

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Dane Ghyll Primary School**

Barrow-in-Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112213

Headteacher: Mr Terry Endacott

Lead inspector: Mr Rob Crompton

Dates of inspection: March 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> 2004

Inspection number: 255947

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:	Community
Age range of children:	4 – 11 years
Gender of children:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Skelwith Drive Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA14 4PG
Telephone number:	01229 894655
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Blackhurst
Date of previous inspection:	14 <sup>th</sup> September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a suburban area on the outskirts of Barrow-in-Furness. Local social and economic conditions are good. Four per cent of children are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. As they start school, most children's social, language and early number skills are more advanced than is typical of the age group. Across the school, the proportion of children with special educational needs is well below average at 9 per cent. Most of these children have moderate learning difficulties; three have a statement of educational need because of specific social or communication problems. A few children are from ethnic minority backgrounds, all of whom speak English as their first language. Very few children enter or leave the school other than at the usual times. The school has gained the Investor in People standard and has been awarded the Active Mark Gold in recognition of its provision for sport.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics History Religious education
14509	Philip Mann	Team inspector	English Geography Information and communication technology Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with several strengths. Children achieve high standards because the teaching is good. Good provision for children's personal development and the warm relationships contribute to the enjoyment most children find in learning. The school is well led and managed and gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Consistently effective teaching enables children to make good progress and achieve high standards
- Children enjoy a very wide range of activities which support their learning and personal development
- The school's very good ethos is apparent in children's very positive attitudes and behaviour
- Children develop very good literacy and numeracy skills and this helps their achievement across the curriculum
- The head teacher, senior staff and governors work as an effective team
- Gaps in written information and lack of opportunities for informal daily contact limit the development of a strong working partnership with parents

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Assessment information is used more effectively to decide what to teach next. Senior managers and subject leaders keep a closer eye on things by looking at planning and observing lessons. Children now have very good opportunities to work independently and to carry out their own research. Children in the reception class have a much better range of outdoor play equipment.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children achieve **well** through the school. They get off to a good start in the reception class. Almost all children exceed the goals that they are expected to reach in all areas of learning. Their language and number skills are particularly well developed and this provides a very good foundation for future learning. Progress in years 1 and 2 is good and children usually reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In recent years, children in year 2 have achieved well above average results in national tests, often being in the top 5 per cent of all schools. Children in the current year 2 class are progressing well and are on target to achieve good standards.

As the table below shows, results at year 6 are frequently above or well above national averages. The A\* grades in English and mathematics indicate that results were in the top 5 per cent nationally. The proportion of children achieving the higher levels was well above the national average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Although progress between year 3 and year 6 in English and mathematics was a little below average for similar schools in 2003, this was against the trend. In recent years, results have been well above those of similar schools. The inspection found that children make good progress in each class, building well on their previous achievements. Current standards in year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A*	B	D
mathematics	A*	A	B	D
science	A	A	A	B

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

Achievement in most other subjects is good. Attainment by year 6 is well above expected levels in design and technology and music. Good standards are reached in physical education and history. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and art and design are in line with those expected. Due to timetable arrangements, it was not possible to judge standards in geography.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Relationships are very good; children have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Attendance is well above average and children arrive promptly.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Teachers make lessons interesting. They establish a good pace and set tasks which challenge children. Children respond well because the work is not too easy or too hard. This means that children of all abilities do well. Those with special educational needs benefit from good support both in class and when working in small groups. High fliers do well because they are given opportunities to tackle demanding tasks. Very good relationships underpin most lessons which means children enjoy learning.

Children have good opportunities to use their language and mathematical skills in other subjects. In particular, they use their writing skills very well in a range of contexts. Opportunities for them to practise and develop ICT skills across the curriculum are satisfactory.

The curriculum offers good opportunities for children to learn according to their individual needs. They enjoy a very good variety of additional activities that promote learning and personal development. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents but more could be done to make this stronger.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and support the school well. They carry out their statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching and the progress their children make. Parents are happy with most aspects of the school, although some feel that they could be kept better informed about how their children are getting on. Children have very positive views. They say they like their teachers and they particularly enjoy extra activities such as sport, music and educational visits.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school needs to do to improve is to improve written information and create opportunities for parents and teachers to have day-to-day informal contact

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** in all year groups. Standards in English, mathematics and science are **well above average**. In most other subjects, children are working above the levels generally expected.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards have been sustained over several years
- Children achieve well in the reception class
- Children of all abilities achieve well
- Achievement is good in most subjects

#### Commentary

1. Children achieve well in the reception class and exceed the levels expected in all areas of learning. This is because effective teaching successfully builds on the good social, language and mathematical skills that are evident as children start school. Progress in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development is particularly rapid and standards are very good. Children gain a very good knowledge and understanding of the world outside their immediate home and school environment. Their personal, physical and creative development is good.
2. Children in year 1 get off to a flying start because of their very good basic skills and they continue to make good progress through years 1 and 2. Results of national curriculum assessments in reading, writing, mathematics and science at the end of year 2 are consistently well above average and often in the top five per cent of national figures. A dip in writing in 2002 was successfully addressed. Very good teaching means that children in the current year 2 class are on course to do well. There are fewer more able children this year and, although above average results are likely in English and mathematics, it is doubtful whether they will match those of recent years. Children are reaching well above average standards in science. Good attainment is evident in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

#### Standards in national tests at the end of year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.5 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	17.2 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.3 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

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

3. The picture is similar when the results of year 6 children are analysed. Overall performance in national curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science has been well above average for the last four years. Again, results in English have twice been in the top five per cent and in mathematics once. The proportion of children attaining the higher levels in 2003 was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The inspection showed that children usually make substantial gains in these years reflecting both the consistently good teaching and children's positive attitudes to learning. The current year 6 children are well on the way to achieving high standards.



## Standards in national tests at the end of year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (30.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.1 (29.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (30.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 32 children in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- Throughout the school, children achieve well and reach very good standards in design and technology, history and music. Attainment in art and design is good by year 2. Less emphasis is placed on this subject in subsequent years but children achieve average standards by year 6. In ICT and religious education, standards are in line with the levels expected by year 2 and by year 6. Due to timetable arrangements, it was not possible to judge standards in geography.
- Good provision for different groups of children enables all to make good progress whatever their starting point. Through good leadership and management and effective teaching the school succeeds in providing equal opportunities for children to experience success. On the one hand, children with special educational needs succeed in meeting their individual targets and on the other, gifted and talented children meet their potential. No difference between the achievement of boys and girls has been identified, neither was any seen during the inspection. Children are very well prepared to start their secondary education as most attain high standards in literacy and numeracy; they develop independence and positive attitudes to learning

### Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their attendance and punctuality are also **very good**. Provision for children's personal development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are eager to learn and very enthusiastic about what the school has to offer
- Residential trips and clubs provide children with excellent opportunities for personal development
- Year 6 children in particular respond very well to the good range of responsibilities they are given
- Assemblies lack a sense of occasion
- Children rarely miss school and almost always arrive in good time

### Commentary

- The school has been very successful in maintaining high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to learning since the last inspection. In class, teachers set very high expectations for behaviour and children are keen to show that they can meet these. The school fosters a clear sense of children's responsibilities towards others. This is evident in the playground where year 6 children help look after younger ones as a matter of course, organising games and tending to any who are upset or hurt. Relationships across the school are very good as a result, and the youngest children feel very confident about mixing with the older ones. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- The number and scope of residential visits are a real strength of the school, giving children memories to last them a lifetime and helping them to develop new talents and qualities. Every class from year 4 to year 6 has the chance to go away. Trips range from camping nearby in the Lake District to visiting galleries and shows in London. These outstanding opportunities help children to develop socially, culturally and spiritually. Children's personal qualities are further enhanced by the school's very good provision for sport and music. Through taking part in extra-curricular activities, children learn more about themselves and others, and find out what they are

capable of achieving. Children who were interviewed spoke with delight of all the experiences they had enjoyed thanks to the school.

8. The school's daily assemblies make little contribution to children's personal development, principally because the hall is used as a general thoroughfare during assembly time. As a result, there is nothing special or spiritual about assemblies. Some children are brought in late because they have been reading to staff, there is little music or singing and staff do not usually attend.
9. Parents value education and the work of the school, and they make sure that their children attend regularly and on time. The school chases up any concerns about attendance swiftly before these become problems.

### Attendance

#### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The teaching is good. A very good range of additional activities enriches children's learning. Support and guidance are good but attention to safety is unsatisfactory. Links with parents, the community and other schools are satisfactory.

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers successfully promote children's independent learning
- Skilful questioning helps teachers to build on children's existing knowledge and understanding
- Children are increasingly aware of what they need to do to improve
- Teachers track children's progress well, but the school's own system is not easily translated into national curriculum levels
- Some children find it difficult to adjust to the contrasting approaches to teaching in the infant and junior classes

#### Commentary

10. The quality of teaching remains at least as good as it was at the time of the last inspection. A higher proportion is now good or better. Lessons are well organised and work is pitched at various levels to enable all children to make progress. From the start, in the reception class, children are encouraged to make choices. As they move up the school, they develop the skills necessary to work without constant prompting by teachers. In practical subjects such as science, they confidently carry out investigations. They work cooperatively and search out information in books and from Internet sources. By years 5 and 6, children make sensible decisions about how to record the outcomes of their research and experiments.
11. The good level of subject expertise among the staff enables teachers to explore children's understanding and to pose questions which challenge them and move their learning forward. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics, science and music. In the most successful

lessons, teachers introduce the correct vocabulary and this helps children to get to grips with the underlying ideas. In turn, children often use sophisticated language when responding to questions or taking part in discussions.

12. More often than not, at the beginning of lessons, teachers make clear what children are to learn and set specific targets. This helps children to concentrate on the important aspects of the lesson and enables them to review their own progress. Teachers provide good feedback during lessons and, in the most effective ones, they make a point of returning to the original targets and help children to reflect on how they have got on and what they need to learn next. Teachers know the children well and accurately assess their progress. Detailed records using a 1 to 5 scale in each subject are passed on to the next teacher. Although these provide a very good idea of children's relative strengths and weaknesses, they are not related to national curriculum levels which are the common currency of assessment information within and between schools. This makes the system unnecessarily cumbersome and does not help teachers to pass on clear information to parents.
13. The warm, relaxed but purposeful atmosphere in the year 1 and 2 classes helps children to develop their confidence. They are secure in the knowledge that their ideas will be listened to and are not worried about making the odd mistake. The approach further up the school is effective but it takes some children a little time to adjust to a more formal regime. Some teachers are inclined to pick up on minor misdemeanours rather than sustain the flow of the lesson and coax children back into learning mode. In contrast, children in year 6 enjoy the same very positive relationships with their teacher as the youngest ones. The school needs to ensure a more consistent approach across the year groups so that expectations for children's behaviour are similar in each class.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	6 (18%)	21(64%)	5 (15%)	0	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.*

**The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **good**. Very good opportunities are provided to extend learning outside of lessons. Resources for learning are good and the school is making the best use of satisfactory accommodation.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good learning opportunities in the reception class give children a very good start to school life
- Provision for children with different abilities is good so that all achieve well
- Very many activities outside lessons contribute to children's personal development and help to broaden their experiences
- The range of opportunities for children to participate in sporting activities is a strength of the school.

**Commentary**

14. Work in the reception class excites the children and is relevant to their needs. It gives them a good start to their formal education. The youngest children settle into school quickly. They make good progress because they are provided with a good range of interesting opportunities to play, explore and practise. They are taught in a stimulating environment which prepares them well for work in year 1.

15. Children with special educational needs receive good targeted support from teachers and learning support assistants which results in them achieving well. These children are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. They know their contribution to lessons is valued and this increases their confidence and self-esteem. Higher attaining children are successfully encouraged to develop their skills. The school has devised a programme for those in years 5 and 6 which effectively enhances skills such as independent research and problem solving. Some higher attaining children attend a Saturday club geared up to providing them with a range of challenging activities.
16. The school provides a very good range of extra activities. Visits outside school enhance work in art, history, geography, music and religious education. For example, year 5 children visit Furness Abbey and this stimulates their interest in Medieval England. A programme of residential visits for children in years 4, 5 and 6 contributes much to children's learning and personal development. All children benefit from a good range of clubs and activities and these are very well attended. Sporting and musical activities are very much appreciated, giving children many chances to demonstrate and develop their talents. These opportunities make a very good contribution to children's learning and personal development.
17. An extensive range of activities and clubs enriches the provision in physical education and music both in school time and after school. For example, children can sing in choirs, learn to play a range of musical instruments and play in an orchestra.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The attention paid to children's care and health and safety is **satisfactory**. Support and guidance for children are **good**. There are **good** systems for consulting children.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A risk to children's safety identified by the inspection team was promptly addressed
- There are good relationships between adults and children
- The well-established systems for class and school councils mean that all the children can have their say

### **Commentary**

18. There is a good level of supervision during the school day. In contrast, the inspection team raised concerns about the safety of children in reception and years 1 and 2 at the end of the afternoon. They were not handed over directly to their parents. Routines were quickly changed so that parents now collect their children from the playground rather than wait outside near the road.
19. The good relationships between adults and children in the school mean that children always have someone to turn to if they need help. Teachers are ambitious for their charges and want them to achieve their very best. They give them good support and guidance in their learning and in the many other activities offered by the school.
20. The school has a long tradition of listening to children's ideas and taking them into account. The year 6 children on the school council consult with the class councils in other year groups and report back to senior staff. Members of the school council say that they have had a lot of influence in recent playground improvements. The very good range of activities and equipment outside bears witness to this.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and the community are also **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are too few opportunities for informal contact between staff and parents
- Parents value the work of the school and support their children's education
- There are significant gaps in the written information available for parents

## Commentary

21. Before the inspection team raised concerns about children's safety, parents did not routinely escort or meet their children on the school site at the beginning and end of each day. They rarely got the chance to say hello or chat to their children's teachers. This meant that parents usually only saw their children's teachers if there was a problem or at parent-teacher consultation evening. As a result of the immediate changes made to routines at the beginning and end of the day, there are more opportunities for informal contact between parents and teachers. This is especially important for the reception class and is likely to help to reduce the misunderstandings that can arise between the school and home. Parents are not always aware of all the good things that are happening in the classrooms.
22. In contrast, there are good links between the school and parents of children with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator works together with parents and older children on reviews and individual education plans to ensure that all parties are happy with them.
23. The school is well supported by its parent body. Parents recognise the importance of education and make sure that their children attend regularly, on time, and well prepared for the school day. They make sure that their children complete their homework and most hear their children read regularly at home. The parent-teacher association is very active, and those parents who can help at school make a valuable contribution in class.
24. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents give a good general overview of school life. Newsletters, however, are not frequent enough to keep parents up-to-date with the school's achievements and successes. The lack of regular written curriculum information means that it is difficult for parents to help their children with their work at home throughout the year. The outdated information provided for new parents of children coming into the reception class gives a particularly poor and misleading impression of school life and expectations.
25. The school has recognised that reports to parents on their children's progress need overhauling. At present they do not give parents a clear picture of how well their children are doing for their age. Targets for improvement are not always precise enough to be helpful to parents.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher and key staff provide **good** leadership. Governance is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, governors and senior staff have a clear idea of strengths and weaknesses
- Senior staff promote high standards for all children and set a very good example in their teaching
- Strategic planning helps the school to move forward

## Commentary

26. A clear sense of purpose, dedication to maintaining high standards and the development of a broad curriculum are key features of the headteacher's leadership of the school. He successfully promotes a collaborative approach to improvement and curriculum planning. Senior staff work together very well, frequently reviewing aspects of the school's work in order to sustain high standards. The deputy headteacher and infant co-ordinator provide very good role models for teachers and their warmth and good nature helps children in many aspects of school life.
27. This is a very inclusive school and all children are valued. Care is taken to meet children's individual needs. Good leadership of the provision for children with special educational needs ensures that these children are supported well. Special arrangements for more able children reflect the school's commitment to helping all to succeed.
28. The school improvement plan is all-embracing and clearly sets out the strategic direction of the school. Subject leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. They keep a close eye on children's work and support colleagues well by observing lessons and providing feedback and suggestions for improvement. Standards are closely monitored and this further enables determined and effective leadership. For example, the recent initiative to address a decline in standards in writing was well thought through and proved successful. The coordinated approach to staff training also contributed to raising standards in writing.
29. Governors make a strong team and bring a good range of expertise to their work. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, a good idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses and clear ideas about how the school needs to develop. These factors have contributed to the good improvement since the last inspection. All statutory requirements are met.

### ***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	421771
Total expenditure	351036
Expenditure per pupil	1935

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	83094
Balance carried forward to the next	70736

30. Governors are mindful of the current high proportion of funds carried over to next year. This has been prudently maintained in order to sustain staffing levels. Management of the school's finances is good. The school works hard to obtain best value for money.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

31. Children achieve well in all areas of learning due to consistently good teaching. The teacher and support assistant work together well as a team and manage the provision effectively. They plan an interesting and relevant curriculum taking great care to ensure that all children get equal access to all the activities. Good systems are in place to monitor and record children's progress. The teacher plans a good balance of activities that cater for the needs of all children. As a result, they are very well prepared for starting work in year 1.
32. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and all weaknesses identified at that time have been well addressed. The provision for outdoor learning is good. There has been considerable improvement made to the available play space and the provision of large apparatus and playground toys is much improved.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children feel secure and confident in trying out new ideas
- A good range of opportunities helps children to become responsible and mature
- Many children display good levels of cooperation when working and playing

#### **Commentary**

33. Children quickly settle into the routines of classroom life. They respond well to the interesting, purposeful and calm environment. All adults are caring and supportive and this encourages children to try things out for themselves. On many occasions, they are given choices and encouraged to make up their own minds. There are good opportunities for children to learn to work together. For example, when playing outdoors many children cooperate well together, making play much more fulfilling and a more effective learning experience. Adults take every opportunity to encourage responsibility and children quickly become independent. Most dress themselves appropriately for going outside at playtime and at the end of the day. A significant number of children are developing a good level of moral awareness. For example, following a session listening to the story of the Good Samaritan their comments indicated a good understanding of which character behaved appropriately.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Opportunities for role-play help to develop speaking and listening skills
- Many children have very good reading and writing skills
- The environment stimulates language and discussion through interesting displays

## Commentary

34. Children enjoy activities rich in opportunities for language development. Imaginative play is used very effectively to help children develop speaking and listening skills. For example, children play in the 'Travel Office' pretending to book their holidays to far away places. The teacher is skilled at generating class discussions. In these, the children listen attentively to each other. They have a good awareness of the need to speak one at a time. Many respond easily and with considerable confidence to the teacher's questions. All contributions receive a very positive response and this encourages some of the more reluctant speakers to join in. Through direct teaching, children gradually learn to share books and recognise simple words. Many are learning to write and a significant number communicate by writing simple words and phrases. Many shape their letters quite clearly and simple spellings are often correct, as shown in written descriptions of their own teddy bears and writing about 'Rainy Days'. Almost all children can correctly write their forenames. The classroom and other work areas are interesting places containing stimulating displays that reflect the importance of language through signs, notices and books.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of practical tasks support the direct teaching
- Most children are very good at solving simple number problems

35. Children are given many opportunities to learn through practical tasks. For example, children thread beads, counting, sorting and ordering them. Children weigh objects and sort them into those that are heavy and those that are light. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of mathematical vocabulary. Almost all children can count confidently up to 20 with most able to recognise and name the appropriate symbols for these numbers. Many children do simple adding sums and recognise and name simple shapes such as a triangle, square and a diamond.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's awareness of the world is enhanced well through visits out and visitors to school
- Children are developing good skills in using the computer

## Commentary

36. The teacher plans effectively through topics and themes, linking these to a good range of interesting activities. These incorporate music, role-play and art to help children broaden their understanding of the world around them. Because of this stimulating planning, children are motivated and achieve well. They are encouraged to be inquisitive. In a lesson about the need for energy for movement, children offered a wide range of appropriate suggestions about what could provide a source of this energy. To aid their learning, children have visited the children's ward of a local hospital, and a local minister has visited the school to talk to them about infant baptism. These experiences positively enhance learning.



37. Children use the computer confidently for a range of purposes. For example, they create pictures on screen by manipulating the cursor with the mouse. A significant number of children can perform simple functions on computers by responding to prompts on the screen using the cursor and the mouse.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective use is made of the outdoor play area
- Children's physical skills are developed well through a wide range of activities

### **Commentary**

38. Children have good control over their large body movements. Their ability to control a pencil or paintbrush and manipulate small objects is also well developed.

39. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to choose activities both indoors and outside. The outdoor area is well resourced with a good range of large toys and play equipment. Physical activities feature every day. This makes a significant contribution to children's good progress.

40. Children display good control when using pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. The quality of presentation of written work, drawings and sketches is good. In their written work, almost all children form letters well. Many children have produced pencil drawings of teddy bears that are advanced for their respective ages, several incorporating some fine shading into their work.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of different experiences helps children to achieve well
- Children enjoy music and sing enthusiastically, and they enjoy painting

### **Commentary**

41. Creative activities are well planned to stimulate children's interest and imagination and to develop their skills. Children enjoy singing and accompanying each other using a range of percussion instruments. They sing in a range of contexts, for example they sing number songs singing enthusiastically and in tune, learning number sequences at the same time. Children enjoy a good range of experiences in art. They paint and learn to use crayons, to mix colour in paint, to print and produce collages of good quality. Most observational drawing is well proportioned and contains considerable detail.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average in all aspects of the subject
- The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good
- Good management is helping to sustain high standards

#### **Commentary**

42. The provision is well led and managed. A number of areas have improved since the previous inspection, including the level of work set for more able children and the quality of children's written work. Supported by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinators, staff work hard as a team to encourage the development of children's literacy skills. Teaching is good and some very good lessons were seen. Teachers devise well-planned, purposeful and enjoyable activities. They keep track of children's day-to-day progress and modify work to suit children's emerging needs. Teachers have high expectations and use interesting ideas and resources to motivate them. For example, the year 6 residential trips are an excellent stimulus for the development of children's literacy skills. Children produce colourful descriptive accounts and sensitive poems as a result of their experiences.
43. Children have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and standards are well above average. Children speak confidently during class discussions. Teachers value their opinions, and do not talk down to them. Unfamiliar words are explained and repeated and children are encouraged to talk and share ideas and do so very maturely. For example, when describing their use of ICT, both year 2 and year 6 children were extremely articulate. Children take part in school productions and assemblies regularly, which give further opportunities for speaking and listening.
44. Standards in reading are well above average. Children are encouraged to take books home. Parents are fully involved and reading is a high priority throughout the school. Regular reading records are kept and there are well-organised group reading activities every day - all of which develop children's knowledge of words and love of stories. Many children are reading independently by the age of seven. Older children use their reading and research skills well, using the library and Internet sources confidently to find information.
45. Writing standards are also well above average throughout the school. Children's written work is varied and interesting and takes account of a variety of purposes and a range of audiences. In year 2, children correctly use capital letters, full stops and some use speech and question marks. Children start to join letters early and, by year 3, most writing is neat, joined and legible. By year 6, punctuation is accurate and work is organised into paragraphs. Extended pieces of writing are lively and creative and children imaginatively use vocabulary to create atmosphere in such pieces as 'Avenge of the Sea' and 'Raging Waters'. Some of the more able children in year 6 produce pieces covering several pages and organised into chapters, such as the retelling of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

#### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

46. The broad curriculum provides good opportunities for children to practise and improve their language and literacy skills. Appropriate use is made of subjects such as science, history and religious education to develop reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to independently research topics. This calls on their study skills as they use contents pages, indexes and glossaries. They learn to adapt their writing and presentation to suit different purposes, for example, when presenting information using bullet points and labelled diagrams.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because the teaching is consistently good
- Children in year 6 have very good knowledge of mathematical facts.
- The subject is very well led and managed

### **Commentary**

47. Standards overall are well above average in all areas of mathematics because of the good teaching and children's positive attitudes. Strengths of teaching include:

- teaching which interests and motivates children
- careful planning of lessons that meet all children's needs
- high expectations of children
- good questioning to make sure children understand
- effective use of homework to support the learning of the older children.

48. Teaching is lively and interesting so children enjoy mathematics sessions and they are well motivated. Detailed plans indicate appropriate activities for groups at different stages of learning. Lessons move at a good pace and provide an appropriate challenge for all children. Higher attaining children are appropriately challenged and well motivated. Year 6 children respond quickly to tables questions and they have very quick recall of a wide range of mathematical facts. This enables most of them to make rapid and accurate mental calculations and to solve problems. Children have a very good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They interpret graphs accurately and create their own independently when working in other subjects.

49. The subject co-ordinator regularly checks children's work and observes lessons. This enables her to monitor the quality of teaching, to gauge how children are doing and to offer appropriate support and advice. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection and very good standards have been maintained. More able children are provided for well. They now have greater opportunities to participate in problem solving activities that challenge their high abilities. Resources to teach mathematics have considerably improved and are now good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. Children often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and this helps them to develop an appreciation of its practical use. For example, children measure when designing and drawing plans in design and technology and use graphs and tables to record data in science. In geography, they use their knowledge of coordinates when locating places on maps.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An emphasis on practical work means that children develop very good investigative skills
- Children's knowledge and understanding is built up systematically because the level of challenge increases from year to year
- Visits are used very well to support children's understanding and to promote their interest
- There is more scope for the use of ICT in lessons



## Commentary

51. Strong leadership has meant that good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards have risen and are now well above average. This is mainly due to the increased opportunities for children to learn through investigative work, which previously did not occur frequently enough. Teaching has improved and is now very good. This was evident in all the lessons seen and was reflected in the quality of work in children's books. High standards are the order of the day. Children respond well to the encouragement they receive in thinking things through. They are confident enough to make suggestions, however tentative, because teachers respond positively to their ideas. In a very successful year 6 lesson, children discussed how to increase solubility and eventually came up with the idea of heating the liquid. The teacher skilfully wove this into an explanation of saturated solutions. Work done in earlier years provides a very good foundation for later study. This was evident as year 4 children tried to dissolve various solids in water. Their good level of understanding provided a secure base for the more challenging work seen in year 6.
52. The school's environmental area provides a very good resource for direct experience. Children also have very good opportunities to develop their interest in science and to secure their understanding through visits. The local butterfly house is visited regularly, as are science departments in museums in Manchester and Liverpool. An important feature of the annual year 6 trip to London is the visit to the Natural History Museum. Children talk about these experiences with great enthusiasm. Science lessons often contribute to children's sense of wonder. There were gasps of amazement in year 4 as children watched salts effervescing and in year 1 as children looked at X-rays when learning about skeletons.
53. Children use ICT to present their findings and to create charts and graphs. They have lots of experience in the use of computers to measure changes in temperature and other weather conditions but they do not have enough experience in using sensors. For example, they have limited experience in using temperature probes to automatically log changes when investigating the properties of materials as insulators. The school is aware of this and is investigating ways to increase such opportunities.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good management has led to improved resources
- Good technical support means that teachers and children are developing increasing confidence in using the equipment
- Teachers are working hard to use ICT across the curriculum

## Commentary

54. Effective management has led to good improvements in provision since the last inspection. This has enabled satisfactory standards to be sustained despite the fact that expectations have moved on considerably since then. The computer network enables children to practise and consolidate skills learnt in the ICT suite when back in the classroom. New resources, such as digital cameras are used to good effect. Images of many aspects of school life are used to stimulate writing and discussion. Children talk positively about how ICT has helped them in their learning. Year 6 children make good use of the Internet, for example, to research places they hope to visit in London during their residential trip. They have begun to create web pages and can explain how these can be linked together automatically.
55. Only one lesson was observed but, from talking to children and the scrutiny of work, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Children use the ICT suite on a weekly basis although

during the inspection, the suite was under-used. Teachers have gradually improved their confidence by working alongside the co-ordinator and technician. There is still some way to go before all teachers feel capable of taking lessons on their own. This affects the efficiency of how ICT supports learning in other subjects. Good guidelines help teachers to plan appropriate work but the work carried out in the suite is sometimes too removed from on-going studies within the classroom.

56. Good technical support has a positive impact on children's progress. Lessons proceed smoothly and there are few frustrating technical hitches. The school has a clear idea of how the subject is to progress and what further training is needed.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

57. The school is beginning to use ICT satisfactorily across the curriculum especially where teachers are familiar with the software and are able to use it confidently. Good examples were seen in science and in art and design.

### **HUMANITIES**

58. No lessons were seen in **geography** because it is taught in blocks alternating with history. It was therefore not possible to evaluate provision or to judge children's achievement. Two lessons were observed in history and children's work was scrutinised. This evidence indicated that standards are above those expected.

59. In a year 5 **history** lesson, children were planning and preparing to write their own books about an aspect of life in an abbey following a visit to Furness Abbey. They had a good knowledge of how monks lived and used various sources of information well, selecting the most significant facts. They used their literacy skills effectively, planning their books and considering such things as what to put in the table of contents and how they might compile a glossary. The children quickly allocated tasks amongst themselves and displayed good levels of cooperation. In a year 2 class, children used a range of artefacts to try and find out what life was like when their grandparents and great-grandparents were young. They showed good history skills as they pieced together a picture of what life was like in bygone days. The quality of teaching was at least good in these lessons. Analysis of a sample of work from all classes indicates that children have a wide range of opportunities to study history and reach good standards.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching makes a good contribution to children's spiritual, moral and cultural development
- Good skills in writing and recording enhance the achievement of most children
- Good opportunities are available for children to experience teaching about other faiths

#### **Commentary**

60. Children make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards. The quality of their work is enhanced by the effective use of their good literacy skills. This shows itself in the quality of some written work. For example, year 6 children compare and contrast customs across a range of religions. In good quality work, they write at length about marriage customs, initiation ceremonies and the place of food and fasting practised in a number of faiths. These include Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism and Judaism.

61. The curriculum is good. Throughout the school children effectively learn about the main religious traditions and faiths and the impact these have on people's lives. For example, year 4 children

learn what it is like to live life as a Muslim and children in year 5 study Judaism and Buddhism. Visits play an important part in children's learning. Children visit churches of different Christian denominations and a local Buddhist Temple. Visitors to school talk to children about their faith and beliefs.

62. Teaching is good overall and contributes well to children's spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, children learn about Christian customs including the meaning and symbolism of baptism and they study the religious observances of Jewish families. Teachers use resources effectively to help children to learn and to interest and motivate them.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

63. No lessons in art and design were seen because it is taught alternately with design and technology. One lesson in design and technology was observed. There was much evidence of children's work in both subjects on display and in portfolios.
64. Displays around the school and a collection of children's work in **art and design** indicate that a good range of activities is provided for them to develop skills and to explore various techniques. Year 1 children produce good quality work using paint, pastels and clay. They experiment with less conventional techniques, such as using fingers and cotton wool to replicate Van Gogh's sunflowers. The standard of work in year 2 is above that expected. Children use pencils of various grades effectively, for example, to create lively pictures in the style of Lowry. They develop a good eye for colour, as their pastel butterflies and shaded kites indicate. The work of the year 6 children indicates that standards are as expected. With the exception of some images created with ICT, there is an absence of the vibrant use of colour and pattern seen lower down the school.
65. Children are enthusiastic about **design and technology** and reach standards well above those expected. Their skills develop well through the school. Each year group faces new challenges. With the help of a visiting puppeteer, children in year 2 produce excellent puppets using papier mâché. In year 3, they learn how to make axles and simple gears and by year 6 children produce excellent moving model vehicles. These are constructed to a high standard using rigid wooden frames, corrugated card and bobbins for tracked wheels and hydraulics to drive moving parts such as fork lifts.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well planned and stimulating lessons captivate children's interest
- Children have very good opportunities to learn an instrument
- A wide range of musical activities supports learning and personal development but music does not feature strongly in assemblies

### **Commentary**

66. Music remains a strength of the school. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She does much of the teaching and provides good support for colleagues. The quality of teaching is very good. As a result, children achieve well and reach very good standards.
67. Lessons are very well structured to include opportunities for children to sing and play instruments, to learn how music is written down and to study a wide range of musical styles. This was exemplified in an excellent lesson in year 6 where the co-ordinator was summarising previous work to trace the development of jazz. Children sang an African song, emphasising the sliding notes and the teacher related this to the technique used by Gershwin in *Rhapsody in*

*Blue*. Her very dynamic approach sustained children's interest as she explained how this shocked audiences at the time. Children's enthusiasm was evident as they took turns in playing chords on xylophones to accompany the class while they sang a blues song with great expression and very good interpretation of the style. Two children volunteered to explore 'cross rhythms' through dance in a lively song and received a spontaneous round of applause. There was further evidence of the very good standards reached as a group of children played violins, flutes and recorders while the class sang a song from eastern Europe. As the teacher was concluding the lesson, four boys asked if they could perform a 'rap' that they had created. Again, the standard of their performance was high – an appropriate conclusion to a most enjoyable and productive lesson. Lessons in year 2 and year 3 were similarly engrossing.

68. Many children learn instruments, including the violin, flute, clarinet, cornet, guitar and recorder. The school orchestra regularly performs in special assemblies and takes part in local festivals. Joint projects involving the choir and instrumentalists enhance relationships with the local community and other schools and help children to develop social skills. Visiting musicians inspire children and extend their understanding of different cultural traditions. School productions provide good opportunities for all children to develop their confidence. All these activities contribute to children's achievement and attainment.
69. Although children sing in Friday assemblies, music is notable by its absence on other days. Music is sometimes played as children enter the hall but there is little reference to it. The joyful, tuneful and expressive singing heard in class lessons is not evident in assemblies so opportunities are missed for music to contribute to children's spiritual development.

## **Physical Education**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are very positive about the subject
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school
- Extra curricular sporting activities are very good

### **Commentary**

70. Children say that physical education, sport and games are some of the most enjoyable aspects of school life. This is clear from the effort they put in to all aspects of the subject. For example, it is refreshing to see the enthusiasm with which boys as well as girls approach dance. There is a good level of expertise among the staff and the quality of teaching is good. As a result, children achieve well, developing good skills and control in gymnastics and dance. From an early age, they learn to cooperate in team activities and play by the rules. Overall standards are above those expected by year 6.
71. During lessons in years 4, 5 and 6, children worked hard at developing skills. They were well behaved and girls and boys worked well together. Gymnastic and dance sequences were carefully worked out and improved and different groups demonstrated and taught others complex sequences of movements.
72. Many extra curricular sporting activities provide excellent opportunities for the development of skills in, for example football, netball, tennis and cross-country running. The subject is led and managed very well. The curriculum is thoroughly planned by an enthusiastic co-ordinator and the school does well in local tournaments, enjoying a good reputation for sportsmanship as well as prowess. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**



73. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning in these areas of work, but the policy and planning are good. The policy accurately reflects the practice within the school. Children's personal, social, health and citizenship education is developed both in day-to-day lessons and through extra-curricular provision such as clubs and residential trips. The school council plays an important part in provision for the oldest children, while circle time helps the younger ones think about themselves and about other people.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Children's achievement	3
<b>Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well children learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets children's needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Children's care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for children	3
How well the school seeks and acts on children's views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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).*