

# Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119185
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358512
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Hemmings

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	365
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tom Haworth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Stephanie Grimshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Exchange Street Accrington Lancashire BB5 0JD
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<b>Email address</b>	head@springhill.lancs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors observed 14 teachers and held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding procedures, school policies, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 313 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

- How effectively the school is seeking to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment.
- The impact of action taken to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- How successfully the school is working to raise attendance.
- The impact of the restructuring of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

Spring Hill is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Most pupils are from minority-ethnic heritages with a majority at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has been awarded the Activemark and is also an accredited Healthy School.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is improving and has several strengths. Senior leaders have overseen a range of initiatives that have been introduced, since the previous inspection, to improve progress, raise standards and increase attendance. These are proving successful, with learning and progress improving securely and quickly so that attainment is rising strongly. Attendance, though low, mainly because some parents take their children on extended leave during term time, is also improving rapidly. Leaders are not complacent and know there is more to do in order to raise attainment and attendance to match the national average. Self-evaluation is accurate and means that the governing body and leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The correct priority areas for development are identified and actions put into place to bring about improvement. These actions are not always clearly linked to their impact on outcomes nor are easily measurable in terms of their success. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough to iron out the inconsistencies in quality between classes. Nevertheless, the trend of improvement since the previous inspection shows there is satisfactory capacity to take the school forward.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, making good progress and achieving well. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 to 6, and increasing numbers are making good progress. Though attainment is low in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, it is much improved since the previous inspection and drawing nearer to the national average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills have been successfully improved so they can communicate their ideas more clearly, using correctly structured sentences. However, pupils' limited vocabulary inhibits their writing and there is insufficient opportunity for them to practise and improve their skills by writing purposefully across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils' problem-solving skills and ability to explain their ideas using correct mathematical vocabulary are weaker aspects of their performance.

Pupils behave well and are polite. They are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. Teaching has many strengths but there are inconsistencies in its quality between classes. Some teachers do not always match activities to the abilities of different groups of pupils nor provide effective feedback to help pupils improve their work. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the strong emphasis the school places on ensuring the safety and well-being of their children.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to at least the national average, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - extending pupils' vocabulary to enliven their writing
  - improving pupils' mathematical problem-solving skills and their ability to explain their ideas using correct mathematical vocabulary
  - providing further opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum
  - improving the consistency of teaching to ensure activities are always closely matched to the needs of all pupils and feedback effectively helps them to improve.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - ensuring priorities are closely linked to their impact on outcomes and that their success can be measured
  - checking the quality of teaching and learning rigorously to set precise areas for improvement and ensure teachers act upon them successfully.
- Work with parents and carers to reduce the number of extended leaves taken during term time in order to raise attendance to at least the national average.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' achievement from their skill levels on entering school, which are generally low, especially in language and communication, is satisfactory. They have positive attitudes to learning, showing interest and enthusiasm in all they do. Pupils enjoy working collaboratively, such as in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6 in which they were estimating the size of angles in a variety of triangles. Pupils speak clearly and confidently share their ideas with others. They enjoy writing but their stories and accounts lack creativity because they do not have an extensive vocabulary. Pupils are not adept at solving real-life number problems. They use information and communication technology confidently to support their learning, such as in using the internet to research information. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make the same progress as other pupils because of the extra help they receive.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and know they can talk to a member of staff if they have any worries or concerns. They add to the life of the school by taking on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council. Pupils contribute well to the wider community by fund-raising for charities and taking part in local events. They have a good understanding of the beliefs and traditions of cultures different to their own. Pupils are adopting healthy lifestyles well, knowing the need to eat a balanced diet and to exercise regularly. Pupils' strongly improving attainment and attendance and their good skills in working together to complete tasks show they are soundly prepared for their future lives.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have secure subject knowledge that enables them to explain new ideas clearly and confidently. They manage lessons well, so that little time is lost and classrooms are calm and friendly places in which to learn. Increased opportunities for pupils to engage in paired and group discussions promote their speaking and listening skills well. Some teachers do not always set work that is sufficiently challenging, nor use marking and verbal feedback effectively to guide pupils to improve. Teaching assistants are usually deployed well to support all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

The curriculum is enlivened by out-of-school clubs and educational visits, such as to Ribchester as part of historical studies into Roman Britain. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by partnership with a local school that enables them to work with pupils from cultural and religious backgrounds different to their own. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to consolidate and refine their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. The Activemark award and Healthy School accreditation reflects the commitment to encouraging pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The school is a safe and welcoming setting in which to learn. Staff are committed to the care of all pupils and know the steps to take if they have any concerns about the well-being of a pupil. The well-targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils plays an important role in supporting their learning and development. Action taken to improve

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attendance is proving successful and having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment. Good attention is paid to ensuring those who have a planned absence do not fall behind. Well-established partnerships with a variety of agencies ensure that extra support for individual pupils is readily available when required.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders work well together and understand what the school needs to do to improve. Morale is high and there is a shared commitment to taking the school forward. Plans to do this are based on accurate information but do not always have sufficient focus on significantly improving outcomes. Lesson observations are undertaken but areas for development are not always precise enough and nor are they rigorously followed up to see if they have been acted upon successfully. The governing body is well organised and supports staff and pupils. It is appropriately involved in setting priorities for improvement. Leaders do not tolerate discrimination of any kind and promote equality of opportunity well. They have detailed information about different groups of pupils and regularly check their performance and contribution to school life.

The school has effective procedures to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils. Training of all staff, especially in child protection, is of good quality. Leaders promote community cohesion well in school and this leads to it being a harmonious community, with pupils from different backgrounds getting on well together. There is good engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school and its immediate community. The school helps parents and carers to support their children's learning in different ways, which contributes positively to the progress they make.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The restructuring of the organisation in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection has successfully improved provision and outcomes for children. Improved teamwork between adults means that children's individual needs are catered for more effectively. Children in the two Reception classes have opportunity to work and play together throughout the day and this better promotes their personal and social development. The good balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by children effectively promotes their development as independent learners. Children behave well and show much enjoyment in their activities. This was evident when they were learning how to use information and communication technology devices to record a message for a partner. The outdoor area is used effectively throughout the day to promote children's development across all areas of learning.

The setting provides a safe and stimulating environment for children. Welfare requirements are fully met and great care and attention are paid to the health, safety and well-being of all children. The curriculum is enhanced by opportunity to work with a variety of visitors, including the school nurse. Good leadership has rightly identified the need to ensure that the more-able children are always challenged effectively. The good partnership with parents and carers and other agencies effectively promote children's learning and development.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. The very large majority of these were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical of many, 'A warm welcoming atmosphere at school that my daughter enjoys every day.' and, 'I am very pleased how my concerns are dealt with.' A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school informed them of their child's progress nor took account of their suggestions and concerns. These were investigated, and inspectors judged that the school provides sufficient information about pupils' progress and takes good account of the suggestions and concerns of parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 313 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 365 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	156	50	152	49	4	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	174	56	133	42	4	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	137	44	147	47	21	7	4	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	119	38	169	54	18	6	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	129	41	170	54	9	3	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	142	45	147	47	17	5	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	145	46	153	49	12	4	2	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	116	37	176	56	13	4	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	108	35	180	58	11	4	5	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	121	39	170	54	15	5	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	107	34	173	55	20	6	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	121	39	168	54	12	4	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	146	47	154	49	8	3	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School, Accrington BB5 0JD**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspectors judge that your school is satisfactory and that:

- though standards and attendance are low, they are improving quickly
- you behave well and are polite
- staff look after you well and make sure you are safe
- you enjoy school and it helps you to be healthy, as you indicated in your questionnaires
- you have a good understanding and appreciation of the traditions and beliefs of cultures and religions different to your own
- the headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to help you do better.

We have asked your school to:

- raise your attainment, especially in English and mathematics, such as by extending your vocabulary and ability to write creatively, improving your mathematical problem-solving skills and making teaching more consistent
- make planning for school improvement more focused and check the quality of teaching and learning more carefully
- further improve your attendance.

All of you are a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best in your activities.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

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