

INSPECTION REPORT

**OLD HUTTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Kendal

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112263

Headteacher: Mr Graham Frost

Lead inspector: Dr Richard Perkin

Dates of inspection: 7th - 8th February 2005

Inspection number: 267428

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 95

School address: Old Hutton
Kendal
Cumbria

Postcode: LA8 0NQ

Telephone number: 01539 773620

Fax number: 01539 773620

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Mrs N Crierie
governors:

Date of previous May 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school, situated in a small Cumbrian village near Kendal in the south east of the Lake District. There are 95 pupils on roll, with fairly equal numbers of boys and girls. Almost all are from white, British backgrounds, with a very small number from other white backgrounds. The social and economic circumstances of the pupils, while mixed, are overall above average. A below average number of pupils qualify for free school meals. A significant proportion of pupils travel to the school from surrounding villages and hamlets. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is variable from year-to-year and within a wide range; overall it is broadly at expected levels, though with a significant proportion with underdeveloped listening and attention skills. English is not an additional language for any of the pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average but the proportion with statements of special educational needs is above average, representing 3 per cent of the school's population. The range of special educational needs includes dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autism. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the usual is high and this can negatively affect performance in national tests in such a small school. The school has been awarded 'Investors in People' status and has gained the 'Arts Mark Gold' and the 'Active Mark Silver' awards. It is designated as a 'Focus School' for the region on the ICT Schools Register. It also has the 'Healthy Schools' award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14591	Richard Perkin	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language English Religious education
13723	Jean Overend	Lay inspector	
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History
30954	Brian Ashcroft	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a successful and effective school with many very strong features. Pupils achieve well and those with special educational needs make very good progress. Academic standards are above average and pupils' personal development is very good. Teaching is very good. Pupils think highly of the school, which is well regarded by their parents. Leadership and management are strong, with very good direction from the headteacher, key staff and governing body. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Above average standards and good achievement in the core subjects because of the high proportion of very good teaching;
- Very good achievement and high standards in information and communication technology (ICT);
- Very strong leadership and governance;
- Very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs because of the high quality provision for their needs;
- Assessment and monitoring of standards in subjects other than English and mathematics are underdeveloped;
- Excellent involvement of pupils in the life and work of the school, leading to high levels of personal development;
- Inconsistency in the quality of end of year reports on pupils' progress.

Improvement has been very good since the last inspection. Standards in the core subjects have improved and in ICT they have improved significantly. Provision for pupils' personal development is better, notably in their spiritual development, and consequently behaviour, attitudes and relationships have improved. Teaching and assessment have improved and the curriculum is significantly richer. There have also been improvements in leadership and governance. All the key issues have been successfully addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	E	B	A
mathematics	E	E	C	C
science	D	D	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is good in all parts of the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and are on target to reach the required goals in all the areas of learning by the end of reception. At present, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, with pupils achieving well in all three subjects. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils reach standards above those expected in English, mathematics and science and, in ICT and speaking and listening, standards are well above average.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. They have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching throughout the school is of high quality. Teachers know their subjects and their age groups very well and plan interesting work that is very effectively geared towards the needs of the pupils. Support staff are used to great effect, particularly with pupils with special educational needs. Assessment is very effective in English and mathematics but less well developed in other subjects. ICT is very well used in teaching and learning.

The curriculum is of high quality, very strongly enriched by a variety of visits, visitors and outside activities. The very good quality of the accommodation and learning resources has a strong impact on pupils' learning. Good standards of care are backed by very good provision of help and advice, based on rigorous monitoring of pupils' literacy, numeracy and personal development. The school's procedures for involving pupils in the life of the school are outstanding. There are very constructive links with the church, the community and other schools and colleges. The partnership with parents is productive and has some very strong features. However, the quality of information provided in the end of year reports on pupils' progress is inconsistent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and a clear vision, which is shared with a very effective team of staff. Consequently, the potential barriers to learning presented by significant pupil mobility and high proportions of pupils with statements of special educational need have been successfully overcome. Very careful financial planning and efficient management ensure that the school runs smoothly. The governing body is very good and ensures that all statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views of the school and particularly approve of the fact that their children like school. They like the quality of teaching and the fact that the school is making their children mature and responsible. Some are concerned about the quality of the information they receive about their children's progress. A few have reservations about the quality of leadership in the school, a concern for which the inspection team found no justification.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and particularly like ICT and the way in which teachers make learning fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of the assessment and monitoring of subjects other than English and mathematics;
- Improve the quality of information provided in the end of year reports on pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good in all parts of the school. Lower and higher attainers achieve well and pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Children in the Foundation Stage are on target to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the areas of learning. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, with pupils achieving well in all three subjects. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards above those expected in English, mathematics and science and, in ICT and speaking and listening, standards are well above average. Achievement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are high and pupils achieve very well;
- Standards in speaking and listening are high;
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress;
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and pupils achieve well.

Commentary

1. Statistics about pupils' performance in the national tests for 7 and 11-year-olds need to be treated with caution because of the small numbers involved. The results are also affected in some years by the number of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils who join the school at times other than in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, results fluctuate considerably from year-to-year and it is not possible to identify trends securely. The relative achievement of boys and girls varies considerably over time, although recent trends for pupils at the end of Year 6 have seen girls do markedly better than boys, notably in mathematics. There is no evidence from the inspection to show that boys or girls are achieving less well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.0 (13.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.6 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The small numbers taking the national tests for 7-year-olds in 2004 did very well in reading and writing. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, reached the nationally expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In writing and, even more so, in mathematics, the proportion reaching the above average level was high. In mathematics, pupils' performance was in the top 5 per cent nationally. Results compared well or very well with those of schools in similar circumstances.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (24.8)	26.9 (26.8)

mathematics	27.0 (25.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.5 (28.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In the tests for 11-year-olds in 2004, results were above average in English and average in both mathematics and science. Most of the pupils reached the nationally expected level in English and all did in science. However, no pupil reached the level above that expected in science. The results compared very well with those of similar schools for English and were broadly similar for mathematics and science. In 2004, the school met its target for English at the nationally expected level and surpassed it for higher level results. It did not meet its target for mathematics at the expected level or its target for science for the higher attainers.
4. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. A significant proportion of them start with levels of personal and emotional development and communication skills that are below those expected for their age. These children, and those identified as having special educational needs, make particularly good progress. Overall, children are on target to reach the level expected in all the areas of learning by the time they leave reception. The stimulating classroom and expert teaching and support ensure that children's interest is caught as soon as they start school. The teacher's high expectations of behaviour and concentration help even those with poor listening skills and low attention levels to settle quickly and develop good learning habits.
5. Pupils' good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2 as the result of very good teaching. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is systematic and effective. Pupils receive a good grounding in those subjects and achieve well, reaching above average levels by the end of Year 2. The good balance between the development of skills and the provision of opportunities for pupils to explore, write and learn independently means that more able pupils also do well in English and mathematics. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to investigate independently and to record their findings in science and, consequently, few are working at levels above the average. The very good resources for, and the teachers' expertise in, ICT mean that pupils do very well in this subject, reaching well above expected standards for their age.
6. There is a high proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6, so that pupils of all abilities continue to achieve well. The teachers' adventurous and stimulating approaches to writing, and the many rich opportunities they provide for pupils to talk for a variety of purposes, lead to well above average standards in speaking and listening and above average levels in writing. Pupils do well and reach above average standards in reading. A strong focus on mental mathematics and on applying mathematics in practical situations results in above average levels of work and high levels of interest from the pupils. Pupils reach standards in science that are above average. Pupils' skilful use of ICT in other subjects is a strong feature of their learning and enables them to improve standards in other subjects while developing their ICT skills to a high level.
7. Pupils of all abilities are enabled to achieve to their capacity. Those with special educational needs often attain standards that are at the national average level. This is because they work very well in lessons and teachers take very good account of their individual education plans and group them for extra support. This enables the pupils to achieve their targets. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school. Pupils identified as gifted or talented are given work that

challenges them well, working, for instance, with an older group in mathematics where they are deemed to need the extra challenge. The interest of both boys and girls is caught by the imaginative choice of lesson content and activity so that they all achieve equally well. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and the standards they achieve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attendance rate is very good and pupils are consistently punctual;
- The children are very happy at school;
- The very positive child centred ethos promotes very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships;
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very actively promoted and impacts on all areas of school life.

Commentary

8. As pupils progress through the school, they develop very well into mature responsible individuals. Pupils clearly like coming to school, something on which all parents agreed in the questionnaires. Younger children indicated that they really liked working with the whiteboards and doing art. The older children loved being at a 'Techno-School' but also spoke very highly of how teachers make the learning fun.
9. Pupils behave very well and there have been no exclusions recently. The older pupils in particular show that they know what is expected of them and respond very well. Pupils with special educational needs show very positive attitudes towards their work. They enjoy very good relationships with the adults who work with them. Although a small minority of parents had concerns about behaviour, pupils' views are that on the rare occasions that bullying happens, it is taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Play at lunchtimes, though sometimes boisterous, is rarely aggressive. Older pupils play very well with younger ones and look after them. Relationships throughout the school are very good and the adults act as very good role models. This ensures that the school operates as a calm and very orderly community. The pupils work very well together as partners, prefects, monitors and in groups, all showing very well developed co-operative skills.
10. The school promotes spiritual development very well, a marked improvement since the last inspection. Assemblies contribute to this development. They are very well planned and linked to other learning. They provide time for pupils to reflect on their lives, feelings and values. The school works very hard to show pupils that they are valued, giving them a voice through the school council and enabling them to understand and make choices about their own learning through developing their self-evaluation skills. Very good use is made of the wild life area and of visitors, to help pupils develop a fascination and responsibility for the natural world.
11. The pupils' understanding of right and wrong is promoted very consistently throughout the day. Moral debates of high quality are encouraged, as seen in the writing from a literacy lesson with Years 5 and 6, which had led to a discussion on whether the 'big bad wolf' should have eaten the little pigs and whether Goldilocks was trespassing in the wood. Pupils also have many well planned opportunities to learn about charities, as when, for example, a visitor came to talk about 'Fair Trade'.
12. Pupils' social development is being very successfully promoted through, for example, the prefect system. For instance, a young child was brought in from the playground after a tumble by a prefect, under the staff member's instructions to ensure that the child was looked after appropriately. The school council is developing pupils' understanding of citizenship and democracy and of how to work

in a wider society. Pupils are given age-appropriate responsibilities, such as being fruit or milk monitors for the infant children or, for older pupils, being buddies for new children. They take their responsibilities very seriously. Out of school activities and links to other schools, both in this country and in France, broaden opportunities for social interaction. School visits, particularly the annual residential visit, further enhance pupils' social development.

13. The provision for pupils' cultural education is very good overall. The school works very hard to ensure that pupils experience other cultures represented in Britain, as well as their own. Consequently, pupils' multicultural education is good and the school promotes tolerance and understanding of other races and religions well. The school uses visits and visitors to add to the richness and relevance of experiences offered. During the inspection, for instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were able to build on their knowledge of Hindu culture, which had been inspired by a visit from a lady to speak about Hindu wedding customs. Their respect, interest and application to their lesson on Mendhi patterns were of a very high order. A visiting Moslem couple also talked about their customs and beliefs to the pupils. The recent visit of Years 5 and 6 to the Urbis centre in Manchester gave a very positive picture of the contributions made by other cultures to our society as people move into cities. The teaching of French from Year 2 upwards, with links to French schools and inclusion of learning about other French speaking countries, is a very useful addition to pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils are getting very good first hand experiences of the ICT culture of today. Strong links to the local church and local community with very well planned visits and visitors, are ensuring that pupils gain a very good cultural education.

Attendance

14. Attendance figures compare very well with the national picture.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.5	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. There is a broad, balanced and very stimulating curriculum, enhanced by a rich programme of visits and visitors and a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The school is a caring one that provides very good advice and support. It is extremely good at taking account of and acting on the views of the pupils. There are very strong links with the community and with other schools and a productive partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good overall. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is consistently very strong. The very effective use of ICT to promote learning across the curriculum is a notable feature. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and insist on high standards of behaviour;
- Resources are used very well;
- Lessons are very well prepared;
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning;
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	6	1	0	0	0

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

15. Throughout the school, teachers have very good subject knowledge. This enables them to plan lessons which are sufficiently challenging for all pupils. In the Foundation Stage, children make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding, because the teacher knows how children learn and applies this skilfully across all areas of development. All teachers have high expectations of pupils. They establish very good relationships with pupils and listen to what they say. The resulting confidence among pupils means that all are enthusiastic and keen to do well. They behave very well in lessons and, as a consequence, tackle the challenging work they are set with interest and energy. A good example was seen when pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class had to interpret line graphs. The activity promoted much lively discussion, yet all achieved the objective during the lesson.
16. Teachers make very good use of ICT equipment. All are skilled in the use of the interactive whiteboards. This helps pupils to focus and increases the pace of learning in a clear and interesting way. It also provides a very good role model for pupils who consequently use ICT with great confidence. A very good range of teaching methods is used. Songs, question games and group conversations were used to very good effect in a French lesson, while there was equally effective use of role play in an English lesson, to help pupils understand the concept of performance poems. Teachers recognise the different learning styles of pupils and ensure that all are engaged in learning throughout the lesson.
17. The very good teamwork of teachers and support staff ensures that all pupils are engaged in learning at the right level. This is particularly true of those who have additional specific needs. The extra support they receive outside of the main classroom enables them to achieve very well. Teaching provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Special educational need pupils have full access to the curriculum. Very good support is provided for them, using the specialist services where necessary. They achieve very well and make very good progress in relation to their abilities.
18. Teachers provide an interesting range of homework tasks, some of which are practical and enable pupils to follow-up and consolidate their learning in school, across a wide range of subjects. As a result, homework enhances pupils' learning very well.
19. There are very good systems for tracking pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Data from assessment tests is carefully analysed to highlight pupils' individual needs, allowing teachers to plan appropriately for them. Procedures for assessing in other subjects however, are not yet secure. This leaves teachers with too little evidence about how well pupils develop knowledge and skills in relation to national expectations for their age. A very good feature of assessment is the way

pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning. An innovative ICT system allows pupils to record their feelings about each lesson. The information is picked up by the class teacher who plans appropriately for the next lesson. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond very well to this and enjoy having some ownership of their learning.

The curriculum

There is a high quality curriculum which provides a very wide range of worthwhile opportunities that cater very well for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the pupils. The school provides very good opportunities for enriching the curriculum. Accommodation and learning resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The breadth of curricular opportunities has significantly improved since the time of the last inspection;
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good;
- There is a very good curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage;
- The upgrade of ICT provision has meant that ICT is now firmly embedded across all areas of the curriculum;
- A varied programme of experiences, through visits, clubs and other activities, helps to enrich the curriculum very well;
- Accommodation and resources have greatly improved and are now very good.

Commentary

20. Since the last inspection, curriculum provision has significantly improved. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and, in addition, the curriculum is further enriched by pupils from Year 2 onwards having the opportunity to learn French. The school is very effective in ensuring that all pupils are included in what it has to offer.
21. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. The planning takes full account of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum and covers all the areas of learning. The classroom and outdoor facilities are very effectively geared up to promote the children's learning, providing rich opportunities for them to make progress. There is a good range of learning resources that are used to very good effect. For example, the Chinese restaurant, open as part of the celebrations for Chinese New Year, stimulates a wide range of exciting opportunities for the children to learn in most of the areas of learning.
22. The curriculum caters very well for those pupils with special educational needs. There is early identification of pupils' needs and individual education plans effectively identify clear and achievable targets for the pupils. They receive strong support from the classroom assistants who work with them and this ensures that they are fully included in the range of opportunities open to the class. Their progress is regularly assessed and recorded by the class teachers. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very closely with parents, support staff, teaching staff and all outside agencies, to ensure that the pupils are very effectively supported.
23. The curriculum is very well organised to enable the pupils to build upon what they have already achieved. The needs of all the pupils are carefully planned for in the mixed age classes. Many more opportunities are now given to pupils to solve mathematical problems and conduct their own scientific investigations. The ICT provision in school is now excellent and this is having a great impact on the pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum. Staff use interactive whiteboards

imaginatively to stimulate the pupils' interest, whilst the pupils use the computer to record, research or extend their learning in almost every lesson.

24. The school makes very good use of the local community, visits and visitors to supplement the work done in the classroom. Pupils have many opportunities to visit places of interest as part of their topics and this makes learning more meaningful to them. There is a residential visit each year for pupils in Years 5 and 6, where pupils extend their experience of outdoor and adventurous activities and improve their physical education skills.
25. The accommodation has been extended and is now very good. The classrooms are bright, well thought out learning environments and all areas of the school are enhanced by good quality displays of pupils' work. The regular access to the adjacent village hall is a valuable asset. The generous and attractive outdoor facilities, including the wildlife area and adventure playground, provide another valuable resource for the school and its pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good;
- Very good use is made of assessment and tracking data in English and mathematics;
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported;
- Induction into the school is very well considered;
- The school's consultation and involvement of pupils is excellent.

Commentary

26. The school provides a good standard of care for all pupils. The child protection co-ordinator is well trained and has ensured that other staff are appropriately trained, so that levels of awareness and vigilance are kept high. Health and safety arrangements are good, with risk assessments used to inform practice for school activities and visits. Good use is made of expertise available from governors and the local education authority, as well as ensuring that up-to-date training is available. The school teaches children to think about safe practice at work and play and encourages them to adopt healthy practices, such as eating healthy food and getting exercise.
27. There are good assessment systems in place for monitoring pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and these are being extended to cover more subjects. Staff use assessment very well to ensure that the specific needs of groups and individuals are met in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs have very good access to well informed support, advice and guidance from their teachers and support assistants. Provision is also made for gifted and talented pupils where appropriate. For example, pupils who are particularly strong in mathematics work with an older age group in that subject. Support staff are very well deployed throughout the whole lesson to help individuals and groups. The headteacher

encourages pupils to email him with book reviews and other articles and this is an additional aid in monitoring pupils' progress and encouraging their self-evaluation.

28. The induction process into the Foundation Stage is spoken of very well by parents. The children are very well supported by staff who have very good systems for exchanging information with parents and also with the pre-school. Pupils who join the school later have their settling in carefully monitored and are given a buddy for playtime and in the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs have very effective arrangements to make their move from class to class as smooth as possible. Teachers seek pupils' views in 'Circle Time' and class discussions. Through the work of the school council, pupils' views are gathered, discussed and acted upon, giving them the responsibility for improving their school. Pupils on the council are proud that they can initiate fund raising events, choose charities and buy equipment for the playground. Through the school's child-centred approach, pupils are also involved in understanding, choosing and evaluating their own learning. For example, pupils complete self-assessment tasks using ICT and choose their own reading books in Years 3 and 4.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good. Links with the community, other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong partnership with parents;
- Parents make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning through helping with homework and in school;
- Community links, including those with the church, are very well planned and impact very well on learning through visits and visitors;
- Very strong links with other schools and colleges enhance learning opportunities.

Commentary

29. The school has a strong partnership with its parents and most parents show a high level of satisfaction with the school. All parents are happy that their children like school. A minority of parents do not feel well informed, particularly about their children's progress. The school provides a wide range of very well presented information for parents. This includes newsletters, a website and the touch screen computer in the school foyer, all of which give high quality information about the school. The number of curriculum evenings provided is generous and the school sends home termly topic information in good time for parents to be able to help their children. The school regularly consults parents, for example after curriculum evenings, to get their opinions and to find out what other subjects would interest them for further evenings. However, although all parents spoken to were aware of their children's targets, the end of year reports are inconsistent in their indication of the progress the children have made and the skills achieved. There are also too few helpful next steps for learning which parents and pupils can work on.
30. The school makes very good use of the available parental support through the setting of homework and making clear its expectations. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept very well involved and informed of their children's progress through meetings, both formal and informal. There is early identification of any pupils who have special educational needs.
31. Parents come into school to help with lessons and trips, and these parents are well guided by teachers so that they make positive contributions to learning. There is also very good support for the school from the Home School Association, which runs events and raises funds successfully.
32. A small minority of parents strongly disagree that the school's leadership is good. They question some of the decisions made and feel that they are not sufficiently consulted. However, the inspection judgement is that, under the leadership of the present headteacher, the school has made very good improvement. The inspection has found no evidence to support the concerns of these parents.
33. The school has made very good links with the local and wider community. It receives occasional gifts from local organisations and in turn it supports local charities, for instance, the Cumbria Air Ambulance. The school's support for the local footpaths campaign is another example of the two-way partnership it has in the locality. Visits by the vicar are appreciated and contribute to learning, as has the visit

of a parent involved in the local mountain rescue service. The use of the village hall for physical education provides a convenient and valuable facility and the school has regular involvement in village and church events. Many other visits and visitors allow the children a far richer curriculum than would otherwise be possible for a small school.

34. There is a very good link to the nearby pre-school which is enabling the school to tackle the recent problem of some children entering the Foundation Stage with below average communication skills. Introducing the phonics scheme that the school uses to the pre-school has also increased the curriculum links in place. Sporting links have been built with other small schools, so that pupils can experience football and netball competitions. There are other collaborations, such as shared theme days and celebrations. Close links to local secondary schools aid the transition process. For example, pupils worked with one secondary school to develop the outside play facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership of key staff is also very strong. Governance is highly effective and well led. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very clear and well directed leadership and is backed by a very strong team of key staff;
- The very knowledgeable governing body supports and challenges the school very effectively;
- Financial management is very strong.

Commentary

35. In the two and a half years that the headteacher has been in post, he has made considerable improvements to the school's accommodation and resources, as well as making a significant contribution to the higher standards and teaching quality now seen in the school. In addition to observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work, his weekly teaching of each class enables him to monitor the quality of teaching and learning very effectively. The most notable aspect of his vision for the school can be seen in the ways in which ICT now underpins almost every aspect of the school's life, enhancing communication with parents and the outside world, supporting administration and management and, most importantly, improving pupils' standards and the quality of education throughout the school. Putting this vision into practice would not have been possible without the strong support of a high quality staff team and enlightened and forward looking governors.
36. The leadership of key areas of the curriculum, such as English, mathematics, the Foundation Stage, ICT and special educational needs, is very strong. The leadership of most other subjects tends to be a joint matter, which helps learning across several subjects in a themed approach to topics such as the local environment; such an approach, while lacking the precision and accountability of more direct subject leadership, nonetheless works well in providing a stimulating curriculum. Leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator is skilled, knowledgeable and experienced. Through her, the provision and for progress of pupils with special educational needs have significantly improved since the time of the last inspection. She works with staff to review pupils' progress and liaises with parents and all outside agencies.
37. The effectively led governing body plays an important part in setting the educational direction of the school and its ethos. It fully supports the school's commitment to the

inclusion of pupils of all needs and abilities and to equal opportunities. It strongly backs the school's successful commitment to racial harmony and its effective anti-bullying policy. Through governors' participation in a variety of school related activities, it knows the school's strengths and areas for development very well. Individual members of the governing body also contribute effectively to the day-to-day life of the school. The governors have supported the headteacher and the school in recent initiatives and challenged decisions where necessary.

38. The school uses its budget very well to enhance the achievement of its pupils through developing appropriate accommodation and learning resources. It is committed to maintaining staffing levels and works imaginatively to squeeze the most value out of the money it receives. The day-to-day running of the school is very efficient.
39. Strong management in all aspects of the school's life has meant that the impact of potential barriers to learning, such as the high levels of pupil mobility that exist and the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, have been countered very effectively. The school has ensured high quality provision for pupils with special educational needs and very good induction procedures that enable new arrivals to settle and have their learning and other needs identified quickly. The school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	206956	Balance from previous year	1722
Total expenditure	207817	Balance carried forward to the next	861
Expenditure per pupil	3420		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in all areas of learning as a result of very good teaching and expert support;
- The layout of the classroom and the quality of display stimulates and develops children's language and communication skills very well;
- The teacher and other adults use a wide range of strategies to ensure that children listen and concentrate well;
- The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught systematically and enjoyably;
- Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developed through a wide variety of interesting activities.

Commentary

40. Leadership and management in the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and sets an example for the staff team. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The teacher is very experienced and expert in working with young children, as is the support assistant. Parents, students and other volunteers help in the class at various times. They are invariably carefully briefed and enhance the provision well. The classroom is very well arranged to promote learning and personal development. Areas such as the Chinese Restaurant provide very fruitful sources of interest, discussion and learning. It encourages children to work and play together while learning about the food and customs of another culture. The children were very excited at the prospect of celebrating Chinese New Year and eating Chinese food. There are very good facilities for outdoor play and physical development which are used well. Careful records are kept of each child's progress and these are used to plan for future activities. Children with special educational needs are given very good support that enables them to make very good progress in the target areas identified for them.
41. Children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development**. A significant number of children arrive in school with lower levels of concentration than usual and their listening skills are often underdeveloped. The teacher, support staff and other adults work very hard and effectively to settle the children into reception quickly. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Staff make it clear what is expected of children and share their own high expectations with them. Consequently, although it sometimes takes a great deal of hard work and skill from the adults, the children learn to work hard, play together with enjoyment and in harmony and behave well. Children are encouraged to play independently in the Chinese Restaurant or in the office, where individual children can practise writing 'letters' or 'stories'. At the end of the day, they sing a prayer and put their thumbs up if they've tried hard today. Caring is promoted when the class Teddy Bear is allocated to a child for his overnight stay. Children that had previously had him to

stay described their experiences confidently. Adults seek to instil the values of the school by setting a very good example in their own relationships in school. Most children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception, though it has been a long hard journey for some.

42. Achievement is good in **communication, language and literacy**. Most children are on track to achieve the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of reception. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Children who start school finding it hard to listen carefully are targeted by the adults to good effect. The basic skills of literacy are taught systematically, partly through a phonics programme that is also now used in pre-school to help give children a head start when they begin reception. The teacher shares books and stories with verve and enjoyment, so that the children develop positive attitudes to books and to reading. They look at the word 'closed' as the Restaurant shuts for the day and are asked what sound would 'shut' begin with if they used it instead of 'closed'. Displays are carefully labelled and writing for all kinds of purposes is used throughout the classroom. Children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes. For example, those who have been host to the Bear write a diary entry with the help of their parents and share it with the rest of the class, thus developing their speaking and listening skills as well as their skills in writing.
43. Children achieve well in their **mathematical development**. They receive very good teaching in this area. The classroom contains many prompts to count, recognise numbers and shapes and use 'money'. There are also opportunities for children to assess their own achievements in number: 'I can count to 20 ... can you?' The Restaurant provides rich opportunities for children to use mathematical language and to apply their skills to real life situations. Children sing number songs and make two and three-dimensional shapes from construction materials. The teacher is adept at catching their attention in lively ways, using, for example, a colourful bag filled with different shapes to stimulate the children to guess what will be next out of the bag. Most are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of reception.
44. A broad range of exciting activities helps to develop the children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Their visits to the school's wildlife area, for example, get them started on scientific observation and recording. Their work on Chinese New Year is supplemented by a boy's account of his father's trip to China. When children create patterns from the shapes they are studying, the teacher and support assistant help them to use the digital camera to take photographs of their work. Children begin to use the computer to play games and make pictures, gaining in confidence and skill in using the mouse and the keyboard. They learn how to use the interactive whiteboard, following the teacher's example. Teaching is very good. Children achieve well in this area of learning and are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of reception.
45. Children's **physical development** is at levels expected for their age and they are on track to reach the expected goals by the end of reception. Children's opportunities for physical activity are not limited to their physical education lessons, some of which are held in the nearby village hall. They make very good use of the play area outside and also use the classroom for movement games that reinforce their learning in mathematics. Teaching in this area of learning is very good and children achieve well.
46. No specific teaching was seen in **creative development** but there is ample evidence in children's work and around the classroom that they are on the way towards meeting the relevant learning goals by the end of reception. Lively paintings feature in a display of work arising from a circus skills day and there are carefully

observed drawings of vehicles using a handwriting pen. Printed patterns and Chinese dragon masks provide evidence of a broad and rich curriculum in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH and MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are high standards and achievement in speaking and listening, greatly enhanced by French lessons;
- There has been a marked improvement, particularly in writing, since the last inspection;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in the subject;
- Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school;
- Leadership is very strong;
- There is a high quality curriculum and very good use of literacy in other subjects.

Commentary

47. Pupils' performance in the national tests in 2004 showed strong features for both 7 and 11-year-olds. All the 7-year-olds, including those with special educational needs, reached the nationally expected level in reading and writing. Almost twice as many than in schools nationally achieved the higher level in writing. Overall, results in both reading and writing were well above the national average. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, performance was above average in reading and well above average in writing. A high proportion of 11-year-olds reached the nationally expected level in English and this again included a number of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the results were better than the national average and well above the average for similar schools. The school met its target for English at the nationally expected level and surpassed it for the higher level. The small numbers in Years 2 and 6 over the years make trends difficult to identify securely, either in overall progress or in the relative attainment of boys and girls. While in tests over the past few years, girls have done better than boys, there was no inspection evidence to confirm that either group are not achieving to their capacity.
48. Overall, standards in English for pupils presently in Years 2 and 6 are above the national average but slightly lower than the test results showed for last year's groups. A considerable number of pupils, particularly in Year 6, joined the school over the past few years and have not, therefore, benefited from being at the school for as long as those who started in reception. Pupils achieve at least well and those with special educational needs achieve very well.
49. From the outset in reception, the pupils are expected to speak in groups and in class, a pattern that continues with increasing challenge throughout the school. Consequently, standards in speaking and listening are high and pupils are confident to speak in a wide variety of situations. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are asked not just to study or even read a poem aloud, they are expected to perform it. In addition, they discuss their interpretation and their performances in pairs, adding self-evaluation to their skills. In the same class, a girl very confidently presented her collection of dolls to the class, using a map of the world to show where each originated. She also spontaneously shared interesting cultural information about some of the dolls, such as features of the Maori religion. Older pupils orally analysed

the strengths and weaknesses of a number of opinions in order to prepare to write a balanced argument about foxhunting and whether it should be banned. Consistently, high quality teaching leads to high levels of achievement in this aspect of English. Pupils with special educational needs are also enabled to shine, because teachers and classroom assistants are not afraid to offer them challenge along with the support that they sometimes need. Consequently, these pupils show a great deal of confidence and are prepared, for example, to volunteer to share their work with the rest of the class. They are supported also by the generous help they receive from other pupils, who are not backwards in offering to work with them on tasks.

50. The very good French lessons that pupils experience each week significantly enhance their confidence in oral communication. These lessons produce high levels of interest and enthusiasm, not only for the French language but also for French culture, both in France and in North Africa. Letter exchanges, email links and video conferencing with French schools all develop pupils' English skills, alongside their understanding of the French language and culture.
51. Standards in English have improved considerably since the last inspection, particularly in writing, and are clearly above average. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. More able pupils are challenged by highly imaginative tasks and also achieve to their capability. Much of this improvement has arisen from the emphasis already noted on pupils' oral skills but the very stimulating material offered by teachers has also played its part. For example, older pupils play about with fairy tales and fables, writing the Fable of the Not So Wise Owl or making a case, with witness statements, for Goldilocks being allowed to sleep in the house of the three bears, resulting in writing of high quality. The school's approach to writing is typified by the title of the class spelling book in Years 1 and 2: 'My have a go book' is where pupils try out spellings before checking them, either in the dictionary or with the teacher. There is a very good balance between the teaching of the technical skills of literacy and exciting independent writing. For example, pupils enthusiastically sharing an Afro-Caribbean poem learnt that most of the rhyming words have common spelling patterns and that punctuation is used in particular ways in the poem; far from interrupting their enjoyment of the poem, this provided them with extra points of interest and help in polishing their performance.
52. Two key features in the very good teaching of English in the school are the development of pupils' capacity to work independently and the extensive use of ICT. Very strong leadership in the subject, fully supported by the vision of the headteacher, has ensured a strong emphasis on speaking and listening throughout the school. This, along with continuing attention to the development of pupils' writing skills and consistently effective use of ICT, has led to strong performance in English by pupils of all abilities. The leadership has also made certain that teachers consistently promote pupils' self-evaluation and the evaluation of one another's contributions. A typical example was when pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked with very high levels of concentration on a variety of reading related activities, while the teacher worked with a group of four pupils on guided reading. All eight computers were being used to produce book reviews, seven other pupils listened avidly to a taped story and the rest read the book they had chosen. In all the English lessons seen, there was independent work of some quality taking place, either by individuals or in small groups, and invariably pupils' opinions were valued, while at the same time being challenged so that they had to take their thinking further. Pupils and teachers alike make very full use of the ICT resources available to them. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards very effectively to present material clearly and to

share the lesson objectives with the class. Work is word processed, edited and re-drafted on the computers and presentations of high quality are produced by the pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Pupils' English skills are used very effectively in other subjects to the benefit of their English achievement, as well as their achievement in the other subject. In history, pupils write in role as Jarrow marchers and report on visits that they make. They comment on investigations in science and write down points to support their argument in religious education and personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE). Lessons in every subject feature oral contributions from pupils, so that they are provided with many opportunities to speak and listen.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and are now above average at the ages of 7 and 11;
- The very good teaching and learning enables pupils to achieve well;
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress;
- ICT is used very effectively to support learning;
- Pupils are now given many opportunities to understand and solve problems;
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented very well and there is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills;
- Pupils enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes towards mathematics.

Commentary

54. Since the time of the last inspection, standards in mathematics have improved, particularly for pupils in Year 2. The number of pupils taking the national tests each year is relatively small which means that the attainment of individual pupils has a large effect on the overall picture. Therefore, the results alone do not give a reliable basis on which to judge pupils' overall attainment. For example, in this year's Year 6, a quarter of the pupils have special educational needs and this will inevitably affect the results. However, pupils in Year 2 have done very well in national tests during the past two years. In 2003, their performance was well above the national average and in 2004, results were in the top 5 per cent nationally. In 2004, all pupils reached the nationally expected level and half reached the level above that. Performance compared very well with similar schools. Results for pupils in Year 6 in 2004 were broadly average and in line with the results for similar schools. However, the pupils in Years 2 and 6 at present are achieving standards that are above the national average.
55. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls and all pupils achieve at least well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their abilities because work is planned at the right level for them and they receive very good support from the learning support assistants. This enables them to take an active part in all the lessons. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, the learning support assistant discussed the answers during the mental

starter to the lesson and then gave very good support to the lower attaining group during the activities. This gave the pupils confidence and helped them to answer simple problems involving number.

56. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented very well and this is having a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The strong focus on acquiring number and calculation skills means that the pupils can apply these skills when they are solving problems. Many opportunities are now given for pupils throughout the school to tackle mathematical investigations, a weakness identified at the time of the last inspection.
57. Teachers take great care to make sure that pupils understand what they are doing. For example, they continually give opportunities for pupils to explain how they have calculated their answers. Pupils respond by enjoying the lessons and joining in enthusiastically. In Year 6, pupils were explaining how to find the lowest common denominator of two fractions when they were comparing the sizes. One child was heard to say, 'I know that the fraction will stay the same if I multiply the top and bottom numbers of the fraction by the same number.'

58. ICT is used very well to enhance learning for the pupils. Teachers are skilled at using the interactive whiteboards to explain things or to provide help in counting exercises, as was seen in a very good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2. In another very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher skilfully used the whiteboard to illustrate how to interpret data using line graphs. Seeing 'Mr Archimedes' sitting in the bath as the water filled up, made the learning 'fun' for the pupils and assisted in the very good progress they made in the lesson.
59. The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good. Lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. Challenging and interesting activities spark pupils' interest and make them want to be involved. Time is used very well and not a moment is wasted. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this enables questioning to be used to check the pupils' understanding and to develop their learning further.
60. Teachers know the pupils well. They have a good knowledge and understanding of how well the pupils are doing because very good assessment and tracking procedures are in place. Pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing and enjoy using the computers to complete the self-evaluation tasks at the end of lessons.
61. Leadership and management of mathematics are strong. Pupils' work, test results and teaching are carefully monitored to see where improvements can be made. Very effective systems are in place for analysing and tracking pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. This is very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects. ICT is used very well as pupils work on selected programs during the lessons. In science, pupils collect data and produce graphs and charts. They use their measuring skills in design and technology and in history they use time lines to help them understand the chronology of events. In geography, pupils used their number skills when they calculated the land use of different areas of Kendal.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and pupils' achievement are improving;
- There is a very good focus on the teaching of science enquiry skills;
- Assessment systems have yet to be fully tested.

Commentary

63. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. The most recent national tests for pupils in Year 6 show improved attainment levels over previous years. This heralded a rising trend in achievement which is evident in the work seen during the inspection. The weaknesses mentioned in the previous report have been

dealt with well. Consequently, pupils now develop good enquiry skills because of the focus which is placed on investigative work in lessons. There is also a better emphasis on developing scientific terminology and the expectation that pupils will use it when recording or reporting back. Standards currently are solidly in line with expectations and are set to improve by the end of Year 6 because of the strong teaching. By the end of Year 2, all pupils are likely to gain at least the expected level with a significant proportion set to achieve higher than the national expectation.

64. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection is very good overall. Lessons are well planned with a very good focus on investigation, so pupils find things out for themselves. During an investigation into forces, for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 posed some interesting questions which led to further investigation. For example, one group decided to change the aerodynamics of a model car to see if it changed the rate or distance it travelled down a ramp. Lessons are made more purposeful for pupils because teachers expect them to apply skills from other subjects. Pupils in Year 2 had to measure out 20 gram pieces of plasticine to use as weights, in order find out how many grams were needed to 'pull' a sledge. Relationships established in lessons are very good. There is a good rapport between teachers and their classes so pupils are confident, knowing that their ideas are valued. Pupils are very enthusiastic and take pride in their work, which they record logically and neatly in their books. Teaching support staff make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They work skilfully with small groups, particularly those who have additional learning needs. Teachers set interesting homework tasks which enable pupils to carry on the challenges of science enquiry outside of school. For example, pupils log their pulse rate after exercise or investigate electrical circuits and record their results. Time is taken in lessons to discuss and evaluate the work being done. This allows pupils to share their ideas and learn from one another. Formal systems for assessment are recent and not yet fully established. These are to be incorporated into the new ICT self-assessment system. Attainment in science knowledge is to be measured against national curriculum levels with a view to providing information for target setting.
65. Science is led and managed well by the headteacher. In-service training has sharpened teachers' knowledge and skills and the impact on learning is beginning to drive up standards and achievement. Resources have improved and good use is made of the environment as well as science workshops and the 'Life Education Science' bus to promote learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above expectations;
- ICT is used very effectively to underpin learning in other subjects;
- Teachers provide very good role models by using ICT confidently in lessons;
- Resources are very good and used to very good effect.

Commentary

66. The school has continued to build on the improving standards seen during the previous inspection. The headteacher is quick to provide new opportunities for pupils to use ICT. As a consequence, the range of experiences pupils gain and the

skills they apply exceed expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The somewhat bold decision not to create an ICT suite has proven beneficial to pupils' learning. Classrooms are well provided with workstations which enable pupils to apply their skills continuously across many subjects. Combined with the motivation and commitment shown by the headteacher, who leads the subject, along with staff, the use of ICT has become firmly embedded in the learning process. Throughout the school, pupils use ICT and supplementary equipment very effectively. Pupils in Year 2 retrieved work which they had done over the year in literacy, numeracy and history. The youngest pupils combined ICT and science by taking digital photographs of themselves using different kinds of pushing and pulling equipment. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their annotated PowerPoint presentations. Some used a video link, for example, to give a presentation about a specific topic, while others created moving cartoon films. Pupils explained clearly how they use ICT to support learning in history, geography, science, musical composition and religious education in lessons.

67. Teaching and learning are very effective. There is a very high expectation that pupils will use ICT and it is clear that they do so as part of their daily routine. All teachers are very confident and use the interactive video whiteboards very skilfully to enliven pace and clarity of teaching. Pupils increasingly do homework on line. This not only improves their word processing skills, but keeps staff informed about progress in the basic skills of punctuation, grammar and spelling. Pupils speak very highly of the innovative self-assessment system in use. This enables them to comment on their own learning and achievement in a lesson. The information is transferred to a spreadsheet, which is used by the teacher to target specific difficulties. In effect, pupils contribute to their own planning, which results in better achievement.
68. The headteacher has set up a very effective communications system throughout the school. This includes a school website as well as a 'touch screen' information system provided for parents, pupils and visitors. Leadership and management of ICT are very good and contribute directly to very high levels of pupils' interest, motivation and achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good.

HUMANITIES

70. It was not possible to observe any lessons in **history** or **geography** and there is insufficient evidence to judge overall provision. Pupils' work that was sampled indicates that standards are at least in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Learning in history is enriched through a good range of visits to places of interest. Skipton Castle, Farfield Mill and a transport trip give pupils the opportunity to experience travel by steam train and boat, and provide good insights into life in the past. During a local study undertaken by the whole school, a visiting archaeologist helped pupils to learn about gathering historical evidence. The local area was also the centre of geographical study. There is, for example, a very informative display of work on rivers, which includes relief models of river landscapes, photographs and work stimulated through first hand experiences gained from working with the River Warden. A real strength of the humanities curriculum is that work is planned purposefully to enable pupils to apply skills learned in other subjects. The use of ICT is particularly evident. For example, pupils in Year 2 used a

digital camera to photograph buildings and other features of Old Hutton, while older pupils used computers to retrieve data from the school's weather station and to work out percentages of land used for different purposes around Kendal.

71. The subjects are managed well. All staff contribute ideas for development. As a result, history and geography retain a high profile in the school and standards are maintained.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning in the subject is very effectively supported through assemblies;
- Teaching is very good and pupils' attitudes are very positive;
- There is an emphasis on first hand experience.

Commentary

72. Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of Year 6 are above those expected for their age, an improvement since the last inspection. As befits a church school, learning in the subject permeates the life of the school. In the lively assemblies, for example, pupils learn about Old and New Testament stories, such as the parable of the lost coin or the story of St Paul. In lessons, teachers present material in varied and stimulating ways, so that pupils show high levels of interest and motivation. In a lesson with pupils from Years 3 and 4, for example, the teacher built upon an earlier lesson where a visitor had described a Hindu wedding she had attended and showed the class a video. Pupils were able to use their previous knowledge of Christian weddings to discuss similarities and differences between the ceremonies. The teacher then played some modern Indian music and lit incense sticks to set up a stimulating multi-sensory experience, during which the pupils produced their own Mendhi patterns. The learning that resulted was of a high quality. The whole lesson developed pupils' understanding of and respect for a culture that was outside their experience, while also promoting racial tolerance very strongly. The subject is effectively led and managed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Very few lessons were observed in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education** and insufficient evidence was available to judge provision in those subjects.
74. In art and design, it is clear that both pupils' standards and the curriculum have improved since the last inspection. Standards are above those seen in most schools and pupils achieve well. They cover a wide range of work and are able to build and develop their skills in painting and drawing. Many good examples of work that the pupils have completed are on display around school and these help to produce an attractive environment for learning. Good attention is paid to the development of line, colour and shading. This was seen in the attractive display of the observational drawings of pupils' shoes that pupils in Years 3 and 4 had produced. Pupils study the work of different artists such as Kandinsky, David Hockney and David Stefan Mack. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 drew a series of good quality black and white etchings based on the work of Sol LeWitt. They experimented with different versions, using tone, angle and shape, and then drew freehand their final designs. The curriculum is enhanced by visits of artists in residence and visits to a local art gallery; for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visited the gallery where they looked at sculptures before making animal masks, which were then used in a dance.
75. Discussions with curriculum leaders and with pupils, along with scrutiny of pupils' work, indicate that standards in design and technology are likely to meet expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils gain a satisfactory range of experiences based on national subject guidance.
76. In music, pupils are provided with a good range of experiences. Many have the opportunity to learn a brass, woodwind or string instrument when a peripatetic music teacher visits the school. Pupils enjoy taking part in the annual Kendal Music Festival. The curriculum is enhanced when musicians visit the school. Pupils enjoy the visit of the 'Music Bus' when they spend a day with professional musicians. Pupils sing tunefully and with expression. Their singing in two parts in assembly was

particularly pleasing. In the good lesson seen in Years 5 and 6, pupils accurately played a melody on glockenspiels, performing with a sense of rhythm and showing a good understanding of dynamics.

77. In physical education, all aspects of the curriculum are covered. Pupils attend swimming lessons and the vast majority are confident swimmers before they transfer to secondary education. Pupils are involved in a wide range of clubs and sporting activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make a residential visit that helps to extend and develop their skills in outdoor pursuits. In the lessons seen, appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of specific skills and techniques. However, there are some occasions when the pupils spend too much time sitting and listening to teachers and not enough time practising and developing their skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very good use of visits and visitors;
- Well planned involvement in charity initiatives develops pupils' awareness of the needs of others;
- A very well empowered school council develops pupils' sense of responsibility.

Commentary

78. The school has made the provision for pupils' personal and social development a strong focus and, as a result, they make good progress towards becoming thoughtful and mature individuals. Assemblies are used well to deliver important messages and 'Circle Time' has become a well established vehicle for pupils to express their feelings and discuss issues relevant to their lives. Very good relationships between pupils and staff help the pupils gain in confidence, so that they are willing to risk a wrong answer. The staff have very good questioning skills which help pupils develop answers more fully. For example, in a PSHCE lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher helped pupils think through 'who is the wimp?' when some one walks away from peer pressure to bully.
79. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to give pupils experience of their wider society and to deliver messages about drugs, sex and relationships education in an appropriate and interesting way. Pupils' responsibility is developed through involvement in many charity initiatives and through training as prefects to look after younger children. The school council also gives them a taste of democracy and empowers them to choose to make a difference.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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