

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARGARET'S CE (Aided) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124782

Headteacher: Mr E Green

Reporting inspector: Mr N B Jones
20973

Dates of inspection: 12-14 March 2001

Inspection number: 190807

Short 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 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bolton Lane
Ipswich

Postcode: IP4 2BT

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Canon David Cutts

Date of previous inspection: 2 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Margaret's is an average-sized primary school catering for pupils aged four to eleven. There are 218 pupils (113 boys and 105 girls) on roll. This oversubscribed school is situated to the north of Ipswich town centre. Around 7% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is about one third of the national average. The vast majority of the pupils are from white ethnic background and very few have English as an additional language. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. The number of pupils on the register of special educational needs or with a Statement of Special Educational Need is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Margaret's is an effective school that provides good value for money. Effective leadership, a supportive and caring environment and good teaching provide the children with a good all-round education. This enables the children to achieve high standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school.

What the school does well

- By the time the pupils leave the school, their attainment is well above average in English and mathematics.
- The teaching is good overall and it is very good in Year 6.
- The headteacher, assisted by supportive governors and a dedicated staff, provides effective leadership.
- The pupils' personal development is well provided for by the school's very positive and supportive environment.
- The pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their work and behaviour.
- The pupils make good progress using the excellent information and communication technology suite.

What could be improved

- Writing in Key Stage 1 could be better.
- There are weaknesses in the provision for outdoor activities for the children in the Foundation Stage (Reception).
- More effective use could be made of the school development plan to improve longer-term planning.
- Aspects of curriculum provision could be improved to ensure that all pupils get an appropriate balance of opportunities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The good standards reported at the time of the last inspection in December 1996 have been maintained, and in certain areas, particularly in teaching, considerable improvement has taken place. The overall improvement in pupils' attainment (as indicated by the national tests) in English, mathematics and science has continued to keep pace with the national trend and has mostly been well above average since the last inspection. However, there has been a dip in the test results in writing in Key Stage 1 over the last two years and in science in Key Stage 2 in 2000. The school is aware of this and the action it has taken is bringing about some improvements in the standard of writing in Key Stage 1.

Most of the issues raised in the last report have been successfully addressed. However, although the school's planning for improvement shows clearly how the school intends to move forward over the coming year, the detail required to achieve longer-term goals is still not included in sufficient detail.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A*	A	A
mathematics	A	A*	A	A
science	A	A	B	C

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

The table shows that for the past three years the results of the national tests in English and mathematics at the age of eleven have been consistently well above average. Where A* is shown, the school's results are very high and in the top 5% nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that by the age of eleven the pupils' attainment is well above average in English and mathematics but is not as high in science. Reading is a particular strength of the school. The pupils also make good progress in learning to play a range of musical instruments and by the age of eleven a very high standard is achieved.

The results in 2000 for mathematics exceeded the school's own targets; in English they were close to the target. The school has set very ambitious targets for 2001 and inspection evidence would indicate that they are likely to be close to achieving them.

The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 over the last three years indicate that standards in reading and mathematics have been consistently well above average but that those in writing have lagged well behind over the last two years. Evidence from the inspection confirms the very good standards in reading and mathematics but confirms the weaknesses in writing. Although there has been an improvement in the pupils' writing, expectations of the pupils' work at the beginning of the key stage are too low. There is an over-reliance on worksheets which results in limited opportunities for the pupils to write at length and this constrains their progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy school; they have a very positive attitude towards their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils have strong self-discipline and are able to meet the school's high expectations for behaviour at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils take on responsibilities readily, take care of one another and have harmonious relationships with staff and each other.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

The small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour noted in Key Stage 1 during the last inspection is no longer a problem.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall: 26	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.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in Class 6 it is consistently very good. The good teaching is a strength of the school and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in most subjects, with very good progress being made in Year 6. In 65% of the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was good or better, including 15% that was excellent or very good. All of the excellent and most of the very good teaching was in Year 6. No teaching was less than satisfactory.

Lessons are well planned, classes are well-managed and resources well-prepared to ensure that lessons run smoothly. A particular feature of most lessons is the good working atmosphere created by the establishment of effective class routines by teachers who know their pupils well.

The quality of teaching in English is good. At the end of Key Stage 1 and at the beginning of Key Stage 2, teaching is particularly good and is directly responsible for the good progress being achieved in these classes. The very good teaching in Year 6 enables the pupils to make very good progress and achieve high standards by the age of eleven. The very good use of questions is a feature common to all teachers in the school and from the earliest lessons it is used to improve and extend the pupils' vocabulary, encourage them to listen carefully and to give them the confidence to speak out in class discussions.

Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good, but there are variations between the classes. Teaching is at its best where teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set time targets to ensure that the lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Although the plenary session is used well to assess and consolidate what has been learned in the lesson, not all aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy are so successful. The mental arithmetic start to some lessons is comparatively weak, either being too short or too slow.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is generally broad and balanced with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Provision for music is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The small number of pupils are identified early and are given effective support to achieve the targets set.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Particularly strong provision for spiritual, moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well catered for within a caring and Christian ethos.

The teaching time allowed for science is at least 15% lower than the national average in both key stages. This may account for the pupils' attainment not being as good in science as it is in English and mathematics. Although many pupils derive great benefit from learning to play a musical instrument, by attending peripatetic music tuition, they miss the same lesson (often literacy or numeracy) each week. The Foundation Stage curriculum does not include regular opportunities for outdoor play and climbing and balancing activities.

The school has appropriate policies and practice in place covering all aspects of health and safety and child protection. The policies are reflected in the daily life of the school which is a pleasant and safe environment. However, although the pupils are normally carefully supervised, this is not the case when they arrive on the school playground each morning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher effectively leads a hard working and dedicated staff. Good delegation has enabled most teachers to share responsibility for the co-ordination and leadership of subjects and other aspects of school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors show great commitment to the school and are actively involved in supporting and monitoring developments. They are successful in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective systems are in place to monitor the pupils' progress and to enable challenging targets to be set. Weaknesses (such as writing in Key Stage 1) are identified and strategies put in place to overcome them. The school ensures that teaching and learning are regularly monitored with a view to bringing about improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes generally effective use of time, staff, accommodation and learning resources.

The headteacher, school secretary and governors manage the school's finances very well and ensure value for money when purchasing resources. All recommendations of the most recent auditor's report have been carried out. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for financial and curriculum planning for their subjects and many monitor the teaching and learning in each class. Resources for music and information communication technology are very good but there is no suitable outdoor area for the children in the Foundation Stage.

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 of work are very good. • The children like school and have a very positive attitude to their work. • The pupils behave well and are expected to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • Parents are made to feel welcome in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework arrangements are inconsistent. • Not enough activities outside of lessons. • On occasions insufficient information is provided for parents.

Inspectors' judgements fully support the parents' positive views. Regarding the areas that parents would like to see improved:

- Homework arrangements vary from class to class and do not always follow the school's policy.
- The school provides a good range of activities outside of lessons including extra-curricular activities and visits.
- Information provided for parents is generally satisfactory and the annual pupil reports are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the time the pupils leave the school, their attainment is well above average in English and mathematics.

1. The national tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that the pupils' attainment in English has been well above average in each year since the last inspection in 1996. The 2000 tests also show that standards are well above average compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The pupils' attainment is above average on entry to the school. They make generally good progress through the school, with particularly good progress being made in Year 2 and Year 3 and very good progress in Year 6. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' attainment is well above average by the age of eleven.
2. Standards in speaking and listening are developed well in all lessons. The younger pupils sit quietly and listen to stories or explanations and take turns to ask or answer questions. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the pupils listened attentively to a factual passage of writing, offered their ideas with confidence and appreciated the contributions of others. The older pupils reflect carefully on questions and can explain and justify their answers and opinions. In Year 3 the pupils confidently incorporate words such as 'author' and 'publisher' within their discussion on the layout of books and in a music lesson they carefully evaluate the work of their peers and give constructive criticism.
3. Reading is well taught throughout the school and, by the end of both key stages, standards are well above average. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of phonics and make careful use of the reading scheme to consolidate learning at all levels. Reading records are thorough, detailing not only the books a pupil has read, but also the category into which they fall, such as fiction, mystery and information. This gives a clear indication of the breadth of books being read. Good teaching during the Literacy Hour encourages pupils to think carefully about what they are reading and they derive great pleasure from a wide range of texts. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson, the teacher's skills in building up excitement in her reading of 'The Silver Sword' led the pupils to a good understanding of the meaning of tension and suspense. A love of reading is evident in the enthusiastic manner in which many of the pupils read.
4. The standard of writing in Key Stage 2 is very good and the pupils attain high standards by the age of eleven. A wide variety of writing tasks lead the pupils carefully through the different stages of planning, editing and final drafting of their work. There are high expectations regarding the use of grammar. This was evident in the Literacy Hour in Year 6 where the pupils debated simple and complex sentences, clauses and connectives and evaluated each other's work. Spelling is taught systematically and every effort is made to extend and enrich vocabulary. Writing across the curriculum is particularly good and the pupils have many opportunities to use their skills in other subjects. This aspect is less evident at the beginning of Key Stage 1. However, expectations are particularly high at the beginning and end of Key Stage 2 where extended writing is a good feature in much of the work. This enables the pupils in these year

groups to consolidate and develop their writing skills very well and they make very good progress.

5. The national tests over the last three years show that pupils' attainment in mathematics has been consistently well above average at the end of both key stages. Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils make good progress overall and that their attainment is well above average by the age of eleven.
6. Scrutiny of the pupils' books indicates a high standard of work in mathematics. It is evident from the inspection that the pupils are not only very good at written calculations but their mental ability is also at a good level. By the age of seven, the pupils readily identify missing numbers from a hundred square, understand tens and units and many have good recall of number facts to 20. In Year 2, the pupils are set challenging tasks on place value and by the end of the lesson a few pupils are able to demonstrate how 3 digit numbers are comprised of hundreds, tens and units. Target cards are used well to challenge these pupils to extend their knowledge, for instance, by learning their 2x multiplication table.
7. The pupils make particularly good progress in Year 6 and by the age of eleven they have very good mathematical knowledge and understanding. In a lesson in this year group, the pupils demonstrated their good mental ability and their understanding of decimals as they successfully calculated the average of five numbers. By the end of the lesson they had gained a good understanding of mean and mode. Their broad range of attainment includes very good understanding of measures, fractions, percentages and angles. They have good recall of multiplication tables and are adept at computation.

The teaching is good overall and it is very good in Year 6.

8. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in Class 6 it is consistently very good. This is a strength of the school and it enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in most subjects, with very good progress being made in Year 6.
9. Throughout the school, the staff have created a secure and caring environment in which pupils are valued. The pupils' good behaviour and effort are consistently praised. The pupils are expected to work hard and behave well; and they do. This was evident in a very good Year 6 science lesson where the pupils, working in groups on different aspects of health education, used mature debate and their own initiative to organise themselves in order to produce work of a high standard. Relationships between pupils and adults who work in the school are good. Lessons are well planned, classes well-managed and resources well-prepared to ensure that lessons run smoothly. A particular feature of most lessons is the good working atmosphere created by the establishment of effective class routines by teachers who know their pupils well. Many lessons start with the teachers sharing the learning objectives with the pupils. At the end of the lesson the teachers establish whether these targets have been achieved or not.
10. The quality of marking varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. In the better examples, the marking is thorough and the teachers provide positive comments and offer suitable pointers for improvement. There are good procedures for the assessment and recording of the pupils' progress and attainment. The targets set for each pupil are used well by the teachers to monitor whether the pupils are making progress. Well planned homework, particularly for English and mathematics, makes a significant contribution to the pupils' progress in most of the classes. However, the provision of homework varies from class to class and does not always follow the homework policy detailed in the school prospectus.
11. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage (reception class) is good. The staff have a clear understanding of the way in which young children learn and work well as a team to provide a warm and welcoming environment in which pupils can feel secure and cared for. The teachers'

planning is very thorough and, despite the limitations of the space in which they work, children are provided with a wide variety of interesting learning opportunities that enable them to make good progress in most of the areas of learning. At the start of lessons, lively discussions are encouraged which help to increase both the pupils' vocabulary and their confidence in expressing opinions. They are expected to listen with courtesy to their teachers and peers, even when bubbling over with excitement about a story such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Clear instructions about the tasks to be covered and good classroom organisation encourage the children to begin work quickly and develop independence in collecting and returning equipment. There are a wide variety of experiences on offer to stimulate interest, encourage independent investigation and allow pupils to make choices. A group writes sentences about 'Jack and the Giant' and explains their ideas to the class teacher whilst another group, with the nursery nurse, explores shape and size as they use play-doh to model chips and sausages for Jack and the Giant's dinner. The children paint pictures of the story or re-enact it through role play. Computers are in constant use. Great emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

12. The quality of teaching in English is good. At the end of Key Stage 1 and at the beginning of Key Stage 2, teaching is particularly good and is directly responsible for the good progress being achieved in these classes. The very good teaching in Year 6 enables the pupils to make very good progress and achieve high standards by the age of eleven. Teachers plan work very carefully and, in the best lessons, it is well matched to the needs of all pupils, builds on previous learning, makes pupils think and provides the challenge needed to promote good progress. This was ably demonstrated in a Year 6 literacy lesson as pupils analysed a piece of text from 'The Silver Sword' by Ian Serraillier. Probing questions by the teacher brought forth a flood of excellent responses showing the depth of the pupils' understanding of the text. The very good skills in questioning pupils is a feature common to all teachers in the school and from the earliest lessons they are used to improve and extend the pupils' vocabulary; to encourage them to listen carefully and to give them the confidence to speak out in class discussions.
13. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good but there are variations between the classes. In the best lessons the teachers modify their questions to ensure that pupils of all abilities are involved and they encourage the pupils to explain the strategies they used to find their answers. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set time targets to ensure that the lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Although the plenary session is used well to assess and consolidate what has been learned in the lesson, not all aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy are so successful. The mental arithmetic start to some lessons is comparatively weak, either being too short or too slow.

The headteacher, assisted by supportive governors and a dedicated staff, provides effective leadership.

14. The good standards reported at the time of the last inspection in December 1996 have been maintained and in certain areas, particularly in teaching, considerable improvement has taken place. Standards at age eleven in English and mathematics have been consistently well above average over the last three years. This very positive situation has been brought about because the school is well led and managed and all of those involved are committed to improving standards. The headteacher effectively leads a hard working and dedicated staff. Good delegation has enabled most teachers to share responsibility for the co-ordination and leadership of subjects and other aspects of school development. Co-ordinators are responsible for financial and curriculum planning for their subjects and many monitor the teaching and learning in each class with a view to raising standards. The governors show great commitment to the school and are actively involved in supporting developments through a curriculum working group and committees for finance, personnel and buildings. The Chair of governors keeps a very good overview of the work of the school through his weekly visits.
15. The last inspection report expressed some concern about class management and control and indicated that teaching in approximately one in ten lessons was unsatisfactory. The headteacher

has played a very active part in improving these standards by observing and discussing each teacher's classroom practice through a rigorous monitoring process which has also included lesson observations by subject co-ordinators and governors. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the current inspection and in over 65% of lessons the teaching was good or better. Most of the issues raised in the last report have been successfully addressed. However, although the school's planning for improvement shows clearly how the school intends to move forward over the coming year, the detail required to achieve longer-term goals is still not included in sufficient detail.

16. The school's monitoring and evaluation of performance is constantly focusing on standards. In this context, the school has identified writing as needing improvement and has put in place a plan to bring this about. Inspection evidence confirms that this is being successful. Effective systems are also in place to monitor the pupils' progress through the school and to enable challenging targets to be set for them on a year-by-year basis. This process provides challenge for the teachers as well as for the pupils.
17. Although the ethos of the school is geared to sustaining and raising standards, great emphasis is placed on the children being part of a family group. At the meeting held before the inspection, parents were in agreement that the school has a family feel about it. This was evident at the school assembly to which parents were invited. The warmth of feeling shown at this gathering is reflected in the caring way in which all in the school respond to each other on a regular basis. This attitude is perpetuated well by the headteacher who is very supportive of staff and pupils and easily approachable by parents.

The pupils' personal development is well provided for by the school's very positive and supportive environment.

18. A strong Christian ethos guides all of the work of the school. The headteacher, governors and staff set out to provide an environment in which pupils can feel safe, valued and confident. There is a commitment to high standards in work and behaviour and pupils learn what it means to be a good citizen and to serve the local community. The staff are very good role models who treat their pupils and each other with courtesy and respect. Particular care is taken to ensure that there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they are well supported in all areas of the curriculum. The children behave well and are polite and welcoming to visitors. There are many examples of older pupils caring for younger children at playtimes and during the lunch break and a strong feeling of 'family' exists in the school. Involvement with the community is a strong feature of the school. There is support for many charities such as Christian Aid, Tear Fund and Comic Relief. Concerts are given for the elderly at Christmas and some events are open to the local community.
19. The achievement of all pupils is valued and celebrated. Good work is displayed around the school and in classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their successes, achieved in or out of school, during assemblies and in class discussions. Music has a particularly strong profile in the school and it makes a very good contribution to the pupils' cultural development. All pupils wishing to take part in choir practices are welcomed and there are many opportunities for them to perform. A large number of pupils are learning to play instruments; some with peripatetic tutors, others learning recorders with the school staff. During the inspection it was a great pleasure to hear a performance by part of the school orchestra and to observe the number of parents who came to add their support by joining in this assembly. The vicar of the parish is a regular visitor to the school. He is Chair of Governors and regularly leads assemblies.

The pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their work and behaviour.

20. The pupils' moral and social development is a strength of the school. They have a very positive attitude to learning and behave very well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They get on very well with adults and with other children of all ages. They take every opportunity to use their initiative and to take on responsibility. The small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour noted in Key Stage 1 during the last inspection is no longer a problem.
21. The pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is very good. In all classes, they are eager to learn and keen to take on challenging work. The children in the reception class become engrossed in their tasks and have already developed the skills to concentrate for an extended period. By the time they reach Year 6, the pupils have developed a very mature and responsible attitude to their learning, working very productively with a determination to produce high quality work. They get on well together and pool their ideas sensibly. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, the pupils worked exceptionally well in groups, allocating and sharing responsibilities fairly and maturely debating the issues involved. A similar willingness to co-operate is evident lower down in the school. Pupils in Year 1, for example, worked together in teams to move equipment safely and without fuss in a physical education lesson. Throughout the school, there is a purposeful working atmosphere. Most pupils are eager to begin their tasks, try hard to do their best, and work at a good pace. They are very confident about reading out their work and talking about what they have done. They evaluate each other's work sensitively and constructively.
22. The positive attitudes which children display in the classroom are mirrored in their behaviour around the school. The pupils have strong self-discipline and are able to meet the school's high expectations for behaviour at all times. In their dealings with others, pupils follow the very good role models of their teachers. They are polite and helpful. Lunchtime is a sociable affair, where children sit and chat amicably and they show patience and good manners as they queue for and eat their lunch. In the playground, the pupils make the best of the space available and play with an awareness of and consideration for others. The support which the oldest children give to the youngest ones is a particularly striking feature. Year 6 pupils cheerfully help staff by entertaining and tending to infant and reception children, and the younger ones take a delight in involving them in their games. At breaktimes and lunchtimes many pupils take on all sorts of responsibilities and activities offered by the school. There is an ethos of trust in the school, and the pupils honour that trust by carrying out their activities reliably and sensibly. Groups of pupils make the most of the chance to use the information and communication technology suite or the music practice room to further their interests and skills. Some pupils sell biscuits in aid of school fund whilst others look after the library in their spare time.

The pupils make good progress using the excellent information and communication technology suite.

23. The school has excellent facilities for the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). The ICT suite contains 16 computers with CD ROM and printing facilities and by being used by no more than 16 pupils at a time each pupil is guaranteed an extended period of hands-on experience. Each class has at least one session of concentrated teaching in the ICT suite each week. The good quality teaching (in the Key Stage 2 lessons observed) by a classroom assistant with very good subject knowledge enabled the pupils to make good progress in the acquisition of skills. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have had a broad range of experiences including word processing, completing spreadsheets, constructing and interpreting graphs, using art packages, accessing information from CD ROM and e-mail and control technology.
24. These excellent facilities and the teaching of skills on a regular basis has enabled the pupils, by the age of eleven, to reach the expected levels of attainment in ICT. However, much of the teaching in the ICT suite is not transferred to ongoing work in the classroom. This has led to some pupils becoming rusty in their use of skills previously learned, for example, word processing. The school recognises that the skills being learned in the ICT suite are not being sufficiently consolidated through their regular integration into classroom activities.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Writing in Key Stage 1 could be better.

25. The national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 reveal that standards in writing in Key Stage 1 have dipped over the last two years and in 2000 were only average. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the results show that the pupils' attainment in writing is below average.
26. At the beginning of the school year, the school identified concern about standards of writing, particularly in Key Stage 1, and an action plan was drawn up to address the problem. Inspection evidence indicates that although there has been a marked improvement in the pupils' work in Key Stage 1, especially that of the more able, expectations of the pupils' writing at the beginning of the key stage are too low. There is an over-reliance on worksheets which results in limited opportunities for the pupils to write at length and this constrains their progress.

There are weaknesses in the provision for outdoor activities for the children in the Foundation Stage (Reception).

27. There are restrictions placed on the delivery of the full Foundation Stage curriculum through inadequate resources. The reception classroom is cramped. There is no immediate access to an outside play area; the only sink in the room is too high for the children to reach and storage facilities are severely restricted.
28. The pupils are time-tabled to use the school hall for two sessions of physical education each week but there is no daily access to an area where they are able to develop their skills on climbing apparatus and wheeled equipment or to experiment freely with sand and water. The present arrangements for storing coats in a small cupboard in the classroom make it very difficult to establish satisfactory routines at the end of lessons as pupils go out to play or get ready for dinner. The governors are aware of these concerns and there are plans to improve the accommodation.

More effective use could be made of the school development plan to improve longer-term planning.

29. The school development plan clearly outlines proposed developments for the current year. These developments are appropriately related to the school's priorities and the effectiveness of their implementation can be judged against the outlined success criteria. Proposals are realistic and are properly costed in terms of finance, staff involvement and timescale. However, the school development plan covers only one year. It does not outline the school's longer-term view of its development so that identified needs can be planned and financed over a number of years.

Aspects of curriculum provision could be improved to ensure that all pupils get an appropriate balance of opportunities.

30. The teaching time allowed for science is at least 15% lower than the national average in both key stages. This may account for the fact that in the Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, the pupils achieved significantly lower standards in science than in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence also indicates that standards in science are not as high as in the other two subjects.

31. The school provides fee-paying peripatetic music tuition for the pupils across a range of stringed, brass, keyboard and woodwind instruments. This tuition is of a good quality and the pupils generally make good progress in learning to play the various instruments. This was evidenced at a school assembly where part of the school orchestra performed to a high standard. At the meeting prior to the inspection, parents were pleased with the opportunities offered by the school. However, there was concern that the children were missing the same part of the same lesson (often literacy or numeracy) each week. The inspection evidence points to a lack of flexibility in these arrangements and many pupils do miss the same lessons each week.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- ***Improve the standard of writing in Key Stage 1.**
(See paragraphs 25-26)
- ***Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage by improving the environment and by providing regular opportunities for outdoor play and climbing and balancing activities.**
(See paragraphs 27-28)
- **Use the school's planning for improvement more effectively to guide longer-term development.**
(See paragraph 29)
- **Review curriculum provision to ensure that all pupils get an appropriate balance of opportunities.**
(See paragraphs 30-31)

* Indicates action already planned, either in writing or informally, by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	11	50	35			

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)		218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		40

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

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.

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
	2000	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	16	16	15
	Total	30	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94(97)	91(87)	91(94)
	National	84(82)	85(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	29	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91(90)	91(94)	94(87)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(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
	2000	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	11
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	27	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87(97)	90(100)	87(100)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87(97)	87(97)	87(100)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	80(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	7
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	175
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	115

Financial information

Financial year	1999-00
	£
Total income	414,492
Total expenditure	401,157
Expenditure per pupil	1,938
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,335
Balance carried forward to next year	15,406

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	218
Number of questionnaires returned	113

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	48	4		1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	50	4	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	54	4		2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	42	22	6	2
The teaching is good.	49	44	3	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	50	21	3	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	38	5		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	2		2
The school works closely with parents.	34	51	14	1	
The school is well led and managed.	66	29	3		2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	41	3		6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	38	14	5	4