast majority of lessons the work is well-matched to individual pupils, however, on occasions the expectations of higher attaining pupils are too low. For example:

- In a Year 1 physical education lesson, the slower pace meant that the higher attaining pupils had less time on the competitive game than they needed and this meant that they did not achieve as much as they might;
- Writing standards could be higher in Year 2 if the highest attainers were expected to write lengthier pieces more often and focus on developing basic skills more accurately.

24. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. There is a range, which runs from two excellent lessons to a fifth of lessons being satisfactory. The school is successfully introducing a system that groups pupils according to their levels of attainment in English and mathematics. Pupils' learning in these lessons is often good and frequently very good, or excellent. For example, teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and this fosters very useful planning and raises expectations for most pupils. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson with higher attaining Year 6 pupils, the teacher recapped previous learning in a thorough and pacy manner. Expectations were high and any weaknesses indicated by the useful homework were well covered. Pupils' responses were driven by sheer enjoyment and a desire to do well. Similar strengths were observed in a literacy lesson for Year 6 higher attaining pupils, but with a different teacher. Although much of the best teaching is seen in Years 5 and 6, the work in younger years is also full of strengths. For instance, in an excellent Year 3/4 religious education lesson the strong features of planning, high expectations and brisk pace are supported by the innovative use of meditation. This gives the lesson a strong influence on pupils' spiritual development and fosters their knowledge and understanding of Buddhism.
25. The satisfactory lessons in Years 3 to 6 generally have more strengths than shortcomings. The stronger elements tend to be good subject knowledge, effective planning and providing work that is well-matched to pupils' needs. However, there are shortcomings in class management, particularly with the lower attaining groups at the older end of the school. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson a significant number of pupils were restless and they did not respond to methods of control. This led to too much time being focused on control and not on learning.
26. Overall, judgements about pupils' attainment are effective in:
- keeping track of individual pupils' achievements;
  - providing information that enables teachers to match work to individual pupils;
  - enabling teachers to move pupils from one group to another that are based on prior attainment.
27. The literacy and numeracy hours have been implemented soundly. Planning in both subjects is faithful to the guidelines and, generally, this is a strength. However, the implementation of the strategies, overall, are satisfactory because:

- insufficient attention is given to developing retrieval skills in the library;
  - more attention needs to be paid to writing throughout the curriculum.
28. Overall, teaching is good in the majority of subjects. The exception is information and communication technology where the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, the teaching in information and communication technology is recently much improved. For example, developments are increasing the rate of pupils' achievements because:
- the new computer suite provides good machines, programs and access to the internet;
  - teachers have greater knowledge and understanding owing to recent training;
  - of new procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment.
29. Homework is used well to consolidate learning and teachers use it appropriately to develop basic skills. This is particularly noticeable in reading and mathematics. The quality of marking is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The day-to-day feedback to pupils is important to them and highlights their progress towards individual targets. The marking fits well with the overall quality of judging pupils' levels of attainment.
30. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is effective. As a result, these pupils learn well. The teaching is well organised, and is undertaken by members of the team, class teachers and learning support assistants. All teaching staff and support assistants are well versed in the procedures for special needs throughout the school and they make good use of individual learning plans to match work to pupils' individual needs. The good quality of the targets in these plans means that the teaching is sharply focused on pupils' specific learning needs and strongly promotes their progress. Work challenges these pupils across a variety of activities, but they are well supported so that they can experience the daily glow of recognised achievement. This was seen in a Year 3 and 4 lower set English lesson, where pupils were praised for the quality of their shaped calligrams. The quality of support is high. Good teamwork between the team, teachers and learning support assistants ensures that all available expertise is used well to enhance learning. Learning support assistants are well informed about planning, recognise their key role and make sure that their target pupils are focused, interested, and productively busy in relevant learning activities.
31. Pupils learning English as an additional language are well advanced in their learning and rarely require specialist teaching. However, their attainment and achievements are checked regularly and teachers are aware of their needs.

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

32. The school provides a good curriculum. It is broad, generally balanced and relevant and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. It meets the needs of all its pupils and provides pupils with an appropriate basis for learning prior to their transfer to secondary education. It is enriched through a very wide range of extra curricular activities and good links with the community. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and all pupils are included in all the school's activities. There is an appropriately generous amount of time allocated to English and mathematics to develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The teachers have worked hard to resolve the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and several improvements have been made:

- all policies including those for sex education, drugs and personal, social and health education are in place;
  - the school has adopted good schemes of work based on national guidelines, which ensure that pupils develop skills in a logical order.
33. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception Year is good. It is based on the nationally recommended programme and includes suitable provision for religious education.
34. Across the school, the main strengths of provision are:
- the good range of activities outside lessons, including visits to enrich the curriculum;
  - the effective programme for pupils with special educational needs;
  - personal, social and health education;
  - good links with the community.

The main area for development is the continued improvement of the provision for information and communication technology.

35. National guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education effectively support the teachers in their planning. Yearly, termly and weekly planning for the coverage of the curriculum now builds steadily from term to term and year to year to ensure that learning is coherent and not repetitive. It is well matched to the age range in each class enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress.
36. Strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are well established and are tailored to the needs of individual pupils. The provision for pupils has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers' planning is now good. Teachers now feel more secure in their knowledge of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, because of the good input from the co-ordinators and also from the ongoing support provided by the local education authority. In addition to adopting the literacy hour, the school provides additional support for literacy and numeracy. There are satisfactory links between subjects to reinforce learning in one whilst extending learning in the other. For example, there are good opportunities for pupils to further reinforce and extend their literacy skills through other subjects such as history, religious education and design and technology.
37. The range of educational visits to enrich and support the curriculum and enhance the learning opportunities offered to pupils is very good. A strength of the provision is the number of experiences, which cannot be offered within classrooms, such as visits to working museums, art galleries, historic houses and sites and visitors to enrich the general curriculum, although visitors from other major religious faiths are less well represented. Older pupils have opportunities to take part in a residential visit, to study outdoor pursuits. The general curriculum is supported well by the range of outdoor activities, including opportunities to participate in local sporting tournaments and to take part in after school clubs, such as art, chess, rugby, football, choir, basketball and external competitions and tournaments. There is extra music tuition parents pay for.
38. The school has a policy for equality of opportunity and this is reflected well in practice. The school is strongly committed to the implementation of equal opportunities and

good race relations, which are evident in the school. Good practice is clearly illustrated in the school's policies, teaching and learning, the broad and balanced curriculum and the commitment of teachers and the manner in which they care for their school community and involve their parents. However, further work is needed to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of a multicultural society.

39. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. A recent policy is beginning to be integrated effectively across the curriculum. Reflective lessons, such as 'Circle Time' (whole-class discussions) have been introduced recently and are used effectively. In these, pupils are given more opportunities to listen, think, speak as they explore a variety of issues, consider how to develop ideas about themselves and deal with difficult situations that might arise in their own lives, such as 'Relationships', 'Friendships' and 'Community'. The school's emphasis on respect for all, aims to ensure that everyone's viewpoint is considered. For example, pupils in Year 6 responded well to an emotive story of prejudice in World War 11, which carried the message that people of different races do not always adopt negative characteristics. The promotion of responsible behaviour through the use of management strategies pervades all the teaching and learning activities and in most is very effective. External health providers support the delivery of health education. The police come into school to talk to pupils about 'stranger danger' and safety on the railways as a self- protection issue.
40. Links with the local community are good. Learning opportunities are provided to extend the curriculum using the community as a resource. Arrangements for transferring pupils to the next phase of education operate smoothly and links with the local high school are good, particularly through sport and music. Pupils' involvement with the local Sports' College enhances the provision in physical education and musical expertise exchange strengthens links with the local high school. Both these opportunities impact on pupils' progress.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting an improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual development and maintaining the very good provision for social development since the previous inspection.

42. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There are promising developments across the school that contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning. This is often where teaching is inspiring and awakens children's ideas of their place in the world. They begin to understand big scientific ideas by investigating together, particularly in science. With increasing knowledge about computers, pupils are starting to explore data and understand electronic media and communications, expanding their ideas and opportunities to understand more about life. An awareness of a greater dimension in their lives pervades the inspiring junior assemblies. Where pupils encounter moments to reflect on issues in lessons, they gain a deeper awareness. Children care for their school and for each other and this underpins learning across the school. This is a result of the strong school messages. The very small number of pupils who have a different family religion or set of beliefs are nurtured equally well in the school. Although there are generally calm and happy occasions of collective worship and assemblies for years 1 and 2, these often miss opportunities to awaken children's imagination and still do not go beyond the brief moments of prayer seen during the last inspection.
43. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils understand what is right and wrong because this is stated clearly by everyone in the school. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility and community. An example of this is seen in the whole school shared reading partners. Older pupils are trained and are expected to support younger children. In lessons, many pupils are generous in their comments about others. In a design technology lesson, for example, a year 3 child indicated how successful another child was in making her product. Others joined in and requested advice. Children have a happy nature and go out of their way to help another. This starts early in nursery where three year olds quickly understand boundaries and flourish in the secure and non-judgemental climate.
44. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school team of adults work hard to sustain high standards of behaviour, particularly so with any pupils who bring less harmonious work and play habits into school. Parents are also supportive. Much of this continued success is down to the lead of the headteacher in ensuring that children's views are valued. As a result, pupils feel very proud of their school and have a keen sense that it is theirs. Staff provide good role models and pupils reflect much of this courtesy and respect. Relationships are very good and pupils understand the importance of considering others at all times. So much so that across the school pupils have a good understanding of how their actions affect others.
45. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to enrich the quality of learning. The variety of the curriculum significantly raises pupils understanding of their own culture and of some local traditions. For example, junior pupils have visited Carlisle castle as part of their Tudor history topic as well as the Guild Hall. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is satisfactory and in art, for example, pupils base observational drawings from photos and internet images of the work of the Spanish architect, Gaudi. The school is making increasingly better use of resources to provide pupils with a greater understanding of cultures other than European. This is supported by an improving range of literature around the school. Religious education successfully promotes pupils' knowledge of the meanings and values of other faiths. Further steps are needed to prepare pupils to live in multi-ethnic Britain.

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

46. The provision for pupils' care, support and guidance is good and arrangements for child protection are appropriately in place. The good procedures and policies ensure pupils continue to learn in a safe and secure environment. This level of care has been maintained since the last report and is appreciated by parents.
47. There are effective measures for promoting good behaviour. The behaviour policy and code of conduct are clear, sensible and effectively implemented by most staff. Teachers monitor pupils' behaviour and reward their achievements. They praise the positive and do not over-react to lapses. These measures are supported by good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, which ensure that pupils learn in a warm, caring and friendly environment. Bullying and other types of anti social behaviour are discouraged and action is taken to thoroughly investigate, record, monitor and report incidents to governors.
48. The child protection arrangements are clear and satisfactorily implemented by a caring, well informed and committed designated teacher. He provides clear leadership and co-ordination which ensures that all staff are informed, suitably trained and understand their role in relation to the issues. All incidents of concern are effectively pursued, recorded and monitored. Good procedures ensure that health, safety and well being of the school community are given priority. Accidents are recorded and systematically investigated. There are regular fire drills and pupils have clear understanding of the school emergency and evacuation procedures.
49. There are good policies and procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Teachers enjoy a very constructive, trusting and productive relationship with pupils. They celebrate and reward pupils' achievements, both inside and outside of the classroom. They provide effective supervision, listen attentively to pupils' concerns, and provide good quality information and sound educational advice and guidance. Further support is provided by the personal, social and health education programme and enables pupils to make informed choices about healthy eating, relationships and drugs awareness. During the inspection issues raised in 'circle time' (whole-class discussions) to raise pupils' awareness included:
- the devastating effects of bullying;
  - racism in Nazi Germany;
  - the death of Stephen Lawrence in the United Kingdom.
- The existing programme and topics contribute significantly to recognising anti-social behaviour in school; the importance of better race and community relations, as well as teaching pupils about living and learning in a multi-racial society.
50. The efforts of the school to discourage anti-social behaviour are further supported by the school's social inclusion and race relations policies, which have clear aims to promote equality of opportunity, good race relations and to treat all pupils equally and fairly. Good practice ensures the aims are achieved and effective action is taken to eliminate discrimination. All known racist incidents are challenged and thoroughly investigated, but are not consistently recorded or reported to parents in the governors' report. The headteacher is aware of this and is taking action to review and develop the existing practice.
51. Staff and the educational welfare officer work effectively to monitor attendance and ensure that appropriate levels of attendance are maintained. These achievements are

due to the hard work of staff. They swiftly follow up absences, reward full attendance and ensure that the educational welfare officer follows up all irregular and unexplained absences and set achievable targets for improvement for all pupils. There are a few pupils who have low levels of attendance despite the school's efforts and this is made worse by some parents who fail to support their child's regular attendance and time keeping. This continues to affect overall attendance of the school and the achievements of this minority.

52. Pupils who have special educational needs, including those who have Statements of Special Educational Need, are well supported. Their needs are rigorously identified and met by teamwork that leaves nothing to chance in this area of provision. The progress of all pupils with special educational needs is monitored continuously and conscientiously by the team in close liaison with all teaching staff. Records are meticulously maintained and each pupils' progress can be tracked step-by-step over time. Effective links with outside agencies and specialists ensure that the programmes outlined in all Statements of Special Educational Needs are carried out and monitored.

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

53. The school has maintained its productive and purposeful relationships with its parents and continues to provide effective communication between the home and school. Parents value the positive and caring ethos of the school, the good teaching, behaviour and the efforts of the teachers. They recognise and are pleased that their children are becoming more responsible and mature. The good and efficient leadership is valued by parents. Inspectors support these constructive views of parents.
54. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and annual reviews and special arrangements are made for parents who are unable to attend. Most parents bring their child to school and take this opportunity to meet and talk to class teachers. This offers them the chance to visit the classroom, particularly in the nursery, acknowledge their child's achievements and understand the topics being taught. Parents receive clear and purposeful written information in a easy-to-read style through the school prospectus, which meets with statutory requirements. Parents also receive regular newsletters, which keep them informed of events in the school and community. The annual report from governors' complements information to parents, but is brief and does not include information about the school's targets for results in national tests at age 11.
55. Annual reports of pupils' progress meet statutory requirements and complement the information that parents receive during the effective consultation evenings. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to all meetings and kept fully up to date with the support their children receive and the progress they are making.
56. Parents are consistently encouraged by the school to support learning in the classroom and home. A number of parents were observed assisting the teacher with learning and supporting the reading of some pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that at least one Chinese parent has supported multicultural activities in school. These parents help to raise standards and contribute constructively to pupils' personal and social development. The Friends of the School support numerous social and recreational activities which enhance learning and help raise significant funds to support learning and purchase educational resources. This further encourages and ensures productive and purposeful links between the school and home.

57. Overall the school does much to promote a constructive partnership with parents and as a result the impact of parents' involvement in the school is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Most parents acknowledge and support the home/school agreement by supporting their child's regular attendance, time keeping and ensure pupils complete their homework tasks. However, a small number of parents do not support the school' attendance policy and this affects the level of attendance.
58. 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, with learning or personal problems. Parents are appropriately involved in reviewing their children's progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

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

59. The school is well led by an experienced and committed headteacher who gives strong direction in seeking to develop the whole pupil. He is well supported by key staff and as a senior management team they provide good leadership and management for the school. They have a clear and shared vision that is continuing to look forward and drive through improvements. For example, a recent innovation is the grouping of pupils according to prior attainment and inspection evidence has identified this is beginning to successfully drive up standards. This is supported by improvements in the quality of teaching and relates directly to the monitoring of standards and lesson observations.
60. The school is managed well, with members of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators providing good day-to-day management in a number of areas. The subject co-ordinators are mainly doing an effective job and in subjects such as information and communication technology they are having a big impact on teaching and pupils' standards. However, there is further room for improvement in supporting staff to take on more responsibility for driving up standards by:
- identifying the need to aim for the highest possible achievement for pupils of all levels of attainment;
  - providing more opportunities to monitor provision and standards and providing them with the means to set and achieve goals.
61. The governing body fulfils the vast majority of its statutory responsibilities soundly, the exception relates to the reporting of academic targets to parents. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, its role in shaping the direction of the school is unsatisfactory. At the present time governors are highly supportive and in the school, but they rely too heavily on the headteacher and senior staff, particularly in relation to development planning, where they voice concerns but do not have a direct impact. A significant reason for this is that the aims of the school have not been the subject of serious review for some years. Consequently, they do not have explicit aims relating to, for instance:
- the search for, and achievement of, the highest academic standards;
  - developing pupils' multicultural awareness;
  - This absence of rigorous review means that the Governing Body lacks the means to lead strongly on significant matters and they do not have a good yardstick for evaluating the performance of the school.

62. Overall, the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is effectively carried out by the staff. An effective range of measures are employed to identify the current level of performance, including:
- analysis of national test results and comparing them with similar schools;
  - analysing pupils' work twice a year;
  - tracking pupils' levels of attainment and using the information to make accurate predictions year-on-year;
  - providing governors with up-to-date information about the school.

These provide a good level of self-review and standards of teaching, learning and attainment are rising.

63. Overall, the school has adequate levels of staffing. Personnel issues are dealt with in a sensitive and supportive way. Performance management is fully and successfully implemented and there are strong links to development planning. The newly qualified teacher is rightly very appreciative of the support and guidance that she receives, the strengths of which are:

- good mentoring by senior and experienced staff;
- good guidance and support with lesson planning and subsequent visits from the deputy head and local authority officers to observe and comment on the quality of teaching;
- opportunities to visit other classes to observe aspects of good practice.

64. The school development plan is an effective document that sets out appropriate priorities for improvement. At the time of the last inspection an issue was rightly raised relating to the identification of targets for results. These now form a part of the plan, but their impact as signs of improvement is only at an early stage. There is a link here with the need to aim for the highest academic standards and keeping the school under review. There are tangible links to financial resources and it is clear to see that priorities attract funding. Importantly, governors and senior managers recognise that the plan comes before budgetary decisions and this gives them sufficient scope to support initiatives. Further, the school is careful and prudent in ensuring that specific grants are used effectively for their designated purpose. For example, monies allocated to support pupils with special educational needs exceed the allotted grant and from the National Grid for Learning has funded the development of the good computer suite. The school has effective measures to ensure that they achieve value for money when acquiring services and resources.

65. The management of special educational needs provision is good. The team leader and special needs team provide good leadership within school. They ensure that parents are kept well informed, the register of pupils is kept up to date and all staff receive appropriate training so they can meet the differing needs of all the pupils. Good advice is given regarding the planning of individual education plans and records of pupils' progress are well maintained.
66. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The school building and grounds are well maintained. Displays in classrooms and the shared areas of the school are colourful, informative and conducive to learning. The school uses its accommodation well and is adequate for the size and age of pupils. Classrooms support, both teaching and learning. The hall is used effectively for collective worship and for dining at lunchtimes. The playground provides adequate space for recreation and for physical education, but the learning space for under fives is good. There are ramps and disabled toilets on the ground floor and these adequately serve the needs of pupils with special educational needs. However, the library is too small and limits the opportunities for pupils work as a whole class.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

67. To further improve this effective school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise standards in English by:
    - starting independent writing in the Reception Year;
    - expecting more of the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6;
    - improving pupils' skills in retrieving information in the library.  
(Paragraphs: 1, 2, 3, 6, 22, 23, 27, 74, 77, 78, 89, 93, 94)
  - (2) Improve the work of the Governing Body by:
    - rigorously reviewing the aims of the school;
    - including aims that relate to achieving the highest standards and preparing for life in a multicultural society;
    - becoming integrally involved in the strategic leadership of the school, particularly evaluating provision and standards.  
(Paragraphs: 45, 61)
68. The school, in its development planning, recognises the need to improve standards in English.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	12	55	19	0	0	0
Percentage	2	14	63	21	0	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. sentence.]*

*The line of % for teaching adds up to 97% only. This should be 100% Need to check.*

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	313
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	82

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	43

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.6

#### 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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	21	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	11
	Girls	19	18	20
	Total	30	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81(68)	81(78)	84(70)
	National	84(84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	11
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	31	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84(65)	81(78)	81(68)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	24	20	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	22
	Girls	11	9	13
	Total	28	28	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64(62)	64(53)	80(91)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	22
	Girls	11	12	16
	Total	28	31	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65(79)	70(53)	86(89)
	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	306	0	0
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	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	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**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	250

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	2
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	31
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4

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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	775,981
Total expenditure	752,347
Expenditure per pupil	2,216
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,368
Balance carried forward to next year	27,002

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	334
Number of questionnaires returned	72

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	28	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	41	9	0	4
The teaching is good.	81	18	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	34	4	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	23	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	63	32	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	75	22	0	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	44	11	1	6

## **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**

69. Children begin their nursery experience when they turn three years old. At the time of the inspection 23 attend part-time mornings and 19 in afternoon sessions. Adults work well together to provide a very calm, welcoming place to be. Children gain a great deal from the positive, stress-free learning experiences which foster early relationships and confidence. Foundation Stage records indicate that many of the children start from well below average starting points for this age, particularly in language, and inspection findings confirm this. The children make very good progress in the time they spend in the nursery. Most of the children move into their reception year with the oldest children (mainly Autumn birthdays) joining the youngest year 1 children in a mixed age class.
70. The transition into reception is carefully handled to step up the learning but similar teaching approaches smooth the changeover for children to maintain their confidence and feeling of security. Different stages of development are catered for appropriately in the literacy and numeracy sessions, particularly where the older children work with year 1. These children achieve well. Overall, children in reception year make satisfactory progress. Although some of the children reach the early learning goals, most still have to achieve some of the stepping stones towards these goals, even though they have achieved well across the two years of the Foundation Stage. Teachers place the highest emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development, and on communication, language and literature.
71. By the end of the Foundation Stage, reception children have achieved the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in their creative and physical development, having made good progress overall since starting nursery.
72. The school has maintained the high quality provision seen at the time of the previous inspection against a background of considerable changes in the curriculum for young children. The school has:
- appointed new staff & supported them in the teaching of young children;
  - introduced the new curriculum for the Foundation Stage and re-planned the activities;
  - developed arrangements for judging pupils' levels of attainment so that progress is carefully checked;
  - improved the range of information provided for parents.
73. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator understands how young children learn best and this permeates the good teaching, ensuring that children get off to a strong start. They have very promising attitudes to learning on leaving nursery and this is maintained in their reception year. Children with special educational needs do as well as other children because early checks ensure that additional or different support is provided. Adults take care to ensure that the very few children learning English as an additional language are well supported along with other children as needed. Features of the very good teaching in the nursery include:
- very good understanding of the children's next learning steps by the staff;
  - activities that tempt children to explore and investigate for themselves ;
  - planning that builds connections between children's own world and new experiences.

74. Children in their reception year make sound progress overall although those in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class make a better rate of progress because teaching of these older children is consistently good. Some activities in the single age reception class over-challenge young minds, particularly in mathematics where understanding of numbers to 6 is not sufficiently secure before teaching moves on. Overall, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching, a high proportion is very good and there is some ordinary teaching. The teaching of early independent writing gets off to a good start in nursery. However, reception teachers' emphasise how to form letters and words but give too little weight to children's own early writing, losing some of the early impetus.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

75. Strengths in provision ensure that children make very good progress in their self confidence and can tackle new activities with some ease. Children in the nursery benefit from seeing older ones in reception as they play outdoors, share singing and some mathematical activities together. They are interested to know what will happen as they come happily into nursery and school, settling quickly once they understand the routines and patterns of the day. By working with a range of adults, including students, they rapidly gain confidence in self help skills. They engage happily with each other, with increasing contact and respect because:

- resources such as outdoor trikes and trolleys encourage twosomes;
- children feel safe because the outdoor area is designed and used as an outdoor classroom;
- they are given activities and choices that foster early decision-making.

76. Children behave well in reception and have very good attitudes to learning, showing increasing maturity in selecting activities. This stems from early "investigation boards" for children to organise their own learning choices. They enjoy the success of other children and co-operate well with others. Given the strong early start, a good number of reception children could begin to write their names as they note chosen activities rather than use adult made cards.

### **Communication, language and literature**

77. Children make good progress in speaking, listening and reading, but only satisfactory progress is made in writing. A small number of nursery children chat to adults and one or two ask questions of visitors but a high proportion cannot express themselves clearly. In reception, even more enriched language is needed to boost their communication skills because at the end of their reception year, when children are invited to write, their ideas are limited.

78. Reception children take books home regularly to share with their parents and there is good exchange of information. Children show great enjoyment of stories. Children with the potential to achieve more can explain what an author and an illustrator do. Most achieve well, using detail as they share a big book with an adult and most are able to say the first letter sound of a word. A very small number of children can distinguish the end sound in a word such as "cat." This knowledge is not used well enough when children write on their own because most writing tasks have adult support. The positive early jottings fostered in nursery give way to fewer opportunities of quality to further these skills in reception. Although children are taught well to form

letters and words, they make too little progress in writing labels, lists and messages of their own. Crucially, this delays progress.

### **Mathematical development**

79. By the end of their reception year, most children are below the expectations set out in the early learning goals and still have some way to go in dealing with numbers to 9. They make good progress overall, learning faster where purposeful experiences test their understanding.
80. In the nursery, children increasingly refine their mathematical ideas by filling and pouring water, handling 2 and 3D shapes and sorting equipment. They count in twos and sing number songs, making good progress in their understanding. Reception children make satisfactory progress over the year group. More is achieved where activities build firmly from children's understanding as is the case for the older children. Adults skilfully design fun mathematical games such as an "eight-legged spider" using such games effectively to build children's growing understanding of numbers to 7 or 8. Some over-challenge in number activities happens when children are moved on too rapidly in attempts to ensure that children can write numbers correctly. This prime adult time could be better used to explore mathematical experiences with children.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

81. On entry to the nursery, a significant number of the children have limited general knowledge of the world but show interest in new things. At the end of their reception year most are slightly below the expectations for their age but have made good progress. Teachers successfully link the six areas of learning into topics so that children begin to make their own connections as their ideas grow. For example, in reception, children watched the changes in melting chocolate and made small books to record their findings; all of this captured on digital images. This demonstrates their growing awareness of scientific phenomena.
82. In the nursery, children increasingly choose the computer and navigate the cursor to dress teddy as well as showing interest in cameras, headphones and other technological equipment around. They have a growing awareness of routes around the building and play area. Teachers use good resources, including books to widen children's experience and understanding of time and where they live, using topics such as "Myself." Reception children go further in their understanding in topics such as "My Family," refining their ideas as they listen to sounds on a walk. Teaching is good and activities across the Foundation Stage absorb children's interest and invite investigation of objects through prisms, magnifiers, coloured lenses and natural forms. Very good use is made of adults to support learning.

## **Physical development**

83. Children make good progress in their physical skills. The high quality outdoor play area provides an outdoor all-weather classroom, significantly enhancing the range of activities. Daily opportunities to climb, race and scramble allow children to explore space and develop increasing control as they manoeuvre around track-ways and each other. By the end of reception, most children can hop and balance on one foot and throw a ball to a partner. Catching skills are not as mature.
84. Children in nursery respond with delight and use imagination as they increasingly move from adults to manage on their own. Being outside is a delight for the children and they respond eagerly, learning to move safely with others in mind. Good progress in fine control is made by experimenting with a wide range of pencils, brushes, rolling pins and cutters. Reception children maintain this development, becoming skilful in manipulating and retrieving objects in sand and water. Older reception children demonstrate a good level of technique as they throw and catch small beanbags, showing some perseverance as they aim but most reception children still need a fair amount of help.
85. Teaching is well focused on refining children's physical skills. Most teachers know how to develop children's skills. Thoughtful planning ensures handling of large construction bricks and malleable materials such as dough to develop strength and control by twisting and pushing. Early experiences with scissors "quack, quacking" and a good variety of tools including a large computer "mouse" encourages children to "have a go" at previously daunting activities. This is because tasks are carefully graded to increase physical skills. Where teaching is ordinary, earlier advice in sessions would increase the pace of skill development.

## **Creative development**

86. The quality of the teaching and provision are good. Children make good progress, particularly through imaginary play, exploration of paint and different media. Adults create learning places where children can and want to create for themselves, adding momentum to their learning. In nursery, adults skilfully blend questions and invitations to encourage three year olds to go one step on in their learning. This is maintained in reception and children go on to paint and layer their self-portraits in appropriate detail.
87. Nursery children finger paint, wielding squiggles of paint from a tube to create patterns that merge and disappear. Reception children make bread hedgehogs and some paint patterns, concentrating for as long as twenty minutes. Children sing familiar songs and rhymes together, clapping to the beat with older ones increasingly keeping to the rhythm. They sing softly to "Hush Little Baby" lowering voices to match the adult lead. Percussion instruments are explored in the outdoor areas.
88. Teaching is good. The good proportion of very successful teaching awakens children expression and sensitively intervenes to help with ideas or to sustain play. In the "baby clinic," both boys and girls care for the "babies" and play out their own experiences. Good resources enrich the experiences and nurture children's early vocabulary.

## ENGLISH

89. Attainment in reading is typical of seven year old pupils, but attainment in writing is below the nationally expected level. These findings are better than the results of the national tests in 2002 because standards in writing are improving. Attainment in Year 6 is below that expected of pupils of their age. This is also an improvement on the results of the national tests in 2002. Attainment in reading for 11 year olds is close to the nationally expected standards, but pupils' skills in using books to retrieve information are lower than those expected of pupils of this age. Writing in Year 6 is below national expectations, but is improving. These improvements are because the school is implementing strategies to improve the writing skills of all pupils, in particular of the higher attaining pupils. To raise attainment further the school should:
- continue to implement the strategies already in place, including utilising opportunities in all subjects to widen the vocabulary of all pupils to raise standards in speaking;
  - ensure that the expectations of all teachers are sufficiently high to plan activities that are matched very closely to prior attainment. In particular, to enable the higher attaining pupils to reach the higher Level 3 in Year 2 and the higher Level 5 in Year 6;
  - carry out the planned improvements to the library area so that information retrieval skills can be taught more effectively.
90. Achievement is satisfactory in all age groups from Year 1 to Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and the very few for whom English is an additional language progress at similar rates to their peers. This is because they receive effective support from teachers and learning support assistants, particularly in acquiring basic skills.
91. Attainment in speaking is below the national average in Year 2 and Year 6 though listening skills are about average. Most pupils listen attentively to their teacher and to each other in the classroom and in assemblies. The attainment reflects the good progress made since they were admitted to the school because of the many opportunities to talk with teachers and support staff. Pupils extend their range of vocabulary during discussions with the teacher and other pupils in the literacy hour and other lessons. For example, in a Year 6 literacy hour pupils compared and contrasted the language used in balanced and biased recounts of a football match. As a result, higher attaining pupils used words such as 'abysmal' and 'depressing' during the concluding part of the lesson. Strategies that enable all pupils to widen their vocabulary and to hear teachers acting as role models will help pupils to improve their writing skills.
92. Attainment in reading is typical of pupils of their age in Year 2. Higher and average attaining pupils recognise many words on sight and use letter sounds to read an unfamiliar word, though average attaining pupils do not always recognise when they have made an error. Lower attaining pupils have a more limited sight vocabulary. One pupil said that he had problems remembering 'l'. Their skill in using letter sounds to read unfamiliar words is also less developed and they rarely self-correct. Lower attaining pupils do not know how to retrieve information from reference books, but the average and higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand that they could use the contents page and the index. In Year 3 to Year 6 all pupils make steady progress in their reading skills, including strategies for reading unfamiliar words so that in Year 6 attainment in reading is close to what is expected of pupils of this age, though library skills are insufficiently developed. Average and higher attaining pupils retrieve information from books using the contents and index pages. They find a book, for

example about 'Dogs', by looking for a shelf label such as 'Animals', but are not aware of the Dewey classification system, though this is used in the school library. All pupils take books home to read to themselves or to other adults who usually record, sometimes with encouraging comments, in the reading diary when they have listened to their child. Most pupils say they enjoy reading. This was backed up, for example, in a Year 3-4 reading session where pupils read firstly to themselves and then shared their reading with a partner, either by reading to the partner or by talking about what they had read. The books they read in school and those they take home are matched well to their prior attainment. Some pupils can name a favourite author and justify why this is so. Some pupils also have a favourite book. To encourage a positive attitude to reading classes are paired so that older pupils support the reading of younger pupils in regular weekly sessions.

93. Attainment in writing in Year 2 is below average. Pupils are provided with a range of writing experiences. Most pupils work at a satisfactory pace. They write about events in their daily lives. They retell stories and write poems that contain alliteration. They learn how to write instructions, for example about how to plant a bulb. Pupils also write imaginatively, for example about an owl in the woods on a dark night. Most higher and some average attaining pupils use full stops and capital letters accurately. Similarly these pupils spell simple words correctly. Higher attaining pupils spell some complex words accurately or in a way that is phonetically justifiable. Lower attaining pupils' writing is less detailed and less accurate. The handwriting of all pupils is usually legible. However, only the average and higher attaining pupils form letters evenly and mostly of a consistent size. Some average and below average attaining pupils still occasionally write letters backwards, for example 's'. Strategies to improve the writing skills of all pupils, but particularly of the higher attaining pupils, are in place.
94. Attainment in writing in Year 6 is below average. The range of writing experiences in Year 3 to Year 5 ensures all pupils make satisfactory progress. In order to help pupils make better progress there is now less reliance on commercial schemes of work in the literacy hour. Pupils have more experience of drafting and redrafting to improve the final version, for example when writing poems in the first person as in the style of 'Hiawatha'. They write biographies and autobiographies – 'When I was six' – as well as writing letters and instructions. They learn how to work on different parts of a story such as the opening of a 'warning' story by listing ideas under headings. As a result, writing for a particular purpose is improving and sentences such as "'You don't need to talk", said Katlin, as a tear dropped from her eye.' encourage the reader to read on. These writing experiences are helping pupils to make better progress in Year 6. All pupils in Year 6 have improved their spelling and punctuation and have a better understanding of grammatical structure. Presentation of work is also improving, though the quality of the handwriting in Year 3 – Year 6 is satisfactory overall.
95. Good opportunities are provided to promote literacy skills in other subjects. In a good Year 2 geography lesson speaking and listening skills were fostered well. Pupils listened closely to a visitor talking about Holy Island. They then began to ask questions to find out more about the island. In history Year 5 pupils write about Henry VIII. In art, Year 5 pupils discuss the techniques used by famous artists in still life paintings. These opportunities will help pupils to improve their literacy skills.
96. The use of information and communication technology to research information is promoted satisfactorily. In a Year 2 lesson a word processing program was used to record 'News'. In Year 6 pupils extended their knowledge and understanding of writing headlines through an exercise using the computer. Now that there are improved information and communication technology resources the school is planning to extend

the use information and communication technology to support learning. For example, Year 6 pupils are to compile a newspaper based on their work in history.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall, being good or better in eight out of ten of the lessons observed. It is never less than satisfactory and occasionally is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is good because:
- teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the format and purpose of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers are beginning to use the National Literacy Strategy more flexibly;
  - lessons are planned well. The plans contain detailed learning objectives with tasks that are matched well to prior attainment because teachers use ongoing judgements of pupils' levels of attainment effectively to inform their planning;
  - pupils are made aware at the outset what it is they are expected to learn during the lesson. They are reminded of this during the review session at the end of the lesson and sometimes during the lesson. As a result most pupils have a good knowledge of their learning and the progress they are making;
  - the pace of lessons, particularly in the best teaching, is brisk and questions are used effectively to recap previous learning and to challenge pupils' thinking, for example, in a very good Year 6 lesson about balance and bias in recounts of events;
  - support assistants are used well, particularly with lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, for example, in a very good lesson in Year 1. Throughout the lesson these assistants enable pupils to participate fully in question and answer activities and to complete written tasks so that they make the same good progress in lessons as other pupils;
  - marking is usually accurate and comments are constructive and encouraging. The best marking, as seen in a Year 2 and a Year 6 class, provides constructive information about pupils' learning and how work can be improved. This and encouraging comments in lessons promote a positive attitude to learning;
  - homework, set regularly, makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.
98. The subject is led and managed well. Test results are analysed carefully to identify strengths and weaknesses and aspects of the subject that need to be developed and to track the progress of all pupils. One outcome is that writing, particularly that of higher attaining pupils, has been targeted as a key area for improvement. To help improve writing specific targets are set in discussion with individual pupils. Targets are recorded on cards in the writing books to remind pupils what it is they are trying to improve. The co-ordinator monitors planning, analyses samples of work and observes teaching. When lessons are observed both oral and written feedback is given to the teacher. In Year 3 to 6 the six classes are divided into eight sets – higher and lower attaining pupils for each year group. This reduces the size of the classes, facilitates the planning for the literacy hour in these year groups and in most classes enhances the learning opportunities. All of these have a positive effect on teaching and learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. Inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics are similar to those expected nationally at the ages of seven and 11. This represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when standards were also similar to the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The 2002 national test results show standards have fallen, reflecting the low and lower levels of attainment generally in last summer's seven and 11 year olds. Present findings are above the 2002 test results, because of the school' improvements in mathematics. These include teachers'

subject knowledge and their planning, the re-organisation of the teaching and learning, which allows teachers to provide work which is more closely matched to individual pupils' needs, good or better teaching and pupils' good attitudes towards their work in mathematics. The curriculum now covers all areas of mathematics and gives improved coverage of the teaching of problem solving and also pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables and these elements are to be further developed as shown in the school's development plan.

Strengths include:

- teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching the National Numeracy Strategy
- planning and successful practices to judge pupils' levels of attainment help teachers to modify their work and deal with individual pupils' weaknesses
- work is matched more closely to individual pupils' needs
- marking is generally good and encouraging and indicates what pupils have to do to improve.

Areas for development are:

- the analysis of the national test results to find areas of weakness in areas of mathematics
- further development of problem solving
- further development of mental mathematics
- the extension of the provision of information, communications and technology in mathematics.

100. At the age of seven, pupils achieve standards that are in line with the national expectation. For example, many pupils have a developing understanding of place value to 100, demonstrate developing ease as they count forwards and backwards in twos with confidence and use addition, subtraction and multiplication number facts competently. Pupils express mathematical sequences in different ways using words or numbers and visual symbols. Another positive feature of achievement in mathematics is the attention given to place value and the good use made of mathematical language, such as 'odds', 'evens' and 'repeated addition'. This enables pupils to build confidently on their understanding, to explain what they are doing and to make further progress. Lower attaining pupils achieve best when they have access to blocks and counters to create a tangible representation of what they are doing. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. They also identify faces, edges and corners of the shapes. They use, buy and list simple money problems and are encouraged to identify key words, think of the mathematical rule involved, and explain how they would carry out the answer. This is appropriate achievement for pupils of their age. Pupils of all abilities have suitable learning experiences and this enables those with learning difficulties to make good progress and higher attaining pupils to achieve their potential.

101. Prior attainment is built upon in Years 3 to 6 as pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in line with the national average. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are developing a satisfactory understanding of place value to 1000 and of how the numbers relate to each other. They explore patterns in number that are created by manipulating and organizing them according to particular rules and use calculators to support their work. Pupils' mental skills in mathematics are satisfactory overall. Although many pupils possess sound knowledge of multiplication skills, some lower attaining pupils' skills are more limited and they need a great deal of help from their teachers. Throughout the school there is a developing emphasis on talking about what a problem means and how to tackle it. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate fractions

and decimals and using their understanding of one to extend their investigation of the other and as a result pupils understood the new work introduced. In a Year 6 class, the teachers' excellent preparation of the lesson and, the very good use of pupils working in pairs, allowed the pupils to apply previous knowledge to the new methods introduced. Each step was built upon and developed logically and as a result, pupils experienced sheer enjoyment in the interesting and relevant tasks and worked wholeheartedly resulting in extremely high achievement. In contrast in a less successful Year 5 lesson, although clear explanations were given and the work was appropriate for the pupils, little progress was made because the lower attaining pupils were restless, lacked concentration and a great amount of time was lost, resulting in little progress being made.

102. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is mostly good with some excellent practice seen in Year 6. All lessons had elements that were good. Numeracy strategy training has given good support to practice and as a result, lessons are taught confidently. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and clear learning objectives give pupils a good sense of their own learning. Teachers plan systematically to engage pupils of all levels of attainment, with very good visual demonstrations and explanations. Although skills in numeracy are extended across the curriculum, such as in poems and graphs, generally, they are less well represented, as is the use of information and communication technology to enhance mathematical understanding. The most effective marking seen, not only give praise and encouragement, but also prompts pupils to consider other approaches or try something more challenging. Expectations are satisfactory overall, but in some classes they are high and well matched to pupils' levels of attainment as a result of accurate evaluations of pupils' understanding. Related homework is set and marked regularly. Pupils are interested in their learning and teachers motivate them well.
103. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to mathematics and generally behave well. They work well in pairs or small groups, learn to share resources and take care with the presentation of their work. They contribute enthusiastically to question and answering sessions and demonstration sessions. Those who find mathematics more challenging are well supported by teaching assistants working with them on carefully designed tasks.
104. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. The school's provision and teaching reflect the emphasis placed on improving standards and the regular and consistent use of all the mathematical areas of the national curriculum, although problem solving and pupils' use of multiplication tables are less well developed. The co-ordinator recognises the need to further develop the school's procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment. There is an appropriate range of methods to judge pupils' levels of attainment in the national tests. Day-to-day judgements are used well to plan the next activities. Currently there is no analysis of the national tests to know which areas in mathematics need development in order to raise standards. Pupils are given individual targets, which are accessible to them for ease of referral. The use of information and communication technology to enhance mathematics provision is still not used consistently across the school to consolidate and support learning, but this is to be resolved in the near future following the installation of a computer suite.

## **SCIENCE**

105. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. Teaching and standards have improved along with the use of analysis of previous test papers and

the use of judgements of pupils' attainments to plan lessons. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 matches national expectations and in Year 6 is above the national average. All pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve particularly well in Year 6 classes. This is due to:

- a high standard of teaching being offered in both Year 6 classes;
- an emphasis seen in most lessons throughout the school on an investigative approach, which allows pupils to learn from direct first hand experiences in a practical and scientific way;
- pupils apply the skills of scientific enquiry to gain knowledge about life processes and living things, about materials and their properties, and about physical forces.

Inspection evidence reveals how these factors have had an effect of helping improve standards for seven year olds, with more pupils beginning to achieve the higher level 3, due to more emphasis of pupils' being engaged on practical work. This shows steady improvement on recent results. The results of national tests for eleven year olds reveal how pupils are achieving well at level 4 and the higher level 5, which is part of an improving trend in the school's performance in statutory tests over the last few years. Over the last three years there were no differences in national test results between boys and girls and this was so at the time of the inspection.

106. By the age of seven, pupils have good scientific knowledge and understanding. They are aware of the characteristics of a fair test. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils realised that different materials have different properties, which allows them to be squashed, bent and stretched, and that you need to observe closely to understand and record the reasons why. In the eight to eleven age-range, pupils develop their scientific understanding of predicting, observing and recording well as they move through the phase.
107. Pupils in Year 6 could explain why a sieve or filter paper could separate liquids from solids, and could make everyday practical connections with the activity when using a tea bag to make a cup of tea. Most of the pupils in Year 6 could apply their previous knowledge of working on materials and were confident in handling the equipment in their investigation. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils knew how to conduct a fair test when investigating how an incline and a different surface would affect the distance a toy car would travel. Pupils also used their knowledge of measuring to help them conduct the experiment so that when they compared the results of how far the toy car travelled they could come to a meaningful conclusion.
108. All the pupils in the school have positive attitudes towards their work in science. In all lessons seen pupils were:
- well behaved and keen to participate in all activities offered to them, for example, in a Year 4 lesson, when investigating the effects of surfaces and friction;
  - co-operating well in group activities, for example, in a Year 6 lesson when investigating the effects of filtering and separation.

The development of scientific vocabulary such as 'circuit', 'incline' and 'liquid' and speaking and listening skills makes a significant contribution to the development of literacy skills. Also pupils' working in group investigations helps in their social development.

109. The overall quality of teaching observed was judged to be good. The main strengths are:

- good direct teaching based on secure subject knowledge, that engages the pupils in discussions of the ideas being taught so that they are fully aware of what they are learning and have opportunities to practice and extend their listening and speaking skills;
  - practical engagement in scientific investigations to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, for example, in Year 2 pupils' learning about electricity, Year 6 pupils learning about filtering and separation;
  - good management of pupils so that behaviour is good, lessons proceed smoothly and the pupils make good rates of learning;
  - good preparation of resources to support experiments, for example, batteries, and bulbs in one Year 2 class;
  - good questioning to gauge the extent of the pupils' understanding and knowledge, for example in a Year 1 lesson on pupils' identifying and classifying differences between papers;
  - good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants. This helps lower attaining pupils and pupils' with special educational needs to understand the ideas being taught in lessons;
  - marking of pupils' work is of a generally good standard, and take pupils' learning forward.
110. Although information and communication technology is used to support learning, for example in Year 6, it needs to be used more consistently across the school. In some lessons seen and in previously completed work there are instances of an over-prescriptive style of teaching, with an emphasis on completing photocopied sheets, which inhibits pupils' learning in independent group investigations. Displays around the school help maintain interest in science, for example, the one in a Year 1 classroom on materials.
111. The leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator is experienced and committed to raising pupils' attainment and the school's performance in the subject. There is a policy and scheme of work that reflect national initiatives, and there are whole-school procedures, which track both individual pupils, and groups of pupils. The co-ordinator has analysed national test results to identify any weaknesses, to assist with future planning. During this academic year the co-ordinator is to undertake lesson observations to assist with her monitoring of termly planning. Resources for the subject are adequate and are stored centrally and in classrooms.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. Standards in art and design are similar to the findings of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be typical of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in Year 1- 6.
113. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection that has enabled standards to be maintained because:
- a scheme of work based on the latest national guidance, but adapted by the school, is fully in place. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met;
  - teaching is good overall and is occasionally very good. This also is an improvement since the previous inspection;
  - leadership and management of the subject is good.

114. Teaching and learning are good because the evidence from the lessons observed, in the pupils' sketch books and from displays of work shows that:
- termly and weekly planning is good and ensures teaching covers all areas of experience;
  - pupils know what they are expected to do, know or understand by the end of lesson;
  - the activities, matched well to prior attainment, promote an interest in and enjoyment of the subject;
  - organisation and management are good;
  - the resources are chosen carefully for the tasks. These resources include the use of information and communication technology to support learning well in the best teaching;
  - information from judgements of pupils' levels of attainment, including collections of pupils' work, inform curriculum planning.
115. The good quality of teaching and learning was exemplified very well in a very good lesson in Year 5. The teacher captured the immediate interest of the pupils by her choice of two contrasting examples – Cézanne and Leger - of the use of composition, colour, shade, texture and the viewpoint of the artist, to discuss with the pupils. Very challenging questions, using technical vocabulary well, ensured that all pupils paid very close attention to the prints. The questions helped pupils to analyse the work of the artists, giving good reasons for their answers. The subsequent activities enabled pupils to consolidate this learning by working in small groups to compose, from a range of artefacts, and draw a still life picture from a chosen viewpoint. Pupils made very good use of a digital camera to record their composition. At the same time a boy and a girl used a search engine to access works by several artists. They then discussed these using a very good prompt sheet prepared by the teacher. All pupils were engrossed in their activities and made very good progress in their learning.
116. Procedures for judging pupils' attainment and other strategies enable the co-ordinator to monitor the progress of all pupils and so have a clear view of the standards of work across the school. She also helps to enrich the learning opportunities by running an art club after school. Pupils also visit a local art gallery and museum. She was also instrumental in involving the school in a project that enabled the school to benefit from an artist in residence. This fostered enthusiasm for the subject well.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection in standards reached by year 6 pupils and the achievement in years 1 to 6. From observation of one lesson, scrutiny of pupils' work on display and discussions, it is clear that at the end of years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards in line with expectations. Features contributing to the higher standards at the end of year 6 include:
- good subject lead in addressing identified shortcomings;
  - a generally consistent approach across the school in planning, designing and making;
  - the range of activities ensuring step-by-step skill development as pupils move through the school;
  - opportunities to design and make products linked to other subjects such as science, English and computer technology;

- a variety of good quality resources, including construction materials, textiles and wood.
118. Year 6 pupils understand that design ideas are moved on from the initial stage through the sequence of making, modifying and adjusting. The projects they undertake develop an understanding of the properties and suitability of different materials for the products they make. For example, the “controlled vehicles” they build have to withstand the weight of a motor and battery and transport them with some stability and speed. Teachers build well on pupils’ existing skills and this is seen in the jointed wooden frames of the vehicles. In the reports they write, pupils make substantial efforts to describe the cause and effect of problems encountered in the making process. Although pupils can assess how well their design meets their intentions, many struggle to put this into writing despite the rigorous teaching.
119. Year 2 pupils make a good early start to establishing how well their design works. In their sock and hand puppets with corrugated legs, pupils examined different qualities of paper to test for strength having already found some disadvantages. One child noted: “First we made finger puppets but they got torn and bent.”
120. Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress. They thoroughly enjoy the activities and show some perseverance in overcoming small problems encountered in making their designs. The amount of pupils’ work of quality and the pride shown, demonstrate good attitudes to the subject. Year 1 pupils have made moving teddy bears using simple pin and pop-up lever “Humptys” and in doing so, understood how to design and make simple mechanisms. Pupils with special educational needs gain much from these activities, relying on support only when needing help with materials or tools. This is partly because pupils are generous with each other and appreciate the worth of well made items, often spontaneously praising others.
121. Photographic evidence indicates that pupils design skills are strong and that they use an imaginative range of materials and techniques to make their products. These include slippers for different people. One of the growing strengths of the subject are the judgements pupils make of their own work as they move through the designing and making process.
122. Evidence from the rich variety of work seen indicates that teaching is good and the satisfactory teaching in Year 4/5 ensures enthusiasm and interest. The quality of teaching has improved substantially, with greater focus on specific design and making skills so that pupils can investigate and try out options on their own and with others. Teachers clearly set appropriate challenges that match pupils’ next learning steps, consolidating understanding well, through discussion, design sketches, labelling and written explanations.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

123. Pupils’ attainment in Year 2 and 6 matches the national expectations for both subjects. During the inspection due to timetabling arrangements only a limited number of lessons were seen in either subject. Judgements about attainment in both subjects are supported by a scrutiny of pupils’ previously completed work, a review of teachers planning, and discussions with the subject co-ordinators, teachers and pupils. Throughout the school all pupils make good progress in developing the key skills and ideas associated with these subjects. There has been sound improvement in maintaining the standards identified in the previous inspection.

124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a secure understanding of the passage of time, and can distinguish between the past and present. For instance:
- Year 2 pupils know and understand the major events at the time of the Crimea War; and know that how the soldiers were cared for by Florence Nightingale is totally different than that found in modern hospitals.
125. Pupils' geographical skills are developed by the use of large-scale maps and human activity around the school. For example:
- Year 1 pupils know and understand that they travel to school either by car or on foot, and could link their work in mathematics to see how many in the class came on foot or by car using a simple block graph;
  - Year 1 pupils can locate different items in the classroom from the class teacher's map, with more able pupils locating the top of the computer;
  - Year 2 pupils could identify where Holy Island is on a map, and understand how a governor travelled to such an island.
126. Between Year 3 to 6 the pupils build up effectively on the skills they have acquired in both subjects. For example in their history lessons:
- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know and understand that there are different versions of Boudicca's Revolt, and also know that history can be told in different versions when writing their own account of the revolt;
  - Pupils in Year 5 can compare and contrast how homes were built during the Tudor period, and how they are built today;
  - Year 6 pupils know and understand why rationing was needed during World War Two, and how tastes in foods and how they are cooked have changed today, with the introduction of 'fast foods'.
127. In geography pupils develop their skills by contrasting and comparing different locations and developing their geographical vocabulary. For example:
- Year 3 and 4 pupils have compared and contrasted Carlisle with a Rain Forest in South America, and can locate them on a world map;
  - Year 6 pupils can name the parts of a river system from the source to the sea, and used this knowledge in tracing the course of the river Mississippi in the United States of America.
128. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work in history and geography. They are keen to share their work and celebrate the achievements of other pupils. This was seen in a Year 1 geography lesson, when pupils were congratulated by peers on finding a location in the classroom after using a map. They use their literacy skills appropriately in both subjects, for example 'map' and 'source' in geography, and 'ration' and 'revolt' in history. This, and the encouragement to use their speaking and listening skills, makes a positive contribution to the development of literacy overall. The teaching of history and geography makes a positive contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. For example, visits to Hadrian's Wall and Carlisle Cathedral by Year 2 pupils, and Tullie House by different classes helps with this provision.
129. In the lessons seen the overall quality of teaching was judged to be of good quality. Lessons are characterised by good planning and challenging activities to take pupils learning forward in both subjects. This is because:

- teachers have good subject knowledge and hold pupils' attention well, clearly demonstrated in a Year 6 history lesson on using ration cards to help pupils form a view of why they were necessary;
  - teachers use questioning and intervention well to develop pupils knowledge and understanding about both subjects, seen in a Year 2 geography when pupils were using maps and photographs to find out about an Island and the transport used to visit it;
  - all adults manage the pupils well, which helps build up a positive relationship between staff and pupils, which in turn enables the pupils to learn well.
130. Although the teaching staff use information and communication technology to support learning in the two subjects, there is not yet a consistent approach to this across the school. In some examples of previously completed work in both subjects, there are examples of an over-reliance on photocopied sheets, which tends to stifle opportunities of pupils working in small investigative groups. There are good displays of pupils' work in both subject areas around the school, for example, one on Florence Nightingale in a Year 2 classroom, which is effective in maintaining pupils' interest in these subjects.
131. Both subjects are led and managed soundly. There are policies and schemes of work in place for each subject, which reflect national guidance. Planning is monitored on a termly basis depending on topic allocation, and both co-ordinators intend to monitor teaching and undertake a scrutiny of work to ensure progressions and continuity. There are whole school procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment both subjects. Resources for both subjects are adequate, and are stored in class bases for efficient use by teachers and pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

132. Standards in Information and Communication Technology are below average at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Currently progress made by pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is accelerating because provision for the subject has considerably improved.
133. The teamwork of the two subject coordinators is ensuring a significant leap forward for pupils and staff. Substantial improvements have been made in the subject, much of which has occurred in the last few months prior to the inspection. These include:
- new hardware & software to match curriculum needs;
  - more efficient networked communication systems;
  - access to the internet and email;
  - improved teacher knowledge and accredited training;
  - new safety arrangements;
  - substantial arrangements to check pupils progress.
134. Pupils' computer skills are below that expected for their age across the school but in Years 3 and 6 pupils are already beginning to reach standards close to those expected for the year group in the activities taught this term. Pupils in Year 6 can search, retrieve, manipulate images and are beginning to transmit information. Teachers' knowledge has improved but is patchy in content and depth. Teachers are building up confidence and skill and there are very promising signs that the increased momentum of pupils' learning is spreading as levels of pupils' skill rise. The full range of national curriculum provision is not consistently in place yet but at the end of the current year, the school plans to adjust the curriculum to build on the gains made. New resources

including software to deliver the different strands of the curriculum are delighting pupils, firing their imagination and developing thinking as well as computer skills. In one example, Year 6 pupils used control technology software and higher attaining pupils are picking up pace as they navigate “inputs” and “outputs” to shift virtual electronic boxes and operate levers and cables. The school also has good development plans in place to measure the impact of the new technology on learning and to step up the already satisfactory use of computers across subjects.

135. This first year using new equipment with the nationally recommended range of activities has some way to go. For example, simulation programs from defunct computers are in the process of being renewed. Some data-logging, using sensors is planned and student teachers from the initial teachers’ training college sometimes contribute to pupils’ knowledge in this aspect of the subject. Year 6 pupils have built vehicles using some control technology but as yet are not computer linked. Improvements brought about by the new computer suite have secured the capacity for further improvement against the background of increasing pupil achievement nationally. During this inspection, evidence was considered from a range of sources including lessons observed in the majority of year groups. Also samples of pupils’ work from most year groups were scrutinised.
136. The school has worked hard to develop this good level of provision. Most teachers have undertaken training in the subject to bring greater improvement in the subject. All pupils are starting to use the computer suite as well as the networked facilities in most classrooms. Previously, pupils used computers to enhance subjects such as science, mathematics, art and English. However, good use of the computers in classrooms to support learning is not as consistent as it could be. Teething problems stemming from new installations are now mainly overcome. Overall, the school community is now well positioned to accelerate the remaining development needs.
137. Year 2 pupils are able to log onto the computer and find the route through to the folder or relevant program icon on the desktop screen. Word processing and computer skills of draw, paint and manipulating effects are developing in all year groups using “Dazzle 2”. Year 5 pupils are learning to “log on” and some can draw a rectangle using “logo” skills. Achievement is stronger in word-processing because pupils have had more opportunities to use computers in classrooms to handle texts. In the process of discovery, pupils explore on screen icons and express some amazement at the effects. In one example, a year 3 child discovered the effects of switching the “minimize/maximise” icons to control the image size on screen whilst in the middle of composing a tune on screen. By the time they reach year 6, pupils are able to reposition, manipulate or change effects. Pupils with special needs or statements outlining learning needs make good progress alongside others, work enthusiastically and cope well with the activities when they are guided by support staff.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good. This means that where aspects of the curriculum have been taught, pupils are achieving well and generally reaching close to average levels of attainment in those topics covered. Skilful planning of the route through an ICT lesson ensures that pupils stand a better chance of spending valuable lesson time, learning. Where mediocre teaching was seen, in one year 4/5 lesson only, delays occurred because precise steps, using accurate technical vocabulary and learning aids were not prepared well enough. Year 1 pupils are making slow progress in their computer confidence for their age but the school is set to address this.

## **MUSIC**

139. Standards of attainment for seven year olds are typical of pupils of their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about music overall in Year 6, but standards of attainment in singing are average. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in Years 1 and 2. This progress, in singing, is maintained in Years 3-6.
140. Pupils make good progress and attain the standards they do in Year 2 because:
- the scheme of work ensures all National Curriculum requirements are met;
  - teaching and learning in Year 1-2 are good;
  - the leadership and management of the co-ordinator are good;
141. Since the previous inspection the co-ordinator has used her good subject knowledge to improve the scheme of work by drawing on the latest national guidance and interlocking this with commercial schemes. Teachers, because of the good guidance provided in the scheme of work, are more confident about teaching the subject and they are less dependent on the co-ordinator. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
142. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good for several reasons:
- the planning is good;
  - teachers have high expectations of what pupils of all levels of attainment should be able to do;
  - the interesting activities are matched well to what teachers want all pupils to know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson;
  - the support provided by learning support assistants, when present, for pupils with special educational needs ensures these pupils are able to participate fully in the lesson and make the same progress as other pupils;
  - teachers ensure that pupils know what they have achieved during the lesson.
- In a good Year 2 lesson all pupils really enjoyed the challenge of learning how sounds could be represented by symbols. When learning the song 'Toys', they listened closely to the track from the compact disc so were able to join in and sing with a sense of rhythm, mainly in tune and with enjoyment. The song also reinforced learning in history well because it consolidated knowledge and understanding of 'then' and 'now'.
143. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning in Year 3-6. However, a short observation of a Year 6 singing activity indicated that singing was typical of pupils of this age. A Ugandan traditional song, 'Dipidu', fostered pupils understanding of other cultures and was sung very respectfully. Three other songs linked closely to work in history about World War II and fostered understanding of this period well.
144. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is satisfactory. Teachers use tape recorders and compact disc players to support learning. In the new computer suite Year 3 pupils were keen to demonstrate how they had used suitable software to translate a poem into sound by composing a melody and sound effects using appropriate software. Pupils were fascinated by the challenge. The use of information and communication technology to support learning

is being extended by the school. This will help to raise standards and foster interest in the subject.

145. Activities outside normal lesson times enrich the music curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and to sing in a choir. These pupils have good opportunities to perform in school for their peers and parents and out of school, for example, in a residential home for the elderly. Through close links with secondary school pupils have had the opportunity to use a recording studio to record songs for a CD. There are also opportunities to learn to play orchestral instruments through the peripatetic service. Visiting musicians also enrich the curriculum by demonstrating what their instruments do and how they are played.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Owing to timetable restrictions, it was only possible to see a small part of the full curriculum, for instance, gymnastics, games and aerobic exercise. Consequently, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about overall standards and achievement. Nevertheless, on the basis of lessons seen and records from swimming, standards are above national expectations in the areas observed. This maintains the standards reported at the time of the last inspection.
147. By the age of seven, pupils are agile and confident when climbing, balancing, jumping and landing. They follow instructions well and respond enthusiastically to the clear instructions they are given. This is particularly noticeable when pupils are working on high and low apparatus; they take great care when on the high parts of the climbing-frame. Higher attaining pupils are particularly good at 'finishes' and they show good discipline in their body positions. They are also very precise when performing forward rolls. In games, the majority throw and catch well and control a bouncing ball well. Lower attaining pupils have some difficulty with ball control, but this improved in the lesson. Nevertheless, more practice at watching the ball into the hands is necessary.
148. By the age of 11, standards in swimming and games exceed expectations. Almost all the pupils leave the school having achieved the 25 metre standard in swimming. The very few pupils who do not achieve the standard are confident in the water and are improving. Standards in games skills reach high levels and this is reflected in the highly successful school teams in football, netball, rugby and athletics. Throughout Years 3 to 6, games skills are good for the majority of pupils. However, what makes their achievements particularly good is the way that they can produce good quality performance when competitive situations are introduced. Higher attaining pupils are particularly good at close control of a ball, either by foot or hand. They are developing good evasion skills and learning quickly the need for tactics to be successful. Huge enjoyment in all lessons and concentration is well maintained.
149. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are consistent practices which have a telling influence on the good standards and achievement. For example:
- All lessons begin and end with a rigorous warm-up and a gentle cool down. Pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on the body and describe it;
  - Good development of skills and the sensible linking of activities into sequences of movements, particularly in Years 1 and 2;
  - High expectations of performance – the little skills such as 'finishing' well are insisted upon and commented on regularly;
  - Higher attaining pupils are used as exemplars for the rest and this visibly improves the performance of lower attaining pupils, most particularly in Years 4 to 6;
  - appropriate attention is paid to safety matters;
  - The high levels of adult commitment and enthusiasm which were amply demonstrated when inclement weather meant that Years 5 and 6 went in the hall for an aerobics class. Pupils were highly motivated, expended a great deal of energy and the lower attaining pupils were given highly specific and well-measured support.
150. Management of the subject is good. The coordinator shows excellent commitment to the subject and pupils' attainment and achievement. There is appropriate monitoring of planning, and staff can rely on the coordinator providing assistance when needed. Lesson observations are done when the coordinator can be released, usually when

there are students in the school. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and benefits from:

- A wide range of activities outside lessons;
- Links with personal, social and health education, most particularly the effects of exercise on the body, health for life and avoiding abuse through smoking.

Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are good. The school is sensibly seeking ways to improve the field and acquire ownership of it.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. Attainment in religious education at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 meets all the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Improvements include the newly introduced scheme of work, criteria for the day-to-day judging of pupils' levels of attainment, and the raised awareness of the role that personal and social education plays in religious education. The recently appointed co-coordinator has already identified areas for improvement. The findings of the 2002 inspection largely agree with the strengths and weaknesses already identified by the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support from the classroom assistants.

Strengths include:

- the broadening of the curriculum.; Links between religious education and assembly themes;
- links with personal and social education;
- relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils and pupils;
- the range of visits to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Areas for development are:

- consolidation of the new scheme of work;
- the extension of the provision of information, communications and technology;
- the use of information and communication technology as an aid to judging and recording pupils' levels of attainment.

152. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Bible stories and of their significance to everyday life. They write their own prayers, showing a developing awareness of the non-visible aspects of life. In Years 1 and 2, much of the work is oral. This is appropriate for pupils of this age, because they gain much from talking, discussing and listening, particularly as their associated writing skills are less well developed. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the differences between religious beliefs and practices. They compare and contrast different customs, symbols and significant artefacts between the Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish faiths. They learn about festivals, such as Hannukah and compare the celebration of harvest in Christian and Jewish faiths. In a good link with personal and social education, the pupils consider relationships, friendships and community, and through their own experiences of families are able to explore the concept of feelings, such as jealousy and belonging. They explore the importance of giving and receiving and pupils identify with these concepts through the resources and activities provided. Good links with design and technology were seen when pupils in Year 1, designed and made Joseph's coat of many colours and other pupils made a photo frame to contain a photograph of themselves.

153. Year 3 and 6 pupils gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of different beliefs and explore the use of symbolism in religion. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have acquired a knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and major events in the Christian Church's calendar. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the Buddhists' symbolism of light, and the lotus flower and its relationship with the festival of Bodhi. After a period of meditation and reflection, they wrote down on a Bodhi leaf, positive descriptive words which indicated their own perceptions of themselves and showed an excellent grasp of this difficult concept of Enlightenment. During 'Circle Time' and in their everyday contact with others, pupils develop a clear understanding of their feelings, beliefs, values and experiences. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils show a good empathy with people in difficult situations and consider, thoughtfully, human rights issues and these opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' moral development. Good links with English were seen, when pupils in Year 6 listened intently as another pupil took on the role of a person living at the time of World War II and answered relevant questions about his character, appropriately, demonstrating satisfactory listening and speaking skills.
154. Pupils' attitudes in lessons and assemblies range from good to excellent. They take part eagerly and listen well and show respect for beliefs, opinions and traditions that are different from their own. Most offer views and opinions confidently and give thoughtful answers to questions. Lessons also include elements of citizenship and insights into life in a multicultural society.
155. Lessons make a good contribution, together with acts of collective worship, to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their skills in literacy. The emphasis, which all adults place on the need to show care and concern for others, supports the teaching of religious education and contributes very effectively, to pupils' personal development, which is a strength of the school. The daily acts of worship supplement learning and provide satisfactory opportunities for reflection. In a Year 6 assembly, pupils had very good opportunities through the study of the feelings and beliefs associated with the Germans in World War, to reflect on and how preconceived, false ideas are formed about people of different race, colour and creed.
156. On the basis of the teaching seen and the scrutiny of pupils' work, teaching is good. Teachers follow the good scheme of work and planning, which enables the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus to be covered. The range of topics studied is interesting and most teachers bring the subject alive by the activities provided. These include thoughtful discussions, debates, for example, on intolerance, and practical activities, such as meditation, to explore and investigate. Formal judging of pupils' skills is in place for every year group and is to be implemented very shortly. There is no sample of pupils' assessed work to help teachers judge the standard of pupils' work. The range of artefacts is adequate and is to be supplemented as and when appropriate. A good selection for the study of Buddhism was seen.
157. Since the previous inspection, a subject coordinator has been appointed very recently and is beginning to provide informed support for the other teachers. She has a development plan for religious education on how to take the subject forward. The school has consolidated its position through the introduction of the re-viewed Cumbria Local Agreed Syllabus and the subject has a suitably high profile in the curriculum and reflects the aims of the school well.