

INSPECTION REPORT

MERIDIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Comberton

LEA area: Cambridge

Unique reference number: 110626

Headteacher: Miss J. Walker

Reporting inspector: Kathryn Burdis
RGI NO. 14809

Dates of inspection: 23 – 26 May 2000

Inspection number: 182438

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Harbour Avenue
Comberton
Cambridge

Postcode: CB3 7DD

Telephone number: 01223 262423

Fax number: 01223 262423

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. J.C.P. Dalton

Date of previous inspection: 8th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Kathryn Burdis	Registered inspector
Leonard Shipman	Lay inspector
Pete Dudley	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Advisory and Inspection Service
P.O. Box 47
County Hall
Chelmsford
CM2 6WN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	11
Attainment in English, mathematics and science	
Teaching is often good, numeracy is taught very well	
Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons	
The systems for self review and school improvement	
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	13
Attainment in information and communication technology	
Communication with parents	
Planning for different abilities of pupils	
The balance of time allocated to curriculum areas.	
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Meridian Primary School is a community school serving the villages of Comberton, Toft, Little Eversden and Great Eversden, on the outskirts of Cambridge. It is a large, successful primary school that attracts pupils from beyond its catchment area. There are 335 pupils on the school register. Fifty-two pupils are identified on the register for special educational need. This is just below average for a school of this size. The socio-economic factors in the area are very favourable and the proportion of pupils having free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is low. Attendance rates are very high in comparison with other schools and unauthorised absence is well below average.

Attainment of the four-year-olds when they start school is broadly average. In the most recent baseline assessment, attainment was just below the Cambridgeshire County average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Meridian Primary is a good school. Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. The strong ethos for learning and achievement promotes in pupils a positive response to learning. By the age of 11 pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education. Teaching is often good and pupils acquire new knowledge, understanding and skill at an appropriate rate. Sometimes good progress is limited by the choice of teaching approaches and availability of learning resources. The school is well led and managed. The senior management team work very effectively together, ensuring the work of the school is regularly monitored, areas for further improvement identified and appropriate action taken.

The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- High standards are achieved in English, mathematics and science
- Teaching is often good, numeracy is taught very well
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in classrooms are very good
- There are good systems for school self review and school improvement.

What could be improved

- Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT)
- Some aspects of communication with parents
- Planning for the different abilities of pupils in individual and group work
- The balance of time allocated to each curriculum area.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in 1996. The developments since then have been sufficient to maintain the high standards achieved by pupils. Good systems for monitoring the provision and setting targets for improvement have been established, subject co-ordinators now have time to review planning and teaching to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Creative aspects of the curriculum have developed and pupils produce art work of good quality.

There have been improvements in the opportunities for open-ended research and investigation, especially at the upper end of Key Stage 2. Investigational mathematics has become a feature of the daily mathematics lesson and there is evidence of pupils applying their mathematical skills in other

areas. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for children to apply their skills in challenging, exciting contexts. Planning for the use of ICT across the curriculum and teachers confidence in using the new technology has developed but the provision is still not as good as it should be. The number of computers under five years old is well below the national average for a school of this size. The school has identified the need to continue improving provision for ICT to ensure pupils attain the standards they are capable of.

The school has worked to improve the library and monitor its use by children. However, it still contains many old books, some of which contain inaccurate information or present inappropriate gender and racial stereotypes. Its layout does not encourage pupils to browse and use books as a source of information and pleasure. Book areas in classrooms are still not as exciting as they could be and the school does not promote a strong book culture.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Key Stage 2				
English	A	A	A	B
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	A	A*	A	A

Key

Pupils results very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The majority of five-year-olds achieve standards beyond what is normally expected for their age in language, literacy and numeracy. At seven years of age standards are high in reading and mathematics. They are very high in writing. By the age of eleven, standards are well above average in mathematics and science. They are above average in English. The standard of pupils' work seen during the inspection reflects these standards. Pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Analysis of the test data of pupils aged 7 in 1995 and 11 in 1999, confirms that they made good progress over time, with the majority of pupils making more than average progress. Standards in mathematics and science were especially high.

High achievement is sustained over time. Taking the last four years together (1996 to 1999) the achievement of boys is very high in comparison with the national average and achievement of girls is well above the national average in the three core subjects. School targets are set that reflect the range of ability in each year and teachers are very successful in ensuring that those pupils who are able reach the higher Level 5 at the age of 11.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school. They respond enthusiastically in lessons and approach their work in a mature way. They work confidently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons, assemblies and as pupils move about the school is very good. Behaviour of Key Stage 2 pupils at lunchtime is not always as good. Some boisterous or thoughtless behaviour causes upsets.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good overall. Relationships are good and pupils have some opportunities to take on extra responsibilities. However, the school systems and approaches do not encourage pupils to take initiative and there are insufficient opportunities for them to work collaboratively.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is well below average.

Pupils behave very well and attendance is very good. They have positive attitudes to learning and tackle tasks with confidence and enthusiasm. They are thoughtful and supportive of each other and are pleased to accept responsibility, such as listening to younger children read. Older pupils are caring of younger pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 percent of lessons. It is good or better in 56 percent of lessons. Very good teaching was observed in mathematics and art in Key Stage 2. Teachers are well prepared and have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Whole class teaching is often very successful and good relationships, enthusiastic delivery and interesting subject matter commands the pupils' interest and involvement. The work that follows this direct teaching is not always as effective when the planned activities and the choice of resources do not reflect the range of ability in each class. The use of time, resources and deployment of teaching assistants is not always fully effective.

Teachers expect a high standard of behaviour and classrooms are purposeful and orderly. Basic skills are taught well and teachers are skilful at asking questions to extend pupils' understanding and developing their thinking skills. Numeracy is taught very well and pupils make good progress. Literacy is taught very thoroughly and pupils attain good standards. However, the amount of time allocated to reinforcing basic literacy skills limits the opportunities pupils have to apply and extend their skills in other curriculum areas.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The planned curriculum is broad and relevant for all ages. There is some imbalance in the time allocated to subjects of the curriculum with Information Communication and Technology and Religious Education being under-represented. There are also occasions where timetabled curriculum activities are altered and learning opportunities are lost.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils with statements are well catered for and their needs met effectively. Structured reading programmes support good progress in reading, but in other areas of the curriculum work is not always matched to pupils' needs to ensure they build on their skills. Individual targets are reviewed regularly, but they are not sufficiently specific to monitor the progress pupils make over time.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Teachers provide good role models for pupils. The school's ethos underpins pupils' developing social, moral and spiritual awareness. Pupils learn right from wrong and respect for others' feelings and beliefs. There are planned opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures, for example, a recent focus on The Gambia and subsequent fund raising to support a school in Africa. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well known to their teachers who are thoughtful and alert to their needs. The school systems for monitoring and improving attendance, personal development and promoting good behaviour are good. The school is developing its approaches to monitoring and recording individual pupil's academic progress and this is appropriately identified in the school development plan as an area for improvement. The school has considerable data on pupils' performance but is not, as yet, using this efficiently to identify the next steps in learning. Individual pupil target setting has recently been introduced. However, the reports to parents do not contain specific pointers to identify what children need to learn next.

The school plans a broad range of learning activities and statutory requirements are met. A high priority is given to developing basic numeracy and literacy skills. The heavy emphasis on English in Key Stage 2 reduces the amount of time for other subjects, especially RE and ICT. Teachers introduce new learning in interesting and stimulating ways, but the follow-up activity in group work does not always provide the appropriate challenge for all pupils. Homework is not set consistently in Key Stage 2, limiting opportunities for independent study and harnessing parental support. Likewise the decision not to allow pupils to take home reading books constrains pupils' self-motivation and personal development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, governors and senior management team lead the school well. The introduction of a senior management team has been very effective in promoting whole school improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are fully involved, are aware of their statutory responsibilities and carry out their role both efficiently and effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governors and headteacher have a very clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good procedures have been put in place to ensure all aspects of the provision are evaluated and appropriate action taken.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good. There is good strategic planning to ensure sufficient funding to meet needs, for example, for improvements to the accommodation. Specific grants are used well and are clearly accounted for in the Governors Annual Report to Parents. The school actively applies the principles of best value. Governors evaluate the value for money they gain from suppliers and select from alternative sources when appropriate.

The leadership is very effective in identifying priorities for development and taking action to meet the targets it sets itself. Thought needs to be given to the most efficient and effective deployment of teaching assistants. The separate room for support staff at play time and lunchtime reduces the effectiveness of communication across the staff team.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school • Behaviour in school is good • Pupils achieve high standards • The support given to individual pupils when needs are identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication about their child's learning • Lunchtime behaviour • Homework in Key Stage 2 • More informal access to teachers • Greater opportunities for pupils to take reading books home

Written communications sent to parents such as the Governors' Annual Report, the School Prospectus and weekly newsletters, are informative and well written. The school has effective systems for responding to a request for an appointment to discuss any concerns. However, the parents' concern about the lack of communication about the progress their child makes is justified. The lack of informal systems, such as a home-school diary or reading diary in Key Stage 2, means that the only opportunities to learn about their children's learning are the parents' meetings in the autumn and summer term. These meetings are too far apart for parents to help their children if there are any difficulties. The school has identified the need to move the summer meeting to the spring term.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Attainment in English, mathematics and science

1. The pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests. In these subjects the school achieves well above the national average in comparison to all schools. When compared to similar schools pupils' performance is above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science.
2. The teachers have a good knowledge of the skills and understanding pupils need to learn to achieve the higher levels in National Curriculum tests and ensure pupils learn these skills systematically as they progress through the school.
3. In the reception class the pupils are introduced to new concepts and engage in practical activities to consolidate their learning. They learn to listen well and enjoy the planned opportunities for talking with their teachers. They confidently discuss new mathematical concepts such as 'empty', half empty' and 'full' and demonstrate their understanding using a range of practical equipment.
4. Pupils listen both to their teachers and each other well, they are able to speak with enthusiasm, clarity and authority about their work.
5. Writing skills are taught well across the school. Pupils learn how to improve the content of what they write and by the age of 11 pupils express their ideas imaginatively, for example, they can identify key characteristics of a poetic form, such as Creole or Haiku poetry and apply it to their own writing. By the age of 11 pupils present their work well.
6. Pupils attain high standards in reading. The structured approach and detailed assessment of progress builds on their reading skills over time. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading over time and are well supported by the structured approach.
7. Mathematics is taught well across the school. At the end of Key Stage 2 very good teaching challenges pupils to develop their understanding and knowledge of mathematical concepts. Pupils confidently apply their mathematical vocabulary in practical investigations. They are able to respond to teachers' questioning with their own hypothesis and suggest approaches to solving a mathematical problem. They rapidly perform calculations with large numbers and choose appropriate mental strategies for doing so.

Teaching is often good, numeracy is taught very well

8. Throughout the school teachers are knowledgeable and well prepared. Lessons are well structured and the direct teaching at the beginning of each lesson is usually very effective. Lessons begin with a brisk pace and teachers' enthusiasm and positive relationships with children promote a positive climate for learning. Children are attentive and listen carefully to instructions. Teachers question children well to extend their thinking or clarify their understanding of new learning.
9. Numeracy is taught well. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy, the pace of lessons and interaction between pupils and teachers contribute to extending pupils oral and mental skills and developing their mental strategies. The arrangements for setting pupils for mathematics allows teachers to plan work at an appropriate level of difficulty. Teachers explain clearly at the beginning of each lesson what it is the children are to learn. The plenary session is usually well managed to encourage children to reflect on and consolidate what they have learnt. Some very good mathematics teaching occurs at the end of Key Stage 2. The oral, mental starter is highly effective, well timed and purposeful. The teachers are skilful at intervening at the right moment to correct a misunderstanding or to challenge a pupil to take a mathematical idea further. Questions are modified to reflect the level of understanding demonstrated by different pupils. Humour and very good relationships create a learning environment where pupils feel safe to take

risks and speculate when problem solving.

10. Basic skills are taught well. There is a very structured approach for the teaching of basic literacy skills. Teachers assess progress in reading and spelling and a variety of support is arranged when needed.

11. In one art lesson the teacher's enthusiasm and humour fully captivated the pupils' attention, creating a climate where pupils were encouraged to respond to questions such as 'what might happen if?' They were encouraged to think about and experiment with available resources to create a design for a tile. Pupils' ideas were valued and used, extending both their understanding of techniques and knowledge of the creative effect of different materials.

12. There are very positive relationships. Teachers instinctively take opportunities to reinforce social and moral development and increase children's awareness of their own actions and the world around them. They encourage pupils to be supportive of each other, for example, older pupils hearing younger ones read, and group reading sessions where there is a high expectation that pupils will be self directing and organise their work sensibly and productively.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good

13. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. There is a strong sense that they come to school to learn. Attendance levels are very high. Behaviour in school is very good and children are usually thoughtful and considerate of each other's needs and feelings.

14. Behaviour in assembly is exemplary and pupils participate in hymn practice with enthusiasm and energy. In lessons behaviour is very good. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and consider the views and opinions of others. When work set is completed or unchallenging pupils may become chatty, but they always behave well.

15. Pupils are eager to participate and work together well when given the opportunity, for example in group reading time, pupils in a Year 1 / 2 organise themselves with the group reading book. They agree who is to start the reading and take turns reading a page each. One pupil is responsible for asking the questions, designed to check understanding of the story. They sensitively help each other if words are too difficult.

16. Pupils willingly take responsibility. They spontaneously offer to help visitors find their way around the school. Pupils are mature in their attitude to work. They are able to discuss the strengths of their school with considerable confidence and insight.

There are good systems for self review and school improvement

17. There are good procedures for monitoring the provision and setting targets for improvement. Since the last inspection considerable thought and effort have gone in to developing systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

18. The headteacher has a regular programme of observing teaching and learning and is developing systems for analysing trends in achievement over time. Members of the senior management team, appointed as key stage co-ordinators, have specific roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision in Key Stages 1 and 2. Subject co-ordinators have time to monitor and evaluate the implementation of their subject across the school. They are supported well by the key stage co-ordinators when analysing their findings and identifying points of action for further developments. This includes staff training and resource needs for their subject. They produce a subject action plan that becomes an integral part of the school development plan.

19. Time allocated to teachers for monitoring their subject has been well used and is having a positive impact on learning, for example, the co-ordinator for design and technology has monitored lessons, matching planning to the work seen in classrooms. She identified where specific aspects of the curriculum were not covered and organised appropriate training. Teachers respond positively and rapidly to the issues identified and incorporate improvements into the teaching programme.

20. Another example of the effectiveness of the monitoring system is the improvements in attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2. Through an analysis of pupils' writing the co-ordinator identified a weakness in attainment in writing. The school took appropriate steps to enable the co-ordinator to work with a targeted group of pupils to increase their knowledge, understanding and skill when writing non-fiction. The success of the strategy is reflected in the very good levels achieved in National Curriculum tests for writing.

21. The school's monitoring file demonstrates many examples of the schools ability to identify specific and appropriate areas for improvement, set appropriate targets for action and ensure they are implemented.

22. The school has identified as an area for further improvement the development of systems for monitoring and tracking an individual pupil's progress. Currently the school undertakes a comprehensive range of assessments monitoring the progress of individual pupils. This data is used to set pupils into ability groups or to identify those who need additional support with literacy. However, apart from the reading scores, this information is not used systematically to track pupil progress over time, set individual pupil targets, inform the teaching programme or inform parents about the progress their child is making.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Attainment in Information and Communications Technology

23. Attainment in ICT is below that expected nationally and does not reflect the high standards pupils achieve in other curriculum areas. During the short period of the inspection pupils had very few opportunities to use the available ICT. Whilst computers are often switched on, rarely were pupils observed using them. Pupils in Year 5/6 are able to use palm top machines to word process and save their work in English. There is still little evidence of pupils using ICT to support independent research. In some instances teachers are planning activities that do not take into account pupils' prior learning, and the skills they bring from using computers at home.

24. Evidence in pupils' work and in wall displays suggests pupils are using software packages to support developing literacy and numeracy skills and art packages are used. There are a number of opportunities to develop word processing skills and some pupils are involved in developing databases in environmental geography. However, overall, there are too few opportunities to develop and extend ICT skills at an appropriate rate.

25. There is clear evidence that there have been some developments in the provision for ICT since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators are identifying ICT needs in subject development plans. Class teachers are planning to use available computers and software is available to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. However, there has been insufficient investment in hardware. The pupil to computer ratio for computers bought in the last five years at 42:1 is well below national norms.

26. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a very clear view of the developments required to improve attainment in ICT. It has been agreed that the old computers in Key Stage 1 will be upgraded with PCs and investment is to be made in an ICT suite. Good systems have been introduced for assessing pupils' progress in ICT. New Opportunities Funding (NOF) training for teaching staff is to begin in the second half of the summer term.

27. The school needs to focus on ensuring the planned developments have an impact on pupils' attainment.

Communication with parents

28. Although the majority of parents express confidence in the school, there are significant concerns about the lack of informal contact with the school, their lack of knowledge relating to how

their child is doing and the opportunities they have to be involved in supporting their learning.

29. Since the last inspection the proportion of parents expressing concern about communication has increased. Whilst the school has a good range of written communication the systems for ensuring parents feel involved in their child's learning are under developed. School reports do not reflect DfEE guidance in their content as they do not contain sufficient information on progress or identify targets for improvement.

30. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have homework diaries or home-school books, as is the case in many schools. Homework spellings go home on pieces of paper, which are discarded after the child has been tested. Consequently there is no informal record of the improvement in spelling skills or increased ability at tackling difficult spellings over time.

31. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not take reading books home. If pupils were encouraged to take books home and keep a record of their home reading they could demonstrate the quantity and range of their reading. This would act as an informal record for parents to see improved reading skill over time. It would also offer the opportunity for parents to actively support their child's learning.

32. The school has vast amount of data on individual pupils. Their level of knowledge, skills and abilities especially in English and mathematics are well documented. Systems should be developed for sharing this information more productively with parents.

Planning for the different abilities of pupils in group work

33. Whole class teaching has many good features. However, many of the lessons observed could only be judged as satisfactory, rather than good or very good, because the activities that followed the lively explanation and well-structured introduction were uninspiring and lacked appropriate challenge. In these lessons the pace of learning drops considerably when pupils move into group work or individual work.

34. Whilst grouping by ability in literacy and numeracy is effective, in other subjects there are too few lessons where the tasks set are pitched to reflect the different abilities of pupils in the class. Pupils are set the same task which is often worksheet based. Higher attaining pupils consolidate and reinforce prior learning but are not extending their skills or applying them in new contexts. They finish work before the end of the lesson and time can be wasted as they wait for their teacher to finish working with other pupils. Lower attaining pupils have difficulty in completing the work set and on occasions stay in at playtime to complete the work. Where teaching assistants are available they support lower attaining pupils well. However, teaching assistants are not sufficiently involved in planning for the groups with which they work. Briefings about what they are to do are often very informal.

35. Teachers are effective when working with individuals or groups. However, the activities set for independent or collaborative work are insufficiently challenging and learning loses focus. Insufficient emphasis is given to the intended learning for different groups of pupils. Resources and challenges presented need to reflect more closely the specific knowledge, understanding or skill being developed.

The balance of time allocated to each curriculum area

36. The school commits a large proportion of teaching time to developing knowledge and skills in English. Careful and thorough cross-referencing of the elements of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) with the school's language curriculum has been undertaken and the school can comprehensively identify coverage of the NLS content. Literacy skills are taught very thoroughly but not always most efficiently. There is repetition of skills learnt and pupils often reinforce and consolidate their language skills but have insufficient opportunities to apply them in other curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 regularly do handwriting practice, learning to join their letters, but they do not apply these skills in their writing in other curriculum areas.

37. Whilst the planned curriculum is broad, there is evidence that teachers sometimes alter the

planned timetable and some elements of curriculum subjects are not covered as planned, for example, an half hour timetabled as 'topic' was used for finishing off work and additional group reading activity. The time allocated to ICT and RE is below average, although implicit aspects of RE, such as developing self awareness and awareness of the beliefs and feelings of others, are covered in activities in other parts of the curriculum.

38. The curriculum for the youngest pupils is planned to National Curriculum requirements. The school's baseline assessment demonstrates the full range of ability when pupils enter school and greater reference needs to be made to the early years curriculum to ensure the appropriate balance in the range of activities offered to the youngest pupils.

39 The school's curriculum has evolved and developed over time in response to national initiatives and the school's own evaluation. Some old approaches have been maintained alongside the new. There is some evidence of duplication and unnecessary repetition in some areas, such as English, and consequently insufficient time is allocated to developing learning and thinking skills. The school has identified the need to review the curriculum in light of the introduction of Curriculum 2000 and the Early Learning Goals from September of this year. Identification of areas of duplication and over learning is necessary to realise time for greater balance and challenge in the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. Attainment in ICT

- Complete NOF training programme
- Improve the quality and range of computer equipment
- Implement the ICT action plan
- Ensure all staff are confident in the knowledge, understanding and skill pupils need to acquire to progress through each level of the ICT National Curriculum.

41. Communication with parents

- Hold a parents consultation evening in the spring term
- Inform parents of the progress their child is making, ensuring specific targets for improvement are known by both the child and the parents
- Introduce a home/school diary
- Include targets for improvement in the annual written report on each pupil's progress

42. Planning for the different abilities of pupils in group work.

- Identify the learning intention for different groups of pupils in teaching plans
- Use information from monitoring to make learning targets sharper
- Ensure the pace of lessons is maintained when pupils are working in groups by having different tasks for pupils of different abilities
- Extend the range of available resources, including the use of ICT, to motivate and engage pupils
- Plan for the involvement and deployment of teaching assistants to enable them to consistently support learning
- Identify problem-solving activities that challenge higher attaining pupils to apply their learning in new contexts.

43. Review the balance of time allocated to each curriculum area

- Review the breadth and balance of the curriculum in line with the guidance included in the Early Learning Goals and Curriculum 2000.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12	40	44	4	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	335
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	15
	Girls	16	19	18
	Total	29	35	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	100	94
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	32	33	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91	94	100
	National	82	86	87

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	18	33	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	16
	Girls	29	28	30
	Total	44	42	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86	82	90
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	18
	Girls	31	29	31
	Total	46	44	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90	86	96
	National	68	69	75

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	330
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27:1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR-Y7

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	107

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	474794
Total expenditure	479328
Expenditure per pupil	1433
Balance brought forward from previous year	15953
Balance carried forward to next year	11419

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

335

Number of questionnaires returned

100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	54	4	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	53	5	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	53	1	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	45	18	17	2
The teaching is good.	33	58	5	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	15	29	31	23	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	26	41	18	12	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	49	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	7	27	34	27	5
The school is well led and managed.	40	44	7	7	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	53	7	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	45	23	9	5

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Written comments were included with twenty (20%) of the questionnaires returned. Whilst parents expressed very strong support for the school and the standards it achieves there were concerns expressed about the quality of communication with parents and how little they were informed of their child's progress. A small number expressed concern about the recently introduced behaviour policy and the incidence of poor behaviour at lunch times.

Other issues raised by parents

At the parents meeting issues related to the inconsistent setting of homework. Parents expressed confidence in the school's ability to identify when an individual child was having difficulty and to take prompt action to ensure they received the appropriate support.