

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DELPH SIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Skelmersdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119304

Headteacher: Mrs Janette Kewley

Lead inspector: Michael Onyon

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 255964

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	144
School address:	Eskdale Tanhouse 5 Skelmersdale Lancashire
Postcode:	WN8 6ED
Telephone number:	01695 721881
Fax number:	01695 556208
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Cathie Durgan
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This a community primary school taking pupils from three to 11 years old, serving an economically deprived area in Skelmersdale. The school has experienced uncertainty about its future, as the result of a review of primary school places in the town. At the time of the inspection there were 144 full-time pupils in seven classes, with an additional 17 children attending part-time in the nursery. Many pupils start school with very low standards of attainment, particularly in terms of language development. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above average, most having learning or language difficulties. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities and none learning English as an additional language. The school has made good use of support from its involvement with a local Excellence in Cities cluster and holds the 'Investors in People' and Environmental 'Green Flag' awards, and participates in the 'Leadership Development Strategy' for primary schools.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18146	Michael Onyon	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music, citizenship
9981	Saleem Hussain	Lay inspector	English as an additional language
40018	Kate Burton	Team inspector	Special educational needs, mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education, religious education
7994	Pamela Weston	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum, English, geography, history

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>28</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Delph Side Primary is an **effective and improving** school, providing good value for money. Children's attainment on entry is very low. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good, as a result pupils achieve well, standards are rising, and in Year 6 they are better than national test scores suggest. Leadership, management and governance are good, with a clear focus on continuing to raise standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good quality of teaching, with a clear focus upon English, mathematics and science promotes good achievement. Teaching assistants and special support assistants contribute very effectively.
- A very positive ethos has been created where pupils' views are actively sought, valued and acted upon, particularly through the very effective school council.
- Very effective links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are helping to raise standards.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is much improved and, as a result, these pupils achieve well.
- Although standards have risen in English, mathematics and science they could still be higher by the end of Year 2.
- Opportunities are not always developed for pupils to make their own choices about when and how to use their writing and number skills.
- Unsatisfactory attendance needs to be improved further.

Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. Most of the key issues identified in the previous report have been addressed well, in particular the quality of the school's curriculum has improved. Pupils' attainment in reading is better and there have been considerable improvements in promoting the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Whilst teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, there still needs to be better provision in the subject. There has been a clear trend of improvement in the standards achieved since the previous inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			schools in similar contexts
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E	E	C
Science	E	E*	D	B

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Schools in similar contexts are those with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Although overall standards of attainment, as represented by national test results, are well below average, present standards are higher than in 2003 and represent **good achievement** for the pupils taking account of their very low starting point and increased levels of pupil mobility, caused by doubts about the school's future. Many children enter the nursery with very low initial standards, and although they achieve well, standards in all six of the required areas of learning are below the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is also good, although attainment is below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement in Years 3-6 is good. Inspection evidence indicates that present standards by Year 6

are average in English mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Pupils' **personal qualities are good**. Their attitudes are positive and they behave well. The school's very strong valuing ethos effectively supports **good moral, social and cultural development of pupils**. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good** quality of education. The quality of **teaching is good overall** and is particularly strong in Year 6. Examples of effective teaching were seen in English, mathematics and science. Teachers show a strong commitment to the school and work effectively as a team. There has been a concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. There are very good relationships with pupils, and teachers use an effective range of teaching strategies, with good planning and organisation of lessons encouraging good learning. There are high expectations for pupils' conduct and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work. Teaching and learning support assistants provide very effective support and are effectively involved in the preparation of pupils' work. Whilst there is an appropriate emphasis upon English, mathematics and science, the curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' personal, social and health education is developed well. The care, support and guidance offered to pupils are very good. The school's partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good**. The school worked very effectively with its local community to ensure its future and there is a clear vision to build on the partnership and to continue to improve. The school reflects well on its work and has been particularly effective in building upon the support of the local education authority and the Excellence in Cities cluster to effectively raise standards. Pupils' achievements are effectively monitored and evaluated with targets for improvement in English and mathematics effectively shared with pupils and parents. All statutory requirements are met. The governing body provides good governance; it knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well and is fully involved in helping to shape the future of the school.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Overall parents regard the school very highly. They feel their children make good progress, the teaching is good and staff are approachable. They played a very effective part in supporting the school when its future was being considered by the local education authority. Pupils also are supportive of the school and feel that their views are listened to and that they contribute to the life of the school. Pupil representatives play a full part in suggesting future developments through their involvement in the school council and an environmental (ECO) committee.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- To continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.
- To improve attendance.
- Develop opportunities across the subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' writing and number skills.
- Achieve a better balance of pupil-initiated and adult-led activities, in classrooms, to encourage pupils' independent learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking into account their progress and their capability.* Given their very low starting point pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There is a rising trend in the achievement of pupils by the end of Year 2, although the results achieved in 2003 were not as good as those achieved in the previous year. The trend is in line with the national trend by the end of Year 6, but results achieved by the 2003 year group were much better than those achieved in 2002.

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

- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well because of the sustained support they are getting.
- The pupils are achieving well in their lessons and older ones have made good progress over the last two years and the school is adding good value, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Standards in the nursery and reception are improving and the impact is beginning to be felt in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although better than at the time of the previous inspection, could be higher.

#### **Commentary**

1. Current standards are below average in reception but pupils are achieving well. They enter the school with well below average attainment, particularly in the areas of communication and language and literacy. There are early signs, as indicated by the assessments undertaken by the school, that pupils in the current reception class will exceed standards reached by reception pupils last year. These pupils, now in Year 1, achieved standards which were below average with most not meeting the early learning goals expected of children of that age.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.7 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (12.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.3 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. The 2003 results for Year 2 were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing, where the school has focused considerable efforts. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, standards are below average in reading, average in mathematics and above average in writing, successfully reflecting those efforts. The improvement in writing enables pupils to do better in other subjects. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are below the national average but that there have been improvements and that the rising standards at the end of reception are beginning to be seen in Year 1 and Year 2. Standards in ICT are satisfactory at the end of Year 2, representing an improvement on the previous inspection. A factor holding back pupils' progress is the limited opportunities for them to make independent decisions about their learning and to take more responsibility for their own work. They are used to adults guiding them through lessons. Taking into account the very low starting point of many pupils, and the numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school due to the uncertainty about its future, pupils' achievement is good by the end of Year 2.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (23.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.0 (24.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.0 (24.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. The school's results in national tests have improved by the end of Year 6, over the last two years, but they currently remain well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. However, when compared with schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children. Improvements in the use of assessment have enabled the school to achieve better results and to accurately predict the expected levels of pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Focused support from the local education authority advisory team and involvement with other schools through the Excellence in Cities cluster have helped to add value, based upon pupils' prior attainment. In science a focus upon investigational and experimental work has helped to raise standards.
4. Since the previous inspection there has been significant progress to improve the assessment of special educational needs and to identify and support individual pupils' needs. There is now good support for these pupils, enabling them to make good progress in relation to their individual learning targets. Pupils are no longer withdrawn from lessons, as at the time of the previous inspection. Their learning is supported by teaching assistants and special support assistants, who play a full part in planning activities appropriate for pupils with differing levels of prior attainment. The small numbers in each class also contributes to the attention given to these pupils, enabling them to make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified by the school, with appropriate provision for their needs. As a result their achievement is satisfactory. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
5. Pupils' work was sampled, but it was not possible to make judgements about standards and achievement in religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and personal development contribute well to their achievements. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good; their spiritual development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils show high levels of interest in school life, lessons and the range of activities provided.
- The school sets very high expectations for conduct and works very hard to maintain them.
- Pupils develop good relationships with others.
- Pupils are confident, self-assured and very willing to take responsibility.
- Although better attendance is promoted well, attendance is below average.

## Commentary

- The good attitudes, behaviour and personal development are at a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils show much interest in lessons and other school activities such as trips and after-school clubs. For example, in a Year 6 art and design technology lesson to produce a tapestry, the whole class was buzzing with enthusiasm as they worked to bring their designs to life using many textiles and materials. Children in the Foundation Stage are developing good habits in their learning.
- The school is a calm and orderly community. This owes much to the school's expectations about conduct and very good use of praise and reward for good behaviour. For example, the school rules are made very clear to pupils and team points are an incentive to behave well and make good efforts in learning. When a pupil is reprimanded, the reason is explained so that he or she understands why.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

- Attendance is lower than at the time of the last inspection. The inspection team is encouraged by the school's efforts to raise attendance levels, for example, through the learning mentor's work with families who experience difficulties. Unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average and punctuality to school is satisfactory.

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – any other mixed background

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
143	5	0
1	0	0

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

- Staff provide good role-models for pupils' own behaviour and relationships. Pupils respect and value each other's opinions and co-operate well in lessons. For instance, during a Year 5 English lesson about locating information in books, they all pooled their knowledge and helped each other in their table groups. An effective race equality policy is in place and there are good opportunities for pupils to learn about the need for good race relations.
- As a result of the positive ethos and opportunities presented to pupils, their social, moral and cultural development are good. There are good systems in place to recognise and reward good behaviour and contributions to the school, through the award of 'team' points. Pupils eagerly await the announcement of the successful team at the end of each week. In a number of subjects opportunities are presented to appreciate local culture and also a diverse range of cultures from different parts of the world. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
- Many opportunities for speaking and listening, for instance, through the school council and the 'ECO' committee enable pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem well. Pupils accept responsibilities such as being a monitor, helping in the office, or acting as 'librarian' very well. These factors help pupils to develop well as young citizens.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. It is particularly effective in Year 6. Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is used well. The curriculum is good, and the school's accommodation and resources are good. Provision for pupils' care, support and guidance is very good. The school's partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Examples of effective practice were seen in the teaching of pupils in English, mathematics and science across the school. Some examples of very effective teaching were seen in Years 3, 5 and 6. Teachers plan effectively and assessment is good overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are clearly planned and the use of support staff is very effective, contributing well to the good learning of the pupils.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and, as a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes in lessons support learning very well.
- What pupils can do is assessed well, particularly in English and mathematics, through monitoring and tracking pupil progress.
- The use of resources is good overall, although there are limited resources for whole-class teaching in ICT at present.
- Time is not always used effectively to maximise opportunities for the pupils to work independently.

### Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching seen across the school. The main reason for the unsatisfactory lessons, in the last inspection, was that teacher subject knowledge was weak. This has been improved.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5 (14%)	16 (44%)	14 (39%)	1 (3%)	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.*

13. In the best lessons, teachers have secure subject knowledge, have planned clearly and use effective teaching methods to engage all pupils. Teaching assistants and special educational needs (SEN) support staff are aware of the aims and the activities to take place. During the inspection, the very good lessons seen were in English, mathematics and science. In these lessons teachers used resources effectively, set high expectations for their pupils that were realistic and challenging, and made best use of the time. In a very good Year 6 science lesson on dissolving, the pupils were able to discuss the contents of the jars using scientific vocabulary, building up their understanding. A very good Year 3 mathematics lesson used visual models of hundreds, tens and units to secure the pupils' understanding of the relative size of these numbers.
14. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by subject co-ordinators have given a very clear focus to the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection and there has been a significant improvement. Lessons are regularly monitored and teaching and

learning evaluated, with specific feedback to teachers on improvements to be made. The work has been effectively supported by local education authority advisory staff, with targeted professional development, to help teachers improve their teaching. The improvement in teaching and learning has had an impact upon standards, with standards rising in English, mathematics and science. Parents judge teaching and learning to be good.

15. The unsatisfactory lesson observed was in history. It resulted from the pupils not being sure of the task set and so spending a considerable amount of time looking at books without making progress in their historical knowledge.
16. Teachers usually begin the lessons by sharing the learning objectives clearly with pupils so that they know what they will be learning and doing. Resources are well organised and appropriate. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson two interlocking circles were given to pupils to make a variety of angles. This resulted in pupils being able to readily discuss findings and use the mathematical vocabulary associated with angles. Most teachers use a range of questioning strategies to involve pupils, such as 'talking partners', thinking time before an answer expected and open questioning. However, in some lessons, strategies are needed to encourage more pupils to be actively involved as opportunities to raise their hands or respond to questions are sometimes missed. Pupils are, however, spending a long time being directed by the teacher and so there is often insufficient time left for independent work. This is leading to very little work in pupils' books by the end of some lessons.
17. Assessment of pupils' work is good overall and teachers have a clear understanding of prior learning and how to build on it. Marking is used particularly well in English, where pupils are given guidance on what they can improve and targets are set. However, this level of marking is underdeveloped in mathematics and science where work is usually ticked if correct and comments relate to effort or presentation. Assessment in other subjects is being developed well. In ICT, for example, teachers have a folder with tracking sheets for recording pupils' skill and confidence levels which ensures that time is not wasted re-teaching previously taught skills.
18. ICT is taught systematically across the school and provision is satisfactory. Since the last inspection much has been done to improve teacher subject knowledge and develop resources across the curriculum. This has meant that ICT is now used in most subject areas. During the inspection it was used particularly to support learning in the Foundation Stage, mathematics and history. The development of resources for whole- class teaching will improve the provision in ICT.
19. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers incorporate individual education plans into class planning, which ensures appropriate learning objectives and support. The teaching assistants and SEN support staff are very effective and offer a high level of quality support to pupils. This means that pupils take part in whole- class lessons. The withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs was a key issue from the last inspection as pupils missed too much of the curriculum. This is now kept to a minimum, and usually when specialist support is needed. Assessment procedures, including reviews of the individual education plans, ensure that pupils make the expected progress and that the targets set are realistic.
20. Activities are matched to pupils' ability levels in most lessons, but more could be done to challenge the more able within class.

## **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides its pupils with a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities which successfully meets their interests, aptitudes and particular needs. The curriculum is made richer by a good range of visits, visitors and after- school activities. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

## Main strengths and weakness

- Provision for personal, social and health education is good. However, the school currently lacks a scheme of work to guide teachers with their planning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school values each individual and makes good arrangements to promote equal opportunities in all areas of school life.
- Accommodation and resources are good overall. However there is no covered outdoor play area for nursery and reception children and this prevents access to outdoor activities during bad weather. The school does not have a computer suite.
- Independent learning skills are not promoted strongly enough in Years 1 to 6. This is often due to too much time being given to teacher- directed question and answer sessions at the beginning of lessons.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and number skills in other subjects are not always planned.

## Commentary

21. The curriculum for all pupils is good and provides a balanced programme of activities which interests the pupils. The Foundation Stage children enjoy a good start to their early schooling. The curriculum provides a wide range of planned and structured activities, which gives the youngest children, especially those in the nursery, a good start to school across all the recommended areas of learning. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been well promoted and have led to standards improving, particularly in reading and writing. Both of these strategies have been adapted well to meet the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs. In all other subjects the school has successfully adapted national guidance to meet the teachers' long-term curriculum plans. The school does not have an ICT suite, but makes the best use of the limited resources available. The planned curriculum does not always allow sufficient time for pupils to work independently. When this occurs it is because too much time has been allocated to oral sessions at the beginning of lessons. This can also result in end-of-lesson feedback becoming rushed and a lack of opportunity for pupils to feel that their work is valued.
22. There is good leadership and management of the curriculum and co-ordinators are more involved in monitoring and evaluating standards in their subjects than at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has provided a clear focus upon provision in English, mathematics and science, as a means of raising standards in the subjects.
23. The curriculum is enhanced by many wide and varied activities, including educational visits and visitors to school. Pupils are involved in community projects, which also enrich their education, for example the Commonwealth Games Project which involved Ghanaian music, dance and storytelling. Many activities are organised through the Excellence in Cities cluster. Examples of this are the activities which are organised to bring together the more able children from the cluster schools in order to challenge them in a variety of curriculum areas, including, for example, activities to develop citizenship, such as town planning. In their responses to their questionnaire pupils appreciate the range of opportunities available to them.
24. Provision for special educational needs is good. The school is committed to ensuring pupils with SEN have full access to the curriculum and this is very beneficial for the pupils with a formal Statements of Special Educational Needs. They have detailed individual education plans, which provide detailed guidance for staff who check that the work set matches the pupils' needs.
25. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and at present is included across all areas of the curriculum. Where circle time is used, it is contributing effectively to pupils' development. The pupils' council is especially effective and is giving pupils a sense of belonging and involvement in school, and in the wider environment generally. Opportunities to

appreciate life in a multi-cultural society are well developed despite the limited opportunities of working with others from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds.

26. There is a good range of after-school clubs in a variety of sports. The arts are well catered for in drama and choir sessions and opportunities to take part in school productions, as well as peripatetic instrumental tuition in keyboard and guitar and an art and craft club, which is run by a parent.
27. There are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils in school. A good number of support staff are all well informed and efficiently deployed. They make a significant contribution to learning in all age groups. The accommodation is good overall with attractive play and games areas, but lacks a covered outside play area which would enable Foundation Stage children to have greater access to outside activity areas. Resources are good overall and will be greatly enhanced once the planned computer suite is up and running.

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

This is a caring school with very good provision for giving support, advice and guidance to all pupils based on monitoring. Consequently, pupils are happy, feel valued and are able to learn and achieve well in a healthy and safe environment. The school has made several good improvements in this area of its work since the last inspection. Pupils are very well involved in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- There are good procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have very strong, trusting relationships with adults in school.
- They have very good, easy access to well-informed advice, support and guidance to help them do well.
- The school has very strong arrangements to seek, value and act on pupils' views.

### **Commentary**

28. Children new to the school are gradually and sensitively inducted through several pre-school integration sessions. A 'buddy' system operates so that they can turn to an older pupil for friendship to help them settle.
29. The school's designated officer for child protection is well trained and deals with any issues effectively. There are good arrangements to inform staff about the school's child protection policy and procedures. Risk assessment is undertaken as required for general health and safety matters. Emergency procedures are well developed and the school is commended for having so many staff trained to administer first aid. The school has addressed the health and safety concerns identified at the last inspection.
30. Pupils feel that they can always turn to, and trust, adults in school if they have any worries or concerns. Staff work well together to give pupils very good advice, support and guidance on a day-to-day basis. Monitoring information is used well to set targets for improvement. The school works effectively with external agencies, where necessary, to provide additional support, for example, regarding special educational needs. Also, a learning mentor is available one day per week in school and helps pupils to overcome barriers to their learning. These factors illustrate the school's inclusive approach to learning.
31. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. For instance, they can raise issues through the school council. It is pleasing to see that the school has adopted many of their suggestions, for example about school rules, 'parents in school week' and the need to raise money for wet lunchtime resources.

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

There is a very good partnership with parents and the community, including other schools and colleges. These factors make a very strong contribution to learning. The school has made good improvements with links since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a very high regard for the school.
- There are very good procedures to ensure parental satisfaction and to deal with any concerns and complaints.
- The school involves parents very well by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.
- The school has established many links in the wider community that enrich learning.

### **Commentary**

32. Parents are very pleased with the quality of education provided. They appreciate and value the commitment of the governors, headteacher and staff. Staff are always happy to meet parents to discuss any individual concerns or complaints.
33. Parents are frequently issued with questionnaires. Consultation has taken place in this fashion regarding the school's code of conduct, homework, the home and school agreement and other matters. As a result there has been a clear focus on raising standards because the school analyses the returns very well to inform its policies and practices.
34. The school provides good information to parents about its policies, provisions and pupils' standards and progress. The prospectus is attractive and well detailed. Pupils' annual reports contain good information about how well pupils are doing, learning targets for the future and how much effort is made in learning. Parents also receive helpful newsletters regularly.
35. Several parents help regularly with school activities, including after-school clubs such as football, netball and art. Arrangements for extended support programmes for parents are good. The school organises courses for parents regularly, for example, 'dads and lads', 'keeping up with the children' and for parents to find out more about special educational needs. These courses enable many parents to support their children's learning better and help to ensure that there is equal provision for all pupils.
36. Wider community links include with the Excellence in Cities cluster initiative, enabling the school to effectively form links with a number of neighbouring schools. This provides funds for provisions such as learning mentor support and resources to promote good citizenship. Additional learning experiences are made available for pupils through many trainee teachers who attend the school each year from Edge Hill College. Other links include with the Sports Action group (sports skills coaching) and the Education Business Partnership (funding for events such as 'science day'). Very good educational links with other schools include those with Glenburn High School. For instance, teachers from there regularly lead lessons such as drama and physical education at Delph Side. There are very good mechanisms in place for the transfer of pupils to secondary schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides effective leadership with a clear vision for the school, shared with other key staff, whose leadership is good. There is a clear focus upon raising standards. There are clear roles and responsibilities for subject co-ordinators and management is good. Overall, governance of the school is good and governors play a full part in shaping the future of the school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for monitoring, supporting and developing the quality of teaching are good and have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Co-ordinators of English, mathematics, science, ICT and special educational needs provide good leadership and have a good idea of what still needs to be done.
- The headteacher has established a good atmosphere of teamwork within the school and also works effectively with outside agencies to move the school forward.
- Performance data in English, mathematics and science are analysed well but the analysis is yet to be undertaken, as thoroughly, in other subjects.
- Financial control is good.

## Commentary

37. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection as a result of consistent monitoring by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, moderated and supported by advisory staff from the local education authority. Formal performance management is also in place and is appropriately linked to professional development and school improvement planning. In addition, the school has been able to learn lessons from other schools, through its involvement in the Excellence in Cities cluster, giving the opportunity to see teaching in other schools and to share good practice. Teachers from local high schools also visit the school to offer teaching in specialist subject areas, for example drama, offering further opportunities for teachers at the school to learn from good practice. Records of progress and the evidence of inspection indicate consistent improvement since the previous inspection.
38. The headteacher and key staff have worked hard to establish a supportive atmosphere for staff in the school, effectively identifying and utilising the strengths of both teaching and non-teaching staff to create a positive atmosphere for learning which is highly valued by parents and appreciated by pupils. She has ensured that the strengths of the previous inspection have been maintained but has also tackled weaknesses, positively embracing support offered by the local education authority that is focused upon raising standards. She has, rightly, concentrated on standards in English, mathematics and science, but at the same time is mindful of the need to develop other areas of the curriculum, encouraging subject co-ordinators to take the lead in the direction of their areas.
39. Uncertainty about the future of the school, caused by a local education authority review of the number of primary pupils' places in the town, was tackled positively, working very effectively with parents and the local community to successfully ensure the future of the school. Parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of leadership and management of the school.
40. Co-ordinators of other subjects are yet to have the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in their subjects and the leadership team is currently considering the implications of the national Primary Strategy document issued by the Department for Education and Skills, offering opportunities in other subjects for pupils to further develop their writing and number skills. Self-evaluation completed before the inspection, matches the judgements in most areas of the inspection. The challenge for leadership now is to move beyond the close focus on English, mathematics and science, whilst continuing to improve.
41. Leadership and management of English, mathematics, science, ICT and special educational needs are good, showing that the sharing of leadership responsibilities has been effective. The co-ordinators effectively monitor and evaluate standards in their subjects and provide action plans for improvement.
42. The decision to provide support within the classroom for pupils with special educational needs, rather than through the teaching of withdrawal groups has been effective. The co-ordinator is



well organised and up to date in her professional development. Effective procedures have been established for the early identification of pupils who need support, liaising with the nursery. Support staff are very effectively deployed and supported and their performance also justifies the higher than average spending that their numbers demand.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	591,552	Balance from previous year	55,212
Total expenditure	588,735	Balance carried forward to the next year	44,640
Expenditure per pupil	3,861		

43. Governors play an effective part in analysing the school's performance and take a full part in determining the future direction of the school. They were fully involved in the strong community campaign to keep the school open and are beginning to build upon the networks established at the time, to help take the school forward. Many governors have individual links to subjects and aspects of the school's work and the Chair and Vice Chair, although relatively new to the posts have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and do not shy away from difficult decisions. Governors challenge and debate matters of strategy and there is a strong feeling of teamwork.
44. The balance carried forward from March 2003 was higher than it should normally be because money for capital expenditure on the provision of a computer suite, and also for the maintenance of existing staffing levels, was carried over the end of the financial year. The balance carried forward is projected to be lower in March 2004.

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

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

45. Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. This good practice has been sustained since the previous inspection. Children start their nursery experience immediately following their third birthday when they attend for half days. They enter the reception class at the start of the year in which they become five. When children start in the nursery, their attainment is generally well below that expected for their age. By the end of the reception year, the majority achieve well and are likely to attain the levels expected in personal, social and emotional development and aspects of mathematical development. In all other areas of learning the children are likely to achieve below the levels expected for their age. This represents good achievement due to the overall good quality of teaching and support the children receive. They are well prepared for work within the National Curriculum when they transfer to Year 1. Teaching in both nursery and reception classes is good. The nursery nurses and support staff have a significant teaching commitment and make a very effective contribution to the children's learning. The learning programme is well organised and based on imaginative practical experiences, such as making 'jammy handprint pictures' which the children thoroughly enjoyed taking part in. Daily planning is thorough, stating clearly what the children are to learn; however on occasions arrangements in reception can be too formal, for example, during registration when children sit in lines as the register is taken. The staff make every effective use of the good quality resources and facilities, and opportunities are taken for nursery and reception children to join together, in particular during outdoor play experiences. The outdoor learning areas are attractively resourced and very inviting to the children; however, lack of a covered area can dictate how and when outdoor areas are used. The gathering of information through the tracking of children's progress is used effectively to guide the children's future learning and is an improvement since the last inspection. Children with special educational needs are supported well and fully included in the wide range of activities offered. Leadership and management are good, creating good teamwork and an attractive, caring and positive learning environment that serves the needs of these young children well. As a result children are very secure, confident and work well together and their behaviour is very good.

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

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

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

- Children share resources and take turns; they are co-operative and help each other.
- Relationships are very positive and play a significant part in children's learning.

#### **Commentary**

46. When children enter the nursery, their personal and social skills are well below average. Good relationships between staff and children build on these skills to develop independence and confidence; as a result children achieve well. The simple star system boosts children's self esteem. Children happily share equipment, take turns to use the class computers and in reception are able to take responsibility for their own actions. Older children are becoming independent when getting ready for physical education and participate eagerly in all activities. Most children make independent choices and remain involved with their work.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The emphasis on speaking and listening skills is good.
- Teaching assistants are well informed and make a significant contribution to learning.
- Writing skills are developed well through practical activities.
- Regular practice enables children to link letters and sounds.
- Tasks set generally match children's abilities well, but in reception, adult questioning often targets only the more able children.
- Opportunities missed to allow children to join in reading familiar phrases from books.

## **Commentary**

47. Children listen carefully to stories and know a wide range of rhymes and songs. In the nursery children are able to complete for themselves, simple rhyming sentences such as 'Tom has a log, John has a dog'. Older children are just beginning to recognise reliably some letters by shape and sound and to use them in their early attempts at writing. Teaching assistants work effectively with small groups to promote children's active use of language as well as their understanding. Teachers take every opportunity to model reading and writing to show children that print has meaning. However, opportunities are missed in the reception class to extend the children further by encouraging them to read along with the teacher, in particular the catch phrases, which are continually repeated in some stories.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Mathematical learning is based on practical, linked activities.
- There is effective use of ongoing routines and spontaneous learning experiences.

## **Commentary**

48. The children achieve well because they receive good practically-based teaching. The children experience a range of opportunities to use mathematics in practical ways and across other areas of learning and because of this a good number will achieve levels expected for children of this age. In the nursery children help a hand held puppet to count tangerines. They recognise the spoken names of numbers and can say that there are three tangerines in a set. In reception, a good number of children are able to name shapes correctly and to make comparisons using terminology such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'longer' and 'shorter'. They recognise numbers to nine, are able to count correctly to 20 and in simple number games they use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting, for example 'add' and 'we need two more' showing good understanding. Teaching and learning are good overall. Activities are planned to meet the needs of individual children with direct teaching and child- initiated activities balanced well.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide a varied and interesting range of activities.
- Good opportunities to use classroom computers and other technological resources.

## Commentary

49. Displays of work, assessment records and photographic evidence indicate that most children are not likely to reach the levels expected of them by the end of their time in reception. Achievement is good overall because the children experience a practical programme of activities and, in the nursery in particular, effective use is made of outdoor areas. There are many well-planned opportunities for the children to use all their senses to investigate a wide range of materials. An example of this was when reception children experimented by making different flavoured milk shakes and were encouraged to talk about similarities and differences in appearances, smell and taste. The staff provide well-chosen ICT programs that reinforce the children's basic skills such as counting, matching, numbers and letters. The children are able to use the mouse to open graphics and use the tool to select the pictures, they make good use of listening centres when they use earphones and operate the tape recorder for themselves.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well through daily outdoor and indoor activity.
- The children handle tools and equipment with growing control and dexterity.

## Commentary

50. Children move confidently with good control, balance and co-ordination. They travel sensibly and confidently in a variety of ways including hopping, jumping and running. The reception class regularly uses the school hall for physical education lessons. Children respond quickly to the teacher's directions and manage the large space in the hall very well. Nursery children have a large climbing frame in the outdoor area to develop their co-ordination skills and this is used sensibly. Manipulative skills are good. Children model with clay, handle pencils and brushes well, use small toys, and handle tools and scissors safely. Teaching and learning are good because planning matches the children's ability well and extends their confidence and enjoyment. Because of this, a significant number of children will achieve the expected level for this age.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for children to express their ideas through a variety of materials, media and colour.
- Role-play areas encourage imaginative activities and language development.
- Children enjoy singing.

## Commentary

51. In the nursery and reception, well-displayed artwork brightens the room. Children use paint, collage and modelling materials, expressing their creative ideas boldly. In the nursery they are eager to enter into the role of customer or waiter in the railway café area, and this enhances their language development well, particularly when staff enter into role-play and extend the activities. The children recall words to their favourite songs. nursery children sing from memory

simple songs such as 'Humpty Dumpty' and clap rhythms. Teaching and learning are good, however, most children are unlikely to achieve the levels expected for their age by the time that they transfer to Year 1.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- More effective lesson planning is now in place in literacy lessons so that pupils' independent work is linked to the main lesson target.
- Targets to enable pupils to know what they must do to improve in writing are placed in pupils' books, effectively supporting pupils' learning.
- Extended writing sessions, in addition to literacy lessons, develop writing skills for older pupils.
- On occasions teachers do not make it clear how much support average and lower achieving pupils have received in completing their written work. When this happens it is difficult to assess an individual pupil's achievement.
- Opening sessions in literacy lessons often contain too much adult input and limit development in independent learning. As a result there is too little time for pupils to complete their independent written work or to share their work at the end of the lesson.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

52. Since the previous inspection improvement has been good. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced and is now being very successfully adapted to meet the needs of the pupils well. Pupils' attainment in reading has improved and there have been considerable improvements in promoting the learning of pupils with special educational needs. All work is adapted to meet the individual levels of ability across classes and pupils achieve well.
53. Although standards of attainment, as represented by national tests results, are well below average, present standards are higher than in 2003 and represent good achievement for pupils when account is taken of their very low starting point and pupil mobility caused by doubts about the school's future. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is good, although attainment in reading and writing is below the national average. Achievement in Years 3-6 is good. All pupils make good progress and the inspection indicates that present standards in Year 6 are average.
54. Effective leadership has led to a good improvement in English. Reading is given additional time during the day and pupils read individually or in a group guided by the teacher. Letters and sounds are taught thoroughly in Years 1 and 2 and pupils have several strategies to decipher unfamiliar words. Only higher achieving pupils in Year 6, are able to enter into discussion about their favourite authors and types of books, despite the encouragement by teachers to select and read a library book and a popular fiction book of their own choice. Writing is taught well. Pupils in Year 2 write in short sentences and many use basic punctuation correctly. Higher achieving pupils show good understanding of the use of speech marks and are able to insert them into a piece of text. Lower achieving pupils learn about speech marks by writing sentences in a speech bubble. This work will be extended in the next lesson by inserting speech marks into the sentence. Pupils in Year 6 experience a wide range of writing activities, and achievement increases in this class. A good number confidently write in a range of modes for a variety of purposes. They include writing that is correctly spelled and punctuated. Handwriting was identified by school as a weakness and has been deliberately targeted. This is now good and most pupils have a neat joined-up style.

55. Lessons often include discussion and role-play and pupils reach average standards in speaking and listening. Older pupils appreciate how language changes in different situations and understand the difference between formal and informal terms in both their writing and their speaking. There are very successful links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in very good drama lessons. Opportunities are taken during these lessons to highlight historical events, such as the emigration to Britain in 1952 of people from the West Indies. In these lessons there are very good opportunities for the development of discussion as pupils, in their West Indian family groups, debate whether to take the great leap into the unknown and emigrate to Britain.
56. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is best in Year 6 and Year 3. Here lessons have a buzz and there is a good lively pace. Careful questioning, directed individually to pupils of all ability levels, strengthens pupils' involvement and attention. Where lessons are only satisfactory this is because there is a need to develop more discussion between the teacher and pupils, especially in questioning, in order to develop the pupils' independence. For example, in one lesson the teacher explained points rather than allowing pupils to try to explain for themselves the difference between the index and contents of a book. Opening sessions are sometimes too long and written activities, which are well matched to reinforce learning objectives, are cut short because of the length of time that pupils have sat during the first part of the lesson. Lower achieving pupils listen passively during these long sessions and miss out on opportunities to discuss their thoughts within their smaller more secure group.
57. Assessment information is used to track pupils' progress effectively, it enables teachers to use previous assessments to set targets in reading and writing. For example, the need to raise the interest of boys in reading has been identified and because of this there is now a greater use of information books in the shared reading part of the literacy hour. This also allows for other areas of the curriculum to be targeted during these lessons, for example the use of literature about the Great Fire of London supported the pupils' history work well. Individual targets are set, and because teachers check these when marking pupils' work by writing, for example, 'remember finger spacing between words' improvement was noted in the Year 2 pupils' work books.

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

58. Whilst language and literacy are used effectively to support work across the curriculum there are few opportunities for pupils to use their writing in other subjects. Reading skills often support learning in other lessons. A very positive feature of planning is the growing practice of linking subjects together so that learning is more relevant to pupils' interests. There is very little evidence of the use of the computer to extend and develop literacy skills; however, once the planned computer suite is in place this should quickly be resolved.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had considerable impact on teachers' subject knowledge and the structure and pace of lessons.
- Teaching and learning in mathematics are good and achievement is good by the end of Year 6.
- Mathematics is well managed and monitored with pupil performance data analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Assessment to monitor progress is used to good effect but more could be made of marking and the setting of pupil targets.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their number skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

## Commentary

59. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. This is a better position than at the time of the previous inspection and represents good improvement. Given their low starting point, pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are working at levels that are below average, as confirmed in the results of national tests, and, by Year 6, the standards achieved by pupils are average. The teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good in mathematics and they achieve well.
60. Teaching and learning in lessons seen were good, with teachers planning effectively from the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons start with an oral and mental warm-up which is usually brisk and allows pupils to recall previous learning and practise skills. During the inspection, however, too little use was made of resources such as number fans or whiteboards for all pupils to be actively involved. In a very good lesson in Year 3, the teacher used whiteboards to quickly assess if the pupils had understood how to order two- and three- digit numbers. This meant that the teacher knew exactly where to offer support and what was needed to challenge the pupils who were able to do the task readily. Lesson objectives were shared with pupils so that they understood what they were going to learn, and they were often questioned about previous knowledge and skills so as to draw learning together. In the best lessons, questioning was also used to encourage the sharing of strategies and the use of mathematical vocabulary. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils could describe two-dimensional shapes accurately using the precise vocabulary of faces, corners and sides. In some lessons, however, questioning was too closed and did not encourage active discussion and sharing of ideas.
61. Work in pupils' books showed that coverage of the topics in mathematics is generally appropriate. In Year 2, however, there was little in the books to show that calculation strategies had been taught and in the lesson observed pupils had to be reminded of the possible strategies, such as doubling, rather than being able to explain suitable methods for themselves. Pupils need to have more opportunities to communicate strategies in calculation. In Year 6, books seen showed that pupils have covered a wide range of mathematical topics including fractions, percentages, calculation in all four operations, shape and data- handling. Work was mostly well presented. Activities have been planned so that pupils are suitably supported but more able pupils need to have a greater degree of challenge. There was little seen for investigative mathematics. All work seen was marked but marking needs developing to include comments relating to progress and next steps.
62. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. With support from the local education authority numeracy consultant, areas for development have been identified for action. For example, analysis of national and optional tests showed that both subtraction and division methods need to be taught more effectively. Planning has been adjusted to reflect this. The co-ordinator has been able to effectively monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, to track pupils' progress and set targets for improvement.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

63. There is some evidence of numeracy skills being used in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils are able to record data using graphs and charts, and measure temperatures and distances in experiments. However, opportunities are missed in other subjects to offer pupils the chance to use and develop their number skills.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good and has been consistently good since the time of the previous inspection.
- The attention given to scientific enquiry, investigation and practical experiments encourages pupils and gives good support to their learning.
- Teachers use assessment well and the outcomes successfully inform the planning of lessons to meet pupils' differing needs.
- There is an imbalance between adult-led and pupil-led activities, limiting opportunities for independent learning.

## Commentary

64. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. However, the results of national tests at that time indicate that standards of attainment were lower. There has been an improvement and, on the evidence of inspection, standards are currently below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. The trend in the school's results indicates clear improvement and is above the national trend. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment well below those expected. Pupils' achieve well during Years 1 and 2 and standards are below average at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement is also good through Years 3 to 6 and, currently, pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve results at the national average. There has been a steady improvement since the last inspection and predictions for future performance indicate that test outcomes will be better at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
65. Informed by the co-ordinator, teachers throughout the school now encourage pupils to investigate and to think about science in an enquiring way. The pupils enjoy the subject and this helps them to remember what they have done, even where they have limited written work, as evidenced by the scrutiny of pupils' books. In one Year 6 lesson during the inspection the skills of enquiry were well taught as the result of the teacher using carefully structured questions and building pupils' knowledge. The teacher drew out ideas from the pupils so that they made good progress in predicting which materials could be dissolved in water, offering scientific explanations. However the lesson planning did not offer pupils the opportunity to make their own choices or an appropriate amount of time in which to record their findings. In a similar way, in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 the teacher led them through considering what factors affect the evaporation of water, guiding them successfully towards the construction of a fair test. However, there were limited opportunities for the pupils to lead the activities.
66. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Investigational work forms a consistent part of lessons as teachers share an understanding of the importance of scientific enquiry. Leadership of the subject is good and the curriculum is managed well. Teachers follow a scheme of work, and different year groups are taught separately, ensuring that they study the content they should. The monitoring of teaching has taken place and the school is beginning to share good practice and to learn from observation of the most successful teaching. Assessment has been introduced and teachers record whether pupils have successfully attained appropriate levels of understanding. Those pupils doing better than expected are identified, as are those not achieving as well as expected. This helps to inform teachers' planning enabling appropriate tasks to be presented to pupils of different levels of previous attainment. In particular the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met well and their learning supported well by teaching and special support assistants. The small number of pupils in each class also enables more attention to be given to the needs of SEN pupils.
67. There has been significant improvement in terms of pupils' skills in reading, writing and number since the previous inspection, often through guided activities and adult-led sessions, and the national strategy has also been successfully applied in the teaching of science. As a result, pupils are used to adults guiding them through activities. The quality of work undertaken with the school council, and the way in which pupils are able to contribute to decisions affecting the future of the school indicate that pupils are now able to take more responsibility for their own



learning and to make more choices about the form of their science experiments. There is good leadership and the subject's management structures are secure and would enable pupils to become more independent learners.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improved teacher subject knowledge and confidence.
- Standards are now satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Leadership of the subject has been very effective.
- Improvements are needed in whole-class teaching resources.

### **Commentary**

68. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection in ICT. In the lessons seen, teachers' subject knowledge and expertise were secure and developed pupils' knowledge and skills appropriately. For example, in a lesson in Year 3 the teacher was able to clearly explain a simulation program to pupils and demonstrate its use. Pupils showed that they already knew how to select icons and use the mouse, so time was not wasted revising these skills. In lesson in Year 5, pupils were seen to access the Internet to support history research. They showed efficient mouse control and keyboard skills. Teachers are finding whole-class demonstrations of programs and skills to be learnt difficult due to limited resources for this. Demonstrations seen were mainly by crowding pupils around a computer all trying to see the small screen. There is a laptop and projector that can be used for demonstration teaching but the surfaces to project onto are unsuitable. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher demonstrated a drawing program using the projector, but the image was difficult to see because of the shiny surface of the board, which was also too small so much of the image was projected onto the wall. There are plans to resource an ICT suite, which will include teaching facilities and an interactive whiteboard.
69. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' planning for the teaching of skills and links with other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 were seen to use a mouse to select icons and control the pointer to draw a person. They showed delight at the range of drawing tools and colours they could choose. The pupils understood that drawings on the computer can be refined and copied.
70. The co-ordinator has worked hard to support staff in developing their subject knowledge and skills, and is very effective. There have been considerable amounts of training in ICT both through national initiatives and staff meetings in school. The co-ordinator has opportunities to monitor the progress in ICT through planning, displays and work samples. This has led to ICT files in classrooms that track progress in skills and confidence as well as coverage of the QCA scheme of work, which is based on national guidance. There is a clear vision for the subject which includes developing a school website, skills training for staff on the use of the laptops and the further development of the ICT facilities.

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

71. The co-ordinator has purchased software to support the use of ICT in most subjects. This has resulted in ICT now being effectively used in many lessons. The impact of this was seen during the inspection, with ICT used effectively to support teaching and learning in English, mathematics and history.

## HUMANITIES

*Work was sampled in geography, history and religious education, with one lesson seen in each of geography and history and two lessons in religious education. It is not, therefore, possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.*

72. In the two lessons seen in **religious education** teaching was good, overall. In a lesson in Year 6 teaching and learning were judged to be good and in a lesson in Year 4 teaching was satisfactory. In both lessons pupils made progress in their knowledge about the Hindu faith. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that standards are average and are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. The resources for religious education are good, with satisfactory leadership from the subject co-ordinator. There is a range of books, posters, artefacts and video material available for all the major faiths. Resources were used well in both lessons seen.
73. A Year 4 **geography** lesson observed was taught satisfactorily. Standards were below average and pupils made satisfactory progress because the work had sufficient challenge to maintain their interest. There was sensitive support for pupils with special educational needs. In a Year 5 **history** lesson, pupils were asked to identify and compare sources of information, including the use of the Internet, about Britain since 1948. Standards were below average because pupils were unsure of how to use the books and the Internet findings to aid their understanding of historical knowledge. Despite this, the pupils were well motivated, interested in the work, willing to discuss it and to answer questions. Photographic evidence and displays around school suggest that these subjects play an important part in the curriculum and are used to aid the teaching of, for example, extended writing, as pupils have written about the Great Fire of London and in art produced interesting pictures of the Taj Mahal as an introduction to their study of India. Evidence indicates that there is satisfactory leadership in both subjects.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*There was not enough evidence to report on any of these subjects individually, because not enough teaching was seen or there was not enough evidence to judge achievement. However, work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.*

74. In **art and design** pupils have access to a wide range of good quality materials. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards or pupils' achievement. Leadership of the subject is good. Discussion with pupils revealed that they gain a great amount of enjoyment from the variety of experiences offered. There is evidence of a range of projects on display around the school, for example 'Dazzling Designs' illustrating Australian art, 'African Masks' produced by pupils in Years 3, winter figures, painted by Year 1 pupils and a large-scale display in the shared resource area, 'The Painter and the Judge', based upon a story and its characters. The displays illustrate appropriate links with other subjects, for example, literacy and history. In the entrance corridor to the school, the works of famous artists are on display, for example, works by Van Gogh and Monet. The displays of pupils' work reflect a range of cultures and styles and make a positive contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. There are few examples of pupils independently choosing their own materials and subject matter.
75. In **design and technology** there is evidence that pupils have the opportunity to follow national guidelines in the subject at specific points of the school year. There is good leadership of the subject. Displays illustrate books made with flaps and 'pop-ups' in Year 4 and simple models of human bodies, made in card, with paper fasteners enabling different movements to be studied. Such work indicates that an appropriate process of design, consideration of amendments, and making has taken place. There are appropriate links with other subjects, for example, mathematics – with models constructed of three-dimensional shapes, and science – looking at the movement of human bodies.

76. In **music** the whole school was heard singing in assemblies, with one teacher leading a 'singing' assembly. Pupils sing with enthusiasm, usually accompanied by recorded music on CDs. Older pupils are able to learn to play the guitar and keyboards, with tuition provided by a specialist teacher. The curriculum is appropriately linked to national guidance and includes all the necessary elements. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. Musical elements contribute to productions presented for parents, especially at Christmas, and pupils recently took part in a regional festival of music, as part of a very large choir which included pupils from many other schools, in Manchester. These examples show that the school is committed to giving pupils good opportunities in music.
77. One lesson in **physical education** was seen during the inspection. This was a gymnastics lesson in Year 4. This was a satisfactory lesson with a focus on improving the quality of movement and a regard for safety. Pupils knew how to move with control, followed instructions and observed each other. Pupils were encouraged to evaluate their performance and act upon improvements. Pupils carried apparatus safely but need more guidance in setting it out in a creative way. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The resources for physical education are good. There is a good range of games equipment for both outdoor and indoor activities and gymnastic apparatus is appropriate and well kept. The hall provides a good, well-lit working space for physical activities.

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

78. There was not enough evidence to report on this area individually but one lesson, circle time in Year 2, was sampled. The teaching was good, as were learning and achievement. Assemblies seen during the inspection also made a satisfactory contribution to this curriculum area. Discussions with pupil representatives of the school council indicated a high level of involvement and a genuine contribution to decisions affecting the future of the school, for example the way in which older pupils act as "buddies" for younger pupils, and the encouragement of pupils' suggestions for improvements. Pupils have organised several fund-raising activities to contribute funds towards these projects. The school is in the early stages of implementing a scheme of work in this area but current activities provide good opportunities linked to citizenship, relationships and drug awareness issues. In addition, an 'ECO' environmental committee of pupils is guided by a teacher to consider re-cycling and energy saving issues. As a result of their work the school has received the 'ECO' gold award entitling it to fly the green flag above the school.

## 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	3
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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' 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 pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<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).*

