

INSPECTION REPORT

VERTON ST HELENS C. E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Overton, Morecambe

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119539

Headteacher: Mrs J A Smith

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater
18463

Dates of inspection: 8th and 9th May 2000

Inspection number: 187935

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lancaster Road Overton Near Morecambe Lancashire
Postcode:	LA3 3EZ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr Gordon F Edwards
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Overton St Helens Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school with 172 pupils aged between four and 11 years. Children enter the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection eight children were under five. The school has 10 more pupils than at the time of the previous inspection and is often over-subscribed. The general attainment of pupils on entry to the school is typical in range and average overall. This year 30 per cent of children were below the standardised average in early reading whilst the rest were at least average and some well above. The majority of pupils who attend the school live close to school but due to the school's local reputation and the pleasant rural nature a significant number (approximately 40 per cent) come from outside the parish. Most pupils are from families where at least one adult is in full-time work. Twenty pupils are registered for free school meals, which is below the national average and about the same proportion of pupils as it was during the previous inspection. No pupils speak English as an additional language. There are 30 pupils on the special educational needs register but no pupil has a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with a great deal to celebrate. Pupils make good progress and results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have been well above the national average and in comparison with similar schools in English and mathematics over the past three years. The school is very well led and teaching is generally good. It provides very good value for money and serves its community very well.

What the school does well

- The headteacher, with the support of staff, governors, parents and pupils, creates an excellent ethos and promotes high standards. The school cares for its pupils very well.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and relationships are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Teaching is good overall and outstanding in Year 6.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, personal and cultural development is excellent.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is excellent.

What could be improved

- The curriculum for children under five does not provide sufficient opportunities for exploratory and investigative learning and for them to increase and refine their skills of playing with large apparatus.
- Some teachers' lesson planning is not precise enough and they do not clearly state what pupils of different abilities are to learn.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has developed well since the last inspection in March 1996. The improvements are even more commendable when considering the unavoidable disruptions and staff absences caused by the serious illness of the headteacher, maternity leave of two staff and building work as an extra classroom was added to the school. In light of these difficulties it is a tribute to the teamwork of staff, governors and parents that the school has maintained the high standards acknowledged in the previous report and improved provision in a number of areas.

There were few issues for development in the last report but the school has responded well to address effectively the assessment of pupils' work and provide clearer provision and support for pupils on the special educational needs register. Resources for reading, information technology and music have been improved satisfactorily.

The school is well placed to make further improvements, largely because of the enthusiastic and supportive response of staff, governors, parents and pupils.

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	B	B
Mathematics	A*	A	A	A
Science	A	C	C	D

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The table shows that in the most recent national tests for 11 year olds pupils' performance in English was above the national average. In mathematics it was very high, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In science it was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were above average in English, well above average in mathematics but below average in science. Although the science result was relatively disappointing it is worth recording that many pupils 'missed' a higher level by one or two marks and the unfortunate disruption prior to the national tests affected the usual preparation. Results over the past four years have been broadly in line with the national trend.

The full range of inspection evidence shows that the attainment of children on entry to the reception class is broadly typical for their age. By the age of five the vast majority are at least at the levels expected and around a third are above average in their reading, writing and numeracy. By the age of seven standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. By the age of 11 standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. This year is unusual in that a larger than average proportion of the current Year 6 are on the special educational needs register and their attainment is likely to be lower than the Year 6 group of last year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' enthusiasm for school is excellent. They are very eager learners and try hard to do their best. They have excellent attitudes at all times.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good throughout the school day. Pupils are very sensible and their ability to value the feelings of others is excellent.
Personal development and relationships	Throughout the school pupils' relationships are excellent. Pupils' personal development is very good. Most pupils welcome responsibility and respond very well to the opportunities given to them but children in reception do not get sufficient opportunity to make choices from a range of materials and equipment for their own purposes.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and pupils enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
19 lessons seen overall	satisfactory	good	very good

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

Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons. It was good or better in 68 per cent of lessons. In 21 per cent of lessons teaching was very good and it was excellent in 21 per cent.

The quality of teaching of children under five in the reception class is satisfactory overall. The quality of direct teaching and the formal lessons in reading, writing and numeracy are good. However, children do not receive such effective support in the less formal activities. Whilst the teacher and support staff have high expectations and plan challenging tasks there are too few practical opportunities, visits and visitors to enable children to learn through investigation and exploration.

Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall and is very good in Key Stage 2. It is particularly impressive in the Years 1 and 2 classes and outstanding in Year 6. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and the grouping of pupils by ability ensures they are all challenged well since tasks are well matched to what pupils already know. The excellent teaching in Year 6 is the result of very detailed planning, imaginative use of resources, very high expectations and a wonderful relationship with the class that enables pupils to enjoy their lessons thoroughly and know that their contributions are valued.

Relative weaknesses in some classes include the lack of precision in lesson planning. There are times when teachers plan what pupils are to do and not what they expect pupils to learn.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children under five is a little narrow although it effectively promotes the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy. Physical development is somewhat restricted due to the lack of large apparatus and a secure outdoor area. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad, balanced and relevant to their needs. A broad range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A skilled and enthusiastic special educational needs co-ordinator manages this aspect well. Individual education plans are well constructed and support is effectively focused on meeting pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. The school has strong Christian values which enhance the excellent ethos of the school. The staff provide very good role models. They have high expectations of their pupils to work hard and behave well. This supports pupils' understanding of their moral and social responsibilities. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' moral and social development with very good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The strong commitment to the well-being of pupils is very obvious in the day-to-day work of the staff. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic performance in English, mathematics and science are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is totally committed to the school. She receives very good support from the deputy headteacher and all staff. They work as an effective team. Staffing changes have caused a reorganisation of curricular responsibilities and despite the newness of their roles staff carry out their work very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is very efficient, all statutory requirements are met and governors help to shape the direction of the school. They take an active role in strategic planning and in monitoring school performance. They support the school very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Regular monitoring promotes high standards of teaching and learning, especially in English and mathematics. Rigorous analysis of test results and target setting coupled with a comparison of the school's performance with other schools ensures that the school identifies and deals with areas for action.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The school's spending and plans for the use of the high financial surplus reflect the priorities expressed in its aims and very detailed school development plan. Governors are conversant with the principles of best value and apply them effectively to ensure that very good use is made of all resources, including staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and they make good progress. • The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school works closely with parents and keeps parents well informed about how their child is getting on. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The amount of work pupils do at home. 	

This table takes account the views of 21 parents attending a meeting held with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and those expressed in 81 returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. Of the 12 questions on the questionnaire over 90 per cent of parents either agreed with or strongly agreed with the school's provision in every question. There were no serious or significant concerns raised in the parents' questionnaire or meeting.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher, with the support of staff, governors, parents and pupils, creates an excellent ethos and promotes high standards. The school cares for its pupils very well

1. As a result of the excellent leadership displayed by the headteacher, with the support of an outstanding deputy headteacher, staff, governors, parents and pupils, the school benefits from an excellent ethos that is embedded in Christian values. The management of the school is very efficient and effective and also carried out within a context of genuine care for all pupils. All associated with the school are committed to equal opportunity and to raising standards. This results in a pleasant, well-ordered and happy learning environment. The commitment reflects the mission statement and aims of the school which are central to school life. The promotion of self-respect, self-esteem and the importance of valuing others are evident at all times and have a significant impact on pupils' learning. The headteacher communicates this very effectively through school policies and her day-to-day involvement with pupils, staff, parents and governors. She is highly respected by all of them. Communication within school is very good, with everyone sharing the sense of common purpose.
2. The teachers and governors have a clear, practical vision of what constitutes high standards in attainment and teaching. Rigorous monitoring by the headteacher, deputy head, literacy and mathematics co-ordinators and a local education authority adviser clearly identifies the strengths and areas for development. Teachers have taught demonstration lessons and supported colleagues in numeracy and literacy. This has led to the good quality of teaching and standards which are well above average when compared with similar schools.
3. Governors are very supportive of the school and fully meet their statutory requirements. They are fully involved in the strategic planning and planning the direction of the school through a well-designed school development plan which effectively balances national priorities such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies with those identified by the school. Objectives within the plan are precise, action planning is suitably detailed, individual responsibilities and timescales are clear and resource implications have been evaluated.
4. Effective financial procedures and spending priorities are identified in the school development plan and linked accurately to the school budget. Financial administration by the school secretary and clerk to the governors is very efficient. The governing body works well with the headteacher, both in the setting of the initial budget and in its review. There are efficient procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of financial decisions, particularly when related to staffing, building and the curriculum. A larger than average carry over in the budget is appropriately explained and used to furnish the additional classroom, maintain the current numbers of teaching staff and maintain smaller class sizes. Overall the school makes very good use of the resources available and is well aware of the principles of best value. The school makes a detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools. Targets for the school and for individual pupils are realistic, relevant and suitably challenging. The effective assessment systems enable monitoring to bring about improvements.
5. Issues relating to special educational needs are managed well by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils' individual education plans are well-constructed by class teachers with the assistance of the special educational needs co-ordinator who maintains records meticulously, oversees early identification and ensures regular communication with staff and governors.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and relationships are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is very good

6. Pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitude to learning is excellent. Relationships are also excellent and are a key strength of the school. In the reception class children arrive happily and readily participate in the activities. They quickly learn the routines of the class and develop in confidence. They demonstrate growing levels of independence when given the opportunity but are sometimes over directed in their tasks. They are polite and caring and show sound levels of understanding in a range of situations. Their behaviour and attitudes are positive and have significant effects upon their learning.
7. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and around school and their attitude to learning is exemplary. Pupils are very mature in their approach to school and their enthusiasm is excellent. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have developed very good work habits. They settle down to work quickly, concentrate well and work sensibly on their own and in collaboration with others. In every Year 6 lesson observed pupils were very well focused and determined to do their best.
8. Pupils are very courteous and well mannered towards their teachers and to visitors. In a number of very pleasant conversations pupils told inspectors of enjoyment of school and Year 6 pupils talked of not wanting to leave. Relationships in school amongst pupils and between adults and pupils are excellent. No anti-social behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection. Parents are justifiably proud and pleased about the behaviour of pupils. They are confident that the school deals quickly and fairly with any rare incidents of unpleasantness. The inspection evidence confirms this view. Some very good opportunities exist for pupils to take responsibility for activities in and around the school. Pupils know they are trusted and their responsible actions are valued. For example, the school operates a 'house' system and pupils elect the captains. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take on more responsibility and are involved in organising and running the sports day and various charity events. In information technology lessons pupils with computer skills are often seen tutoring their colleagues. Their personal development is enhanced further when they enjoy a residential visit to Ned Nook.

Teaching is good overall and outstanding in Year 6

9. The quality of teaching is good overall and a strong feature of the school. During the inspection teaching was observed to be at least satisfactory or better in all lessons, 26 per cent of lessons were good, 21 per cent were very good and 21 per cent were excellent. All the excellent lessons were in the Year 6 class and taught by an outstanding teacher. The high quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress and this contributes to the high standards achieved.
10. Teachers are enthusiastic and work hard to ensure that lessons are carefully prepared, well-paced, resourced well and provide challenge. Higher attaining pupils often have 'extension' work planned for them whilst lower attainers are generally given suitable work and pressed hard to achieve as well as they are able. Staff have a great knowledge of their pupils and have a good range of skills with which to teach them. They have high expectations of their pupils to behave very well. Teachers use praise and encouragement regularly to motivate pupils into giving their best at all times. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. The consequent very positive working atmosphere promotes an excellent ethos for learning.
11. In all of the very good and excellent lessons planning makes very clear what pupils are to learn. The teacher explains this at the beginning of the lesson and reminds pupils at the end. This has a positive effect in consolidating pupils' learning. In a stunning Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher's enthusiasm for literature communicated itself to the pupils so

that they quickly and enjoyably learned about classic narrative poetry. The mood was set as the teacher darkened the room and lit a number of candles. In an amazing atmosphere the teacher, dressed in a cloak and with various excellent resources (including a sword), read “The Highwayman” by Alfred Noyes. The expressive delivery left every pupil, and the inspector in the corner, spellbound. This is awe and wonder! The enthusiasm gushed over into work on poetic images and exploration of characters from the poem. Throughout the lesson the teacher made the most of every opportunity to remind pupils of alliteration, assonance, the similarities with Shakespeare and some historical aspects of the poem. At the end of 90 minutes pupils were disappointed that lunchtime had arrived.

12. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall. Most teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of literacy skills is good and in most lessons teachers sustain pupils’ interest and concentration. Teaching of numeracy skills is good overall and generally builds well on pupils’ prior learning. Teachers take into account pupils’ need for clear explanations interspersed with practical activity and in the better lessons teachers make the best of opportunities to discuss a variety of strategies for problem solving. In the majority of classes skilful questioning in both literacy and numeracy lessons promotes thinking and learning. Teachers use plenary sessions effectively to assess the level of pupils’ understanding and ensure that they are challenged further in future lessons. The weakness in a small number of literacy and numeracy lessons is the short-term planning which does not always take into account what pupils already know and what they are expected to learn. When planning is not precise enough the work is sometimes too easy or too difficult for groups of pupils and pupils are not clearly focused.
13. Marking is generally very helpful and encouraging to the pupils and gives good guidance on how to improve their work. However, there are odd examples of teachers accepting poorly presented work without comment despite making clear their expectation of neat and tidy work.

Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social, personal and cultural development is excellent

14. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. Teachers successfully create an environment where pupils’ contributions are valued. Within the daily act of collective worship pupils are given opportunities to listen quietly to music at the start and have moments for prayer, stillness and reflection. In religious education pupils learn about a greater being. In studies of the world’s major religions pupils in Key Stage 2 learn about prayer and its importance. Year 5 and 6 pupils produced some stunning pictures to express their own ideas based on “dreaming”¹ paintings of Aborigines and wrote their own prayers on a “prayer tree”. Such opportunities contribute well to the very good provision for spiritual development.
15. Pupils’ moral development is excellent. The school teaches them to know right from wrong and to behave well. Staff consistently promote its moral code and the pupils recognise and respect it. The school lays an emphasis on developing self-discipline. Pupils in all classes are given opportunities to be involved in making rules for their classrooms. For example, pupils in one class express “It is OK to ask for help” and “Say nice things to one another”. Staff and pupils are aware of the importance of kindness and good behaviour with pupils being rewarded for good behaviour and their names being displayed in the school hall. Pupils are encouraged to develop an understanding of their moral responsibilities and the consequences of the actions that they take. This is seen to very good effect in sessions where pupils sit in a circle and tell the class about how they

¹ Spiritual paintings that are secret stories that only the artist can explain

feel (often known as 'Circle Time'). The pupils display very mature listening skills and respect for each other's views. Pupils' social development and concern for each other can be judged by the way one pupil hugged another child who explained that she was sad because of the loss of a relative. Such an example is typical of this school and shows the extent to which the school also promotes social development.

16. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Older pupils have appropriate opportunities to exercise responsibility. For example, they assist with lunchtime arrangements and carry out a variety of administrative tasks. Staff act as positive role models for pupils through their very good example and pupils are expected to be polite and courteous. Participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as gardening club, drama club, art club, young ornithologist club and a wide range of sporting and musical activities plays a positive role in developing pupils' social skills. Through these activities pupils are given opportunities to work as a team and to mix with other children and adults from within the school. Parents and pupils alike express their appreciation for the extra-curricular activities. A very supportive parent teacher association organises a number of events which are well attended by adults and children. The school actively encourages pupils to support and take care of others both personally and through supporting charities. Pupils are encouraged to take care of the environment by considering how they can reduce waste and have been involved in a number of environmental initiatives such as litter picking to keep the village tidy. A good range of educational visits further promotes pupils' social development.
17. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good, with many opportunities for pupils to explore their own cultural heritage through studies of Lancaster, the River Lune and participation in the school Rose Queen festivals. Pupils' awareness of their own cultural traditions is very good and they have a good appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures. In religious education lessons pupils demonstrate a secure awareness of other faiths and cultures and in assemblies they learn about customs, festivals and celebrations such as the Chinese New Year. Pupils' awareness of ancient cultures is developed through the school's history work on Ancient Rome. Cultural experiences include pupils experiencing operatic arias of Puccini and art work of famous artists such as Andy Warhol and Monet. There are also significant opportunities for pupils to experience the artwork of other cultures including Japanese, Aborigine, North American and Mexican Indian. Visits and visitors play a substantial part in promoting pupils' cultural development. For example, musicians and theatre groups have visited the school and pupils have visited museums and the Judge's lodgings in Lancaster.

The school's partnership with parents and the community is excellent

18. The school has excellent and mutually supportive links with parents. Parents are extremely interested and involved with the work of the school and want to know how their children are doing and to support them. Parents help in school, providing outstanding extra support in the classroom, at the swimming pool and when accompanying trips and visits. The hardworking parent teacher association also puts on fund raising and social events to raise much needed equipment for the school. For example, following the previous inspection they helped to provide a wide range of quality multi-cultural instruments that have since helped to broaden pupils' cultural development.
19. Parents are kept well informed about what their children are doing and their progress. The prospectus and governors' annual report are very informative and readable and give all the statutory information. Special meetings, for instance, to inform parents of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies give parents the opportunity to find out more about their children's education. Pupils' reports are good overall and tell parents in specific terms what their children know, understand and can do. Class assemblies give parents a very good view of what children have been learning.
20. Parents were very involved in the contents of the home/school agreement and all parents

have signed the agreement. Parents are very supportive of homework and 96 per cent of parents strongly agree or agree that the school gives the right amount. Parents regularly hear their children read at home and comment in reading diaries. Parents keep school well informed if their children are absent from school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved in annual reviews and the setting up of individual education plans.

21. Relationships with the local community are very strong and the school is seen as a focal point of the community. Pupils are involved in fundraising for local charities and often visit local farms, businesses and industries as part of their studies. This helps to enhance pupils' social development. The community regularly uses the school for meetings and adult education and social meetings. This helps to give the school a high profile. The school has very close links with the church. The local vicar, a governor, is a regular and welcome visitor. The Overton community is justifiably proud of its school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The curriculum for children under five does not provide sufficient opportunities for exploratory and investigative learning and for them to increase and refine their skills with large and outdoor apparatus

22. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for children under five with an emphasis on personal and social education, literacy and numeracy.
23. The quality of direct teaching input and the opportunities created for reading and writing are good but less formal activities and informal encounters with books and writing are less well supported. Children enjoy their books and are supported well by parent helpers in school and by their own parents when they take home their reading books and homework. There is little evidence of role-play in an informal setting although a pretend café is situated in the classroom. The adults provide constant verbal instruction and feedback to children which is good. However, they often miss opportunities to ask the type of question that requires a verbal response and children's language skills are not stretched as much as they could be.
24. There are weaknesses in the curriculum. Children have too few opportunities to experience outdoor and large apparatus work and as a result children's physical development is not promoted as well as it could be. Satisfactory skills are evident in physical development in hopping, skipping and balancing. Children have a growing awareness of space particularly as they run around avoiding others. In the absence of access to an outside play area the school hall is used well to support this area. It is the lack of large apparatus and wheeled toys that prevents children from crawling and climbing, cycling and pulling their friends around on trolleys, for example, that slows their progress. The school has recognised this and the school development plan highlights the need to improve this provision.
25. Other areas of the curriculum are planned effectively to cover the nationally recommended areas of learning for the age group and prepare them well for the National Curriculum. However, whilst the curriculum is broad and balanced it provides too few practical opportunities for children to learn through investigation and exploration. This prevents the less mature children from learning through doing and curtails the natural curiosity of higher attaining pupils from observing closely and asking questions. While the medium term planning is satisfactory the daily planning is too generalised and too focused on task management rather than on what the children might learn from tasks. This means that adults, including parents who work directly with the children, lack the guidance necessary to promote maximum learning from every task.
26. Although there is effective teaching of skills such as sticking, cutting, folding and joining there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to make choices from a range of

materials and equipment for their own purposes. Children often produce work which is identical. For example, a display of paper sheep is mounted in the classroom. These have been produced from a template and all are covered in white paper which has been curled and stuck on using glue for effect. All sheep are the same size, shape and colour. There is no evidence of pupils discussing or observing what the texture of sheep's wool is like, how it feels and what colour it is (not all sheep are white). There are no big sheep or little lambs on display. Children have not discussed or investigated to see if there are other ways to stick on the 'wool'. There is little evidence of visits and visitors being used to enhance and consolidate children's learning and the environment is somewhat dull. The current layout of furniture makes it difficult for the teacher to find space for stimulating displays at the children's level that might allow them to touch and handle objects, arouse their curiosity and promote excitement and wonder. Much more can be done to add to the current good practice in the formal teaching of reading, writing and mathematics to add sparkle and enrich the curriculum.

Some teachers' lesson planning is not precise enough and they do not clearly state what pupils of different abilities are to learn

27. Most teachers set realistic and challenging targets for most pupils and plan lessons well. The best planning clearly shows the National Curriculum programmes of study and clearly indicates the levels they are assisting different groups of pupils to achieve. However, some planning is a little vague and teachers' confuse what the pupils are expected to do with what they expect the pupils to learn. There is evidence of very good and sometimes excellent planning by the Years 1 and 2 teacher and the Year 6 teacher. This practice needs to be shared with all staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

28. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) provide more opportunities for children under five to participate in more exploratory and investigative learning and provide further opportunities for them to increase and refine their skills with outdoor and large apparatus. This can be done by:
 - i) improving the range, quality and frequency of opportunities where pupils are expected to talk about, describe and explain what they see and experience;
 - ii) improving the quality of short term planning by including specific objectives for each activity and by explicitly identifying the vocabulary and the language to be promoted;
 - iii) improving the quality of displays at children's level and the quantity and range of experiences in order to excite children's curiosity, awe and wonder;
 - iv) providing a suitable outdoor environment and resources for children to engage in challenging activities.

(paragraphs 22 – 26)

In drawing up the action plan the governors should consider the following less important shortcoming and establish procedures to improve the consistency of short term planning by:

- i) sharing the current good practice in school;
- ii) ensuring that lesson plans are not too generalised and the teacher identifies exactly what it is that pupils are expected to learn from the tasks and, where possible, makes reference to the National Curriculum levels.

(paragraphs 12 and 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	4	5	6	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	172
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	11	12	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	12	9	12
	Total	22	18	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96	78	96
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96	96	100
	National	82	86	87

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	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	11
	Girls	14	14	12
	Total	22	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85	92	88
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	12
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	22	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85	92	96
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
	£
Total income	272,966
Total expenditure	271,668
Expenditure per pupil	1,677
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,780
Balance carried forward to next year	49,078

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 47%

Number of questionnaires sent out	172
Number of questionnaires returned	81

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	49	49	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	32	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	48	1	1	2
The teaching is good.	68	30	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	5	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	36	4	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	74	25	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	40	2	0	4

No issues were raised at the meeting which 21 parents attended.