

INSPECTION REPORT

LEVENDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mount Leven Road, Yarm

LEA area: Stockton-on-Tees

Unique reference number: 111566

Headteacher: Mrs S M Jones

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Vickers
1465

Dates of inspection: 22nd May to 24th May 2000

Inspection number: 182547

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Levendale Primary School Mount Leven Road Yarm Stockton-on-Tees
Postcode:	TS15 9RJ
Telephone number:	01642 391826
Fax number:	01642 391826
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Coleman
Date of previous inspection:	June 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mrs J E Vickers	Registered inspector
Mr J Waugh	Lay inspector
Mrs E Millward	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Redcar and Cleveland LEA
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Council Offices
Kirkleatham Street
Redcar
TS10 1YA

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

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- The school is very well led and managed by an effective headteacher and senior management team who are supported by a very efficient governing body.
- Children receive a very good start to their education in the nursery and reception class, where high quality provision builds on and extends their learning.
- By the time they leave the school at 11 years old, most pupils have achieved satisfactory or good standards and are confident learners.
- There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school and much that is good, very good or excellent.
- Pupils of all ages have a positive attitude towards learning, are highly motivated and enjoy coming to school.
- There are very positive relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults.
- The majority of pupils are very well behaved, socially skilled and keen to contribute.
- The school is particularly effective in supporting pupils with SEN who are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
- Support staff make a very valuable input to the quality of learning and standards attained by pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

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- The accommodation, in order to support teaching, learning and standards at Key Stage 2 more effectively.
- The opportunities for all pupils of high ability to reach their full potential.
- Consistency in assessment and record keeping across the whole school in order to continue the good work already started.
- Standards in writing which have already improved significantly due to the good work carried out this year.
- ICT provision which consolidates the recent good progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Levendale is an average sized primary school in an area of social advantage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, as is the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN), including statements. The attainment of pupils on entry to the nursery shows a wide spread but is broadly average overall. When pupils enter the school, baseline assessment information indicates that the majority are of average ability or above.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Levendale Primary is a good school with many very good features. Pupils enjoy attending and their positive attitude towards learning supports the progress they make. By the time they leave at 11 years old, almost all are achieving satisfactory or good standards.

The headteacher provides leadership of a high quality and has created a positive climate for teaching, learning and raising attainment. She is fully supported by an able governing body.

Teaching is never less than satisfactory and much of it is good or very good. At times it is outstanding. Good quality teaching and learning are enhanced by teaching assistants who support the pupils well. The quality of education for pupils with SEN is particularly good. The many strengths of the school outweigh its few minor weaknesses.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The school is very well led and managed by an effective headteacher and senior management team who are supported by a very efficient governing body.
- Children receive a very good start to their education in the nursery and reception class, where high quality provision builds on and extends their learning.
- By the time they leave the school at 11 years old, most pupils have achieved satisfactory or good standards and are confident learners.
- There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school and much that is good, very good or excellent.
- Pupils of all ages have a positive attitude towards learning, are highly motivated, and enjoy coming to school.
- There are very positive relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults.
- The majority of pupils are very well behaved, socially skilled and keen to contribute.
- The school is particularly effective in supporting pupils with SEN who are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
- Support staff make a very valuable input to the quality of learning and standards attained by pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The accommodation, in order to support teaching, learning and standards at Key Stage 2 more effectively.
- The opportunities for all pupils of high ability to reach their full potential.
- Consistency in assessment and record keeping across the whole school in order to continue the good work already started.
- Standards in writing, which have already improved significantly due to the good work carried out this year.
- ICT provision which consolidates the recent good progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in 1995 found that Levendale Primary was a good school and identified five key issues for action.

The school has made significant progress in all areas. It has also focused on national and local priorities, including involvement in a self-evaluation pilot initiative.

1. Review the management structure and role of co-ordinators in the school.

Particularly good progress has been made in this area under the leadership of the new headteacher. The small, effective senior management team has been successful in addressing curriculum coherence through planning, assessment and target setting.

A climate for improvement has been created and all staff are aware of the main priorities for the year ahead. Now that the school roll is more stable, longer term strategic planning can be shared with all staff and governors.

2. Produce schemes of work for all subjects and establish consistent curriculum planning procedures. Do this in order to address current curriculum imbalances and to ensure the delivery of the full statutory requirements in all subjects.

The small senior management team has effectively managed curriculum coherence through planning, assessment and target setting. Curriculum planning is now of a high quality and consistent across all year groups. The school wisely made this a priority whilst introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Nationally produced schemes of work and the new Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education have all been adopted to support the planning process.

3. Establish a consistent approach to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and achievements throughout the school.

There has been good progress through a systematic approach to improving teachers' knowledge about accurate levelling of pupils' work. This has been achieved by providing regular opportunities to moderate examples of work which reflect standards across the school. There is still some way to go in ensuring that all teachers are fully operating the agreed systems and are consistent and accurate in assessing and recording pupils' progress.

4. Review the accommodation, and improve the management of storage and resources.

The storage of resources and pupils' access to them are now good. The school is aware of the difficulties resulting from the small class base for Year 3 pupils and the use of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Suite as a teaching space for Year 5. Neither situation encourages high quality teaching and learning. Accommodation use should be reconsidered in order to improve provision for pupils and staff.

5. Develop and implement strategies to raise pupils' multicultural awareness.

The school has worked hard to address this issue and pupils now show a better awareness of their place within a multicultural society. Improved resources and a range of visitors to the school from other religions and cultures ensure that pupils have a deepening understanding of the diversity of cultures that exist. Pupils from ethnic groupings other than British are fully integrated members of the school community.

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
English	C	B	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	D	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Most of the children in the current reception class are achieving higher standards in all aspects of language, literacy, numeracy and social development than is usually expected for their age. In 1999, results for 7 year olds in reading, writing and mathematics were above national standards. When compared with similar schools, reading and mathematics were average but writing was well below. The school has given a high priority to the development of writing this year and inspection evidence indicates that standards reached by 7 year olds are now much improved. This year, overall standards for 7 year olds in reading, writing and mathematics are expected to be at least in line with those in similar schools.

In 1999, the standards of 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results in English and science were well above and in mathematics they were above. Scrutiny of work for this current year group indicates that standards are even better than in 1999 with more pupils attaining the higher levels. Ambitious targets have been set for 2000. These are for 92% of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above in English and mathematics. This is a significant increase on the 1999 targets and the school is on track to achieve it.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school. They are effective learners who give of their best and engage fully with the opportunities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults. They have mature attitudes towards all aspects of school life and make a positive contribution to its ethos.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. From an early age pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities. Older pupils are particularly good in supporting younger pupils. This helps to create the family atmosphere of the school. Positive relationships are a strong feature within Levendale.
Attendance	This is very good. Pupils come to school willingly and are well supported by parents in both attendance and punctuality. This gives a good start to the day and promotes a positive attitude towards school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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.

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and over 70% were good, very good or excellent. The standard of teaching in the nursery and reception class is very good. The overall standard of the inspected teaching in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1 (5-7 year olds) and Key Stage 2 (7-11 year olds) was good with some that was very good or excellent, particularly at the upper end of both key stages. Good teaching is characterised by detailed planning, which matches work to the learning needs of all ability groups and helps them reach their full potential. Teachers create a good working environment and explain clearly what they intend children to learn. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They know their children well and are able to motivate them through engaging their interest and challenging them to give of their best. The very good relationships between adults and pupils make a major contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and the standards attained. Effective teaching is greatly enhanced by a team of highly skilled support staff who are helping to improve standards in the basic skills. Minor weaknesses were found when some pupils of high ability were not given enough opportunity to fully extend their learning through more open ended tasks which would allow them to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The good teaching of literacy and numeracy is having a positive impact on standards attained at 7 and 11 years. Pupils are highly motivated from a young age. They come to school to learn and help create the excellent educational climate in Levendale.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and provides a wide range of experiences which meet pupils' interests and abilities. Good opportunities are available for gaining an understanding of the world and the diverse cultures within it.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with SEN is a strength. They are well supported and make a significant contribution to the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school has a strong moral code. Pupils have a very good understanding of their responsibilities to others within school and the community. They are aware of social issues and the wider world. Good provision is made for spiritual development through curriculum experiences and assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school fulfils its responsibilities in the care of all pupils. It takes deliberate steps to ensure their welfare, health and safety. It has effective arrangements to support child protection issues. Procedures for monitoring progress and performance are now well established and becoming more effective.

The school works in close partnership with most parents. They encourage their children to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and provides enrichment activities to motivate pupils across the age, ability and interest range. Sport, music, ICT and the arts make an important contribution to the experiences available.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has had a strong influence on the improvement of the school. She has developed a team approach to addressing key priorities and is well supported by senior staff. This is proving to have benefits for the whole school community.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is highly business-like in carrying out its responsibilities. It takes a full part in contributing to the direction and major developments of the school and provides a high level of challenge and support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good progress has been made in the school's self-evaluation since its involvement with an LEA pilot programme. The headteacher has used this strategy effectively and it is having a very good effect on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the budget available to the school. Areas that need improvement are clearly identified. The school roll has become more stable, allowing for a longer term, strategic approach to managing priorities and resources. The school gives very good value for money.

The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is fully supported by all staff and has the confidence of parents. She gives a clear direction to the work of the school and has created a culture where people feel

valued. The work of teachers and support staff is of high quality. The school has enough resources to promote learning and regularly audits the curriculum to identify changing resource needs, which can then be planned for. Accommodation in some areas of the school does not encourage teaching and learning. This needs attention. Governors and the headteacher monitor the budget clearly to check that it is meeting the needs of pupils currently in the school. They also make sure that they provide value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards attained by the time pupils leave the school • The way the school deals with pupils with SEN • The positive value system within the school • Management of behaviour • Leadership and management • The good quality of education provided by the nursery • The image of the school in the local community • Ease of access for parents who may have concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More specific information on pupils' progress in relation to national standards and expectations • Consistency in the setting of homework • Provision of extra-curricular activities

Most parents acknowledge the many strengths of the school and the inspection team fully endorses the positive views expressed. Although some parents would appreciate additional activities outside of lessons, the school does provide a wide range of activities over the year. They include opportunities to engage in sports, music, French, the arts and an after school club which runs a variety of social activities. For a school of this size the inspection team considers the range to be good.

A significant number of parents said they would like more detailed information on the progress their child was making in relation to national standards. The school does fulfil all statutory requirements in reporting to parents. It also provides very comprehensive end of year reports. The school needs to consider how it might meet this request.

There was a mixed response from parents on the issue of homework. Many want to support their child and the school through work at home. Some thought there was too little homework, others thought there was too much and many were satisfied. Clearly there is uncertainty about the school policy and expectations about quality and quantity. Staff obviously have a good understanding and this needs to be communicated to parents, especially at the beginning of the school year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is very well led and managed by an effective headteacher and senior management team who are supported by a very efficient governing body.

1. The headteacher has a clear vision for the direction of the school. She works effectively with a small senior management team and a highly skilled governing body, who are fully committed to Levendale. The governors provide an appropriate level of support and challenge, making a valuable contribution to the efficient running of the school.
2. The headteacher has developed a team approach which includes all members of the school community. Everybody plays their part and work well together. Staff are enthusiastic about their role in further developments and think purposefully about what is working well and what could be improved.
3. The school has been involved in a self-evaluation pilot programme and the headteacher has used this effectively to monitor and evaluate teaching, learning and standards across the year groups. She has been well supported in this by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. There are plans to make self-evaluation an essential part of all school developments. The headteacher is particularly good at analysing information collected or provided and then taking appropriate action to improve performance. A good example of this has been the development work done to date to improve standards in writing as a result of last year's national test results for 7 year olds and her own monitoring of pupils' work. She has also helped all staff and governors to use target setting effectively to improve standards.
4. The budget is efficiently managed by the headteacher and finance committee. Good quality information is provided by the headteacher for the twice-termly finance meetings. She is well supported by the LEA Bursary Scheme. Staff carry out a termly audit of additional resources needed to support teaching and learning in each curriculum area. This helps to set clear priorities for spending and to target funding. The school is always striving to use its money to best advantage and uses comparative information about its costs in relation to similar schools to aid decision making.
5. The school improvement plan is well linked to the budget. The pupil roll is now more stable and a wide range of information is available so that the school can plan over a longer period of time and identify its priorities.

Children receive a very good start to their education in the nursery and reception class, where high quality provision builds on and extends their learning.

6. Nursery and reception staff work closely together to meet the individual needs of all the children. Their planning structures learning to match with pupils' abilities and they promote high standards and expectations of both work and behaviour. There is a good sense of teamwork, with all adults having a clear understanding of their role and the contribution they can make to the children's learning.
7. Teachers and support staff understand clearly what children are going to learn within lessons and over time. They exploit opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills. For example, when baking for a christening party, nursery children were encouraged to name the ingredients and explain how they made the cakes. They listened to the contribution of others and offered their ideas. There are many opportunities to promote the early skills of reading and writing which include Year 6 children supporting those in reception in reading and in literacy games. Guidelines for the learning in areas such as sand and water are very good. All adults working in them with children know exactly how to support effective learning. Teachers are very

good at capturing the children's interest at the beginning of lessons and maintaining it throughout, as in the telling of a story when props were used to help them understand the sequences.

8. All staff have high expectations of what they want the children to achieve. They know them well and ensure good quality teaching and learning opportunities are provided through sharply focused, challenging activities. Staff use a range of questioning strategies which check understanding and extend learning, for example, teachers use their assessment of pupils' learning to guide the next stage of their planning and keep clear records of children's progress.
9. Both the nursery and reception class are stimulating and well organised areas, where children learn enthusiastically. Labels, silhouettes and written instructions help the children to become increasingly independent and the high standard of resources has a direct impact on the quality of education provided.
10. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their children's education. Some give support within the classrooms on a regular basis, others give it when they can. All are keen to encourage their child in fully participating in the curriculum experiences provided. The nursery newsletter ensures that all parents are kept informed about events and other news.

By the time they leave the school at 11 years old, most pupils have achieved satisfactory or good standards and are confident learners.

11. The headteacher has placed raising attainment at the top of the school's agenda and has effectively analysed the data from national tests at 7 and 11 years and from teachers' assessment of pupils through each year group. This analysis informs staff and governors about standards and helps them to set challenging targets for improvement.
12. In 1999, the standards attained by 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools they were above in mathematics and well above in English and science. This year's results are expected to be even better with more pupils attaining the higher levels. During the inspection, work of a very high standard was observed in the Year 6 class. Pupils had a good understanding of complex mathematical concepts. They were able to talk about how to solve problems and were confident in trying different methods to find the most appropriate. Many were using a range of high order literacy skills and demonstrated their ability to gain an insight into a poet's deeper meaning through reference to his use of language and imagery. They were able to talk about their work and were obviously enjoying the challenge of solving problems.
13. The standards of 7 year olds in 1999 were above average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. This prompted the school into making the improvement of writing a key priority for all year groups. Work in this area has had a significant impact and evidence from the inspection indicates that many more 7 year olds are now working at a satisfactory or good standard in writing. This successful work on improving writing should now be further developed to ensure good standards in handwriting and presentation. Consistency in the range of opportunities provided needs to be consolidated.
14. Basic skills are well taught in the school and this underpins standards reached in all subject areas. Pupils are confident readers, have highly developed speaking and listening skills and, by the end of Key Stage 2, are writing with confidence for a variety of purposes. They are able, for example, to make effective notes when appropriate. They have a range of strategies for spelling words correctly and use dictionary, spell-master and thesaurus to support them in learning.
15. Pupils in all year groups are keen to learn. They enjoy challenge, are not afraid of failure and confidently attempt new learning. These positive attitudes help them succeed and reach very good standards in all areas. In the literacy hour and daily mathematics lessons, many pupils were observed working at high

standards for their age. Some particularly good examples were seen in Years 2, 5 and 6 where pupils were able to apply what they had learned to new tasks.

16. Most pupils can work well together from a very early age. They know how to take turns, when to offer suggestions and where to ask for help. Pupils with SEN are particularly well guided by teachers and support staff so they are able to show what they know, understand and can do. In some classes, but not all, more able pupils have challenging opportunities to extend their learning and demonstrate their understanding.

There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school and much is good, very good or excellent.

17. Levendale is staffed by highly professional, committed teachers. They work well together to provide curriculum experiences that meet all statutory requirements and extend social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. They value the children in their care and strive to meet their learning needs. Teachers have high expectations and create a classroom climate where pupils are supported in reaching good standards.
18. During the inspection it was evident from lesson observations, scrutiny of work and examination of planning and records that staff know their pupils well. They work hard to match planning and teaching to the needs of the pupils. Some very good examples of this were seen in the teaching of literacy where work set for groups helped them reflect on a poet's use of language, the purpose of rhyming couplets and how to use punctuation effectively when reading aloud. In the daily mathematics lesson there were examples of pupils of differing abilities manipulating numbers and finding solutions to complex problems. In the best examples of this, pupils of high ability were challenged and they responded well. There were a few instances where more able pupils could have had better matched work and progressed at a faster pace. On the whole the pace of lessons is very good and most pupils make appropriate progress.
19. Basic skills are well taught by all staff. Pupils of all ages acquire a good grasp of skills and knowledge in reading, writing and number. They know how to use these skills for a range of learning purposes. This helps them to reach good standards in other subjects. Reading is systematically taught and pupils of all ages and abilities are confident when reading aloud. In the Year 5 class, pupils read with sensitivity, confidence and enjoyment. They are able to discuss the meaning of words and offer critical opinions. In the reception class, children were observed developing their reading ability through the story of 'The Three Bears'. The teacher skilfully used models of beds, bowls and chairs to positively involve the children in speaking, listening and labelling. This captured their interest and made learning enjoyable. By the age of 11 years, pupils are writing well. A more focused approach to the teaching of writing skills is influencing standards in the lower school. This should be continued to consolidate improvement.
20. The relationships between teacher and pupils are of a high quality. Pupils know that they are in school to work and that teachers have high expectations of their effort and behaviour. Most pupils are used to giving of their best. They know teachers will help them if they are in difficulties and they demonstrate confidence when trying out ideas or seeking help.
21. The best teaching is particularly good in giving pupils independent and confident control of key skills in solving problems, reflecting on their learning and improving their performance. Some good examples of this were seen in the Year 5 class where pupils were designing a toy for a younger child and in the Year 2 class where pupils asked questions of others to check their understanding of doubling in a mathematics lesson. In the Year 3 class, pupils were able to explain the method they had used to find a solution in mathematics and then check to see if it worked with other examples.
22. Teachers are resourceful in matching their methods to suit particular learning needs or to respond to a specific blocks or misunderstandings in learning. Many good examples were observed of teachers changing pace, consolidating learning through further examples or checking understanding by skilled questioning. The very good use of time sets a pace which encourages progress in the immediate lesson and over time.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and know when pupils are ready to be extended or need further consolidation.

23. There is a whole school policy on homework and many examples of work completed and returned were observed during the inspection. The best homework is effective in consolidating or extending what pupils have learned in class. Older pupils were able to talk about information they had to find, work they had to complete or revision they had been doing in preparation for SATs. However, there is some variation of consistency of expectations between classes.
24. When pupils leave the school at the age of 11, the good teaching they have experienced prepares them well for secondary education. Observations of the Year 6 class reflect this. Pupils were highly motivated, keen to be challenged, confident in trying a range of strategies to seek solutions and enthused by learning. They were able to collaborate, work independently and use their skills and knowledge with confidence, regardless of their ability.

Pupils of all ages have a positive attitude to learning, are highly motivated and enjoy coming to school. There are very positive relationships in the school amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults. The majority of pupils are well behaved, socially skilled and keen to contribute.

25. Pupils work well together across all age groups. A good example seen was the work produced jointly by Year 2 and Year 4 pupils during Book Week. Older pupils give good support to younger ones in a variety of contexts: during lunchtimes, on the playground, and sometimes in work sessions.
26. In lessons, most pupils are highly motivated and remain on task, showing a willingness and determination to improve. They are enthusiastic learners and quickly settle to established routines and good work habits. In almost all lessons observed, there was a very good working atmosphere, with movement around classrooms quiet and purposeful. Pupils feel valued and confident in making contributions. Even the youngest children settle in quickly and demonstrate maturity and independence in accessing resources. Pupils of all ages show very good listening skills and are willing to reflect on their learning. Their responses are well thought out and articulate.
27. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very positive and underpin a value system which promotes the aims of the school. Pupils are proud to be part of the strong school identity and this contributes to a very positive ethos.
28. During the inspection, all pupils behaved very well in lessons and out of the classroom. There are very well established routines which promote good behaviour and support teaching and learning. Pupils understand these and respond positively to praise and encouragement from their teachers. They work well together in small and large groups and many are able to operate effectively for periods without direct supervision.
29. Pupils arrive at school and leave in a very orderly manner. They enter classrooms quietly and with good nature, settling quickly to their work. Lunchtimes are social occasions when most children support each other and play happily together. Very high standards of behaviour are evident in whole school assemblies where pupils sit quietly, listen attentively and take advantage of time for reflection.
30. The school ethos promotes respect for people and for property. Pupils are well mannered and socially skilled within a variety of contexts. For example, they actively welcome visitors into the school and are confident in their dealings with them. They enjoy talking about their work and sharing their experiences with others.

The school is particularly effective in supporting pupils with SEN who are fully integrated into all aspects of school life (support for pupils with SEN was inspected at the request of the school).

31. Pupils with SEN are particularly well catered for and accepted as an integral part of the whole school community. Support for them is effective but understated and this helps them to gain full access to the curriculum and to activities outside of lessons. Levendale is a school that values the needs of all pupils and the contributions they make. It aims to support them in reaching their full potential. The positive ethos ensures that pupils with SEN are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. This is beneficial both for them and for other pupils who learn to be sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils, staff and parents recognise and accept children with SEN as valued members of the school community.
32. The school has good systems in place for early identification of pupils with SEN. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is fully involved in seeking specialist advice and support that might be needed. Where necessary, individual education plans (IEPs) are developed and targets for improvement set. These are regularly reviewed and appropriate action taken. As the school develops and refines its target setting procedures for all pupils, targets within the IEPs are becoming more specific.
33. The school is very good at providing well-targeted support for pupils who have particular difficulties within a mainstream environment. This is funded by a combination of school budget and LEA contributions. It is extremely well managed and helps individuals to access the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. There is a team of staff giving support at different times to groups of pupils within all classes and this is part and parcel of the working life of the school.

Support staff make a very valuable input to the quality of learning and standards attained by pupils.

34. During the inspection many examples of very good work by the team of support staff were observed. This was particularly so in literacy and numeracy lessons. Staff are well deployed to ensure maximum impact in supporting individuals or small groups in a sensitive, unobtrusive way. They are highly skilled and fully informed about teachers' learning intentions. They know what the pupils need in order to improve. Their targeted intervention and support helps pupils consolidate or extend learning and make good progress. Support staff are valued members of the school team who help all pupils, but particularly those with SEN, to reach their full potential. They know exactly what is expected of them and pupils of all ages enjoy and respond to their support. The team is used efficiently and all their time is focused on supporting learning. They provide very good value for money.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The accommodation, in order to better support teaching, learning and standards at Key Stage 2.

35. During the past year the headteacher has reviewed the use of accommodation and is aware of the particular difficulties for staff and pupils in the teaching spaces used by Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 are working in very cramped conditions for much of the day and the Year 5 class often has to move out of its area, because other year groups are using the ICT equipment. Whole class teaching, which is a key part of literacy and numeracy, faces particular problems as a result. Teachers are inventive and plan carefully for use of the space through detailed time-tabling and curriculum planning. However, if the pupils were not so well behaved, with positive attitudes towards learning, and staff did not have such a creative approach to overcoming difficulties, the quality of teaching, learning and standards achieved could be undermined.
36. Within the constraints of the accommodation, staff are making good use of time, space and resources. Nevertheless, the work of the school is impaired by current arrangements and attention needs to be given to improving the internal layout and organisation for the ICT suite to ensure better access to the good quality curriculum being provided.

The opportunities for all pupils of high ability to reach their full potential.

37. As part of its regular cycle of self-evaluation, the school has recently reviewed its provision for more able and gifted pupils. It is involved in an initiative with the local primary schools and the receiver secondary school, which will provide experiences in the arts for Year 6 pupils during the next half term. All of them will be involved in an arts programme for one afternoon per week. Senior staff have attended a conference with other local schools to address the issue of teaching and learning styles for more able pupils. Further work will continue from this, with a professional development day for all staff when different approaches and strategies for teaching pupils of a higher ability will be investigated. This will then inform whole school development.
38. During the next academic year, a small group of the current Year 4 pupils will be involved in a mathematics initiative aimed at enthusing and exciting those with a particular ability in this area. Observations during the inspection illustrated some good methods used by staff to ensure that pupils of high ability are extended and reach their full potential. Well-matched tasks and activities challenged pupils' thinking and made them look at a variety of ways of reaching solutions. Some particularly good work was seen in Years 2, 5 and 6. Planning, teaching and assessment ensured that pupils were moved briskly through areas of learning, making good progress and achieving very high standards. Older pupils responded well to questioning in lessons and teachers were able to judge their level of understanding and provide further tasks and challenges. The school needs to spread the message of this good work so that all teachers develop more strategies to meet the learning needs of the able and gifted.
39. Where very good teaching was observed, there was evidence of highly skilled questioning of all ability groups to check understanding, consolidate learning and extend thinking. This provided opportunities for the high ability pupils to demonstrate their understanding well. They enjoyed the challenge, remained very motivated and were fully engaged in their tasks. All teachers should think about how they can plan for questioning at this level and provide a range of open-ended tasks which challenge and encourage pupils.
40. The school should review its practice for the identification of pupils who are more able and gifted in particular curriculum areas. It needs strategies in place for providing appropriate support and experiences, and particularly for monitoring the progress made by these pupils as they move through the school. Staff may wish to consider the development of individual education plans and the setting of specific targets to support the more able and gifted pupils in reaching their full potential. Systems already in place in some classes should be consolidated to ensure a consistent whole school approach.

Consistency in assessment and record keeping across the whole school in order to continue the good work already started.

41. The school has made significant improvements in the assessment and record keeping systems it has in place. The headteacher has created a target setting culture which is fully supported by all staff. Teachers are developing a better understanding of levels and standards through a systematic approach to sampling work and agreeing standards against National Curriculum criteria. They use portfolios of standardised work very well to check pupils' attainment in key curriculum areas. The practice in target setting should be extended to help individual pupils identify what they need to improve in order to reach better standards.
42. In lessons, assessment by teachers is proving to be particularly successful. Some good examples of this were observed in most classes when teachers used questioning to check pupils' understanding of particular aspects of their work. Quick reviews of strengths and weaknesses of recorded work during the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson also provided good opportunities for assessing pupils' progress and readiness to move on. Teachers are skilled at planning opportunities to do this within lessons. The school now needs to build on this foundation. Good practice should be disseminated and systems consistently applied in order to check the regularly progress of individuals, ability groups and year groups.
43. Some good examples of marking used to help pupils know what they are doing well and what they need to improve were observed. This good practice needs to be spread across the school. The school policy should

be reviewed to provide better guidance on how teachers can mark work in a more focused way within the time available. This review needs to identify what is manageable and how marking can help pupils improve and help staff broaden their understanding of pupils' strengths, weaknesses and the next steps of learning.

44. All teachers know the pupils well and record their progress and development in key areas. The school now needs to agree a more consistent approach so that essential information is noted regularly and summarised at the end of the year. This will support the next teacher in planning for continuity.

Standards in writing which have already improved significantly due to the good work carried out this year.

45. The school has made good progress in improving standards in writing by the time pupils are 7 and 11 years. The whole school focus has helped staff look carefully at how they teach writing and the opportunities they provide for using different styles. All staff, including those in the nursery, plan for the teaching of writing, both within the literacy hour and across other curriculum areas. Some good examples were observed of pupils from all age groups working at improving their writing by checking spellings, making notes, working at their style and concentrating on good presentation. This good practice needs to be consolidated to ensure that all pupils are giving of their best and know the standards that are expected.
46. In some classes pupils get a wide range of opportunities to write for different purposes. They understand the need for an appropriate style and present their work well. In other classes, opportunities for writing are more restricted and presentation is variable. A consistent approach is needed which enables pupils to build on their experiences as they move through the school.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

In addition to the requirements for a short inspection, the school requested that the team focus on two priorities to check progress and plan the next stage of development. These were:

- The implementation of the ICT strategy
- Support for pupils with SEN (see paragraph 31-33)

The Implementation Of The ICT Strategy

47. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in its provision of ICT. At that time it was found to be narrow and offering limited experiences to pupils, many of whom were achieving unsatisfactory standards. The current headteacher prepared a development plan which identifies a systematic improvement of resources linked to staff development. This has guided the work of the ICT co-ordinator. He has been influential in improving the contribution made by ICT to the wider curriculum and in supporting a more coherent approach to the development of skills from nursery through to Year 6. The good progress should be consolidated with increased access for pupils in the younger age groups. The support given to raising standards in other subjects is evident in the older age groups.
48. Although the level of knowledge, skills and confidence amongst staff is variable, all are very keen to learn and have willingly engaged in a training programme.
49. The quality, quantity and range of hardware and software have improved considerably over the last two years. ICT is a key priority within the school improvement plan. A substantial percentage of the budget, enhanced by contributions from the Parent Teacher Association, has helped the school to develop an ICT Suite within the Year 5 teaching area. There are 7 networked computers in this area and an additional unit in the after school club. This has made it possible for all pupils, including those in the nursery, to have a minimum of one hour access time each week.

50. All pupils have regular opportunities for ICT. This supports progress through the year groups. This has helped all pupils gain confidence in using different programs and has also ensured that those who do not have computers at home can develop appropriate skills and knowledge. In lessons observed, the benefits of this access from an early age were evident. Nursery and reception children worked well together in consolidating and enhancing their understanding about logging on, controlling the mouse and moving the icon. Year 5 pupils demonstrated a high level of skill and knowledge when using the computer to produce a leaflet on healthy living. There was evidence of good collaboration which promoted learning and attainment across the age groups. The gains from more regular access can be observed in the standards attained at the upper end of Key Stage 2. Here, pupils are able to use ICT well to support learning and achieve good standards across a range of curriculum areas.
51. In order to continue the good progress made in improving resources, access and standards, the school needs to maintain the momentum by retaining ICT as a key priority in its next school improvement plan. It should also consider how it can improve accommodation to preserve the many benefits of an ICT suite without the disadvantages of using a teaching area.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to continue to improve the quality of provision in Levendale Primary School, the headteacher, staff and governing body should now:

- improve the use of accommodation to give more support to the teaching of pupils in Key Stage 2.
(paragraphs – 35, 36, 51)
- Extend opportunities for all pupils of high ability to reach their potential through:
 - a more consistent whole school approach to their identification;
 - activities which challenge their thinking and approaches to learning.*(paragraphs – 16, 18, 37, 38, 39, 40)*
- continue the good progress already made in developing ICT through:
 - extending its use across the curriculum;
 - improving accommodation;
 - increasing access for pupils of all ages, particularly those in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2.*(paragraphs – 35, 36, 47, 49, 50, 51)*
- continue the good work in improving assessment and record keeping in order to:
 - ensure continuity of learning and progress across the year groups;
 - develop the effective work already begun in target setting;
 - consolidate and extend the best practice in marking.*(paragraphs – 3, 8, 11, 32, 41, 42, 43, 44)*
- continue the work to improve standards in writing and ensure consistency of practice across the school in:
 - handwriting and presentation;
 - the range of opportunities provided for different types of writing.*(paragraphs – 13, 19, 45, 46)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

53. Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

54. Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	26	37	26	0	0	0

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

55. 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)	25	176
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	28

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	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

56. Attendance (1998/99) 95.6%

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

57. 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	9	13	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95(92)	95(96)	95(92)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	21	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95(92)	100(96)	95(92)
	National	82(80)	86(85)	87(86)

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

58 .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	7	10	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	15	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88(82)	88(77)	100(82)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	9	8	8
	Total	14	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82(77)	76(77)	76(77)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

59. Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	147
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

60. 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.

61. Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81.6

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

62. Financial information

Financial year	1999/ 2000
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	£
Total income	370470
Total expenditure	361539
Expenditure per pupil	1883
Balance brought forward from previous year	10863
Balance carried forward to next year	19794

63. Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	49	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	45	15	7	2
The teaching is good.	43	52	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	55	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	42	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	36	1	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	30	50	16	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	46	48	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	49	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	42	18	3	15