

INSPECTION REPORT

MARTON AND DISTRICT CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Macclesfield

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111329

Headteacher: Mr D Newcombe

Reporting inspector: Mr P B McAlpine
21552

Dates of inspection: 20-22 June 2000

Inspection number: 187504

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Marton Macclesfield Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs I Sefton
Date of previous inspection:	25/03/1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a Church of England Aided school. It is about the same size as most other primary schools. There are 207 full-time pupils aged five to eleven years, organised into seven classes, each with a single year group. A further 37 children aged three to four years attend a nursery class part-time. Attainment on entry to full-time education is above average overall. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well below average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; the proportion is low and no child speaks English as an additional language. About one pupil in seven is on the special needs register, which is below average; one child has a statement of special educational needs. More than half the pupils are brought to school by local authority transport.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Attainment is high throughout. Learning is satisfactory. Nearly all children enter the nursery with typical or better levels of attainment for their age; about one third attain a higher level than is expected nationally. Overall, the pupils learn at a rate that is consistent with national expectations in English and at a faster rate in mathematics and science. By age eleven, a substantial majority attains or exceeds the national level for their age in each core subject, with one third or more attaining higher levels. The teaching is good overall, the leadership and management are effective and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Test results are high; a greater proportion of pupils attains or exceeds expected national levels in English, mathematics and science at the ages of seven and eleven than do so in most other schools and standards are better than similar schools.
- The pupils respond enthusiastically to the teachers, work very hard, and behave well.
- The teaching is good overall; it is particularly good in mathematics and science.

What could be improved

- In writing in the juniors, the pupils' achievements lag behind those in reading, mathematics and science, reflecting insufficient emphasis on key writing skills in this age group.
- The arrangements for checking the teaching do not concentrate enough on sharing good practice and identifying what could be improved.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement has been good. The proportions attaining and exceeding the nationally expected levels have increased each year, keeping pace with the national trend; this means that high standards have been sustained over the past four years. The teaching has improved. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and the amounts of good teaching and very good teaching are better than the national average. Shortcomings in teaching identified in the previous report have been remedied.

The response of the headteacher and his staff to the key issues for action arising from the previous inspection has been positive and largely successful. Management roles have been clarified and the amount of delegated responsibility is satisfactory. Teachers with management duties understand their roles and work effectively. The planning, assessment and recording arrangements have been extended and are now satisfactory. Schemes of work have been written and implemented for all subjects. The procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, and the quality of their individual education plans, are satisfactory. Pupils are no longer withdrawn from literacy or numeracy lessons for instrumental tuition. The arrangements to provide parents with curricular information through meetings and reports are good. The underachievement in English has been fully remedied in reading but not yet completely so in writing. Good practice in teaching is still not shared sufficiently.

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	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	B

Key

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

At age eleven, standards in 1999 were much higher than most schools in each of the core subjects tested; they have been sustained at this high level since the previous inspection. Slightly more pupils are successful in mathematics than in English, which is the opposite of the national picture. Compared to similar schools, standards were very good in mathematics and good in English and science. In English, the eleven-year-old pupils did better in reading than in writing, especially the lower attaining pupils. At age seven, the 1999 test results in reading and writing were well above average and better than similar schools; in mathematics, they were above average and the same as similar schools. In both age groups tested, boys at the school did much better than boys nationally in all subjects tested and did better than the girls. Compared with attainment on entry, the pupils' achievements by age eleven are good in reading, mathematics and science and satisfactory in writing. The eleven-year-olds tested in 1999 have left the school and gone on to secondary education. The early indications of the 2000 test results are that the eleven-year-old pupils have exceeded the targets set by the school and that the high standards achieved in 1999 have been improved upon.

The inspection findings are consistent with the test results. The standards in English, mathematics and science among pupils currently in Year 6 are high. The proportions of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected level for their age in these subjects are much larger than in most schools and very high in reading. Current standards at age seven are high in mathematics and above average in reading and writing. The rate of learning in reading, mathematics and science is generally good throughout the school for all pupils. Learning in writing, however, is inconsistent between the year groups; it is good in the nursery, the reception year, Year 1 and Year 5. It is satisfactory overall in the other year groups but there are instances in two of the junior classes of pupils whose progress in writing is insufficient compared to their earlier attainment. Learning in science is particularly good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties. There are no significant differences in attainment or learning between pupils from different backgrounds.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. All pupils work very hard. They listen attentively, enjoy most lessons and like school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils behave well in lessons, in the dining hall at midday, when walking about the school and when outside at play.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Children in the nursery and reception classes settle quickly and get on well with each other. Responsibilities given to pupils throughout the school are eagerly accepted and carried out diligently. Levels of care, mutual respect and courtesy are high. Relationships with each other, with teachers and other adults are positive and constructive. No bullying was seen nor was any reported by the pupils.
Attendance	Well above average.

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.

The teaching is good overall; it is all satisfactory or better; 85 per cent is good or better, 25 per cent is very good. This is better than the picture nationally and a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The very good teaching is in the reception year, Year 1 and Year 5. The headteacher leads by example through the very good quality of his teaching. There are no significant differences in quality between the key stages. The teaching is consistently good in mathematics and this is one of the reasons why pupils are slightly more successful in this subject than in English. The teaching in English ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. The teaching in science is good, although only a few lessons were seen.

The very good teaching is characterised by good subject expertise and good planning; specific targets for lessons that are shared well with the pupils; challenging work that is carefully matched to needs and to learning targets; and enthusiasm that infects and motivates the pupils. Good teaching uses methods that work efficiently and lead to almost every pupil gaining knowledge at an adequate rate. Work is appropriate to learning needs, pupils' understanding is checked regularly and misconceptions remedied quickly. In all lessons, relationships are good and pupils are appropriately managed.

Overall, the teachers' subject expertise is stronger in mathematics than in English; two teachers in the juniors have limited expertise in the teaching of writing. Planning systems are good overall, which is a big improvement since the previous inspection, and leading to generally good continuity and progression in learning. However, weekly plans do not always identify learning targets clearly or in detail and this sometimes affects the quality of teaching and learning, for example in writing.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The pupils experience a full curriculum. Policies and schemes of work have been recently reviewed and are of satisfactory quality. The long, medium and short-term planning arrangements are good overall.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The shortcomings found at the time of the previous inspection have been remedied. The recently appointed special needs coordinator is managing the provision effectively. Delegated funding and staff provided by the local authority are deployed appropriately. Funding is limited and the school makes extra provision from the main school budget. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and numbers on the special needs register have risen as a result.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Opportunities to learn about Christianity and other major world religions are planned well. Time is provided for reflection. All teachers consistently promote the application of moral values and principles; their expectations of the pupils are high. Pupils are encouraged to show initiative and live as a member of a community. Aspects of the pupils' own culture and the cultures of other people and other times are well promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. All the staff understand the child protection procedures. Health and safety arrangements are clear and rigorous. The policy for dealing with bullying is appropriate. The assessment arrangements have greatly improved since the last inspection and are being used systematically to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher effectively promotes high standards. Members of the senior management team clearly understand their roles and, together with the headteacher, are actively bringing about improvements. There is a good sense of teamwork and a strong desire to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are actively involved in school life. They understand its strengths and weaknesses. Through an appropriate range of committees, the governors adequately hold the school to account for the standards achieved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The systems to monitor the performance of the school have been developed over the past two years and are good overall. The systems to monitor academic standards and the pupils' work are rigorous. The procedures to check the teaching are not systematic or used effectively to identify areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The budgeting arrangements are systematic. The school development plan looks ahead appropriately. The school applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The high standards attained by the pupils. ▪ The good overall standard of teaching. ▪ The way that hard work, effort and good behaviour are promoted by the teachers and the good standards achieved by pupils in these aspects. ▪ The caring attitude of the school towards children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provision for pupils with special educational needs is thought by a small number of parents to be insufficient for children's needs. ▪ A few parents think that children's learning has been disrupted by recurrent absences of some teachers. ▪ Several parents think that there is insufficient classroom support for Year 1. ▪ A significant minority of parents would like more extra curricular provision.

The inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has had shortcomings in the past; this was commented on in the previous report. The shortcomings have been remedied to a standard that meets statutory requirements, where these apply, and is consistent with the code of practice. Appropriate systems to promote early identification of pupils with special educational needs are now in place. The needs of pupils on the register are identified in adequate detail and specific learning needs are included satisfactorily in the planning and the teaching. The school makes provision from within existing resources, in accordance with requirements, for those pupils at the earliest stages of assessment. The local authority makes appropriate provision for pupils at later stages of assessment. There is no evidence that recurrent absences of teachers have affected progress or that the deployment of temporary teachers has been mismanaged. The provision of classroom support staff, outside the nursery class, is well below average; this is a decision of the governing body. The amount of extra curricular provision is typical of most schools; the opportunity to extend the range is severely curtailed by the transport arrangements for pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Test results are high; a greater proportion of pupils attains or exceeds expected national levels in English, mathematics and science at the ages of seven and eleven than do so in most other schools and standards are better than similar schools.

1. At age eleven, the National Curriculum test results in 1999 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. In English, about eight in ten pupils attained or exceeded the expected national level for eleven-year-olds; nine in ten did so in mathematics; in science, every pupil did so. In each subject, about half the pupils attained a higher than expected level. This is significantly better than most schools. The very good overall standards have been sustained since the previous inspection. The early indications of the 2000 test results are that the eleven-year-old pupils have exceeded the targets set by the school and that the high standards achieved in 1999 have been improved upon. The high standards reflect the good quality of the teaching. The improvements in standards over the years reflect the increased quality of teaching compared to the previous inspection.

2. Compared to similar schools, standards in 1999 at age eleven were very good in mathematics and good in English and science. This shows that the educational value added by the school is greater than most other schools that have pupils from similar backgrounds. The 1999 tests at both age groups, show that boys at the school did much better than boys nationally in all subjects tested and did better than girls at the school. For all pupils, compared with attainment on entry, achievements by age eleven are good in reading, mathematics and science and satisfactory in writing. Analysis of school records shows that almost every pupil in the group of eleven year olds tested in 1999 made or exceeded the expected amount of progress between the ages of seven and eleven, except in writing, and a significant proportion did better than this. This is the case for all pupils in reading and mathematics, for example, and for all average and high attaining pupils in writing. Other assessment and test records show that this picture of progress for the eleven year olds who have now left the school is replicated in other, younger year groups still attending.

3. At age seven, the 1999 test results in reading and writing were well above average overall compared to all schools and better than similar schools. In reading, about nine in ten pupils attained or exceeded the expected national level, with nearly half exceeding it. The proportion attaining the higher levels is about one third greater than the average nationally. In writing, eight in ten pupils reached or exceeded the national level, which is close to average, but one in five exceeded the level and this is almost three times greater than the norm nationally. In mathematics, the test results were above average compared to all schools and about the same as similar schools. Almost every child attained or exceeded the expected level, with one third exceeding it. The results have varied significantly in reading and writing over the past three years. The pupils who sat the tests are still at school and the annual variations in performance at age seven mainly reflect varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs who tend to concentrate in some years but not others. The high number of changes to the teaching establishment mean that past annual variations to pupil performance at age seven cannot be linked to current teaching quality.

4. The inspection findings are consistent with the test results. The standards in English, mathematics and science among pupils currently in Year 6 are high. The overall proportions of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected level for their age in these subjects is similar to 1999 but slightly fewer pupils are attaining higher levels in writing and mathematics. This reflects the presence of one or two more pupils with special educational needs this year. The proportion of pupils that exceed the expected level in reading, about 60 per cent, is very high, reflecting the effectiveness of the strategies used to boost attainment in this subject. The school is on course to exceed its targets for literacy and numeracy in 2001, which should be reviewed in the light of this finding. The rate of learning in reading, mathematics and science is generally good throughout the school for all pupils. Learning in science is particularly good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties. There are no significant differences in attainment or learning between pupils from different backgrounds.

5. Almost every pupil in Year 6 is an independent reader who uses a range of methods to tackle new and unfamiliar words. The more able pupils are self-motivated and confident readers. All pupils read fluently and cope well with the workbooks, worksheets and text they meet daily as part of their studies. The writing skills of the substantial majority are appropriate for their age. They write in a range of forms in a style that is lively and interesting. Stories are organised effectively and details about character and setting are included. Letters for different purposes contain the basic elements and make main points clearly. In mathematics, nearly all the

Year 6 pupils have satisfactory or better knowledge of multiplication facts to 10x10, for example, and can use this knowledge in a range of calculations. They demonstrate good understanding of percentages, which formed part of a good lesson in mathematics seen in Year 6, and of other appropriate knowledge across each of the National Curriculum attainment targets for this subject. Boys currently in Year 6 are attaining better than the girls generally but this does not reflect shortcomings in the teaching.

The pupils respond enthusiastically to the teachers, work very hard, and behave well.

6. The pupils' attitudes to school are good. The parents' questionnaire shows that nearly all pupils whose parents' views are known like coming to school. There are no problems with lateness linked to pupils' reluctance to begin lessons. Attendance is very good.

7. The pupils show enthusiasm for their work. Year 6 pupils, for example, when talking in the summer about pieces of writing they had completed in the previous autumn, could remember with excitement the circumstances of the lesson and what had made them want to write a particular story or poem. The pupils are careful to get things right and sustain concentration until a task is finished. In a science lesson in Year 5, the pupils spoke with eagerness about previous experiments with air pressure and resistance and investigations that revealed the presence of air inside substances such as chocolate. They then applied themselves to investigate the presence of air in soil by carefully measuring the quantity of water that was poured into a container of soil to displace the air. They worked collaboratively in groups, sharing tasks, following each others' suggestions, asking questions, repeating the experiments several times to investigate the findings with different soils. They recorded their findings systematically, evaluated their work and responded well to the evaluations. These examples show how positively the teaching enthuses and motivates the pupils and leads to very good levels of personal development and relationships.

8. The headteacher takes a personal interest in the work of every child. He has a rigorous system for monitoring the work regularly as part of a rolling programme. He records brief evaluations for each pupil, talks to them individually about what he has found, sets personal targets for the child, and checks that the targets are met. He rewards their successes and has systems in place for achievements to be acknowledged publicly. This is effectively teaching the pupils to value learning and has established a climate where learning is seen by all as the main business of the school.

9. The teachers and other staff use praise much more frequently than they admonish pupils. The latter is very rare. When they praise verbally they invariably give the reasons for the praise and say what it was that was good. In their marking of pupils' work, these principles are often followed. The children respond positively to the marking system by correcting their errors, often without prompting. Levels of confidence and self-esteem are high.

10. The pupils are constructively involved in the routines of the school. Older pupils are given responsibilities, such as operating the CD player and overhead projector during assembly, and they carry out these responsibilities with care and thoroughness. Several instances were seen where pupils took initiatives, such as opening doors and making room for others, and levels of courtesy and respect for others are high. Relationships are very good and all pupils are well integrated into the life and work of the school.

11. Behaviour is good. No bullying, racist, sexist or oppressive behaviour was seen and the pupils reported none. In lessons, when moving throughout the school, at midday and at playtimes the conduct of pupils is orderly. The headteacher and his staff have very high expectations of good behaviour and the pupils live up to these expectations. The behaviour policy is documented in detail and is implemented by everyone.

The teaching is good overall; it is particularly good in mathematics and science

12. All of the teaching is satisfactory or better. Eighty-five per cent is good or better, including one quarter of the teaching that is very good. This range and distribution of the teaching means that it is good overall. The teaching is better than the typical picture nationally and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is good teaching in every year group. The very good teaching is in the reception year, Year 1 and Year 5. The headteacher leads by example through the very good quality of his teaching. There are no significant differences in quality between the key stages. Almost every lesson in mathematics is good and this is one of the reasons why standards are higher in this subject than in English. The teaching in English ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. The teaching in science is good, although only a few lessons were seen.

13. In all lessons, the substantial majority of pupils learn and make adequate progress; in good lessons, nearly every pupil makes adequate progress and in very good lessons the pace of progress is rapid for the bulk of the class. In mathematics, the extent to which all pupils acquire new knowledge and develop their ideas is broadly consistent throughout the school. The rate of learning conforms to or exceeds national expectations in almost every case, which means that learning is good overall. The same finding applies to reading and science. In writing, the pace of learning for pupils in the nursery, reception year, Year 1 and Year 5 is good but is slower than this in the other year groups.

14. In a very good English lesson for four and five year olds in the reception year, the pupils were taught how to write a holiday postcard. The purpose of the lesson was made very clear at the outset and linked closely to the pupils' recent experiences. A giant example of a postcard was used, which provided very useful reading practice and a challenging opportunity to extend word and letter recognition skills and vocabulary for all pupils. The pace of the lesson was quick and the children responded enthusiastically. Specific questions were targeted at children with different levels of knowledge and everyone was fully involved. The children then shared the writing of a postcard and the task of deciding what to include to match the purpose for writing. Pupils acted as scribe, which generated great interest and eagerness to spot what was correct and what could be improved. Locating capital letters and shaping specific letters were among the writing skills extended. The children then wrote their own postcard independently, which is a challenging activity for pupils of this age, demonstrating good understanding of what they had been taught and high levels of concentration and motivation. This reflects the personal enthusiasm and good skill of the teacher. No time was wasted during the lesson and almost all pupils managed to finish the work on schedule.

15. Similar high quality teaching in English was seen in Year 1, where a strong emphasis on independent writing is extending all pupils to levels of attainment that are typical or better for their age, and again in Year 5, where guided reading sessions are extremely well managed and effective. One of the common characteristics of such high quality teaching, in addition to the personal enthusiasm for the subject that is conveyed to the pupils, is the quality of planning and clarity of purpose. These teachers know specifically what they want children to learn by the end of a lesson; they include learning objectives in the planning, share them with the pupils at the start of the lesson and return to them constantly to remind the pupils and to evaluate progress.

16. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, the mental arithmetic warm-up to the lesson was brisk and challenging. The teacher targeted well-prepared questions at pupils with different attainment. The teaching of basic skills involved all pupils and retained their interest throughout. This was achieved in part by linking the content to recent experiences of the pupils, making it very relevant as well as challenging. Independent work was well matched for all pupils according to their different attainments and they adequately understood what they had to do and why. Good levels of support were provided for the majority of the pupils. The teacher in this example concentrated on the high attaining group for much of the time, with a learning target specific to them, checking the progress of other pupils regularly and resolving misconceptions quickly. The group who are targeted in this way changes daily. Relationships within the class and with the teacher were good. The lesson was brought to an efficient close by returning to the main themes and by evaluating progress, which was rapid for the high attaining pupils and appropriate for the remainder. The majority of the teaching throughout the school is of this good quality.

17. Teachers subject knowledge and their competence in teaching basic skills are generally good, with a small number of individual exceptions in writing. Subject expertise is stronger overall in mathematics than in English. In English, some teachers in the junior age group are limited in their knowledge of the methods and organisational strategies necessary to teach writing efficiently and effectively.

18. The medium term and weekly planning systems are consistently implemented throughout the school. This is a big improvement since the previous inspection and the arrangements are, in the main, promoting good continuity and progression in learning. All teachers complete the plans conscientiously but the quality varies. About half the teachers plan what they want the pupils to do rather than what they want them to learn specifically in that lesson, which is a weakness. In a few instances, mainly in writing in the juniors, this limitation in the planning is leading to lessons where greater emphasis is placed on the ideas that pupils will include in their writing rather than the knowledge and skills necessary to express these ideas effectively. All of the teachers motivated the pupils, manage them well, and achieve good standards of behaviour. Support staff are deployed appropriately. Resources are used well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

In writing in the juniors, the pupils' achievements lag behind those in reading, mathematics and science, reflecting insufficient emphasis on key writing skills in this age group.

19. In the 1999 tests in English, the eleven-year-olds did better in reading than in writing, especially the lower attaining pupils. In these tests, nine in ten pupils attained or exceeded the expected level in reading compared to six in ten in writing. Because the results at age eleven are based on a composite score, some pupils managed to attain a satisfactory overall level in English as their good skills in reading compensated for deficiencies in writing. This was not true for every pupil, however, and about one in ten did not attain a satisfactory overall level because of limitations to their writing skills. The pupils most affected were those who just managed to attain the expected national level in writing at age seven but did not extend their writing skills sufficiently in the junior years to maintain the achievement at age eleven. The information from the analysis of test results is consistent with the findings from the work of pupils currently at school. The early indications of the 2000 results are that overall standards in English are higher than in 1999 because attainment in reading has improved considerably, especially at the higher levels. In writing, the proportion at the expected national level in 2000 is about the same as in 1999 but fewer pupils exceeded the level.

20. The rate of learning in writing is inconsistent between the year groups; it is best in the nursery, the reception year, Year 1 and Year 5. It is satisfactory overall in the other year groups but there are instances in Years 4 and 6 of pupils whose progress in writing is insufficient compared to their earlier attainment.

21. While the grammar, spelling and handwriting of the majority of pupils in Year 6, for example, conforms to expectations, a substantial minority are not adequately extending the depth of understanding and range of skills in these aspects. In some instances, gaps in knowledge are applicable to all pupils. Discussions with Year 6 pupils shows that they are comfortable with terms such as "paragraph" and "speech marks" and apply this knowledge to their writing. They are less confident with terms such as "clause" and "phrase" and pupils' work shows that improvements in sentence complexity and the use of comma to separate clauses, for example, and of the use of punctuation devices such as colon and semicolon is sporadic. These variations reveal gaps in the curriculum and the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy Framework. In a lesson in Year 6, the pupils' lack of knowledge of genres, normally accumulated over several years of teaching, prevented them realising quickly that a holiday brochure is a form of persuasive writing. This slowed their understanding of the techniques used by writers of such brochures. This lesson was ultimately satisfactory in that the children successfully wrote their own travel brochures and extended their knowledge but it took longer than necessary and left the deliberate use of adjectives and adverbs, a key element of this genre, to be explored another time.

22. The headteacher and his staff recognise the need to improve writing skills. Over the last two years they have concentrated on improvements in writing in the nursery, reception and infant year groups, with a good measure of success. The school has established booster classes, for example, using its own resources as well as national funding. This demonstrates a good commitment to raising standards. However, these developments have not been extended sufficiently into all of the junior year groups.

The arrangements for checking the teaching do not concentrate enough on sharing good practice and identifying what could be improved.

23. The overall arrangements for monitoring have been a development priority since the previous inspection. The headteacher has already put in place a broad range of procedures that will enable him to check the strengths and weaknesses in the children's work and the planning. The procedures to monitor the children's performance are of good quality, rigorous, and used to identify learning needs and set targets for improvement. The monitoring of curricular planning is systematic and takes place frequently. Feedback to teachers on the quality of the planning is appropriately part of the arrangements. Increasing the provision of work at different levels for pupils of differing attainment, for example, is a priority that emerged from this monitoring. This finding led to in-house training; in all lessons seen during the inspection, provision for pupils of differing attainment was included. This shows that monitoring is leading to self-evaluation and to action aimed at improvement; this is good practice. The headteacher has provided individual support to teachers when implementing developments and as part of induction arrangements for new staff, and this too is good practice.

24. Observing lessons is becoming part of the monitoring culture of the school but the arrangements are not yet rigorous. The checking of teaching in English is less well developed compared to mathematics, for example, and this is one of the reasons why the teaching of writing is not as sharp as mathematics. Checking the quality of teaching through lesson observation was introduced about two years ago, with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. A check-sheet is used to promote consistency, records are maintained and feedback provided. The literacy coordinator, mathematics coordinators and deputy headteacher have carried out some of the observations; lesson observation is also part of the appraisal system. The frequency with which lesson observations are conducted is relatively low, however, and the evaluations tend to identify only those features of the teaching that meet management expectations. The findings are discussed with the

teacher concerned but are not used sufficiently to demonstrate to the staff as a whole what it is that constitutes good practice in those few areas of teaching where weaknesses exist.

25. Observations of the literacy hour, for example, took place last year. Every teacher was seen, which is good. The checking concentrated on the overall structure to the hour and whether teachers had understood the broad principles. However, no follow up visits to literacy hours have taken place with a view to making in-depth evaluations of the effectiveness of each teacher's implementation of National Literacy Strategy methods, such as those specific to shared and guided writing. Where second and third observations of teachers have taken place it has been with less particular checking in mind. This is why, for example, the gaps in the writing curriculum noted elsewhere were not identified through the monitoring, nor those particular shortcomings remedied.

26. The procedures used so far are appropriate as a first stage of development but are too generalised to be effective in the long-term. They do not concentrate, for example, on checking that the very specific expectations set out in the school's good quality teaching and learning policy are understood by the teachers and used as a basis for their work. Nor is monitoring used to check if variations in pupil progress, such as those between reading and writing, are linked to ineffectiveness in teaching. Areas for improvement are not clearly identified in the records. There is no comprehensive programme of follow-up visits to check that areas so identified have been remedied.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

27. The headteacher and his staff have already identified writing and lesson monitoring as areas for development and begun to work on them. The emphasis now should be to sharpen and extend these developments so that effectiveness is increased. The headteacher and his staff, with the support of the governing body, should:

- raise the achievement of the pupils in writing to at least the same level as their achievements in reading, mathematics and science by:
 - identifying and remedying gaps in the teaching of the National Curriculum programme of study for writing and the National Literacy Strategy Framework, particularly in the junior year groups;
 - increasing teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum programme of study for writing and the National Literacy Strategy Framework, and of the methods and strategies necessary to teach them effectively;
 - setting measurable and challenging targets for improvement in writing and rigorously monitoring progress towards achieving them;
 - regularly reporting to the governing body on the extent of progress made;

(Discussed in paragraphs 19-22)

- increase the rigour with which the teaching is monitored by:
 - clarifying with the teachers the framework for lesson monitoring, including the frequency and extent of monitoring;
 - increasing teachers' knowledge of the school's policy for teaching and learning; then using this policy rigorously as a basis for checking the quality of all teaching;
 - establishing a programme of lesson observations and repeat observations with specific purposes identified;
 - clearly identifying at an individual and school level areas of good practice and areas for improvement; then rigorously checking that good practice is sustained and improvements take place;
 - regularly reporting to the governing body on the findings from monitoring and on progress towards improvement.

(Discussed in paragraphs 23-26)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	60	15	0	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)	19	207
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	14	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	10	12
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	25	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	81	96
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	25	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	93	89
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	13
	Girls	15	15	16
	Total	24	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83	90	100
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	13
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	23	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79	79	100
	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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	176
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only (there are 207 on roll, excluding the nursery, of whom 178 are of compulsory school age).

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	395326
Total expenditure	395139
Expenditure per pupil (223 NOR in Jan 2000)	1765
Balance brought forward from previous year	22442
Balance carried forward to next year	22629

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	245
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	40	7	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	54	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	48	10	6	4
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	3	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	53	6	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	33	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	5	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	31	48	13	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	40	12	6	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	43	4	3	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	37	24	5	15

Other issues raised by parents

All significant issues raised by parents are included in the summary of parents' view.