

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mrs L Graves  
Headteacher  
Dean Barwick School  
Witherslack  
Grange-over-Sands  
Cumbria  
LA11 6RS

Dear Mrs Graves

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Information and  
Communication Technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during  
my visit on 23 March 2009 to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject,  
the visit had a particular focus on the quality of assessment.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national  
evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the  
contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the  
main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the  
end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with  
staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work  
and observation of three part lessons.

Dean Barwick school is a much smaller than average school with, at the time  
of this visit, 28 pupils on role.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement is good. Pupils leave the school with standards which are above  
average.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with skills and  
ICT capability which are broadly average. However because of the very  
small numbers in each year there is a wide range of skills and  
capabilities.

- The good teaching and learning in the EYFS means that the individual needs of the children are catered for. In the EYFS children use confidently a large number of ICT resources. These resources include CD players, interactive whiteboards and floor robots. Children in the EYFS make at least satisfactory progress with many making good progress.
- At Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make at least satisfactory progress. However some higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always challenged to achieve as well as they could.
- By the end Key Stage 2 pupils have made good progress and they leave the school with standards which are above average.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well in lessons. During their time at the school they make good progress. These pupils are also able to access appropriate ICT resources.
- You provide a comprehensive programme to enable the pupils to learn about e-safety, this engages the pupils in writing the internet safety rules. This programme includes links with parents. The pupils are very knowledgeable about the dangers of using new technologies and what they need to do to keep safe when using them.
- The pupils are exceptionally well behaved when they use ICT equipment. They enjoy working together and they work well together, taking turns to use the equipment and respecting each others' learning styles. The pupils are also respectful to the additional adults who support them when they are using ICT. This use of ICT has enhanced their independent learning skills.

#### Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Members of staff have good subject knowledge. This is used to good effect in lessons. For example in all lessons seen members of staff constantly reinforce the use of correct ICT terminology. This means that the pupils are fully aware of the need to use the correct language.
- Lessons are well planned. The activities motivate the pupils and they are highly engaged in their learning.
- In some lessons the good questioning techniques encouraged the pupils to think about their work and how they could improve it. For example in the EYFS children were challenged to consider how they could make their instructions more specific.
- In all the lessons seen the pupils listened well to each other. This meant that the pupils were able to demonstrate their work to each other and they learnt from each other. This was particularly effective in a lesson where the pupils were learning how to make their own animated films.
- In many lessons the pupils were able to work independently. Good systems were in place for them to ask each other for help which increased their knowledge and understanding of ICT and developed their social skills. This was particularly well done in a Key Stage 1 lesson when some pupils had to work in another room. They willingly helped each other to develop their work.

## Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The curriculum is good.

- The curriculum provided is comprehensive and all pupils receive their statutory entitlement to the ICT National Curriculum. Pupils were enthusiastic about the opportunities they had, particularly when they had controlled floor robots and used digital cameras.
- The use of ICT is embedded in all areas of the curriculum. Long term, medium term and short term curriculum planning show exactly where ICT is used to support learning. Pupils were also aware of how and when they used ICT to support their learning in other subjects.
- Progression in all Key Stages is planned. This means that most pupils make good progress during their time at the school and develop their ICT capability well.

## Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- You have a very limited ICT budget because of the size of your school. This budget is used effectively to ensure that ICT is a tool to improve learning in all areas and for all the pupils. You apply the principles of best value: compare, consult, challenge and competition. The recently completed questionnaire to the Key Stage 2 pupils highlighted the consultation process. You also link with other schools to share good practice and members of staff appreciate these opportunities to visit other schools.
- You have audited the staff's ICT skills and capabilities and have put in place training to develop them.
- You have a clear vision for ICT which is shared with staff. ICT is there to support the learning of the pupils in all areas. This includes the use of ICT to develop your forest school.
- You have a comprehensive development plan for ICT. This is costed and is time related. It is regularly reviewed and changes made, if appropriate.

## Use of Assessment

The use of assessment is satisfactory.

- At the beginning of the EYFS children's ICT skills and capabilities are assessed. The improvements in these skills and capabilities are then comprehensively tracked across the areas of learning. These assessments are tracked through to Key Stage 1. The assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 link into Key Stage 2.
- At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the pupils assess their own progress through 'can do' statements. These statements are linked to the ICT National Curriculum levels. These sheets are then monitored by staff to ensure that pupils are making the expected progress. However this assessment tends to be generic rather than specific to each pupil.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are tracked well. There is a comprehensive assessment done related to their learning needs in ICT.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 are challenged when using ICT
- developing the use of assessment to ensure that it is specific to each pupil rather than generic.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ICT in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Tanya Harber Stuart  
Her Majesty's Inspector