

INSPECTION REPORT

VICARAGE PARK C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kendal

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112269

Headteacher: Miss A Hallam

Lead inspector: Mrs Heather Evans

Dates of inspection: 7 - 9 March 2005

Inspection number: 268173

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
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 206

School address: Vicarage Drive
Kendal
Cumbria

Postcode: LA9 5BP

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs N Bates

Date of previous inspection: 08.03.99

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Vicarage Park Church of England Primary School is an average sized school situated towards the edge of the town of Kendal in Cumbria. There are 206 pupils on roll at present, fewer than at the time of the last inspection in 1999. These include 30 children in the reception class. There is no nursery and children join the school in the reception class from many local pre-school providers. Currently about 6 per cent of the pupils are in receipt of free school meals; this is a relatively low percentage and there is compelling evidence that others who might be entitled to free school meals choose not to claim. The school is a designated strategic facility for pupils with severe learning difficulties and those with medical or physical special educational needs. They are drawn from a wide area in the town. For this reason, whilst the overall proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is about the same as that usually found in most schools, the percentage of pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational need is above the national figure. At the present time there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal times of admission or transfer is lower than usual. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are less favourable than at the time of the last inspection, largely due to the loss of two major employers, and are below average. The attainment varies with each intake and the attainment of many pupils on entry to the school since 2002 is now below that usually found, particularly in language and communication skills and in mathematics. The school has gained a Special Needs Partnership Inclusion Award and was highly commended for its work.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	Mrs H Evans	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Religious education
8992	Mr J Vischer	Lay inspector	
30559	Mrs J Taylor	Team inspector	English Geography History Modern foreign language (German)
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with many very good features. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment achieve well and make good progress. Teaching is predominantly good and much is very good particularly in the Foundation Stage. As a result, pupils learn well. The school is led and managed well by a skilled headteacher with the support of a team of people who are working towards ways of improving pupils' achievement and striving for even higher standards. Finances are managed very well and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children are provided for very well in the reception class.
- Pupils' standards and progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are still too low.
- Subject leaders are inconsistent in the use they make of allocated time to monitor planning and teaching.
- Standards exceed expectations in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good and the curriculum is enhanced by many rich extension opportunities.
- The provision and support provided for pupils with special educational needs are very good.
- Overall the leadership and management of the school are good.
- The commitment and skills of the teaching assistants are invaluable.
- The assessment procedures are very effective in setting targets for improvement.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Provision and teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved greatly. Planning is better in most lessons. There are still times where teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for those pupils capable of higher attainment and, in those lessons, pupils' attainment is too low.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 across the school is good. Most children in the present reception class are on course to attain the expected learning goals in language and communication and mathematics by the end of the present year. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress and most reach their personal targets. The overall standards attained in statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well below average when compared with all other schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments placed them below average in science. In Year 6 in 2004 whilst test results in English fell below the national average, standards in mathematics and science were above the national average and above those in similar schools. The school is a strategic facility for pupils with severe special educational needs across the town. The statistics in 2004 were affected by the results of some pupils in the class who have severe learning difficulties. It is, therefore, more reliable to look at the attainment and achievement of every pupil rather than the year group as a whole. Most achieved well and met their personal targets. For the past four years, standards in Year 6 have been maintained at a level similar to that in schools nationally. The overall trend of improvement has also been similar to that in most schools. Inspection evidence shows that currently standards in English match the expected level and pupils are attaining above expected levels in science and mathematics

in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology match national expectations across the school. Pupils' attainment is well above the expected level in art and design. Work seen exceeds expectations in music, design and technology and physical education and is at least in line with the expected level in history and geography. Attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Across the school there are examples of very good work in all of these subjects.

Pupils' personal welfare, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very well organised and is very good. Work to support these aspects of the pupils' development is threaded through different subjects very successfully. Pupils have very good attitudes to work and learning. Relationships across the school and pupils' behaviour are very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good. The impact of the work to promote the development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills is very strong.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is very good. Learning is very good when pupils are working collaboratively at practical tasks. Teachers then offer intensive support to groups that need extra help or additional challenge. The teachers have a secure understanding of the National Curriculum and of how children learn through real-life experiences. Teachers build on pupils' prior experiences, achievements and knowledge well. Teachers use the many opportunities provided within the very good curriculum to reinforce the learning that has taken place in one subject to encourage pupils to practise the skills acquired in other subjects, such as using literacy skills to extend learning in geography, history and science. The work of the teaching assistants provides encouragement and support to pupils of all levels of prior attainment. The school uses the well-organised learning environment within classrooms and in the very attractive extensive grounds to good effect. Many educational experiences, including residential visits to places of interest, are used very well to extend pupils' learning opportunities. The school maintains good links with parents. Pupils are cared for very well and become mature independent learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership, management and governance of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school by example and demonstrates a very clear and positive vision for the school's future. Her dedication, with the support of the senior leadership team, provides very good guidance for the teaching and support staff and for the governing body. With the leadership team she works to ensure the continuing good of the school. Governors manage their areas of responsibility well and fulfil all of their statutory requirements. They actively pursue the priorities set out in the clearly structured school improvement plan. Subject leaders are effective when monitoring their colleagues' planning but, at present, some do not monitor their work in the classrooms sufficiently. The school has identified this as an area for ongoing work. The agreed policies and strategies support the curriculum to good effect. The school uses the various talents of the teaching support staff and the administration team well. The staff constantly strive to refine their practice and share in the process of working to raise standards in statutory tests to match attainment in some other subjects of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the work of the school and many are actively involved in their children's learning. A few parents would, however, welcome more regular information about their children's progress throughout the year. The team supported this view and the school is now using the reading and homework diaries that already work well for the younger pupils in all classes across the school. Most pupils have very positive views of the good things that the school offers them and have no complaints.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop strategies to help pupils increase their attainment levels in national tests in English in Year 6.
- Ensure that the established pattern for monitoring the planning and teaching in all subjects is pursued with equal rigour by all subject leaders across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

By the end of Year 2 in 2004 the standards achieved were below the national average in reading, and mathematics and were well below average in writing. When compared with similar schools standards in these subjects were again below the national averages. By the end of Year 6 in 2004 standards were below the national average in English but above average in mathematics and in science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and science have improved to average levels in Years 1 and 2 although mathematics is still below. Standards in Year 6 are now at the expected level in English and exceed expectations in science and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of children in the reception class is good and provides a very good springboard for improvement in the next classes.
- Standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are still below the expected level.
- Overall, the achievement of pupils of all levels of prior attainment is good.
- Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are used well to enhance work in other subjects.
- Work seen in music, design and technology and physical education exceeds national expectations and is well above the expected level in art and design.

Commentary

1. On entry to the reception class the prior attainment and range of experiences of children vary, but in the present group, it is below that expected for children of the same age. Children in the reception class make good progress and achieve well. By the end of reception, most are on course to achieve all of the expected learning goals, except for those with identified special educational needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (16.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.0 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.4 (15.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils in Year 2 are now on course to achieve the expected standards in reading and writing by the end of the year but strategies to lift mathematics have not yet proved to be as successful as in other subjects and attainment remains below that expected. In science, where all work is based on investigation, prediction and testing, work is well organised and purposeful and pupils' attainment at least matches and regularly exceeds national expectations. The test results shown above show that the scores in the tests in 2004 were below those achieved in most schools nationally and lower than in the previous year in the school. The pupils who took the tests in Year 2 in 2004 are doing well in Year 3, which indicates that the strategies adopted by the school are paving the way to success in English and science.
3. The structured teaching and learning programme now being promoted is enabling pupils to achieve well in English. Work is organised well and is systematic and thorough. As a result, standards in reading and writing are much improved. The texts are well matched to pupils' personal interests. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported well in English,

where they are encouraged to extend the scope of their work. In mathematics however, efforts to include the pupils with statements of special educational need are succeeding but the challenge for those pupils capable of higher attainment is still not sufficiently well matched to their needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (28.0)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.0 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.9 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The results shown above are for pupils who left the school in the summer of 2004. Test results in English, which are lower than in the previous year and are just below the national average, reflect the impact of pupils in the class who had difficulties with reading. In subjects where on overall test results they were helped with reading their scores exceeded the national average. Inspection evidence shows that in the present Year 6 standards overall meet the expected levels in English and are above the expected levels in mathematics and science. Indications are, that with the exception of one or two pupils who have severe learning difficulties, all pupils are on course to exceed the national expectations in these subjects by the end of the year. A few pupils with profound special needs achieve creditably and are likely to achieve their own targets. This year the school is on course to exceed the targets for English and mathematics agreed with the local educational authority.
5. In mathematics, pupils use their knowledge and understanding of number with growing confidence in oral and mental mathematics. Pupils manipulate numbers mentally using the rules of multiplication and division. Working in groups, they are encouraged to try several methods to check their results. By the end of Year 6 daily oral work in mathematics and English, helps pupils to organise their ideas into sentences and to explain their ideas clearly. Pupils with special educational needs are growing in confidence and independence, secure that the teacher will offer prompts as required.
6. Standards in science have been greatly improved and now exceed the nationally expected level. Pupils in all classes plan investigations confidently. They are learning to be scientists rather than simply demonstrating which scientific facts they have learned. Pupils' work is neat, and is mostly correct. Pupils look to support their predictions with carefully gathered evidence. Pupils demonstrate how they have evaluated mistakes and worked towards an acceptable and verifiable solution. Coverage of the science curriculum is good.
7. As a direct result of the improved facilities and strong leadership, pupils' work in information and communication technology (ICT) is interesting and challenging. The skills of the teachers and their imaginative use of the subject to support learning across the curriculum have enabled pupils of all ages to make good progress and achieve well. In all classes pupils' skills and attainment levels are now in line with the expected levels. In every group there are some pupils who have skills that are better than those expected. All of the pupils use computers confidently for word-processing to enhance work in subjects such as English, art and design, history and geography, and to organise and review data in science and mathematics. Across the school, pupils' use of the well-established ICT skills is making a strong and practical contribution to their achievements and attainments in other subjects.
8. In other subjects pupils' attainment overall by Year 6 is now better than that expected. The higher than expected levels are achieved through practical work, role-play and activities involving oral work and 'hands on' experiences. In all classes and subjects there are examples of topics where much of the completed work exceeds the expected level. Pupils' work in music, design and technology and physical education exceeds that usually found and the quality of

work in art and design is well above the level expected for primary school pupils. The quality of work in history and geography is good and, although few lessons were observed during the inspection, indications are that attainment levels are at least at the expected level. In religious education the school exceeds the basic requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' attainment is above that frequently found in schools. Links with the local church and visits to other places of worship, including the Hindu temple in Preston, lift the range of experiences very well. A strength of the school is the way that pupils of all attainment levels are very well supported in lessons and are helped to learn well by being constantly encouraged to pursue their own interests through independent research and personal study. The attainment of the pupils identified as having special educational needs often matches national expectations despite their learning difficulties. With the other pupils in their classes, their achievement is good overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are both very good. The provision for their personal development is very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school consistently sets high expectations of pupils' conduct and works very well to achieve them; this enables pupils to develop good levels of self-respect.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in lessons and in school assemblies.
- Pupils form very constructive relationships with staff and with one another; many are mature for their age.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly good.

Commentary

9. As a result of the school's continued refinement of a thorough, innovative and well integrated behaviour policy, all pupils, some with complex needs, demonstrate high levels of self-respect and maturity. The piloting and use of new materials, that are intended to support a national initiative, have helped the staff to become more confident in managing school-wide behaviour with total consistency. The skills learned help to ensure that all pupils know what to expect. Whole school assemblies and collective worship offer a good opportunity to see this in miniature. Year 6 pupils come in alongside their 'buddies' from the reception class and sit beside them on the floor. During the collective worship pupils share in reading pieces of writing or poems that they have chosen to reflect the theme and develop a mood. Others participate by acting out the theme. The spiritual aspect is established and is expressed through prayer and reflection and music. The quality of pupils' singing is very good. All staff support the simple yet serene atmosphere. The school has been piloting, with some success, the new primary strategy on developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills (SEBS). This resource marries in very closely with the behaviour curriculum and has added to the school's great success in promoting pupils' personal development very well through the planned activities. These strategies, that are understood and accepted by everyone involved in the school, mean that, very occasionally, it is necessary to exclude pupils whose behaviour becomes unacceptable. This happens rarely but pupils and parents understand and support the rules. The few pupils who are excluded do not like the sanctions but accept them in a remorseful way. A result of the clear system is that pupils' behaviour is almost always very good.
10. The very responsible and considerate pupils who serve as buddies from Year 6 reflect the high quality of relationships across the school. These pupils exhibit great emotional maturity. It is not, however, just the older ones who show this maturity. When interviewed, some pupils from Year 2 displayed very mature and self-confident attitudes. Pupils are friendly and polite around the school and outside they play together very well. In the playground, the marked zones for different age groups and the football rota are respected without a hint of anyone feeling hard done by. Pupils' maturity is also reflected in their understanding of bullying. They have a clear

understanding of the distinction between ‘rough play’ and bullying. Pupils explain that teachers deal with any instances that arise swiftly, fairly and consistently. Pupils are clearly trusted by adults and, for most, this pays dividends in terms of mutual respect. Pupils with varying needs are integrated very well and girls form a regular cohort in the ranks of the footballers. A planned program of ‘Family Group Meetings’, ensures that all pupils have more than just their classmates to identify with. Each member of staff has a group of children, across the age groups, who meet together at special times; this creates an additional sense of belonging. In lessons too, pupils readily support one another and make sure that the pupils who have additional needs are totally included in everything that is going on.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
173	4	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

- The attitudes, values and personal qualities of pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical, medical, emotional and behavioural difficulties, are developed very well. These pupils behave very well alongside the others and they all show positive attitudes to learning. The majority of pupils work to the full extent of their ability. All pupils are fully included in the whole school curriculum. Staff and pupils communicate with pupils with speech and language problems using the ‘sign-a-long’ system of communication. Arrangements are made so that all pupils can take part in all activities including day and residential visits.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of personal development are promoted very well not only through assemblies but also through the careful overview that the headteacher takes in seeking other extension opportunities. These are often through music, art, and planned visits to places of interest, visitors to the school or in celebrations of achievement through public performances. Fund-raising activities are frequently led by pupils and enable them to build on their sense of pride in the school. Pupils have a good and well-established link with a school in Germany and they also welcome many special visitors to the school and share and celebrate their multicultural tastes, traditions and customs. Teachers take every opportunity to find ways of preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society. This is not easy in this part of the country but lessons in art and design, music and religious education are interwoven very skilfully into extending pupils’ awareness of how other people live and work.
- Attendance is well above the national average. Unauthorised absences are negligible. Figures since last September follow the same pattern. Punctuality is good with very few latecomers and lessons begin promptly at the start of the day. The school promotes attendance well and as a result parents and pupils make good efforts to attend regularly and on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 96.2%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	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

Overall, the quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and the curricular provision is very good. A range of diverse and interesting learning opportunities enriches

the curriculum very well. The diverse needs of pupils from different backgrounds and with a wide variety of needs and talents are met well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of assessment and use made of gathered evidence are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have very good relationships with the pupils.
- The strategies employed for teaching literacy are good.
- The strategies for teaching numeracy are unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but are being addressed and following a detailed review they are now very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers have suitably high expectations for most pupils and in the best lessons they strive to challenge pupils' thinking.
- The quality of teaching for those pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The pace of most lessons is brisk and good use is made of time.
- The planning is detailed and well structured; teachers select from a good range of methods.
- The rate of learning is predominantly good.
- The strategies for day-to-day and long-term assessment are very good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
10 (26%)	13 (33%)	12 (31%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and most teaching is good or better across the rest of the school. Where teachers have special skills, as in science, art and design or music, much teaching is very good and even excellent. In just two lessons teaching was unsatisfactory and in these lessons the challenge was too low and pupils' learning and progress were not good enough. The work with pupils with special educational needs, most of whom have statements setting out their specific needs and targets, is very well matched to their needs and prior attainment. Skilled teaching assistants support these pupils very well in lessons. This enables pupils to learn effectively and to achieve as well as the other pupils in the class. Pupils make clear and measurable gains in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of work that they study. Across the school the quality of teaching has been improved since the time of the last inspection. In the two unsatisfactory lessons in mathematics, the introduction and explanation of what was expected were too long, the pace of learning was too slow and the challenge for the pupils capable of achieving higher than expected standards was too restricted. The school is alert to this problem and has designed and initiated ways to address the issue. As yet the impact of these strategies is not proving to be as successful in Years 1 and 2 as it has been in the classes for older pupils.
15. The proportion of lessons judged to be very good or excellent is above that regularly found in many schools. In almost all lessons teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is secure and their expectations are clearly explained to pupils. The methods used to promote a love of reading, poetry and literature are organised well. Whenever possible teachers link their expectations to earlier work or to practical experiences that pupils remember. This is a particular strength of work across the school in music, art and design, design and technology and physical education, which are all influenced by the school's approach to learning using the piloted work in the social, emotional and behavioural skills programme. Teachers aim to achieve early success in some subjects from which pupils can build, using their very well-established feeling of self-worth. Work is also very well managed in science, history and geography and in information and

communication technology in Years 3 to 6. The complementary work is planned to include a commitment to investigations and practical experiences. The linked lessons provide good opportunities for revision and consolidation. The system of setting for mathematics that is now used in Years 3 to 6 is producing very good results and is helping those pupils capable of higher attainment to achieve very well.

16. In almost all lessons teachers' planning is good and the opportunities for learning are well organised. The methods chosen and the available resources are usually suitable. Teachers are at pains to engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons; work is interesting and in most instances the pace of learning is brisk. As a result of the very positive relationships, there is a shared sense of joy in learning as well as delight in achievement. The completed work in pupils' books indicates that teachers are promoting work at a consistently high level. In classes for younger pupils however, much work is recorded on whiteboards or is orally based. In some instances written work in these classes relies too heavily on prepared worksheets that too often inhibit pupils' original thought. Most of these sheets are specifically designed to meet the needs of each group; they are not merely copies from a commercial scheme. This style of recording means however, that a measure of individuality is lost.
17. Subject leaders offer good support for colleagues when preparing lessons and the procedures for assessing pupils' progress, attainment and achievement are clear and manageable. Although some subject leaders are careful to use their allocated time for monitoring work in the classroom very rigorously, in some instances this monitoring is more informal and then the agreed practice is not consistent across all classes and all subjects of the curriculum. Teachers follow the agreed marking policy very carefully as an important strand of the shared assessment procedures. In the best examples teachers share a dialogue with pupils, praising effort and improvement and pointing out where more thought and even greater effort is still needed.
18. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils make very good progress. A national assessment system for pupils with special needs enables the progress of pupils with more complex and profound difficulties to be tracked. Whenever possible pupils with identified needs are taught alongside the mainstream class, supported by very knowledgeable and skilled support staff. Those pupils who need specialist intervention, either individually or in small groups, are withdrawn from class as their needs dictate but they always receive their full entitlement to the curriculum. Teachers use the trained support staff very well to maintain the rate of learning that is now seen to be improving. The skilled intervention of these assistants when pupils experience any difficulties enables lessons to move at a brisk pace and helps to build on the sense of success. Their support enables pupils who have barriers to learning to achieve alongside their peers in lessons.
19. The very well developed partnership between the teachers and the teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school and to the very effective working atmosphere in all classes. Homework is set at suitable levels each week with time allowed to complete it. Such independent work is proving to be a positive aid to learning. This is true for those pupils who choose to complete their work at one or other of the homework clubs because they find working at home more difficult.
20. Teachers make good use of the information gathered on a day-to-day basis to refine work for the next lesson. As a result, most of the work is matched very well to the prior attainment of the pupils. Since the last inspection the use of assessment to promote work matched to pupils' earlier learning, and setting achievable challenges, has been greatly improved.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good curriculum, which meets the needs of all pupils. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are very good. The accommodation is very good and supports pupils' work and learning very well. The amount, range and quality of resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits to places of interest and visitors to school enhance the curriculum very well.
- The provision for art and design and music is very good.
- The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are met very well as a result of the school's commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' personal, social, emotional and health education are promoted very well.
- Accommodation overall is very good and is good in the Foundation Stage.
- The school's commitment to developing the curriculum, including innovation, is very good.

Commentary

21. The school provides an extensive range of curricular opportunities, which meets legal requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs including those pupils designated as part of the strategic facility. The curriculum is adapted appropriately to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, including those with more severe and complex learning difficulties. The curriculum is organised and monitored through detailed planning to ensure that continuity and progression in pupils' learning is maintained.
22. The work to promote pupils' personal, social, emotional and behavioural skills and develop health education is very effective and permeates the whole of school life. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol and receive very well organised education about sex and personal relationships. The school is currently involved in the development of an innovative programme of study developing a national strategy for the teaching of social, emotional and behavioural skills through a whole-curriculum approach. Teachers have shared in piloting study materials that will soon be published for use in schools across the country. Some aspects of this work were demonstrated very effectively by a group of pupils from Year 6 who discussed very sensitively issues related to forgiveness and friendship. The commitment to the work of SEBS and the central place of physical and creative subjects in the overall plan is deliberate. The school believes that once a pupil has found a high level of success in a subject such as art and design or music it is the easier for the staff to encourage persistence at the subjects such as writing or mathematics that seemed to be so daunting. The system is working well and pupils of all levels of prior attainment achieve well across the curriculum by the end of their time in school.
23. The school is justifiably proud of its commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of school life. The staff have received local and national recognition for their commitment to providing an inclusive education for all. Great care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers analyse how well pupils are achieving and make any necessary modifications. Those pupils whose needs include more severe and complex learning difficulties, are enabled to take part in the curriculum within the school. They join in all visits including a recent residential visit to the Robinwood Activity Centre. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to subsequent stages of education. There is close liaison with neighbouring secondary schools to enable all pupils to transfer successfully.
24. The leaders of the school regularly review the curriculum; all of the teachers and support staff are actively involved in reviewing and developing each subject in turn. Work undertaken embraces innovative practice. This includes the teaching of German to all pupils, thus providing a different dimension to their lives and experiences. Pupils enjoy the challenge of learning a modern foreign language and this makes a strong contribution to developing their confidence and self-esteem. All pupils engage in activities associated with the teaching of 'dalcroze eurythmics', which is a study of music designed to develop concentration, co-ordination and communication skills. Subjects are planned to support learning in other areas such as the work in the present Year 6 where work in English, art and design and geography are linked in the study of 'climate'.
25. Pupils' involvement in sports, arts and other interests is promoted very well though the wide and interesting range of activities, clubs, visits and visitors to school as well as by teachers and

pupils working closely with neighbouring schools. Clubs are provided during lunchtime and after school including homework clubs that support those pupils who find it difficult to organise work at home. There is a high take-up of involvement in clubs dedicated to developing sporting, musical and artistic talents. These include ceramics, specialist teaching of sports skills, including football and dance, together with music and drama. Pupils join with many other local schools to perform at the Kendal schools 'Mary Wakefield Music Festival'. Pupils from many local schools share in the Making Music Society choir of about one thousand voices at the local leisure centre. Their spiritual and cultural interests are fostered through the time travellers project associated with Kendal Church, and the visit of the life education bus. Pupils shared their enthusiasm and delighted in talking of what they had learned during visits to the Imperial War Museum in Manchester. They also spoke in a very animated way about their experiences at the local Abbott Hall Museum as part of their most recent history topic.

26. An experienced, well-qualified and effective team of teachers and classroom assistants supports the curriculum very well. They welcome the help provided by specialist teachers for music and sports as well as that given by additional helpers and parents.
27. The accommodation is very good and offers a stimulating practical learning environment. The school is well equipped with specialist areas for art and design, information and communication technology tuition and an attractive library. There are also small quiet areas where pupils who need small-group tuition can be taught. Outside space is very well designed and is used well. This includes an orienteering trail. All areas are accessible for those with mobility problems. Areas are provided to cater for specialist medical needs as well as pupils' personal needs. There are sufficient good quality resources to fully meet the needs of the curriculum. They are well organised and accessible to all. The space outside the reception class is really too small but so many other secure and attractive facilities are available that this does not present a real problem.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is very good. The support, advice and guidance pupils receive are also very good. The involvement of pupils is good: staff listen to their views and act on them whenever they are practical.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good monitoring procedures ensure pupils' health, welfare and safety.
- The highly developed social, emotional and behavioural skills provision promotes very good pastoral advice and supports the safety of pupils very well.
- The procedures for induction to the reception class are very good.

Commentary

28. A high level of training and conscientious monitoring and the detailed way that records are maintained are important parts of the health and safety procedures. Governors are closely involved and offer a fresh eye on any potential hazards. Regular risk assessment patrols of the site are supplemented by detailed monitoring records, which clearly show issues that have been resolved or where progress is being made towards resolution. All kinds of visits and classroom activities have been assessed very well. Electrical equipment and fire extinguishers are tested every year. All staff are trained in basic first aid training and three members of staff are now fully trained. The school manages the very clear system for pupils who need regular medication very well. As there is a broad range of medical needs within this strategic facility this is a key feature of the effectiveness of the procedures.
29. The safety of pupils is further supported by the highly developed social, behavioural and emotional skills provision in the school. Trained staff are very skilled at managing the wide range of behavioural needs. The depth of understanding of the behaviour-based provision means that all pupils benefit very well from the established systems that instil in them a maturity

that is often in advance of their years. The involvement of pupils from Year 6 as 'buddies' to the youngest children offers the latter very good pastoral support. Pupils feel safe and know they can turn to one of several adults for advice should they experience any worries.

30. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. The dedicated team of experienced and well-qualified staff enable them to achieve success and make very good progress. A range of other specialist medical and education staff from outside agencies also contribute to their teaching and learning. Teachers assess and monitor their progress as they do the rest of the school alongside the review of their individual education plans. The systems for monitoring the academic progress of all pupils are organised very well and are used in a very practical way to organise the curriculum and to support teaching and learning for pupils of all levels of attainment.
31. The induction arrangements for pupils joining the school are very good and help facilitate a smooth transition into school life. The reception class teacher makes regular visits to families and to playgroup providers. In turn children from local playgroups visit the school during the summer term with their parents and are able to use the rich range of resources. Procedures to support transition between the phases are very good. Children and pupils are secure and confident about any changes that they experience. The high quality of the relationships in the school between adults and pupils ensures that pupils' views are listened to well. In addition, the school council plays a central role in the development of the school. It has run a pupil questionnaire and is fully involved in the wide range of fund-raising activities. The pupils hold the work of the school council in high esteem. The school is now moving towards establishing a more formal structure where pupils take on the leading roles. Through their experiences with the school council pupils' sense of responsibility is very well developed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents. Links with the community are satisfactory. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school staff are very approachable and deal with any complaints well.
- The induction process for children is very good.
- The school involves parents through listening to their views and responds to them well.
- Opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning are not fully exploited.
- Although there are close ties with the church and local community college other community links are less well established.
- Transfer links to the secondary school are good.

Commentary

32. The staff of the school are approachable, especially for parents of younger pupils. All teachers are available at the beginning and end of every day. Any complaints or concerns are dealt with conscientiously. This is evidenced by the school readily responding to the request for regular and even daily communication using reading or homework diaries in classes for older pupils. Consultation with parents has been systematically improved since the last inspection through meetings and questionnaires. The collected views of the parents are analysed, governors are involved, and useful 'briefing papers' are drawn up to inform parents about what the school intends to do about the issues raised. Other information to parents is generally of good quality and consultation evenings are very well attended. The annual written reports are clear about pupils' personal development but could be more useful in helping parents to be more involved in their child's learning. Listing hints or targets as to what the child needs to do next would help those parents who find it difficult to speak to teachers informally on a regular basis. The homework clubs provide a valuable support network for those pupils who find difficulties with or choose not to work at home. Links with parents are very well reinforced through the parents'

association, which regularly raises funds for the school through organising social events. These events have been instrumental in funding, for example, dance classes led by a visiting teacher; these offer pupils a real extension of opportunity through which boys are particularly inspired.

33. There are very close links with the local church. In addition to ties one might expect, the school worked closely with the parish church to develop an imaginative approach to history through the time travellers project following the course of the Christian year. This work engages pupils well. Other links with the community have been restricted by the closure of two large companies. The joint events for sports and the environment project are held at the linked secondary school. Some of the after-school activities are linked with neighbouring schools, with members of staff from both places helping to extend the range of opportunities, avoid duplication and provide for a larger group of participants.
34. The relationship with local secondary schools are valuable. The headteacher regularly visits them to follow-up on how pupils are doing and pupils return to the school because they feel welcome. One returning pupil, now in the sixth form, led a session on the rainforest and environmental issues. Others have returned after achieving very well in county cricket and Tae Kwando. This helps to make the transfer process more comfortable and extends the school's strong approach to personal development by offering such good role models. Pupils on work experience are welcomed as friends and again promote and sustain the strong links. Teachers exchange visits between the schools in order to learn about new developments in Year 7, to share in joint training and keep an eye on former pupils. A local business college offers a citizenship project link and other schools offer French, tag rugby and investigative mathematics support. There are reliable links with the local arts centre for performances with other schools. The headteacher is acting in an advisory capacity as the launch of the SEBS project is getting near.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very committed to inclusion, equality and concern for the needs of each child.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leadership team provide good leadership and management.
- The headteacher has very clear vision and high aspirations for the academic and social development of all pupils.
- The strength of the teamwork is a major factor in helping pupils to achieve.
- Inconsistencies remain in the way that subject leaders monitor the work of colleagues.
- The priorities identified are highly appropriate in the drive towards raising standards and improving achievement in most areas.
- The financial management of the school is very good.

Commentary

35. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and management overall. There is a shared commitment to providing a good education in a caring atmosphere for all pupils. The senior leadership team has worked diligently to implement the school's vision of providing an inclusive and wide-ranging curriculum. The headteacher has devised a school development plan where priorities are highly relevant, clearly identified and well costed. There is a strong focus on valuing each member of the school community and a continuous emphasis on enabling pupils to improve their achievements still further. The governors and parents rightly value the quality of education provided and are aware of areas for improvement.

36. The headteacher sets a very good example by the quality of relationships that she has established with pupils and many outside agencies. She is a very good role model for all pupils. She has established a very high quality and caring environment for all pupils. The headteacher and staff have a very strong commitment to developing pupils' personal and social development and ensuring equal opportunities for all. The school has a growing reputation of strength and worth within the community and is developing very effective links with partner institutions. The ethos of the school is very good. The school is very successful in meeting its aims. The roles of the subject leaders are very clearly defined. There is a range in teachers' expertise and most are rising to the challenge of increased responsibility and accountability. The leaders in most subjects provide a superb balance of guidance, encouragement and support at the same time as ensuring that assessment is rigorous and up to date. The climate of the school encourages an open discussion about what is effective classroom practice. In practice, the work of the school reflects its aims very well on the pastoral side but as yet in some subject monitoring there remain some inconsistencies.
37. The senior leadership team has initiated a programme of staff development aimed at extending the management role of subject leaders. This is beginning to be effective but teachers have yet to ensure that the monitoring of colleagues', planning, teaching and lesson evaluations is carried out consistently with increased rigour across all classes and subjects. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good with some excellent features. The teacher's personal knowledge, skills, monitoring and tracking procedures are exemplary. She uses the many skills and very good subject knowledge of students in training and the teaching assistants very effectively. Parents are now actively involved in their children's learning and provision for children in the reception class has improved greatly since the last inspection.
38. The management and leadership of special educational needs provision is very good. There is a strong commitment by the headteacher and SEN co-ordinator to educate all pupils, irrespective of their learning difficulty or disability, within the whole school curriculum. This vision permeates the entire school in its endeavour to provide high quality support for pupils with special educational needs. The policy is reviewed regularly to take into account changing needs. The administration and record keeping are of a high standard. An effective and dedicated team of support assistants liaise closely with all staff. The governor for special educational needs is closely involved in the management and provision for pupils with learning difficulties.
39. The measures for improving teaching and achievement have been very successful and have improved the quality of work in most areas since the last inspection. The involvement of teaching assistants contributes to high quality shared provision. This has resulted in the majority of lessons being of high quality or better and in effective learning taking place. Some residual difficulties in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 still remain but the leadership team is working strenuously to bring about in these years the positive results already seen in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6.
40. The school is governed well. The governing body is very supportive of the school and holds it accountable for the provision and standards. The committee structure is well established and the governing body fulfils its statutory duties. Governors have benefited from a very good range of training and have a clear awareness of their roles. Performance management is securely rooted in the governance and management of the school. While recognising the importance of improved academic standards and achievements, governors place an equally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. The purpose is to ensure that every pupil has a successful base from which to build on towards equally high gains across all other subjects. This strategy has been very successful in recent years because of a united approach across the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	549250	Balance from previous year	71190
Total expenditure	558150	Balance carried forward to the next	62290
Expenditure per pupil	2670		

41. The school administrator provides an extremely welcoming first point of contact and is highly efficient. She gives excellent support to the school. The day-to-day financial management of the school is very good. Resources are fully utilised to ensure that the school makes good progress towards the priorities identified in the school development plan. Specific grants for example, those for special educational needs are spent carefully and wisely after due consideration. All expenditure is carefully tracked according to best value principles and the budget is updated continually to show accurately the state of the school's finances. The school bursar has excellent knowledge and understanding of financial planning and provides valuable guidance to the governing body on which they base their decisions. The school is therefore enabled to meet its curricular, social and premises requirements. The apparent surplus is as a result of money allocated for specific purposes remaining in the account at the end of the financial year because goods ordered had not been delivered on time. This included planned replacement of heating boilers and the fitting of the carpets throughout Key Stage 2. The amount in hand at the end of the present financial year will be well within recommended limits. Overall the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall with many excellent features and has significantly improved since the last inspection. Across all areas of learning the quality of leadership and management is excellent and contributes strongly to children's achievement.

Children are prepared very well for work in the National Curriculum. All children achieve very well due to the very high quality teaching, curriculum and assessment procedures. Children benefit from very high quality support from the learning support assistant. The curriculum is very well planned to provide an exceedingly wide range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities including visits and visitors. All adults are very good role models and establish very good relationships with children. The teacher and classroom assistant work very effectively together as a team. They monitor all aspects of children's learning and personal and social development very carefully. Parents commented very favourably on the provision in the class and their involvement in their children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- Supportive relationships are quickly established and children work with confidence and enjoyment.
- Children have a wealth of opportunities for learning about Christian festivals and those celebrated by people of different faiths and cultures in Great Britain.
- Children have excellent opportunities for personal reflection and considering many factors that make them feel good.

Commentary

42. Children achieve very high standards in this area of learning. They make very good progress because of the excellent level of care and understanding shown by the class teacher. As a result they know what is fair and acceptable behaviour. Their individual achievements are valued in many ways. Children listen to and participate in the many interesting activities and stories and the majority speak clearly and confidently. From the minute they arrive in the morning they are welcomed and valued. There is an outstanding atmosphere of happiness, activity, respect and regard for one another. This excellent aspect reflects the teacher's commitment to high quality personal development and valuing each child as a valuable and equal member of the class community. Children are continually encouraged to feel confident about their achievements and are reminded of the very high standards of behaviour expected. They are encouraged to share and take turns and put up their hands before answering a question. Consequently, groups of children are frequently observed working very well together with minimal adult intervention.
43. Teachers ensure that the children experience many opportunities to celebrate festivals and traditions from many faiths and cultures such as the pattern of the Christian Year, Chinese New Year, Diwali and traditions shared by the children in the linked school in Germany. The work with SEBS is instrumental in providing times for reflection and thinking about concerns and feelings. During the inspection children explained the things that they had experienced that made them feel good about themselves and where they lived.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and all staff create many opportunities for developing children's speaking and listening skills in all areas of learning.
- Children have many opportunities for writing and learn how to form letters accurately.
- Children achieve very well in reading because of carefully structured teaching and effective involvement of parents and other helpers.

Commentary

44. Provision for this area of learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and children's achievement is very good. Most of the children in the present group are well placed to reach the expected levels in this area of learning. Higher attaining children are likely to exceed them. All children achieve very well in speaking and listening because the teacher plans many stimulating opportunities for group discussions in all areas of learning. Children were frequently observed sharing books, listening to stories and practising writing skills. The teacher plans many exciting opportunities designed to increase children's vocabulary. She poses challenging questions and encourages children to use correct vocabulary when answering.
45. The children in the average and higher attaining groups already read fluently and accurately. They demonstrate good understanding. The books chosen match their abilities and interests very well. They use reasoning skills very well to retell the story in the correct sequence. Most children are eager to read familiar stories and they attempt unseen texts with equal confidence. The lower attaining children read familiar texts and benefit from the repetition of vocabulary. They retell a wide range of stories incorporating recently learned vocabulary very well in clear and well-organised sentences. They understand the sequence of the story of Jack and Beanstalk, for example, very well, explain the feelings of Jack and his mother and use their imagination vividly as they describe the beanstalk and the castle.
46. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and all adults listen intently and respond well to their comments. A rigorous and tightly structured plan for the teaching of sounds requires children to say the sounds, recognise them in print and practise them in writing. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with the correct grip. Most children form letters accurately and have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns. The teacher's excellent organisation ensures that the higher attaining and average attaining children have many opportunities to extend their learning; the lower attaining children and those with special educational needs have the necessary support and additional guidance.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of excellent teaching.
- The teacher plans a wide range of structured activities to ensure that children understand number and apply their skills to other areas of learning.
- The children have very positive attitudes and confidence in applying mathematical skills.

Commentary

47. There are many excellent features in the provision for mathematics. Most children are well placed to attain the expected early learning goal by the end of the year. The group of children capable of higher attainment have already achieved this. The teacher has excellent subject knowledge and ensures that assessment guides planning and the resources used. The majority of children have very good understanding of number and place value. Higher attaining children count to over 50. Nearly all children recognise a wide range of two-dimensional and many three-dimensional shapes. They create interesting mathematical patterns showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. Children are encouraged to reason and to investigate all aspects of number and measurement. They have very good opportunities for investigations and using ICT.
48. Higher attaining children have exciting and challenging work planned for every activity and children who have additional needs are very well included in all activities. Most children are very confident in this area of learning; they enjoy the activities and work very well. There is a wide range of abilities in the class and the teacher and teaching assistant ensure that all their needs are fully met. The provision for mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's learning is greatly enhanced by an exciting range of activities and an excellent range of visits and visitors.
- Children have many opportunities for using ICT.
- The excellent planning of this area of learning ensures that children apply basic skills of literacy and numeracy to many aspects of the subject.

Commentary

49. As a result of very good teaching, children achieve very well in all aspects of this area of learning. They attain higher standards than those expected of children in the reception year as a result of a number of excellent learning opportunities. During the year the teacher plans and provides very well for children's scientific, technical and geographical aspects of learning. They benefit from the wide range of investigations planned, are confident and capable users of ICT and know that many pieces of equipment are powered by electricity. The wide-ranging opportunities for making models from a wide range of construction equipment are excellent; children understand the importance of wheels and moveable parts of machinery. They have a very good understanding of the order of seasons, seasonal changes and the impact of weather on activities.
50. During the inspection, children planted cress seeds to form the hair on a clown. They showed a very good understanding of the conditions needed for growth, knowing that plants need water and light. They also compared and contrasted seeds grown under different conditions well. During these activities children shared in the discussion very well, taking turns and valuing each other's contributions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have many opportunities to develop a wide range of physical skills.
- Children achieve very well because of the very high quality teaching.
- Although the adjacent outdoor accommodation is small, the teacher ensures that children use the hall and the extensive grounds of the school.

Commentary

51. Most children achieve high standards. They have very good spatial awareness when running, jumping and moving in response to music. Children handle construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with very high levels of dexterity and accuracy. The majority of children hold pencils with the correct grip because of very good teaching; consequently their standards of handwriting have improved impressively over the year. Children who need additional help, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and achieve very well in comparison to their previous learning. During the inspection, children took on the roles of the different characters of the Jack and the Beanstalk story and moved ferociously like the giant and angrily like Jack's mother.
52. Although the facility for outdoor play immediately outside the classroom is very small, it is well used. Also, children have ready access to the school hall.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Opportunities for story telling and small group discussion are outstanding features.
- Children's very positive attitudes are reflected in their confidence when discussing their previous work.

Commentary

53. Most children are well placed to exceed the expected levels in this area. They achieve very well because of inspirational teaching that encourages their creativity. Planning shows that over the year children have a superb range of opportunities for developing their creative skills. All staff skilfully extend children's language and encourage their imaginative and collaborative activity. An excellent activity during the inspection involved groups of children performing part of the story, 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. They used language creatively and responded to each other's comments and actions.
54. The teacher encourages children to experiment when mixing paint and using modelling materials. She is very skilful in ensuring an excellent balance between discovery and focussed learning. This is reflected in the wide-ranging displays that include excellent paintings of spring flowers and colour mixing. The very good teaching of the musical aspect successfully contributes to very high standards. Children sing tunefully with a very good awareness of dynamics and rhythm. Throughout the year they have many opportunities for moving to music and playing a wide range of percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment is very good and is used well to set individual targets for improvement.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good.

- Literacy is used very well to support and enhance research, discussion and written work in other subjects.
- Work to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Checking of teachers' work by subject leaders does not ensure consistency throughout the school.

Commentary

55. There has been satisfactory improvement in English since the last inspection. Progress in writing was identified then as an area for further development. This is being addressed and standards are improved. The headteacher and the senior leadership team are working with great vigilance in order to maintain and extend the gains made already.
56. Test results in 2004 indicate that attainment levels by the end of Year 2 in reading were below the national average and well below the average compared to similar schools. Writing was also well below the national average and well below expectations when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English are now on course to meet national expectations by the end of Year 2. Test results by the end of Year 6 in 2004 showed attainment to be well below the nationally average and below the levels in similar schools. These test results, however, include the scores of a higher than usual percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Disregarding the results of these pupils, attainment for the rest of the class was close to national expectations. In 2004 too few pupils attained at higher than expected levels and the number of pupils who actually attained Level 5 was below that predicted in the target agreed with the local education authority. Test results vary according to the size and composition of the group but the trend over time is similar to that in schools nationally.
57. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in Year 6 is in line with expectations and many of the average and above average attaining pupils are on course to exceed this level. The school's careful tracking of progress indicates that by the end of Year 6 a higher proportion of pupils will achieve the higher than expected level and are on course to attain Level 5. This means that the challenging targets agreed with the local authority are likely to be met in the present year.
58. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is carried out systematically and the use made of the data is proving to be particularly effective. The detailed analysis of test results is used very well to identify areas for future development and appropriate action is taken. Individual and group targets are set as a structured approach to enable standards to be raised further. Teachers make good use of structured questioning to challenge and stimulate pupils' thinking. Pupils are well motivated and work well together. They behave very well and listen intently to the teachers' questions. They respond enthusiastically and demonstrate a very positive attitude to learning. Written work is well presented and by the time pupils reach Year 6 they have developed a legible, well-formed joined writing style. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. They are well supported by an experienced and dedicated team of classroom assistants who work closely with the class teachers and with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
59. During the inspection the standard of work in speaking and listening, writing and reading was found to be similar to that found in most schools in Years 1 and 2. In Year 2 pupils showed a good understanding of how to write poetry based on the poem 'My Sweet'. This linked well to their work about healthy eating in science. Pupils described how the sweets made them feel - for example, 'fizzy', 'marvellous' and 'invincible'. Pupils in Year 6 listen well and readily engage in mature discussion – for example, when they considered the impact of persuasive writing in newspapers and advertisements. They know how different advertisements focus on different audiences through the writer's choice of adverbs and images. They understand the impact of alliteration and planned to use terms such as 'fabulous fun' and 'sensational scenery' when designing advertisements linked to experiences shared on their residential visit during the previous week. In another lesson these older pupils took part in a mature debate about the quality of friendship and forgiveness. They demonstrated their understanding of emotions

through revealing expressions - for example, 'felt cold inside when her friend betrayed her'. This work makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

60. Pupils of all ages show a keen interest in books and say that they enjoy reading. An attractive, well-stocked library fosters this interest very well. Few pupils experience any reading problems. Those who are at the early stages of learning to read follow a structured reading programme and acquire the skills to enable them to read less familiar words. Pupils in Year 2 discuss their favourite books, ranging from *Just William* to Greek myths, with knowledge and enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 6 have a wide-ranging taste in styles of reading and books, including stories by Jacqueline Wilson and poems by Michael Morpurgo.
61. The standards of writing across all age groups show that the actions initiated as a result of the last inspection report are proving to be useful and effective. The presentation of independent writing is good. Pupils' folders show how they have moved on during the present year in classes across the school. Teachers select from an interesting range of strategies to engage the pupils' interest and capture their enthusiasm in order to raise standards. The process is working well and teachers recognise that this work needs to be ongoing and with each group new ideas have to be employed. Links with other subjects - for example, geography, history and religious education as well as discussion about style in their guided reading are used to good effect. The result so far is that standards are rising.
62. The subject is led and managed well by the two co-ordinators, one from each key stage. They are both knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and committed to improving writing skills across the age groups. The pattern of regular monitoring of planning and of the performance of colleagues in the classroom, however, is inconsistent. As a result the overview of the benefits of different initiatives and their outcomes in each year group are patchy.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The language and literacy skills of all pupils are used well to support learning in other subjects. This work in turn helps to reinforce the skills learned in English. Speaking and listening skills are encouraged through discussions in history and in the lessons linked to the SEBS programme. Younger pupils speak about the Great Fire of London and pupils in Year 6 write about their visit to the Imperial War Museum as part of their study of Britain since 1930. Oral work in history and religious education is used to ensure that pupils think and speak in sentences in order to improve their writing techniques. The extra-curricular activities, including day and residential visits, are used well to enhance the teaching of English. Pupils discuss their adventures, research projects further and record their experiences in many forms of writing.
64. Insufficient lessons were observed in **German** to judge overall provision, standards or teaching. Just one complete lesson was observed together with several short partial observations. This is supported by discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of work. Indications are that pupils are achieving very well and are attaining very well. All pupils are fully involved with all aspects of the curriculum. The teacher has extremely good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this enables her to teach at a lively pace. She communicates in German and presents a very good role model to pupils. When it is necessary to support pupils who are less confident she moves effortlessly from German to English. All pupils are enthusiastic and are eager to participate in the lesson. They are proud of their ability to speak German. Lessons are structured and organised well. Strategies for teaching vary with the different age groups but music and games activities are used extensively to make learning fun.
65. The subject is led and managed very well. The quality of teaching and learning in the few lessons seen is excellent and pupils are eager to demonstrate their expertise and enjoyment. Assessment and evaluation of progress during the lesson are incorporated into high quality question and answer sessions. This enables the teacher to make sure all pupils have a secure knowledge of the target vocabulary. In the one complete lesson observed pupils worked to learn the colours of the rainbow. Pupils make very good progress and achieve well as tasks and challenges are very well matched to their ability and needs. Pupils are expected to use German

throughout lessons. This increases their confidence and extends their ability to use the vocabulary learned to develop good pronunciation.

66. The specialist teacher is also the subject leader. Her expertise is recognised by the local authority and she contributes to the working party for the teaching of modern foreign languages in primary schools across the county. She has also developed useful links with a school in Germany so that both schools can share their experiences. Her interest and passion for her subject are instrumental in raising standards to the present high level.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well and have very positive attitudes to the subject.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are still not challenged sufficiently, therefore they make unsatisfactory progress and the standards achieved are too low.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 who are capable of attaining higher standards are enabled to achieve them in all aspects of the subject.
- The very high quality of investigative work and application of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum in classes for older pupils develop their mathematical understanding well.

Commentary

67. Standards across the school vary. Standards are above expectations by the end of Year 6 but in Year 2 they are below the expected level. This reflects the results in the tests in 2004. Pupils' achievement very well in Years 3 to 6 but many pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to achieve unsatisfactorily, as they did in 1999. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked very hard to address this issue but there has been only partial success. Gains made in previous years have not been sustained. As at the last inspection pupils who have achieved well in the reception class are not given enough suitably challenging work at the start of the National Curriculum. In both the Year 1 and Year 2 classes too much of the work planned for pupils lacks variety and challenge. Too often it is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' prior attainment and to the needs of each individual. As at the time of the last inspection, work often lacks challenge for higher attaining pupils. The subject is well organised and the areas of the curriculum are covered systematically but too much work is based on pupils' completing worksheets. Whilst these are carefully prepared, and the content thoroughly explained, sometimes at great length, they do little to inspire the pupils' personal initiative or encourage them to think of themselves as successful mathematicians.
68. In Years 3 to 6 teachers plan a very challenging range of investigative work and pupils who are engaged in practical experiences achieve very well. In these classes pupils are achieving very well. In Years 3 and 4 the deficiencies with which they began Year 3 have been rectified. This indicates that the school has now established a clear way forward but that persistence and time are needed to address the issue in the classes for younger pupils. By the end of Year 6 those pupils who do not have severe learning difficulties are well placed to attain above the expected level, with those pupils capable of higher attainment achieving at a very high level. Indeed, with the additional time available and the use of a reader as part of the test procedures, many with special educational needs are well placed to succeed. Pupils are encouraged to use a suitably wide range of methods for problem solving and for planning investigations. Their understanding of place value is reflected in their ability to multiply and divide using decimals to two places. Average and above average attainers have a secure understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages and a very good understanding of the properties of triangles and quadrilaterals. Most apply their numeracy skills to a wide range of mathematical investigations. They show a good understanding of the magnitude of numbers and the need for methodical working in calculations and investigations. Teachers in these year groups use ICT very effectively to develop pupils' mathematical skills. The very good provision for gifted and

talented and higher attaining pupils in Year 6 is further enhanced by very strong links with a local secondary school.

69. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 remains unsatisfactory, As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should because the teaching lacks challenge and does not build systematically on gains made. In contrast, the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall. In some lessons the quality of teaching and learning are excellent. The quality of teaching in mathematics has however improved considerably since the last inspection. In Years 3 to 6 all aspects of teaching are strengths. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in very clear explanations and very good teaching of both basic and advanced skills. Teachers' questioning challenges pupils' thinking and they then use the responses to assess their understanding. Teachers have very high expectations of the pace of work but demands for the quality of presentation vary. Pupils know how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. The learning support staff are very purposefully involved in every part of lessons and their work contributes to the increasingly high standards. In most lessons the use of ICT to apply and extend pupils' skills is very well planned. Very good teaching in the classes for older pupils is one of the key aspects that contribute to the levels of attainment being on course to reach well above the expected level.
70. Curricular planning is very good and all of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy are met, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The results of statutory and voluntary tests have been monitored carefully and have had a profound impact on curricular planning in these classes. The school has taken effective measures for improving the provision for pupils in all attainment groups including those for higher attaining pupils. Grouping of pupils according to their levels of attainment ensures that there is a very good range of challenging activities for pupils at all levels. There is equally good support for those who need additional help. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and, in most cases, they achieve very well in relation to their targets.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are good overall and have resulted in pupils making up any lost ground so that by the end of Year 6 they achieve very well. The subject leader and headteacher monitor work throughout the school and this work has resulted in greatly improved provision and standards in Years 3 to 6, but as yet not in Years 1 and 2.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Pupils use mathematics very well as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This work is carefully planned to match the levels of attainment of most pupils and to extend their understanding of mathematics in the world. They use their mathematical skills, for example, in graphs and charts in geography and science and their understanding of shape and pattern in art and design and design and technology. They use calculations involving large numbers when studying different historical periods and important events in religious education.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall the quality of teaching and, as a result, pupils' learning are very good.
- Procedures for assessment are good and are used to good effect in planning new work.
- Work is very tailored to the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs.
- The curriculum is very well planned and is supported by good quality resources.
- Pupils and resources are managed very well.
- Good use is made of assessment strategies.

Commentary

73. In the statutory tests in 2004 pupils attained at levels above those expected by the end of Year 6. The very good teaching enables pupils to achieve standards that are now close to the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and above the expected level by the end of Year 6. This represents improvement in Year 2. The standards achieved are improving because in most classes teachers concentrate on pupils being scientists and conducting their own interesting experiments and investigations. This is a developing pattern and most pupils are keen to plan their own imaginative investigations. Pupils across the school achieve well and most are skilled at predicting the outcomes and systematically test their results against their hypotheses. This approach allows pupils in Years 3 and 4 to build on the good start that is now well established in Years 1 and 2. Pupils of all prior attainment achieve well as work is matched very closely to their earlier experiences.
74. The many pupils with multiple and complex special educational needs succeed because, besides having specially tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and well-informed support staff. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve alongside others in the class because of very well planned work that is specifically modified to meet their needs. In Year 6 some of these pupils may well find it difficult to attain at this high level in the statutory tests but, because they are permitted to have a reader and additional time, increasingly these pupils are attaining at the expected level. In most lessons higher attaining pupils are provided with an increased range of opportunities to go beyond the level of the majority of the class and to discover for themselves the next steps in the process being studied. Time is used well and all pupils are encouraged to work to their potential.
75. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and is very good in Years 3 to 6. As a result, pupils work together enthusiastically and achieve well. The good relationships that allow teachers and pupils to work well in a calm and purposeful way allow for times for reflection and fun. Lessons are very well planned, often including options for individual development. In lessons in Year 3 about plants and the dependence that humans have on things that are made from plants, pupils' thinking was greatly challenged and the learning process was very purposeful. The results of investigations about sound were well presented with some pupils using skills learned in ICT. Pupils were encouraged to seek out the method of demonstrating their results in the way that was best suited to the needs of the group.
76. In Years 1 and 2, pupils planned investigations using light to create shadows and they discovered how the distance of an object from the light affected the size of the shadow. They explained differences in terms such as 'opaque', 'transparent' and 'translucent'. The teachers supported their ideas and provided them with the time, equipment and opportunity to think, reason and move on using experimentation to prove or contradict what they think they already know. In their work about friction pupils experienced work using cars on ramps with a wide variety of surfaces. This work was well organised and contributed successfully to pupils' scientific development but the cross-curricular links, with for example mathematics, were not sufficiently well exploited.
77. Resources and pupils are managed well and in lessons the different approaches used frequently make the speed of learning brisk so that time flies. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, causing them to think of answers to solve problems and to demonstrate their understanding of complex issues.
78. Assessment procedures are good and are built into lessons in the planning stage. Sometimes possible alternative strategies are listed to engage pupils' imagination and to extend their thinking. The oral and collaborative marking of work with the teacher sitting beside pupils, where a comment or a word is enough to refocus pupils' thinking is very effective. The completed work in books is good and, where pupils are planning and using their own recording systems, learning is more secure. Pupils then are more enthusiastic about using their personal initiative. This was seen to very good effect in a lesson in Year 4 about movement through air and water, where pupils' ideas overtook the initial plans as their results led them to extend the scope of their investigations.

79. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The two subject leaders work together very well. The leader, who is not in charge of a class, supports colleagues in their classrooms very effectively. Both support and encourage colleagues and lead the subject by example through their skills in teaching. Together they monitor teachers' planning, review completed work and analyse all test results.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership has had a very positive impact on extending the quality of provision.
- By the end of Year 6 a group of pupils achieve at the level above that expected for their age.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The use of the subject to promote and extend learning in other subjects is very well developed.

Commentary

80. Levels of attainment match the expected level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although a group of Year 6 pupils exceed this. At the time of the last inspection a need to improve in the subject was identified and this issue has been addressed very successfully. The work to integrate this subject across the entire curriculum has been organised very well. Pupils from Year 1 onwards attain at the expected levels with small numbers of pupils in most other classes achieving above the level expected for their age. All of the teachers and support staff have undertaken training and the scheme of work ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught.
81. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the various forms of communication such as CD-ROMs, tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computers for word processing, drafting, editing and importing pictures, and use a mouse confidently. They are totally familiar with the keyboard and use of icons. They confidently log on, edit text, save their work and log off. They use remote controlled robotic floor toys well. By Year 6, most pupils are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. For example, pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets and graphs. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are developing very well. The school has good access to an interesting and up-to-date range of relevant software.
82. Teaching and learning are good overall. This has had a positive effect on raising standards. All teachers are comfortable using ICT and some have strong subject knowledge and explain the purpose of all work very well to pupils. Lessons are well planned and teachers explain exactly what they expect pupils to do and learn. Suitable emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary and very often the skills learned in ICT are used to support work in other subjects. Teachers make sure that enough time is allowed for pupils to get on with their independent work. This results in good learning. In all lessons, the pace is brisk and the activities used are broken down into manageable steps. Skilful questioning fully involves pupils in their own learning and support is well targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are important factors in pupils' achievement in lessons.
83. The leadership of the subject is very good. A wide range of interesting and stimulating strategies to raise attainment levels has been very well managed. The subject leader has undertaken a comprehensive whole-school audit to evaluate the best ways to use and extend the existing skills base. She is seconded to the local authority as an advanced skills teacher and is alert to any initiatives that are available. As a result, all teachers have a very good understanding of what pupils do well and where they need to offer additional support. Very practical assessment systems are used to chart pupils' work and progress and to enable

teachers to provide relevant follow up work. The resources are good both in the computer suite and in classrooms. These machines are in almost constant use and rarely lie idle.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. The use of ICT across the curriculum is purposeful and effective. Teachers' planning for other subjects regularly identifies opportunities for its use. Teachers and pupils often use work from other subjects as the means to promote and extend computer skills. Increasing skills and confidence in mathematics help pupils to develop more advanced skills in the subject. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and by the use of programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Pupils use software programs and the Internet regularly for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography, and art and design. Data handling in science and mathematics using computer skills is one development that particularly inspires pupils.

HUMANITIES

85. Too few lessons were seen to judge provision, standards and teaching in **geography**. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, and analysis of their written work, indicate, however, that standards are typical for pupils' ages. The stimulating and creative manner in which the subject is taught in combination with other topics develops children's understanding of the impact of the locality on lifestyles and the environment.
86. The younger pupils an island in a nearby lake called Derwent Water to a centre called Hawesend. They travel using various forms of transport, including boats. They practise the skills that they have learned on the school's orienteering tracks and in a very companionable way imagine how people feel when abandoned on a desert island. The video record shows that as the boat goes away and they huddle in their survival tent, called a kissou, they try to feel scared and alone. In truth, on this island, where their friends and teachers surround them, it is a really exciting adventure. Once back at school their discussions, pictures and writing reflect their confidence and enjoyment. In Year 6 pupils recognise the different regions of the United Kingdom, such as the Highlands as well as national boundaries, rivers and major cities. They have extended their geographical knowledge during residential visits and have good opportunities to study physical features, such as rivers and mountains, and use a wide range of mapping skills very well. Pupils understand the route of a river from its source to the mouth and identify meanders, oxbow lakes and other physical features. They use ICT to extend their learning in a natural and skilled way. All pupils develop a good understanding of environmental issues and understand the responsibility that individuals have for caring for the environment. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly and assessment is clear and practical.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of visits and visitors to enable pupils to have first-hand experience and to make their learning more meaningful.
- Teachers find ways of including all pupils in all learning experiences irrespective of their learning difficulty or disability.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject.

Commentary

87. Few lessons were observed in history but additional evidence was gathered through scrutiny of work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that in history pupils are achieving the standards expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and most have achieved well from their prior levels of attainment at the end of Year 2. Work on display shows

that there are many examples of work by older pupils that exceed the expected level in some parts of their work. All pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum. This includes day and residential visits that are used very well to enhance the first-hand experiences of pupils. Staff have undertaken specialist training to ensure that pupils with severe, multiple and complex special needs are able to join in the planned visits. This involves very rigorous risk assessment at study centres and other places of educational interest. There are strong links with other areas of the curriculum; for example, music and geography are linked through the study of the tropical rainforest. Older pupils link art, literacy, and design and technology to their study of family life across the years and their understanding of the life of children during the last world war. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to visit local places of interest. Pupils in Year 6 were fascinated by their visit to the Imperial War Museum in Manchester as part of their study of Britain since the 1930s. They discussed this experience with great enthusiasm and showed in-depth knowledge of the things they had seen.

88. Teaching and learning are good overall and in the lessons observed the quality of teaching was very good. All of the linked elements were very well planned. In one of the lessons the teacher and the teaching assistant have established a very good well-matched set of linked learning experiences that use skills learned in design and technology to build models of air raid shelters, trace family trees using computer programs and compare their own family with either the Royal family or another established family that they had researched.
89. The work planned for history across the school is wide ranging and interesting and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment procedures are effective and are used well. Resources are good and from time to time they are supplemented by project loans from the county library service. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Effective support for colleagues is readily available, often informally, although time for more formal evaluation has been allocated in the most recent school improvement plan.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and promote a strong interest in the faiths and traditions of others.
- The levels of attainment are above those regularly found in most schools.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The school is alert to the opportunities to learn from experts in their own faith and to use the skills available to increase the pupils' knowledge.
- The school's planning includes traditions from other than Christian worship very well.

Commentary

90. Attainment levels in this subject exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In most classes across the school attainment is better than that usually found in schools nationally. Work in this subject is exciting, imaginative and practical and pupils achieve well. There is a high level of spirituality in many lessons that is naturally reflected in this subject. Pupils learn about the Christian, Hindu, Islamic, and Jewish faiths and make visits to different places of worship. They particularly enjoy visiting the Hindu temple in Preston. Much of the work is based on experiences and discussion. Pupils are developing an understanding of the traditions, customs and dress of different cultures and faiths. They are helped to understand the similarities and differences between the major world faiths. Pupils learn about the customs and religious leaders of each tradition. Teachers incorporate the skills of experts and professionals from different faiths and traditions to extend the range and scope of the work for pupils to good effect.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers use work in the subject very sensitively to contribute to pupils' personal as well as academic development. Pupils read stories from the Old and New Testaments and from the sacred books of traditions other than the Christian faith. Work to compare the pattern of celebrations based on festivals of light enabled pupils to reflect on the Hindu customs at the time of Diwali. The high quality of work seen maintains that found at the time of the last inspection.
92. The school uses the strong links with the local church very well. When celebrating all aspects of the Christian year, they join with other worshippers and visitors to the area as part of the time traveller project. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who uses her skills very well to support and monitor work across the school in a straightforward and practical way.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. No complete lessons were observed in **design and technology**, as it was being taught with and alongside other subjects so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about provision, standards, achievement or teaching. The collection of photographic evidence and the many examples of completed work indicate that standards attained often exceed the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. All planning and making are clearly linked to a purpose, and practical ideas are carried through very well. The items are designed to meet a need and are then used in other lessons. They have to be functional and durable. Whilst many examples of work in the subject stand alone many are linked to other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 were using tools in a very sensible and mature way as they worked to improve their initial attempts at making Anderson shelters to extend their work in history. During the process of designing and making products, all ideas are tested using cheaper and less durable materials. These 'mock up' designs are then often tested to destruction before making the final high quality product. Those that prove to be unsuitable are modified, enhanced or re-worked until they are of a suitably high standard. The work seen showed very positive links with history and art and design.
94. Designs in books are marked and annotated and the quality of completed work on display indicates that everyone works to high standards. The resources provided are plentiful and are of good quality. Pupils are eager to share their work with others and are keen to explain how they developed their earliest ideas through to completion. The task of designing and making slippers and picture frames had inspired pupils and they were very happy to discuss their work and talk about the shared activity. Making and decorating functional boxes, linking skills and techniques from ancient times, were productive activities. The finished articles were very attractive. Work is evaluated and assessed very effectively.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Inspirational leadership and management contribute to the high standards and to pupils' very good achievement in all aspects of the subject.
- There have been very good improvements in the provision and learning since the last inspection.
- The excellent curriculum gives pupils a wide range of creative opportunities that enhance other aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

95. Standards overall are well above the expected levels and pupils' achievement is very good. The overall provision and the standards achieved have improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils incorporate art from a wide range of cultures and different historical periods into their work. Teachers employ exacting challenges for gifted and talented pupils and offer

very good support for those with special educational needs. Pupils build on a well-structured range of skills and consequently they are very well motivated and confident when experimenting with new techniques. Pupils benefit from the work of visiting artists and visits to places of artistic interest. During the inspection, pupils discussed their achievements and the work on display with great enthusiasm and very good understanding.

96. Pupils acquire an excellent range of artistic skills and use a much wider range of art materials than pupils in most schools. Their learning across all aspects of the subject is enhanced and enriched by the very good development of skills. Teachers and pupils use skills learned in ICT very effectively in some aspects of the subject.
97. Many aspects contribute to the very good provision and to the levels of achievement being well above those usually found in primary schools. The subject leader has an excellent influence on standards and levels of challenge throughout the school. She is very supportive of colleagues and monitors completed work and displays. She has, therefore, a very good understanding of pupils' attainments and achievements in each year group. The leadership and management of the school have shown high commitment to the involvement of a practising artist and have appointed a person with very high quality personal skills and motivation who can support others. Teaching and learning throughout the school are very good, with examples of excellent teaching. Teachers know how pupils develop artistic skills and have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the requirements and challenges of the subject. They plan work very well to develop pupils' positive attitudes and confidence.
98. The curriculum enhances pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils' understanding of art from other cultures and countries is reflected in many displays. A wide range of African art is displayed in the hall. Other high quality displays include work in the style of Gordon Beningfield. Pencil sketches of birds show excellent understanding of how to show texture, perspective and proportion. Pupils are involved in many local and community events and have won many awards. Some impressive features include designs for a scarecrow for Kendal in Bloom, art displays at the county show and pictures and designs in the church, the education office and in local hotels. The pupils have won many nationwide art competitions.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music has a very high profile within the school and the community.
- Pupils achieve standards in the subject that are well above the expected level.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good and contribute to very good standards and high levels of achievement.
- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities for performing in small groups and in large-scale productions.

Commentary

99. By the end of both Years 2 and 6 attainment is very good. From the lessons and musical activities observed, pupils achieve standards that are well above those expected. They have very good knowledge and understanding of music from a wide range of cultures and styles. Their performances are sensitive and highly rhythmic. Pupils have a good feel for the rhythm and style of music, and the school's development of eurhythmics as an integral part of developing language and physical awareness contributes to this.
100. Provision for the subject has been greatly improved since the last inspection. Pupils achieve very well because the school ensures that the specific needs of all are met. Some pupils benefit from instrumental tuition and, in the lesson observed, achieve very well. Many pupils have opportunities for performing in assembly. During assembly, a very skilled young pianist from one of the classes played the piano and performed extremely well showing great maturity. All

pupils who have additional needs, including with those with special educational needs, are very well supported in all activities and achieve very well compared to their targets.

101. Many aspects contribute to the attainment being well above the expected level. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The inspirational qualities that are a part of the leadership of the subject ensures that pupils benefit from an exciting and challenging curriculum. Pupils' skills developing a very well structured manner throughout the school. Teaching and learning are very good and occasionally excellent. Pupils and teachers are enthusiastic about the involvement of specialists in music and dance. The school is committed to the development of pupils' rhythmic awareness and its contribution to many aspects of learning in addition to music. Many pupils take part in local music festivals and concerts in partnership with other schools. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and the dynamic and enthusiastic leadership of the subject contributes to the many areas of success.
102. Many pupils took part in 'Elgarthon', a national musical charity event for a cancer research. They enjoyed wearing moustaches in order to resemble Sir Edward Elgar as they sang 'Land of Hope and Glory'. This is part of their celebration of making music within the community.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good collaborative teaching.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and show very good skills and control.
- The very good extra-curricular sports clubs are open to all pupils.
- There is good participation in most local and district sports competitions

Commentary

103. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations and by the end of Year 6 it greatly exceeds national expectations. In the lessons and clubs observed the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Based on prior individual skills and team contribution pupils achieve well, due to their own enthusiasm, keenness to improve and skilled coaching. School records indicate that standards in swimming exceed national expectations, with many pupils swimming longer distances by the end of Year 6.
104. Pupils in all year groups know the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises in relation to muscle tone, heartbeat and breathing. In Year 2 pupils enjoyed a session of short tennis that was well organised and managed. Gymnastics in Year 1 showed how pupils understood the need to be aware of others as they used space very well when curling in and out of hoops around the hall. Pupils show good control and use of speed and tension to express feelings and moods as they get older. For example, pupils in a Year 5 lesson combined skill, speed and patience as they undertook a team challenge in table tennis. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work well together when developing skills in managing control and speed. They make very good use of space when working together controlling and passing balls in hockey and when playing football and netball.
105. The school places a strong emphasis on developing physical ability, healthy life-styles and positive attitudes. School teams take part in friendly and local football, and netball competitions. Good community links are formed with other local schools. Whole-school sessions in dance are led by a visiting teacher who inspires everyone, but particularly the boys, in using every part of their bodies to express moods and feelings through dance. The sports clubs are available for all pupils and some join who attend the neighbouring school.
106. The quality of teaching and as a result learning is very good overall. The subject is led, managed and organised well by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader, who is well supported by a team of teachers. Many teachers willingly devote additional time to after-school

practices. Sharing the running of clubs with the neighbouring school makes it possible for both schools to offer a greater number of options. A good scheme of work and detailed planning ensure that the full range of physical education activities is covered.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Overall provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils of all ages is good.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
- The headteacher has very clear vision and aspirations for the development of this aspect of pupils' education.

Commentary

107. The school's provision for this aspect of school life is central to its ethos. From the reception class onwards this work is considered to be a vital part of every day. This work is supported very effectively through the social, emotional and behavioural skills programme that underpins much of the work of the school. This part of the curriculum was not inspected separately at the time of the last inspection although many of the elements now included were rated highly at that time. The headteacher leads by example and has set clear goals for the development of this work in every part of the life of the school. All of the staff provide very good support for pupils' personal development they are good role models and promote and sustain very good relationships. The quality of teaching of this part of the curriculum is very good and as a result pupils' learning is also very good. The subject is led and managed very well although, as part of the preparation of materials for a national project all of the staff have a shared involvement to a very high degree.
108. There are very effective arrangements for pupils to work collaboratively and to take responsibility. In this way pupils learn that every action has some impact on another. They realise that people's efforts are all valid and deserve to be praised and encouraged. Older pupils help with preparing the classrooms for lessons, organising resources and helping younger children through the buddy system. During collective worship each morning pupils have many opportunities for discussing social and moral issues, talking about feelings and reflecting on the dilemmas that face them each day. Healthy eating and healthy lifestyle initiatives are strengths and pupils learn about a healthy lifestyle through science, physical education and the ethos of the school. The school has gained a healthy schools award. As part of this work, that meets statutory requirements fully, pupils develop a sensible awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. Sex education and relationships are part of this curriculum. Pupils are successfully encouraged to show initiative through fund raising and have a very good understanding of parts of the world where there are hardships. There are effective and practical systems for involving pupils and giving them additional responsibilities, including making decisions and acting on their own ideas.

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	3
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).

