

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Banks Lane Junior School**

Offerton, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106028

Headteacher: Mrs Jane Caygill

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Inspection number: 271428

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior school  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 7-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 403

School address: Hempshaw Lane  
Offerton  
Stockport  
Cheshire  
Postcode: SK1 4PR

Telephone number: 0161 4802330  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Gavin Andrews

Date of previous inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> September 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Banks Lane Junior School has 403 pupils on roll and this is considerably bigger than other schools nationally. The school takes pupils from a very wide range of backgrounds and from outside its natural catchment area, but overall socio-economic circumstances are average. Pupils are of predominately White British origin with a handful of pupils from other ethnic groups. Very few speak English as an additional language. About a quarter of the school is on the register of special educational needs, which is above the national average, and eight pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Broadly average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils are taught in three parallel classes. Few pupils move in and out of the school except at the usual time, but not all pupils who took the Key Stage 1 tests in the adjoining infant school transfer to the junior school. Overall, attainment on entry is average.

The school attained the Healthy Schools Award in 2004. It is involved in an Interactive Whiteboard Project and a Networked Learning Community. It is currently applying for the Inclusion Kite Mark, the Artsmark Gold Award and a national award for information and communication technology.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Sue Walker	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, personal, social and health education, information and communication technology, geography, history and special educational needs
31718	Denise Shields	Lay inspector	
25577	William Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics, religious education and physical education
30935	Kathleen McArthur	Team inspector	English and music
27324	Daphne Crow	Team inspector	Science, art and design and design and technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Banks Lane Junior School has many significant strengths and some important areas for further improvement. Overall, it is **satisfactory**. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good specialist teaching seen. The school is very inclusive and its strengths reflect this aspect. The school is well led by a headteacher who is very committed to enriching pupils' lives and developing good citizens. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money from a low budget.

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

- There are below average standards in science.
- There are outstanding links with the community, particularly with Fosbrooks Educational Trust<sup>1</sup>, and these enrich pupils' learning significantly.
- Pupils take part in an excellent range of educational visits and clubs.
- There are a significant number of pupils below average, particularly boys, in writing.
- There are insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in classes.
- Standards in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- The school provides pupils with a very good standard of care.
- There are weaknesses in marking.
- Daily and weekly planning is inconsistent in quality.
- The accommodation is very good, particularly the library and the new quad.

The school has made satisfactory improvement from the last inspection when it had no major areas for improvement. It has made good improvement in the curriculum and the accommodation and it has improved standards in religious education. It has largely maintained its strengths in other areas. However, standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection, science is well below average and there are weaknesses in writing. The school recognises this and is taking satisfactory action to improve matters. There are fewer good or very good lessons than at the time of the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **satisfactory**, overall. It is good in information and communication technology because the school has had this aspect as a priority for many years and has purchased good resources and trained all staff well. The most able pupils achieve very well in mathematics because they are very well taught. Inspection findings show that by the time pupils leave the school standards are average in most subjects, except art and design, and in singing, dance and swimming where standards are above average. Standards in science are below average. Too few opportunities have been given to pupils to find things out for themselves, to question, to devise their own experiments and work out how to record their findings. This aspect is improving slowly.

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004

<sup>1</sup> A internationally renowned dance and folk group.

English	C	D	C	C
mathematics	C	B	C	C
science	D	C	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2*

In the 2004 national tests for pupils aged eleven, standards were average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. The school did not do as well as schools in similar socio-economic circumstances.

Standards in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**. Pupils show very good attitudes and their behaviour is good. The ethos is very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Specialist teaching in history, geography and religious education aids pupils' learning in Year 6. The daily and weekly planning of lessons requires improvement to bring about more consistency in teaching. Assessment is used very well to put pupils in sets, but overall its quality and use are satisfactory, with a weakness in marking. The curriculum is good with outstanding extra-curricular enrichment. Citizenship is developed very well. Pupils receive very good care and good support and guidance. There are very good links with parents and other schools and colleges and outstanding links with the community which aid pupils' learning. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**, overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and is very committed to inclusion and to the enrichment of pupils' lives. The school is in the process of achieving national recognition for those aspects where it performs very well. The team of senior managers provides good role models for other staff, as do subject leaders. However, there has been insufficient time for subject co-ordinators to observe teaching and learning in the classroom in order to iron out inconsistencies. Governance is satisfactory and almost all statutory requirements are met. The governors have a clear grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There are satisfactory management systems to support pupils' learning.

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

The school has very good links with parents and consequently parents are very supportive of the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and thoroughly enjoy the range of opportunities given to them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards and improve achievement in science;
- improve daily and weekly planning of lessons in order to improve the quality of teaching;
- further develop the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning through increased classroom observations by co-ordinators.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the governors' annual report to parents includes all statutory information.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Achievement is **satisfactory**, overall. It is good in information and communication technology (ICT) where improvement in resources and teacher expertise has been a school priority. It is also good in art and design, singing, swimming and dance. Standards are average in English and mathematics and are below average in science.

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

- Standards in science are below average.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT because of the amount of resources the school has invested in the subject and staff training.
- Boys' achievement in writing requires improvement.
- The most able pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in mathematics.
- The very good library provision enhances pupils' good reading skills.

#### **Commentary**

1. Pupils enter the school with a very wide range of standards, which are average overall. All the pupils who took the Key Stage 1 tests in the adjoining infant school do not transfer to the junior school, particularly the more able. Although the overall movement of pupils in and out of the school is low, 38 per cent of those on the register of special educational needs come from outside the school's natural catchment area.
2. Standards are good in art and design and in singing, dance and swimming. Pupils attain well in speaking and listening. Very good library provision helps them to attain well in reading, but lower standards in writing bring the overall grade down to average. Standards are average in mathematics and ICT. In science, standards are below average because pupils have had too few opportunities to find out things for themselves and to set up practical tests as they moved through the school. In all other subjects standards are as expected for eleven year olds.
3. Achievement overall is satisfactory. The school is very conscientious in tracking progress from year to year in English and mathematics. It looks carefully at pupils who have exceeded or failed to make the expected progress and changes their provision accordingly. The most able pupils achieve very well in the top set in mathematics due to good teaching. Achievement remains satisfactory due to the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Science is a current priority of the school improvement plan and tracking of progress is a fairly recent innovation, so at present achievement is satisfactory. There are strengths in achievement in art and design and ICT due to the good curriculum and resources provided.

#### **Key Stage 2**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (25.5)	26.9 (26.8)

mathematics	27.0 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.3 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 91 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. In the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. A similar picture emerges when progress is judged from age seven to eleven. The school dipped slightly below its target for the number of pupils to attain Level 4, but met its target for the number of pupils attaining Level 5 in English and exceeded it in mathematics. This cohort contained more special educational needs pupils than the school has usually identified. Girls have consistently outperformed boys in the national tests in English over the last four years, especially in writing where boys persistently underachieve. The school has focused on making improvement in writing a current priority. In mathematics, there are no significant differences and, in science, boys perform slightly better than girls. The inspection team noted no significant differences in learning. About a quarter of the school's pupils are on the register of special educational needs, predominantly at the early stages. The school uses its assessment information very well to target support for such pupils and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality. There is a wide range of provision to support such pupils' achievement, for instance teaching pupils by ability in English and mathematics, booster groups and individual and small group sessions. The quality of provision is satisfactory, overall, because teaching in the lower sets is satisfactory. Provision is boosted by the fact that the school trains its support assistants in a wide range of skills.
5. About 10 per cent of the pupils, mostly boys, are on the register of gifted and talented pupils. This is based on their academic potential. Provision is very good for the Year 6 most able mathematicians who are taught at a very good pace, but those who are gifted in other academic areas do not have similar opportunities. Those pupils who are talented in music, dance or sport have exceptional opportunities to thrive.
6. At the time of the last inspection, the most able cohort in six years was in Year 6. The inspection team judged standards in many subjects to be above average and progress was good. The national tests show that standards have remained broadly average since that point in both English and mathematics and have been variable in science. Over time the school has not done as well as similar schools.

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **very good**. Pupils' behaviour is **good**. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**. Punctuality is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a very good ethos.
- The school is very successful in promoting very good relationships.
- The school deals effectively with all forms of harassment.
- The school's focus on enrichment and citizenship gives pupils very good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school council has a real role in managing the school.
- The pupil 'play leaders' are an effective initiative.

## Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy everything that the school has to offer in work and play. The very caring ethos of the school promotes very good relationships. The school ensures all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Pupils new to the school are made welcome. All Year 3 pupils have a Year 6 'buddy' who helps them to integrate quickly into the life of the school. Staff work hard to develop very good relationships within and outside classes. The school deals with any form of bullying or racial harassment quickly and effectively. This results in pupils feeling secure and develops their self-assurance and confidence well. They value each other's contributions: a Year 5 pupil asked her group "How can I make this better?" when they were describing a mythical monster.
8. Generally, classes are well managed and there are high expectations of behaviour, pupils respond well to this and behave accordingly. This has a positive impact on their learning. In these classes where the pace of learning is brisk and the teacher generates interest in the subject, pupils show very good attitudes to learning. Pupils work and play happily together. Pupils behave sensibly during lunch and at playtimes. Pupils act as 'play leaders' and help to support all pupils at break times.
9. The very good ethos that pervades the school promotes pupils' spiritual awareness very well. The school has a good number of effective incentives to encourage pupils to understand the right way to behave. Rewards are given to pupils for a wide range of attributes, including 'class peacemaker'. Pupils co-operate well together when working in pairs or small groups. There have been no exclusions.
10. Older pupils enjoy helping with the smooth running of the school by undertaking tasks and responsibilities. The democratically elected school council gives pupils a very good opportunity to take an active part in how the school develops. They took a lead role in writing 'anti bullying' leaflets for both parents and pupils. Other very good opportunities are provided for pupils to consider wider social issues, such as taking care of the environment and contributing to a wide range of local and national charities. An excellent range of purposeful activities is provided outside lesson times. These are very well supported and appreciated by pupils and promote their social development very effectively.
11. The school promotes cultural development very well. As well as visiting places of interest, theatres and galleries, pupils have good opportunities to work with local artists and musicians. They have very positive experiences of English folk dance and music. A high priority is placed on promoting positive images of people from other cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils are developing a good understanding of other cultures and religions.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.9
National data:	5.1

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.*

12. Attendance is broadly the same as most schools. The school has very recently changed to a new computerised registration system. As a result pupils' attendance patterns and punctuality are now being more rigorously monitored and followed up.
13. Since the last inspection a very positive picture remains and pupils thoroughly enjoy all the school has to offer.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **good** with **outstanding** extra-curricular enrichment. Pupils receive **very good** care and guidance. There are **very good** links with parents and other schools and colleges and **outstanding** links with the community, especially the Fosbrooks Educational Trust.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interactive whiteboards support pupils' learning very well.
- Teaching in art and design and ICT is good.
- Specialist teaching works well in Year 6.
- Marking procedures are inconsistent and do not always tell pupils how to improve their work.
- Very attractive displays celebrate and consolidate pupils' learning.
- The same activity being given to every pupil within a teaching group does not allow pupils to develop their full potential.
- Assessment procedures are particularly good in mathematics and writing.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0 %)	8 (20 %)	15 (37 %)	17 (43 %)	0 (0 %)	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.*

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, but it is too inconsistent. Teaching tends to be good and sometimes very good for most Year 5 and 6 pupils. Specialist teaching works well in history, geography and religious education in Year 6 and ensures that pupils have equal opportunities to learn from teachers who have a keen interest in the subject.
15. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. Good teaching is provided for the top sets in English and mathematics. This leads to good achievement and the usual number of pupils attaining Level 5. However, teaching for the lower sets tends to be satisfactory, which does not allow pupils to catch up. Teaching is good in ICT because of recent training and good resources. The interactive whiteboards particularly promote pupils' learning. Teaching is good in art and design because of the way that the curriculum is planned and delivered.

16. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs who are in the lower sets is satisfactory, but the pace is not fast enough to increase learning. Support for such pupils in other lessons varies, but is never less than satisfactory. In most lessons, teaching assistants support pupils' learning satisfactorily by keeping them on task and explaining any difficulties. There is good use of praise and stickers to support pupils' self-esteem.
17. The school has satisfactory computerised planning for all subjects to be taught during a half term. Year group staff meet to discuss how they will deliver lessons on a weekly basis. However, this approach results in a range of planning with insufficient detail for senior managers to be sure that intended lesson objectives are taught. This contributes towards the inconsistent standard of teaching seen and thus overall satisfactory achievement.
18. The school has a good revised marking policy, but its guidance is not consistently followed in all classes so that all pupils know how to improve their learning. The best marking occurs in the regular writing assessments.
19. The school has a good assessment policy on which to base its work. The school has carefully analysed statutory and optional tests to establish which questions have caused pupils the most difficulty and has amended provision accordingly as part of the school improvement plan.
20. The assessment manager uses the data very well to place pupils into teaching groups for English and mathematics and to sort out the most able pupils and those who need extra support in their learning. It is also used effectively as a basis for setting yearly and termly targets in English and mathematics. However, once placed, for instance within an average or above average class for mathematics or English, teachers give everyone the same work. This does not allow all pupils to show what they know and understand. Additional testing is used satisfactorily to identify those pupils with the potential to be gifted and talented.
21. Assessment in ICT is good with the potential to be better, as further improvements are planned. The school is at the early stages of establishing a computerised portfolio of pupils' work. In most other subjects, assessment is satisfactory. Teachers sort pupils into those who have met the objectives of the topic, those who have exceeded targets and those who have not succeeded in learning as much.
22. The quality of teaching has fallen since the last inspection, because there are fewer good or better lessons. As at the time of the last inspection, assessment has a balance of strengths and weaknesses.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a **good** breadth of curricular opportunities and an **excellent** range of enrichment activities for all pupils. Resources for learning are **good** and the accommodation is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for equality of access and opportunity for pupils is very good.
- Amongst subjects, the provision for art and design and dance stands out because of its high quality.

- An extensive programme of visits and visitors enriches classroom studies and excites pupils in their learning.
- The school's flexible use of curriculum time is effective.
- A very wide range of extra-curricular activities provides excellent opportunities for boys and girls to widen their range of interests and to support their personal development further.
- There is very good provision to prepare pupils for their next school.
- The very good accommodation allows pupils to be taught in smaller groups.

### **Commentary**

23. The curriculum is innovative and the school's provision for curriculum enrichment is excellent. Parents appreciate this provision. Numerous, wide ranging visits and a variety of visitors add interest and extra motivation in many subject areas. Such events are always planned to coincide with learning that is current in the classroom and to bring the curriculum alive. During their time in school, all pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential visits to Conway and the Kingswood Centre near Ullswater. These periods of time away from home provide excellent opportunities to widen pupils' academic experiences, while further promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
24. The school curriculum provides pupils with intensive experiences to improve their learning, such as art and design and design and technology workshops or arts weeks where pupils work with practising artists. Time has also been found for pupils to study *philosophy* and *thinking skills* in order to improve their performance.
25. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Large numbers of pupils say "there is a lot to do". Opportunities include sport, art, music, chess and large stage productions. Clubs are run by school staff, visiting teachers and also by instructors. All are available to both boys and girls. Pupils successfully take part in mixed competition in basketball, football, cross-country and cricket. Such matches provide opportunity for pupils to use skills learned in physical education lessons to very good effect.
26. Pupils are very well prepared to move into secondary schools. They work on individual topics that show high school teachers what they can do. Visits are made to new schools and teachers from those schools come to Banks Lane to talk to both staff and pupils. Transition programmes are provided for less able pupils that are overseen by staff with special educational need responsibilities.
27. Since the previous inspection, the building of a particularly attractive and functional 'quad,' a computer suite and extra classrooms, including a base for pupils with special educational needs, has further improved the quality of accommodation. A strength is the number of small rooms that are available to provide bases for small group tuition for peripatetic music. Pupils say they really enjoy the extensive playground and grassed areas, particularly in summer. The advantage of having two large halls is very well taken and enables lunchtime and after-school activities to take place. The centrally placed, well-stocked library is put to very good use by groups and by whole classes. Resources to support the teaching of all subjects are good. This represents good improvement since the time of the previous inspection. There are sufficient staff to allow smaller teaching groups to be provided for pupils in English and mathematics.

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

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. There are **very good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in and to influence the school's work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are cared for very well.
- Pupils have good and trusting relationships with at least one adult in the school.
- All pupils think very highly of the school and they are very involved in its life and work.
- Arrangements to help pupils of all ages settle into the school are very good.

### **Commentary**

28. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe there. A repeated theme through discussions and the response to the questionnaires is "there are lots of things to do". All adults know pupils very well and regularly share information about them with each other. As a result individuals and their families are very well known. The school regularly uses the expertise of a wide range of external agencies to support and guide pupils. This provision reflects the very caring ethos of the school. In discussions, pupils state there is an adult they are confident to talk to if they are worried or unhappy. This view is supported by the questionnaire results. The school has maintained its positive provision since the last inspection.
29. Pupils indicate both in discussion and through the questionnaire that they can ask their teachers for help during lessons. During the inspection good examples of one-to-one support were seen. The school's monitoring and tracking system is good and enables teachers to identify when pupils are having difficulties. This means that they can take swift action to help put matters right. The school has a good range of provision to support pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are of good quality and pupils have good opportunities to add their own special targets for improvement, such as "To stop shouting out in class" or "To improve my handwriting".
30. Overall, pupils know what their targets are in both literacy and numeracy, but some are unclear how these will help them to improve their work. This is because sometimes targets are too general. Aspects such as healthy eating, sex education and substance misuse are taught together with other areas of personal and social education. These aspects of the programme are very good and effectively support all pupils' personal guidance.
31. Adults follow the agreed policies and very clear practices relating to health, safety and child protection very well. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are very clearly understood by all concerned who work or help in school. Because there are very close links with the infant school, the arrangements for pupils to transfer to their next stage of education are very sensitively and carefully planned. This helps pupils to settle quickly into their new school. Both pupils and parents confirm the success of these arrangements. There are equally well organised systems for supporting children who join the school part way through the school year.
32. Parents believe that all adults in the school encourage pupils to become mature, responsible and independent. Pupils say that teachers listen to and value what they have to say in lessons. The school regularly seeks pupils' views through the well established school council and takes them into account when planning its future developments. Older pupils confirm they think they have been able to make a difference to school life and quote examples such as the improvements to the 'quad area', playground markings and games for wet playtime. However, they unanimously state that the toilets need improvements. The inspection team agrees with these concerns that the toilets are extremely smelly, sometimes inadequate in size and lack locks to some doors. The school is working towards improving matters.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **excellent**. Liaison with other schools and colleges is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The community is extremely well used to support pupils' learning.
- Parents' views are regularly sought and acted upon.
- Transition arrangements at the end of Year 6 are very good.
- The school works very well with other schools and colleges.

### Commentary

33. Pupils speak very enthusiastically about the educational visits they have taken part in and express very clear enjoyment about their experiences. The school uses the local and wider community extremely well to enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with an extensive well planned range of experiences. In addition, there is a very wide range of visitors to the school, including theatre companies and also members of the local community, all of which are linked to enhancing pupils' achievement. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in events in the locality. This is not only through involvement with the Fosbrooks Educational Trust, but through involvement with a wide range of charitable and environmental work. These opportunities make an extremely good contribution to developing pupils' confidence, self-esteem and all-round personal development.
34. Discussions with parents before the inspection and in their response to the questionnaires indicate they hold the school in high regard. They find the school welcoming and are content that their children flourish in a happy atmosphere. Parents generously support the school by raising significant sums of money that help the school financially. They also support their children in the many charitable fund raising activities that are organised. The very good dialogue with almost all parents means that many fully support homework activities and this has a positive impact on the achievement of their children. The 'open door' policy ensures that concerns and issues are quickly addressed. Questionnaires are regularly used to seek out parents' views. Suggestions made are considered and built into the school's development planning process. Parents like the fact that the school consults with them and appreciate the '*anti bullying week*' that the school organised in response to their suggestions.
35. The day-to-day information provided for parents is very good; it is extensive and informative. The curriculum leaflets which tell parents what their children are to learn are particularly impressive. The school brochure contains practical and useful information, but the annual governors' report to parents does not contain all the information it should. End-of-year reports about the progress pupils have made are good, with very good features in relation to the subject commentaries for English and mathematics. Sometimes, however, other subjects do not give a clear enough picture about the progress that pupils have made but tend to focus on what they are able to do or the themes covered.
36. Liaison with other schools through the Network Learning Community has had a very positive impact on the development of the curriculum, for instance in science. Links with the nearby infant school and local secondary schools have enabled staff to develop their expertise in subjects such as religious education, geography and the arts. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of education at the end of Year 6 are very well planned. Very good communication and transfer of information means that individual pupils' needs are catered for and the move to their next school is made easier as a result. The school has maintained its very positive provision since the last inspection.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership. Governance is **satisfactory** and almost all statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good leadership by the headteacher sets a clear educational direction for the school.
- There is very good commitment to include all pupils in all activities offered by the school.
- The subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable, but have not had sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

### **Commentary**

37. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Her very clear sense of purpose and direction is firmly embedded in the shared aim for each individual pupil to be prepared for life beyond school through a balanced curriculum that '*enriches our lives*'. Her vision has successfully promoted the development of a good curriculum supported by an excellent range of extra activities that enrich the life of the school. However, although the school also aims for academic improvement, standards are average and have not risen since the previous inspection. The very good inclusion of all pupils in all activities clearly demonstrates the headteacher's firm commitment to develop every individual within a supportive community. This commitment is shared by staff and governors.
38. Senior staff provide satisfactory support for the headteacher, have a finger on the pulse of the school and are good role models for staff. The subject co-ordinators are effective in improving the curriculum, providing training and in their personal teaching skills. However, overall co-ordinators have not kept a sharp enough eye on the quality of teaching to maintain the number of good and very good lessons.
39. Management of special educational needs is satisfactory, but there is insufficient opportunity to monitor day-to-day delivery of the good range of provision. The co-ordinator has a very wide ranging and inclusive role as is evident in the amount and good quality of evidence that is to be submitted for the *Inclusion Kitemark*. Her own teaching produces visible improvement in pupils' progress. Individual education plans provide a secure basis for pupils' future learning and she liaises very well with parents, pupils and outside agencies.
40. Governance is satisfactory overall. The school governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience. The chair of governors in particular is very committed, has a good knowledge of the school and visits regularly. Governors share the school's aim of raising standards and providing a caring environment in which all pupils can develop academically and personally. A recently revised system of committees ensures governors fulfil most of their statutory duties satisfactorily. The governors' annual report to parents does not include all the required information. Links between governors and subject co-ordinators are useful and provide an overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They question and challenge the headteacher confidently, for example on plans for improvement and difficult budget decisions.
41. The management of the school is satisfactory. This year's improvement plan is comprehensive and detailed. The school analyses all assessment information thoroughly and staff know their pupils well and set appropriate targets for them to

achieve. However, assessment information is not always used well enough to respond to pupils' learning needs by improving and developing teaching and the curriculum.

42. Senior managers and subject co-ordinators contribute effectively to the improvement plan by reviewing their subjects to ascertain areas for development. Priorities are appropriate, for example the current focus on improving writing. An effective system links performance management to priorities in the school improvement plan well. This was particularly successful in enabling staff to be confident users of the interactive whiteboards. Subject co-ordinators understand their management roles. Those responsible for English, mathematics and science, for example, are knowledgeable and aware of areas for development. The co-ordinator for religious education has raised standards since the last inspection. The co-ordinators have had insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom in order to improve standards still further, although they have, for instance, talked to pupils about their learning and monitored their books. The co-ordinator for ICT is now carrying out this task via the computer.
43. Financial management and control and day-to-day management and administration are efficient and effective. Shrewd and stringent management of a limited budget has enabled the headteacher and governors to maintain and carry out improvements to the building. Outside sources of income are vigorously pursued, such as for interactive whiteboards. The finance committee provides advice, but governors do not have systems to assess the impact of spending on pupils' achievement. Governors have adopted a best value statement to ensure budget spending is allocated wisely. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## Financial information

### Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	834,644
Total expenditure	828,798
Expenditure per pupil	2,076

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12,403
Balance carried forward to the next	43,662

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

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good speaking, listening and reading skills.
- The standard of boys' writing is not good enough.
- There is a lack of rigour in monitoring in the classroom.
- The curriculum provides a good range of activities, including opportunities to write in other subjects.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons
- The school has a very good library that is used very well by all classes.
- Assessment procedures are used very well to place pupils in sets, but there are weaknesses in its use.
- The way teachers plan lessons is not consistent throughout the school.

#### Commentary

44. In the 2004 national tests, standards were average against all schools and similar schools. Overall, the standard of the work of pupils currently in Year 6 is in line with national expectations. However, a significant number of pupils, many them boys, are still working below the levels expected for their age, particularly in writing. The school has introduced different styles of teaching and learning such as *'thinking skills'* and drama to improve writing, but the benefits have yet to be seen. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and the very few who speak English as an additional language. In individual lessons that are taught well, achievement is often good or very good.
45. Speaking, listening and reading skills are good. Most pupils have a good vocabulary and add interest and description to stories and accounts with varied adjectives and adverbs. Pupils talk confidently with their *'talking partners'* in discussions in lessons, and to their friends and adults. They listen carefully to their teachers to ensure they understand their tasks.
46. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. Pupils were eager to share their love of books and the enjoyment they get from reading. By Year 6, the majority read fluently and this supports their work across the curriculum. Most pupils read aloud with expression, particularly when the teacher demonstrates this well. The *'reading buddies'* scheme where Year 6 and Year 3 pupils are matched for a weekly session to read and discuss books is effective. The library and the reading centre are very good resources that promote reading well. The high-quality, very well resourced library is the hub of the school and makes a very strong contribution to pupils' reading skills in all subjects.
47. Writing skills vary in quality. The school has responded well by introducing a range of initiatives to help pupils to improve their writing, but it will take time for these to show results. Pupils currently in Year 3 are beginning to write at greater length, using more structured sentences. Year 6 pupils use a range of writing styles across the

curriculum. More able pupils write to a high standard, with interesting ideas in a range of contexts, but some middle achieving pupils needed plenty of support to construct sentences for a story, even after the teacher had prepared them well. Throughout the school, spelling is often erratic, for example an able Year 5 pupil confused 'threw' with 'through'. Most older pupils write neatly and legibly and present their work well, but the school has not adopted a particular form of handwriting, which leads to inconsistencies in style.

48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good and very good teaching for the more able groups. In these lessons, teaching challenges and stimulates through good quality, interesting activities that pupils enjoy. These lessons successfully blend teacher input with pupil discussion and purposeful activity, and move along at a good pace so pupils remain involved and achieve well. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the curriculum for English. Effective assessment procedures provide them with good knowledge of their pupils' capabilities. However, assessment information is not always used to provide work for different abilities within each teaching set, particularly the less able groups. Teachers' daily and weekly planning is inconsistent and does not always show how the work planned will be developed. Occasionally, teachers try to cover too much in a lesson so less able pupils find it difficult to acquire new knowledge. Regular writing assessments are annotated thoroughly, with reminders to pupils to use their individual targets. Otherwise, marking comments are not used consistently to move pupils' learning on. Regular homework is set to consolidate work in class.
49. The subject is led well and managed satisfactorily. The knowledgeable co-ordinator acts as a good role model by leading teaching, providing good support for staff and organising workshops and training. She has identified the right areas for development using data and assessment information. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work, especially through the good quality writing assessment system. She does not check the quality of teaching sufficiently well to ensure that teaching is good for all pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection which found there were not enough opportunities for writing in subjects other than English. This has been remedied effectively.

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

50. Provision is good and pupils have lots of opportunities to consolidate and improve their skills in other subjects. Subjects are linked well, such as when Year 3 pupils created 'The School Skeleton' blending poetry with science and history. They competently wrote instructions for testing different papers to see how much water they absorbed. Year 6 pupils wrote a persuasive argument against building a hotel on Snowdon and produced empathetic diaries of life as a Victorian child. Teachers and pupils make good use of ICT to promote literacy skills through word processing, drafting and editing. Pupils' reading skills help them in research and discussions, for example when Year 5 pupils inferred meaning from the song 'Greensleeves'.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The most able pupils in Year 6 achieve well.
- Assessment procedures provide teachers with clear guidance as to the ability of pupils in their care, Marking that shows pupils how to improve is used inconsistently.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to work on tasks which are well matched to their ability within sets.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning lacks regularity and rigour.
- Pupils lose interest and concentration when the mental/oral starter is too long and lacks pace.

## **Commentary**

51. In the 2004 national tests, standards were average in Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection standards were accurately judged to be above average, but they have been average every year since then, because overall quality of the annual intake has declined.
52. The achievement of most pupils, including those with special educational needs and the very few with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Inspection evidence and school assessment procedures both identify that current overall standards are similar to those expected nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving higher than expected standards also fits the national picture.
53. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school uses the results of very good assessment procedures to place older pupils into groups related to their mathematical ability and to provide all less able pupils with extra support. This practice allows teachers to have a focus related to the level at which they should pitch their work. A weakness is that pupils do not have the opportunity to work at their own level within the sets. As a consequence of subsequent challenge and pace in lessons, the most able pupils in Year 6 achieve well. In some lessons inspected, the beginning of the lesson lacks pace and takes up a significantly large proportion of the lesson. This reduces time available for topic development in a major part of the lesson. In most lessons pupils have very good attitudes to mathematics and, even when work being undertaken does not excite them, their behaviour is good. Most pupils co-operate well and show an eagerness to succeed and this helps their learning. Relationships are very good and most pupils are confident and eager to demonstrate their mathematical understanding on the interactive whiteboard. Teachers successfully insist on good standards of behaviour, concentration on the task and positive attitudes to homework in support of their pupils' learning.
54. The quality of marking is inconsistent. It is usually undertaken and reward stickers are regularly used well. However, an overall weakness is the absence of purposeful comment to indicate how individual pupils might improve. Assessment information is not always used to plan different tasks from the start of group work. As a result, some pupils can find the set task either too difficult or too easy.
55. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is a good and experienced teacher, justifiably proud of the assessment and tracking procedures that are now in place. The subject co-ordinator does not check the quality of teaching sufficiently well to ensure that teaching is good for all pupils. For instance, an area for further development is regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure a consistency of supportive marking, that work is matched to pupils' level of understanding and also to check that the timing of lessons sustains pupils' interest and enjoyment.
56. Improvement from the last inspection is satisfactory because average point scores are slowly improving and tracking procedures are very good. The school has identified issues for improvement and taken appropriate action.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Provision is satisfactory for pupils to consolidate and improve their learning. Lessons include planned opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding in all subjects. This also enables them to evaluate the importance of mathematics in life generally. Use of data handling in science was recently identified as a way to improve overall standards in that subject. Scrutiny of workbooks shows that this is now taking place. Temperature graphs and grid references show pupils the importance of mathematics in geographical studies.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average.
- Pupils lack confidence in devising and carrying out their investigations.
- Good use is made of the co-ordinator's skills to teach all three classes of Year 6 pupils.
- Teachers' skills are variable and there are some inconsistencies in pupils' learning and achievement in Years 3 to 5.
- The co-ordinator has a good perception of what needs to be done to raise standards, but monitoring by senior staff is not rigorous enough.

### Commentary

58. Standards in tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below all schools nationally at both the expected level and the higher level. They were also well below the national average when compared with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances.
59. Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 6 are below average, overall. Currently, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge overall, but the development of skills of questioning and setting up tests has not developed well enough. In the past, too few opportunities have been given to pupils to find things out for themselves, to question, to devise their own experiments and work out how to record their findings. The school has only very recently started to address this weakness. Consequently, most pupils in Year 6 still require support when undertaking an investigation and a below average number of pupils are likely to attain the higher level in the national Year 6 tests.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some teachers, including the co-ordinator, have good levels of scientific knowledge and understanding and teaching and learning in these lessons are generally good. Other teachers are less confident and secure in their skills. This impedes pupils' progress, especially potentially higher attaining pupils, in the development of the skills necessary for scientific enquiry. Marking of work in some classes is basic and does not sufficiently identify ways in which pupils can improve their learning. However, there is evidence of recent improvement. Extra materials have been introduced by the school which contain opportunities to assess pupils' learning and progress. This is helping teachers to improve their planning for pupils of differing abilities. As well as this initiative, more emphasis is starting to be placed throughout the school on developing pupils' experimental and investigative skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support from learning support assistants and make progress in line with their peers.

61. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the main strengths and weaknesses of the subject and it is now a priority in the school improvement plan. She has given some in-service training to other teachers to improve and update their skills, as well as seeking support and advice from the local science advisory service. She does not check the quality of teaching sufficiently well to ensure that teaching is good for all pupils, although she talks to pupils and looks at their books. The tracking of pupils' progress has only recently been initiated and has not yet been implemented across the whole school in order to provide consistency and continuity of pupils' learning across year groups and between classes.
62. Overall, improvement is just satisfactory. Although standards have declined since the last inspection, there have been very recent improvements in provision which have not been in place long enough to raise standards sufficiently in the current Year 6. As well as this, there are now an increased number of pupils with special educational needs who require additional support.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The use of ICT strengthens pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Pupils are confident users of computers.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about what ICT can do.
- An enthusiastic co-ordinator and colleagues lead the subject forward.

### **Commentary**

63. Standards are in line with the national average by Year 6. Achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, because ICT has been a consistent school priority. Resources have improved as pupils moved through the school and are now good.
64. All classrooms have an interactive whiteboard which teachers and pupils use well for a variety of purposes, such as demonstrating aspects of mathematical formula, grammar or showing how a weir works in geography. Well thought out library sessions allow pupils to use other forms of technology such as tape recorders. Pupils appreciate the good impact that the interactive whiteboards have had on their learning in the classroom. They praise the ICT suite and the opportunities it offers them to learn.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Good improvement in teachers' skill levels have been a consistent school priority which has been securely linked to performance management. This improvement in teachers' confidence levels has led to a corresponding rise in pupils' skills. For instance, one more able pupil provided an accomplished review of the benefits of one form of software over a previous program. All pupils talk about what they can do on the computer using the correct technical vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons as adults encourage them to use the correct tools to help them improve.
66. Leadership and management are good. The subject co-ordinator now has information on computer which means that he can access planning from his master computer.

Assessment in ICT is good with the potential to be better. The school is at the early stages of establishing a computerised portfolio of pupils' work so that the co-ordinator can easily check all pupils' progress. The school has invested in giving all teachers another adult in the computer suite to help all pupils to achieve well. This is working well because pupils' abilities have been identified and they are given tasks and support to match their ability. Other colleagues have responsibility for aspects such as ensuring that teachers are confident with the interactive whiteboards and linking with the networked learning community. The school has set its sights on gaining local and national recognition for its work.

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

67. Good. The school has planned this aspect well to get value for money on its investment. Computers are well used for research in a variety of subjects. The library sessions are well designed to allow pupils to consolidate and improve their skills in a variety of areas such as research and taped stories in history. Pupils consolidate their skills in lessons such as art and design where they employ the stamp tool effectively to construct a repeating pattern. Word processing is used well for reports, such as on a visit to Chadkirk chapel, or in presenting poetry. Many displays showed that pupils had used their computer skills to reflect learning in mathematics.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

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

- Very well planned educational visits enable pupils to consolidate their learning.
- There are great opportunities for pupils to develop understanding of environmental issues.
- Specialist teaching works well in Year 6.
- There are good cross-curricular links with other subjects, particularly ICT.
- There is a lack of opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards are in line with those expected nationally. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, but with a considerable strength in pupils' understanding of people's impact on their environment.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good specialist teaching in Year 6. In a challenging and lively debate led by the Year 6 teacher acting 'in role', pupils' moral and social values were thoroughly tested when they had to decide whether to allow a plastics recycling factory to be built in a nearby beauty spot. Pupils spoke clearly and stated their views with passion. This session provided very good links to pupils' work in personal, social and health education and citizenship.
70. This school covers the full geography curriculum very thoroughly and pupils really enjoy their learning. Pupils questioned had a good range of factual knowledge, which had been consolidated by very well planned educational visits, for instance to Conway, and by very good use of the local environment. Interactive whiteboards are well used,

for instance to show pupils why a weir develops. The Internet is used well for research. Very attractive displays allow pupils to consolidate their knowledge of topics being studied.

71. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had a satisfactory opportunity to discuss their work with some pupils and the next stage is training in how to assess and place secure levels on pupils' work. However, there is insufficient opportunity to look at teaching and learning in lessons or to pick up inconsistencies in dating and marking work. The curriculum and resources are good and there has been useful liaison with the nominated governor. Overall, this is a broadly similar picture to the last inspection with a similar range of strengths. Improvement is satisfactory.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Drama is used well to support pupils' learning.
- Very good use is made of planned educational visits to make learning come alive.
- There are good cross-curricular links to other subjects.
- Some teachers do not always make full use of pupils' existing knowledge.
- There is a lack of opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom.

## Commentary

72. Standards in Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall, but with a strength in pupils' understanding of how to carry out research.
73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and are good in Year 6 where specialist teaching is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. This teacher made very good use of the ending of the lesson to allow pupils of all abilities to demonstrate what they understood. With minimal fuss, groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, performed a drama on a given topic to the rest of the class. Pupils had very good opportunities to improve their speaking skills. Using dialect, humour and on one occasion song, they empathised with the plight of chimney sweeps and servants. This was a good improvement since the last inspection when *'a little too much dry and academic work was undertaken'*. Discussion with pupils from all age groups shows that they have a solid factual knowledge and an enthusiasm for the subject. Very well planned educational visits to places such as Styal Mill allow pupils to dress up and act out parts and visits to Manchester Museum allow them to observe and handle period artefacts.
74. Library sessions are used effectively to allow pupils to research topics on the Internet, such as the life of Lord Shaftsbury, or to allow pupils to listen to taped stories relevant to the topics they are studying.
75. In an occasional lesson the teacher did not make full enough use of what pupils already knew about the topic, but reduced their contributions to simple phrases such as *'round houses'*, *'square houses'* when contrasting lifestyles and this did not allow the more able pupils to achieve well.

76. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a real flair for incorporating music into history. Effective links with the local sixth form college to present drama productions help to consolidate pupils' learning. Good links with the English co-ordinator result in good opportunities for pupils in writing diaries, letters and reports in history. The school correctly identified that pupils' sense of chronology is relatively weak and the resulting large pictorial timeline in the library supports pupils in understanding how topics fit together. Although the co-ordinator has talked to pupils about their work, the next step is training in how to assess pupils' work to check it matches national expectations. The co-ordinator does not check the quality of teaching sufficiently well to ensure that teaching is good for all pupils or to pick up inconsistencies in marking and dating work.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is well linked to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Good links are being developed that allow pupils to learn from leaders of different faiths.
- There are good opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills.
- Learning support assistants are not well enough deployed in some lessons.
- There is a lack of opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom.

### Commentary

77. Standards of attainment seen are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils show very good attitudes to subject material being taught. All Year 6 lessons are taught by the same specialist teacher and this is effective. In a good lesson, pupils discuss how they feel about growing up in *'Life as a Journey'*. Planning identifies that they will later learn about young children growing up in Jewish and Islamic families and this gives them a good idea of life in other cultures. Pupils investigate ideas such as *'the greater their freedom, the greater their responsibilities'*. Debate contributes significantly to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and multi-cultural development. In a Year 4 lesson taught by the co-ordinator, very good subject knowledge sustains pupils' interest and concentration throughout. Excellent relationships support very good achievement related to the importance of differing faiths in this lesson. Occasionally, learning support assistants do not do enough to support pupils' learning so that they make good progress in lessons.
79. Every term a leader from a different faith visits school to take an assembly. Teachers experience a training day at the Jewish Museum. Such experiences provide the school population with very good opportunities to gain awareness and appreciation of difference and similarity between religions. This is good preparation for pupils to live in a multi cultural world.
80. Leadership of religious education is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides a good role model and has led good improvement since the previous inspection, when religious education was below the level required by the

locally agreed syllabus. She has ensured that the recently revised syllabus has been implemented, but monitoring of teaching and learning is an area for further development. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues well, aided by a strong personal interest and commitment to the importance of religion in support of pupils' personal development. Good quality resources are available to support teaching.

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

81. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure range of judgments about **design and technology**, as no lessons were taught during the inspection. However, from the samples of work observed, pupils' attainment appears in line with national expectations. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject curriculum since the last inspection. The school has introduced a new scheme of work for developing pupils' learning in this area and pupils now receive satisfactory opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. This was identified as an issue in the last inspection. Leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator are satisfactory. She is competent and committed and has talked to pupils and studied their work in order to gauge standards

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

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

- The curriculum is well focused on the development of pupils' skills and knowledge with effective links with other subject areas.
- Pupils' work is valued and very effectively displayed throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are good and committed to improving standards and resources.
- The introductory part of some lessons is too long and this leads to a minority of pupils losing interest and concentration.

### **Commentary**

82. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above national expectations and pupils achieve well. Pupils say they enjoy the subject. The broad curriculum gives pupils good opportunities to experience a wide range of techniques and a variety of media, both two and three-dimensional. Good links are made with other subject areas such as history and literacy which enhance work in these areas. As well as these, the study of famous artists such as Van Gogh and art from other cultures make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of culture.
83. Teaching and learning are good overall. This is evident in the very attractive work on display. Relationships are good and pupils generally show interest in the subject and are proud of their efforts. During the inspection the school was just starting new topics and in the lessons observed the introductory part of the lessons were too long which resulted in a minority of pupils losing interest and concentration. This was quickly resolved as soon as the focus was on more practical aspects of the subject. Teachers display pupils' work imaginatively, which enhances the environment and contributes effectively to the ethos of the school and pupils' spiritual development, as well as their self-esteem. Visits by external artists and visits out of school to places of interest such as art galleries support pupils' learning well.

84. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and acts as a good role model for others. She is fully committed to maintaining a high profile for the subject, which is evident throughout the school. The curriculum is enriched by arts weeks and arts workshops when pupils work with practising artists. Resources for teaching are good. Improvement is satisfactory because good standards in art and design have been maintained since the previous inspection.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy singing and reach good standards.
- The excellent range of extra-curricular music provision enriches the life of the school for all pupils.
- The music curriculum ensures pupils have good opportunities to compose, perform and respond to music.
- Teachers do not always plan sufficiently well for more able pupils in lessons.
- The accommodation aids provision in music very well.

### **Commentary**

85. Overall, pupils' achievement and standards are satisfactory because teaching and learning in lessons are satisfactory. Pupils reach good standards and achieve well in singing. Regular singing practice with the co-ordinator and opportunities to join the choir supplement lessons well. Pupils show good attitudes and behave well in lessons and this aids their learning. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to use computers to compose their own music. Music adds to pupils' cultural development when they respond to music from different cultures and times, for instance Year 5 pupils studied the song 'Greensleeves'. Sometimes, however, the achievement of more able pupils - who perhaps play an instrument - is delayed in lessons when they have to work at the same pace as their classmates who do not.
86. The very wide range of extra-curricular music provides excellent enrichment to the life of the school for all pupils. It very effectively meets the needs of the more able and talented pupils. Specialist teachers provide tuition in a very wide range of instruments. Some of this tuition requires payment of a fee. The excellent links between the school and the Fosbrooks Educational Trust provide further enrichment. The school's funding from a specific grant has enabled seventeen pupils to learn brass instruments. Pupils who become involved with the Fosbrooks sing, perform and dance in locations that have included China and Sweden and this in turn benefits the school. Support from home is good and pupils are expected to take responsibility for learning words to songs and practising instruments regularly, contributing to their growing sense of personal responsibility.
87. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator provides good leadership of the outstanding range of musical opportunities. Her regular choir practices are open to all pupils and a good number of both boys and girls willingly give up their lunchtimes to practise because they enjoy singing. School shows are much enjoyed and pupils speak very enthusiastically about the productions which include music and dance and give them good experience of performing in front of an audience. Resources are good

and small instruments are used well in lessons. Management of day-to-day music is satisfactory. Improvement is satisfactory because the school has maintained its excellent range of musical activities and resources have improved. A strength of the accommodation is the number of small rooms which are available to practise and store musical instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Older pupils achieve well in dance and swimming as a result of overall good teaching.
- Teachers, outside agencies and residential experiences all enable a very good, strongly enriched curriculum.
- Some lessons have insufficient challenge and pace.
- Boys and girls take part in all activities.
- The accommodation is very good.

### **Commentary**

88. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected nationally in Year 6. Overall, achievement is satisfactory overall. At the time of the previous inspection, although a full physical education programme was not being delivered, standards were judged to be average.
89. Year 6 pupils understand and use 'synchronisation' related to movement effectively. They respond well to live piano-accordion music. Groups of pupils make positive evaluations of other group dances, performed with good control and quality of movement, which help all pupils to improve. A wide variety of gymnastic movements are well incorporated into dance sequences. Three Year 5 classes experience swimming teaching for one term each. Performance records from 2003/2004 show pupils achieve well and that all are confident in the water.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. However, in a very good dance lesson inspected, relaxed relationships, enthusiastic teaching and knowledgeable modelling of the activity all contribute to pupils achieving very well in developing enjoyment and satisfaction through much improved performance. When lessons are otherwise satisfactory, they lack sufficient challenge and pace in elements of the lessons. Regardless of lesson quality, pupils respond very positively, co-operate with each other and behave very well.
91. Boys and girls are involved in competitive basketball, football, cross-country and 'kwik' cricket. This provides good opportunity to develop the use of lesson-based individual skills in team situations. Coaches from Stockport County Football Club and a good judo coach from Sport UK provide good quality skills sessions. Year 6 pupils can be involved in three-day residential courses near Ullswater, where team-building activities, abseiling, rock-climbing and low-rope work all contribute significantly to the physical education programme and to pupils' personal development. Lessons and photographs show that the school is very successful in involving boys in dance activities where pupils experience dance from a range of cultures.
92. The subject leader has been in post for a small number of years and, as a specialist, his leadership is good. He has developed good staff response to teaching physical

education by extending national guidelines. This initiative provides teachers with planning to suit the needs of the school, ensures curriculum coverage and provides assessment procedures. Management is satisfactory. Opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and assessment is an area for development. A spacious hall, extensive playing fields and level, hard surface play areas provide very good accommodation for subject teaching. Resources to support teaching are good. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection due to good subject leadership which has brought about an improved curriculum, better resources and the co-ordinator has his eyes set on a national award.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is high profile throughout the school.
- An effective sense of citizenship is developed.
- Current news events are used to good purpose.
- The subject has good links to both religious education and assemblies and contributes very effectively to pupils' moral development.

### **Commentary**

93. Standards are in line with those expected of Year 6 pupils. Achievement is good because of the strength of the scheme of work, the time devoted to it and the school's emphasis on this aspect of learning.
94. Teaching and learning are good because training has been given to staff on how to deliver discussion sessions in the most effective manner. Personal, social and health education is efficiently delivered through a series of 'blocked weeks' and is backed up by themes in assemblies. There is a very well planned scheme of work which covers such issues as '*peer pressure*', '*stranger danger*' and '*substance abuse*' and which prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. These key messages are reinforced throughout the school by very attractive displays and various visits and visitors.
95. A sense of citizenship is developed well through pupils' work with charities. They raise considerable sums for both local and national charities. In Year 4, for instance, pupils have a waste action group which helps them to consolidate their understanding of the impact of humans on the environment which is developed very well in geography lessons. The school council takes its duties seriously and has produced leaflets on anti bullying strategies for both pupils and parents. Pupils run a school shop for other pupils.
96. Pupils reflect on the latest news and draw the relevant moral messages from items. One particularly effective strategy was a screen saver in Year 6 which simply asked: "*Tsunami – do we forget too soon?*".
97. Leadership is very good and contributes much to the school's very good ethos and sense of inclusion. The subject is a high priority and the school's attention to how it threads throughout the curriculum is very effective.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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