

INSPECTION REPORT

ELMSTEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Elmstead Market, Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115260

Headteacher: Mrs S W Grantham

Reporting inspector: Ms Ruth Frith
2490

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 2 May 2001

Inspection number: 192533

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Elmcroft Holly way Elmstead Market Colchester
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs N L A Ford
Date of previous inspection:	9 – 13 December 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Elmstead Primary School is a foundation school for boys and girls of all abilities aged 4 to 11 years. There are 215 pupils on roll, including 30 children in the reception class. The school serves the village of Elmstead Market which is situated a few miles north-east of Colchester but draws nearly a third of its pupils from outside the catchment area. The children generally come from favourable backgrounds and the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below the national average. The school site is shared with a nursery that opened last year and most children attend the nursery before starting school. Since the opening of the nursery, the school's records indicate that attainment on entry to the school has risen and in the current reception class, children showed above average attainment on entry to school. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and currently no pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most of the pupils with special educational needs who require regular additional support have moderate learning difficulties. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has just received recognition of its work by being awarded Investors in People status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Elmstead Primary School is a very good school with many excellent features and no significant weaknesses. It achieves high standards and serves the community well. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils are encouraged to work hard. The leadership and management of the school are excellent and manifest themselves in a strong commitment to raising standards while also offering a broad and interesting curriculum. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- When compared with all schools, results in national tests for pupils at the end of their last year in school are very high in mathematics and well above average in English and science.
- The quality of teaching is very good across the school for children of all abilities and is significantly enhanced by the good quality support provided by the teaching assistants.
- The school is a caring community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation in which pupils behave very well and develop excellent relationships.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and attendance is high.
- Procedures for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils are excellent.
- The quality of the curriculum and range of learning opportunities are very good.
- The headteacher provides excellent management and leadership and other key staff and the governing body ably support her.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and are very supportive of the staff and the work that they do.

What could be improved

- Outdoor play provision for children in the reception class.

There are no major issues for the school to address but in the context of its many strengths the above area for improvement should be considered.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996 when the quality of education provided and the standards achieved by pupils were good and the school's climate for learning was very good. Some aspects of the curriculum required improvement. The school has successfully addressed the key issues identified in the inspection report and improved on previous good practice. The quality of teaching has significantly improved and standards in English, mathematics and science at eleven are now above those reported in the last inspection. Staff have devised new policies and schemes of work, and developed a more consistent approach to assessing pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement. Consequently, teachers' planning has improved and this has led to the provision of tasks and activities better matched to the pupils' levels of attainment. Provision for higher attaining pupils is much improved. The school now has a clear Development and Improvement Plan, which guides the work of staff and helps to evaluate the school's effectiveness. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good and the school demonstrates a clear commitment to even further improvement.

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	C	C	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A*	A
Science	A	A	A	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

These results show that when compared to all schools, pupils achieved very high standards in mathematics which placed the school within the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards in English and science were well above average. When compared with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils achieved well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Over the last five years the school's rate of improvement overall in English, mathematics and science has been in line with the national trend and reflects the school's focus on maintaining high standards. In 2000, the school achieved well above its target for English and above its target for mathematics. Evidence from this inspection confirms that pupils in Year 6 are making very good progress and should maintain these high standards. They are expected to reach the realistic targets set. Children make very good progress with their learning in the reception year and by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the large majority of children at least reach the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning and a substantial minority achieve beyond these. Results of the 2000 standard assessment tests for seven-year-olds indicate that in comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils achieved well above average standards in writing, above average standards in reading and average standards in mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 are currently reaching well above average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve as well as they can and pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attainers achieve well. No significant difference was noted in the progress and achievement of boys and girls.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in what they do. They are proud of their achievements and talk confidently about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Staff set high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They develop in confidence as they progress through the school and become increasingly more responsible and independent. The excellent relationships within the school help to create a safe and stimulating learning environment.
Attendance	The attendance rate is well above the national average. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.

The pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development and their excellent relationships provide a good basis for their learning and make a positive contribution to the levels of attainment that they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Across the school, the quality of teaching is excellent in 7 per cent of lessons, very good in 54 per cent, good in 36 per cent and satisfactory in 3 per cent. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and reflects the high value which senior management place on appointing good teachers whom they then support well through a good programme of professional development. Staff are valued and helped to give of their best. They meet the needs of all pupils well. The teaching of children in the reception year is particularly effective in developing their personal and social skills and their attitudes to learning. These strengths are built upon successfully in the rest of the school where teachers continue to focus on developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy within a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers have adopted the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good at both key stages. Overall, pupils' learning is very good. The school targets valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and this results in their making good progress towards the targets set. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged. Teachers manage pupils very well and have high expectations of work and behaviour. Consequently, no time is wasted and pupils try hard to do their best. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The quality and range of learning opportunities presented to pupils stimulate their interests and maintain their concentration.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and progress well towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is excellent and provision for their spiritual and cultural development is very good. The headteacher is keen to ensure that by the time they leave the school pupils have a sense of responsibility for themselves and others and become positive members of society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's belief in 'valuing children' is well reflected in its work. Staff have very good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and make excellent provision for their welfare, health and safety. The care given to pupils is well reflected in the way pupils, in turn, respect and care for others.

Staff provide a wide range of activities which develop pupils' academic and personal skills very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and central to this is the aim to raise standards. She is very effective in appointing good quality staff and motivating a team with a shared sense of values and priorities. She is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and other key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and all statutory requirements are met. They are fully involved in the school development planning process and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school very effectively analyses its strengths and weaknesses in order to decide what needs to be done next and has a clear agenda for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The school manages and uses its resources very well, particularly in relation to teachers and support staff. Priorities for development are well prioritised and appropriately financed. Correct tendering procedures are followed and staff and governors seek to obtain the best value for their spending.

The success of the school stems from the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher and the very effective work of key staff and governors. All share a clear vision for the development of the school with a specific focus on teaching and learning.

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 are happy to go to school and make good progress. • The school promotes the raising of pupils' self-esteem well and they are helped to become mature and responsible learners. • The quality of teaching is good and teachers expect the children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents and they, in turn, feel comfortable about approaching staff. Parents are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority of parents would like the school to provide more activities outside lessons.

Inspectors endorse the positive views held by parents and the regard they have for the school. Inspectors understand the views of a small minority of parents who would like more activities outside lessons but judge the school to be providing a good range of activities. Every teacher is involved in at least one extra-curricular activity in addition to their formal teaching.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

When compared with all schools, results in national tests for pupils at the end of their last year in school are very high in mathematics and well above average in English and science.

1. When compared with all schools, pupils from Elmstead Primary School achieved well above average standards in English and science and very high standards in mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000. These results in mathematics placed the school within the top five per cent of schools nationally. Over the last five years the school's rate of improvement overall in English, mathematics and science has been in line with the national trend and reflects the focus that staff and governors place on maintaining high academic standards. In 2000, the school achieved well above its target for English and above its target for mathematics. Compared with schools with pupils from a similar background, pupils attained well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Evidence gained from observing lessons, talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are making very good progress and are in line to maintain these high standards and reach the realistic targets set.
2. Currently, pupils in the reception class most all of whom have previously attended the nursery show levels of attainment on entry to school which are above those found nationally. In previous years, before the opening of the nursery, this had not been the case and attainment on entry to school has been broadly average. Children make good progress with their learning in the reception class and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the large majority of children reach the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning, and a substantial minority achieve beyond this. Results of the 2000 standard assessment tests for seven-year-olds indicate that, in comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils achieved well above average standards in writing, above average standards in reading and average standards in mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 are currently reaching well above average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a small minority of pupils with special educational needs who, although making very good progress, may not reach the standards expected for their age. Overall, pupils achieve as well as they can.
3. The school has successfully implemented the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Currently, pupils are making very good progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils are encouraged to listen to the views of others and respond in a positive manner throughout the school. Teachers are particularly effective in improving pupils' speaking skills by extending their range of vocabulary and valuing what they say, not only in literacy lessons but, for example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson. Here, pupils were seen speaking confidently and sensitively about family life when they were encouraged to put forward their views to others in the class. The teachers' confidence in managing this session was a key feature in the development of pupils' skills. Above average standards in speaking and listening are seen throughout the school and reflect the teacher's respect for pupils and what they say. Pupils' reading skills are also developed very well, as shown in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher indicated how reading a text could be improved by pupils using their previously gained knowledge and understanding of punctuation to read with expression. In Year 6, most pupils read texts with fluency and accuracy, and effective questioning by the teacher helps pupils to appreciate how dialogue is used to create interest in a story. The high expectations of teachers ensure that pupils are encouraged to work hard to develop, and use, a wide range of vocabulary in their writing. The work on display and in their books indicates how pupils have carefully chosen appropriate vocabulary for the effect it has on the reader. By the time they leave school, pupils have had practice in writing for a variety of purposes and this helps to support the high standards that they achieve.
4. Most pupils make very good progress in mathematics throughout the school. The introduction of the numeracy lessons is stimulating pupils' interest, particularly in mental calculations, and they are gaining in confidence and competence. The good planning which covers all the elements of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good range of activities and teaching methods are key factors in pupils developing their mathematical thinking. In a Year 6 lesson, the high degree of pupil participation and brisk pace of learning resulted in them making very good progress and reaching levels of attainment which are well above average for their age. Teachers have high expectations and plan lessons with activities that build well on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. This, together with the very good use of mathematical language and use of practical examples to confirm and clarify learning points, results in pupils making very good gains in their learning.

5. The school allocates valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and this results in their making good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Work is well focused and develops the pupils' learning at a good rate. Teachers and teaching assistants are positive and encourage the pupils to do their best. Consequently, the pupils are keen to work and develop confidence in their learning. The school's provision for higher attaining pupils has improved significantly in recent years. These pupils are now well challenged and reach levels of attainment which match their abilities. For example, a small group of pupils in Year 6 are currently working at Level 6 in science. Most pupils make very good progress as a result of the high expectations of staff, the provision of a broad and interesting curriculum, and the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
6. Although lesson observations were not possible for each year group in each area of the curriculum, it was clear from talking with pupils and looking at their work that the good standards achieved in literacy and numeracy help them with their learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are achieving well in science throughout the school and reaching well above average standards in Year 6. Standards were good in many of the lessons observed, for example, in history in Year 3 and information and communication technology in Year 4.

The quality of teaching is very good across the school for children of all abilities and is significantly enhanced by the good quality support provided by the teaching assistants.

7. Across the school, the quality of teaching is excellent in 7 per cent of lessons, very good in 54 per cent, good in 36 per cent and satisfactory in 3 per cent. This quality of teaching represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the percentage of very good and excellent teaching observed and the lack of unsatisfactory teaching. A particularly pleasing factor is the spread of very good teaching across all teachers so pupils receive very good experiences regardless of which class they are in. Teachers' performance reflects the high expectations of the headteacher and the value that senior management and governors place on attracting good quality staff. Also, a good programme of professional development supports staff, and the regular monitoring of teaching and learning identifies teachers' strengths and areas for development. Teachers and teaching assistants are valued and encouraged to give of their best. All these features, together with the very strong team spirit present in the school and the strong commitment of staff, result in good practice.
8. The teaching of children in the reception class is very good. Staff have a clear understanding of how young children learn and provide a range of activities which support their learning and maintain their interests. They work well together to provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning which challenges all children appropriately and meets the requirements of the recommended curriculum for children of this age. Appropriate attention has been placed on settling children into school and they quickly develop very good personal, emotional and social skills, attitudes to learning and behaviour. A good balance is made between direct adult teaching and activities that encourage the children's ability to make choices and work independently or with each other. Children are encouraged to develop their literacy skills through a daily literacy session and through other activities offered through the school day. The children's speaking and listening skills were well developed by the teacher in a lesson when each child was given a 'special box' and was encouraged to talk about the contents to others in the group. This activity also provided good opportunities to develop the children's spiritual awareness through the wonder of opening the boxes to reveal the surprises inside. In another very good lesson, the teacher developed the children's creative and social skills well by providing an activity which related well to their work on fairy stories. The children made a 'Topsy Turvy Cinderella Doll' by joining materials and colouring. A pupil with special needs was effectively supported to take full part in this activity and was encouraged to develop her speaking skills through careful questioning by the teaching assistant and discussion with the teacher. Staff in the reception class have worked hard to change their practice in line with the new national recommendations and planning is good. Due to a lack of dedicated play area outside and a lack of resources, they are not yet able to provide a fully challenging outdoor play curriculum.
9. Children's strengths are built upon successfully in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, where the school focuses on developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy within a broad and relevant curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is very good. In Year 1, an additional teacher is provided to support lower attaining pupils and is effective in moving their learning forward. By the end of one session observed, the pupils were confident to write their own sentences as the previous work had been well structured to build up the pupils' understanding in a systematic way. In a

very good Year 1 numeracy session, the pupils developed their learning very well through the use of a number line and number square. Tasks were challenging and by the end of the session the pupils could correctly recognise and place numbers on a line up to 40. The careful questioning by the teacher ensured that all understood the tasks and consequently she was aware when to provide more challenge. In Year 2, the pupils' numeracy skills are further developed and in one lesson observed they showed a good understanding of number sentences involving addition and subtraction. Here, the teacher worked well with the lower ability group of pupils and ensured that they fully understood before setting them work to do on their own. Consequently, they were confident and made very good gains in their learning. In Key Stage 2, teachers build on previous good practice and continue to challenge pupils appropriately.

10. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can do. Staff have focused on developing the pupils' basic skills in a coherent way and have successfully used the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to meet the needs of pupils. The Literacy Strategy helps to engender an interest in stories and writing for a variety of purposes, and the Numeracy Strategy ensures that pupils get regular practice in using their mental mathematics skills. Additional booster classes have also been provided, which have supported the pupils' learning. Support teachers and teaching assistants work effectively alongside class teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in these areas.
11. In a Year 3 literacy session the presentation of work was good due to the high expectations of the teacher, and pupils were working well above the level expected for their age. Planning was good and the tasks set resulted in good story writing. In Years 4, 5 and 6, the quality of teaching was at least very good and occasionally excellent in all of the mathematics lessons observed. The teachers had high expectations of what pupils could do and planned work with clear learning objectives and activities which matched the pupils' abilities. In most of the lessons observed, teaching was energetic and enthusiastic and motivated the pupils well. The excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, and the teachers' good management of pupils' behaviour, allow a friendly and sometimes humorous atmosphere within the classes and encourage pupils to enjoy their learning.
12. As well as recognising the need to provide pupils with a good grounding in literacy and numeracy, the school is keen to ensure that pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum, which stimulates their interests and encourages a desire for learning. The teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology has developed well and they use the resources effectively throughout the school day to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils in Year 3 demonstrated above average levels of attainment in a lesson on databases where the teacher effectively moved around the class addressing any problems highlighted by the pupils. The teaching and learning in a Year 2 music lesson was particularly effective due to the good subject knowledge and confidence of the teacher who encouraged the pupils to understand how sounds and music can be used to create mood. In an excellent design and technology lesson in Year 5, the teacher's very good subject knowledge was used very well to plan a lesson with a range of activities which stimulated the pupils' interest regardless of their ability level. The very good preparation of the lesson and wall display resulted in practical activities which developed the pupils' problem-solving activities well. In a Year 3 history lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject acted as a motivating force for learning and resulted in all pupils making good progress in their understanding of Roman Britain.
13. One of the most significant factors in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection has been the identification of clear learning objectives, through careful planning, and the sharing of these with the pupils. In the best lessons, this helps pupils to understand the relevance of what they are doing and encourages them to work towards set targets. Consequently, pupils are aware of how they can improve their work and they are able to review their achievements at the end of the lesson. Teachers mark the pupils' work well and use the information gained from this to correct any misunderstandings and indicate to pupils how they can improve their work. This has enabled teachers to focus their attention on areas that are likely to make a difference to pupils' levels of attainment. Teachers are encouraging and this results in pupils becoming confident, keen to answer questions and put forward their own points of view. The comments made to pupils help to raise their self-esteem and give them a clear idea about how they can improve.
14. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good in English, mathematics and science, and the results of these assessments are used well to guide lesson planning. There is useful data collected from statutory and optional testing of pupils' attainment and results are carefully analysed to produce a picture of an individual's strengths and areas for development. This is used as a basis of predicting and target setting and for identifying pupils who for a variety of reasons may not be making expected

progress. They are then given appropriate support. Pupils are aware of their own targets, and they are involved in self-reviews of their attainment and progress along with their parents.

15. Additional support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and well managed. The smaller group size afforded by this additional support and the clear identification of learning needs result in these pupils making good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils in Year 2 were supported well and given tasks which built on their previous knowledge and understanding. The sensitive response of the teaching assistant created an atmosphere where the pupils were willing to 'have a go'. Consequently, they were sufficiently challenged whilst also receiving appropriate support. Booster classes are also provided for pupils who require additional support in order to raise the standards of their work to a higher National Curriculum level. A group of Year 6 pupils made very good progress in a literacy session when they were observed developing their writing skills. The well-structured approach taken by the teacher indicated a clear understanding of the pupils' strengths and areas for development, and her very good questioning and responses to their work developed the pupils' thinking well. The needs of higher attaining pupils are also well identified and their work is appropriately challenging. The pace of learning for these pupils in a Year 4 mathematics lesson was very good and resulted in pupils being stimulated to learn. They were expected to explain their thinking which gave the teacher opportunities to assess their understanding and extend their learning even further. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils within lessons.
16. Teaching assistants are seen as valued members of the teaching team and make a significant contribution to the work of the school and the progress which pupils make. They are well trained and supported and this results in a staff that is keen to do its best for pupils. Teachers and support staff take pride in the pupils' achievements through the display of their work. It is of a good standard and contributes positively to the raising of pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Communication within the school is good and adults act as good role models to pupils, who emulate their behaviour and attitudes. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.

The school is a caring community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation in which pupils behave very well and develop excellent relationships.

17. Provision for pupils' moral and social education is excellent and helps to support the working atmosphere evident throughout the school day. Communication between staff and pupils is positive, friendly and supportive. This results in pupils who feel valued and, in turn, value others and their property. Relationships are excellent and staff act as good role models in the way they interact with each other and the pupils. A key feature of successful practice is the way that staff set high standards of personal and social behaviour alongside those for academic excellence.
18. On entering school, pupils quickly become familiar with the school's policies and procedures and respond well to the expectations placed upon them. In the reception class, work is planned to maintain the children's interest and to develop their independence. Consequently, children quickly become involved and display good levels of concentration and application from an early age. Activities such as the 'Castle' develop their imaginative and social skills well, for example, when they act out the roles of King and Queen. Pupils' social and academic skills are further developed throughout the rest of the school when pupils are encouraged to play together and take part in activities such as those in Year 5. Here, pupils worked together in a design and technology lesson to discover differences in cams when studying moving toys. In this activity, the tasks were well planned to challenge all pupils and encourage them to work together to investigate how circular motion was turned into linear motion. Relationships between pupils were very good and they shared their ideas well.
19. Moral and social education is also developed through formal lessons where pupils are asked to respond to issues through, for example, the reading of stories, the study of key issues and through the daily interactions between staff and pupils. Pupils in Year 4 were observed during a very good lesson when they were encouraged to discuss the effects of humans on the environment. Pupils were confident to put forward their views and sensitively highlighted how certain environments had been damaged. The good range of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of interest further enhance pupils' social development by encouraging them to interact in a setting other than a formal lesson.
20. The school's expectations regarding good behaviour towards others are clearly outlined by staff and demonstrated by their daily interactions with pupils. Assemblies are used very effectively to confirm the school's expectations and to guide pupils in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They

are also used well to praise pupils either for their academic or personal achievements through the awarding of certificates and recognition of their efforts in front of the staff, pupils and parents. Pupils are proud to wear stickers, which have been awarded for their work and effort, and talk confidently about how well they have done. This reflects the staff commitment to valuing the child at all opportunities. These formal systems of reward encourage pupils to give of their best.

21. In classrooms, around the school and in the playground, the behaviour of pupils is very good. A key feature of the success of the school is the consistent approach adopted by all that work there. Staff are clear about the school's behaviour policy and implement it well. Pupils do not distinguish between teaching and non-teaching staff who are all seen as having equal status within the school community and relate to them very well. Pupils learn a good sense of personal and community responsibility, through participating in a variety of fund-raising activities.

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and attendance is high.

22. Responses from the parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils indicate that the vast majority of pupils like school. They are well motivated and respond positively to the teachers and the activities provided. They attend activities out of formal school hours where possible and this helps to develop their skills and also enhances their self-esteem and social development. Several pupils in Year 6 volunteered their very positive experiences about the school saying how they enjoyed lessons. They value the opportunities that they are given to learn and also the additional help they receive, for example, when preparing for the National Curriculum tests and assessments. The pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the very good attendance rate, which is well above the national average. Pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly. Consequently no time is wasted.
23. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and a reflection of the expectations of staff and the provision of a broad and interesting curriculum. Most pupils are eager to improve their work and have pride in their achievements. They were keen to identify their own work on display and talked about it positively. The quality of display in the school is very effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and also enhancing the environment. Pupils listen well to each other and to the teachers, and settle quickly to tasks when asked to do so. Pupils become increasingly independent as they get older. By the time they leave school, they are clear about what they should learn, work well on their own and have the confidence to ask for help when they need it. They show respect for the school, the people within it, and resources. Pupils indicate that they have a clear understanding of the importance of their own learning and most know how they can improve their work. This is supported by the way teachers explain the next steps to be taken in learning, through the marking of pupils' work and through the setting of targets. The pupils' very good attitudes to school and to their learning are key features in ensuring that they work as hard as they can and make very good progress.

Procedures for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils are excellent.

24. The school makes excellent provision to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The personal needs of the pupils are very well met. Staff who work in the school office and reception play a key role in dealing with issues raised by pupils and parents and provide a positive and friendly welcome on entering the school. Procedures for first aid are good and appropriate space is made in the school to provide for pupils who feel unwell. Teaching and non-teaching staff have a key role to play in celebrating the pupils' achievements and all are genuinely pleased when children do well. The reward system is very effective. Pupils are pleased when they receive praise and are keen to talk about their work. They speak very positively about the school and the staff.
25. Teachers and support staff have high expectations and they create a very supportive atmosphere where pupils are encouraged to do their best. All the staff know the pupils well and consequently are able to appropriately challenge pupils to do better, if they think that they can, and support them when they assess that learning is difficult for them. The needs of pupils are identified early and those with special educational needs are given appropriate support to help them make good progress. The school recognises the need to give further support for pupils who show particular abilities or talents. These pupils are identified and given appropriately challenging work within school. A small group of higher attaining pupils are currently working at Level 6 in science – a level well above that expected for their age.

26. At playtime, pupils are well supervised by adults. The midday meal supervisors know the pupils well and are aware of their responsibilities regarding health and safety and child protection. The school has an after school club and provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. This reflects the headteacher's and governors' aim of seeing the school as being central to the local community and providing an extended service to the children and their parents.
27. Staff have worked very hard to provide a building and site which are well maintained and provide a pleasant and safe environment. Pupils are encouraged to interact with the displays of pupils' work, books and artefacts. All classrooms are bright, cheerful and stimulating, thus suggesting that learning is fun and something to celebrate. The display of the pupils' work throughout the school indicates that the staff have pride in the pupils' achievements, it helps to improve the environment and raises the pupils' self-esteem.

The quality of the curriculum and range of learning opportunities are very good.

28. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a very good range of learning activities, which engage the interests of the pupils. Whilst staff are keen to ensure that pupils achieve well in the basic curriculum areas of English, mathematics and science, they are also anxious to ensure that children develop good knowledge, skills and understanding in other subjects. Improvements in the art and design and design and technology curricula, for example, have resulted in pupils developing good skills and producing work of a high standard. Pupils in Year 3, after comparing pattern from different times and cultures, produced some pleasing work in the style of Kandinsky. They were also aware of the reasons for the use of colour in Aboriginal art. Year 4 pupils when they use their imaginations to design and make chairs entitled, for example, Santa, The King and Football Fan produced some high quality work. The curriculum is also enhanced by a weekly French lesson for all pupils.

The headteacher provides excellent management and leadership and other key staff and the governing body ably support her.

29. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are excellent. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure good standards. She is fully committed to providing the best education possible and, with the support of governors, manages to attract staff who respond well to her high expectations: they work hard and do the best they can for the children in their care. A well-structured programme of professional support and training results in staff remaining aware of new developments and eager to improve their own practice. A very supportive atmosphere exists in the school where staff are able to ask for support when needed, and where all are willing to share their ideas and expertise. The programme of monitoring and review is systematic and the feedback after observing teachers' lessons is aimed at identifying and extending good practice. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set good examples through their own very good teaching. They have a good understanding of the pupils' needs and how they learn, and this is reflected in the school's practice, which encourages independence and learning through a range of activities. These features are well demonstrated in the school where an ethos of care and concern together with high expectations are evident. By the time pupils leave school they show a mature attitude and are sensitive to the needs of others.
30. The headteacher is particularly effective at team building and motivating staff. An outstanding feature of staffing is the strength of united teamwork that is noticeable on entering the school. It is purposeful and motivated, resulting in improving standards and a determined will to succeed. There is a strong emphasis on parity of esteem and all staff are valued and supported to achieve the best they can. There is a clear management structure and teachers are well aware of their roles and responsibilities. The views of staff are formally sought and they are encouraged to take full part in improving the school and their own performance. All have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development and ably assist the headteacher. Co-ordinators are well informed and effective in promoting their subjects and raising standards.
31. The school's aims of raising standards and improving the quality of education are increasingly reflected in its work. Good systems monitor pupils' progress and evaluate the quality of teaching. The school's tracking system, which indicates the gains that pupils have made in their learning, highlights that the vast majority of pupils meet the targets set by the school. A significant feature in the recent development of the school is the successful programme of target setting where both staff and pupils are clear about what the pupil has achieved and what they can do next to improve. Overall, the

headteacher has developed a culture of continuous improvement in which both staff and pupils try to do their best.

32. The school has successfully addressed the key issues arising from the last inspection and the school has made very good improvement. Governors give full support to the school and they and the headteacher have worked hard to raise standards and involve parents and the community. Governors have very good levels of knowledge and are well informed, which helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently and fulfil their roles very well. They have trust in the headteacher and staff. Governors, headteacher and staff continue to show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. There is an excellent culture of monitoring and target setting that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims. The School Development Plan sets a clear agenda for improvement and is the result of a good consultation process. The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and all statutory requirements are met. They have good control over the budget and have spent a considerable amount of time ensuring the best value for their spending. The school manages and uses its resources very well. This has resulted in the school providing very good value for money. The aims of the school are well met and the drive for high academic standards is effectively combined with very successful encouragement of pupils' personal development.

Parents have very positive views of the school and are very supportive of the staff and the work that they do.

33. Parents, through responses in the questionnaires and comments at the parents' meeting, expressed a high level of satisfaction. They believe that their children make good progress and that standards are very high across the school. Teachers were praised for the individual attention that their children receive, both socially and academically, and for the way in which teachers and support staff give freely of their time. The vast majority of parents say that their children like school and all think that staff help pupils to become mature and responsible. They believe that pupils are expected to work hard and, without being unduly pressured, achieve the best they can. Parents like the values of the school and the way in which individual achievement and good behaviour are promoted and recognised through the reward system. They stated that the school creates a very nurturing environment where the children are valued in themselves and encouraged to become confident in what they can do and achieve. Parents stated that the school had improved since the last inspection and continued to be well led and managed. They were aware that the headteacher will be retiring next year and stated that she will be missed as she plays a key role in communicating with parents and the local community.
34. Parents think that communication between home and school is good and are pleased with the active role of the headteacher who can be seen welcoming parents and pupils each morning. The school makes admirable efforts to involve parents in all aspects of its work and suggestions or concerns are dealt with quickly and treated positively by the staff. Parents feel well informed and are encouraged to support their child and the school through a variety of activities. The annual reports on pupils' progress are detailed and evaluative and indicate how pupils can improve. Attendance at meetings with teachers to discuss children's progress is very good. Parents are interested in the school and encourage their children to work at home. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning and the support that they give to the school are important factors in the progress which pupils make and the standards that they achieve.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Outdoor play provision for children in the reception class.

35. Staff have worked hard to develop the curriculum for pupils in the reception class in line with national guidance for children of that age. Planning indicates good coverage of a broad curriculum in most aspects and ensures that the children receive a range of learning activities which promote their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. Children receive regular physical education lessons and have access to outdoor play in the nursery for some periods during the school year. However, staff are restricted in their ability to provide good quality outside provision to encourage learning, due to the lack of dedicated play space and equipment. The children do not have an area in which to develop their skills of travelling under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment on a day-to-day basis, nor do they have sufficient opportunities to use equipment, such as ride-on toys.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Although there are no major issues for improvement, the staff and governors should improve outdoor provision for children in the reception class in order to develop the curriculum in line with the national guidance for children of this age.

(Paragraphs 8, 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

28

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	54	36	3	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)		215
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		29

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	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
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	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	19	19	17
	Total	32	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	100 (90)	94 (87)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	19	17	16
	Total	32	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (87)	94 (83)	91 (83)
	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	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	29	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (73)	97 (90)	94 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (77)	97 (90)	97 (93)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	184
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	2	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	30.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	453,349
Total expenditure	443,615
Expenditure per pupil	2,045
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,363
Balance carried forward to next year	32,097

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	130

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	28	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	75	25	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	82	17	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	42	7	0	1
The teaching is good.	82	16	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	23	5	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88	12	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	80	18	2	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	90	9	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	80	20	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	27	4	3	5

Other issues raised by parents

Parents stated that they were very satisfied with the school's provision and standards were very high. They believed that teachers worked hard to challenge the more able pupils and school funds were spent well to improve teaching provision. The art work in the school was said to be very good.

Responses were overwhelmingly positive. The headteacher was seen to be a key figure in the school's success and parents stated that she would be missed a lot when she retired.