

INSPECTION REPORT

**MERRY HILL INFANT AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Bushey, Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117090

Headteacher: Mrs M Kane

Reporting inspector: Mr G R Alston
20794

Dates of inspection: 15th – 16th May 2000

Inspection number: 191728

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
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Hertfordshire

Postcode: WD2 1BY

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Hammond

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	11
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Attainment in English and mathematics, particularly numeracy, is high. The most recent test results are well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. Results are much higher than those achieved by pupils from a similar background in other schools.

Pupils' behaviour is good; they form very good relationships, try hard with their work and accept responsibility well.

The quality of teaching is good; no teaching was unsatisfactory. Good assessment in English and mathematics enables teachers to build effectively on past learning and pupils' efforts and contributions are greatly valued.

The school provides a happy, caring environment, with many opportunities for pupils' personal development. Particularly good provision helps pupils develop socially and morally.

The headteacher and governors lead the school very well, and with the support of a conscientious team of teachers, successfully plan and evaluate the work of the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

16

By the time pupils leave the school, the quality of the presentation of their work and of their handwriting is not as high as their other language and numeracy skills.

The good assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics are not evident in other subjects. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand or what they can do in these subjects.

Coordinators do not regularly monitor the teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible; consequently, it is difficult for them to identify and evaluate areas for improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

18

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

19

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Merry Hill Infant School is an averaged sized Infant school with 176 pupils, ranging from four to seven years in age and a nursery with 50 children who attend on a part-time basis. There are very few pupils with parents from other cultural backgrounds or for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to a free meal is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special needs due to learning or behavioural difficulties is less than that found in most schools and pupils' attainment on entry is above the expected level. There is one pupil who has a formal statement of special needs. This is a popular school that in recent years has had additional classrooms and teaching areas added.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. It is effective because careful planning for future developments and purposeful evaluation of its work ensures that high standards are maintained and improved upon. The pupils achieve well in all aspects of their education. The quality of teaching is good, providing pupils of all abilities with challenging tasks. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher with the strong support of staff and governors and as a result gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English and mathematics, particularly numeracy, is high. The most recent test results are well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. Results are much higher than those achieved by pupils from a similar background in other schools.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; they form very good relationships, try hard with their work and accept responsibility well.
- The quality of teaching is good; no teaching was unsatisfactory. Good assessment in English and mathematics enables teachers to build effectively on past learning and pupils' efforts and contributions are greatly valued.
- The school provides a happy, caring environment, with many opportunities for pupils' personal development. Particularly good provision helps pupils develop socially and morally.
- The headteacher and governors lead the school very well, and with the support of a conscientious team of teachers, successfully plan and evaluate the work of the school.

What could be improved

- By the time pupils leave the school, the quality of the presentation of their work and of their handwriting is not as high as their other language and numeracy skills.
- The good assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics are not evident in other subjects. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand or what they can do in these subjects.
- Coordinators do not regularly monitor the teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible; consequently, it is difficult for them to identify and evaluate areas for improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in November 1996 the school has made a good improvement in the areas of concern highlighted in the report and all of them have been dealt with fully. The role of coordinators has been successfully developed. The influence of coordinators on developing their subjects and supporting teachers is having a very positive impact, especially in English and mathematics. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching by observing lessons and although some monitoring has taken place by coordinators there is no time allocated at present for them to do this. The school has plans to re-establish this practice. The school enriches the curriculum for pupils through an appropriate range of out of school activities. Through a planned programme of development, the school now has effective schemes of work in all subjects providing clear guidance for teachers. There are good assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics enabling teachers to gain a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do in these subjects. However, this good practice is not evident in other subjects and pupils are not regularly assessed resulting in little recorded evidence of their achievements. Teachers plan their lessons well. They identify carefully what pupils are to learn in the lesson. In English and mathematics they use assessment information purposefully to plan challenging work for pupils of all abilities. All these factors have helped improve the quality of teaching, which in turn has maintained the good standards pupils achieve, particularly in English and mathematics. The school is well placed to continue to improve and has a strong commitment to do so.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999		
Reading	A	A*	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	A	A*	A	A	
Mathematics	C	A	A*	A	

The information shows that results in mathematics are in the highest five per cent nationally, and in reading and writing are well above the national average. Compared to schools, that have pupils from a similar background, results are much higher than usual. Trends over time show a gradual improvement in mathematics, whereas results have been consistently above the national average in reading and writing. Results in mathematics are particularly good because of the way the school teaches the subject, providing many opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge and mental skills. The scrutiny of pupils' work and their performance in lessons indicate similar high standards in the current Year 2 class. There is no significant difference between the standards that boys achieve in comparison to girls. Results have risen over the past three years at a similar rate to that found in most schools locally and nationally in reading and writing, and at a better rate in mathematics. Standards in English and mathematics are sufficiently high. However, the quality of presentation of pupils' work and the handwriting skills of older pupils are not as high as their other language and number skills. In other lessons observed, appropriate standards were achieved in information technology and geography, and evidence from displays indicates pupils achieve well in art. The school has already met the high targets it was set in national tests and is on line to achieve future targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to learn. They settle quickly to tasks and concentrate well. They are proud of their school and give of their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour both in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils care for one another, showing respect for adults and other pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and pupils have a clear sense of responsibility. Relationships are very positive.
Attendance	Attendance levels are similar to most schools and pupils enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good.	N/a

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 teachers successfully meet the needs of all pupils. Across the school, all the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, and in almost one quarter of lessons the teaching was very good. The teaching seen was mainly in English and mathematics lessons. These subjects are effectively taught with strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The teachers provide good resources for pupils to use, set challenging tasks and make pupils feel valued. As a result pupils contribute confidently to lessons. Pupils are set appropriate targets, which they respond to positively by working hard and producing work that reflects their capabilities. The good teaching is instrumental in helping pupils to make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils follow a rich curriculum that meets their needs well. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy with lots of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. An appropriate range of out of school activities is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision: work is planned to meet individual needs. Effective support helps pupils to achieve the targets set in the areas highlighted in their education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Learning opportunities for pupils' personal development are good. Pupils work well together and independently. Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure, caring environment. Teachers know their pupils well, and good assessment helps teachers to build effectively on pupils' past learning in English and mathematics. Assessment in other subjects is not sufficiently well developed.

Parents support the school well, both in raising funds and by helping pupils at home or in school with their work. The school successfully keeps parents informed about the work of the school and of their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear sense of direction. There is a good team approach to decision making. Coordinators effectively manage their subjects. Teaching is monitored carefully by the headteacher, and from time to time by coordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and carry out their duties purposefully. They successfully monitor and evaluate the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school carefully evaluates its performance. Where areas have been identified, improvements are considered and implemented.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the money it receives well and deploys its resources effectively. The school gives good value for money.

The school considers carefully how it can get best value in purchasing equipment and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching • The behaviour of pupils • The progress pupils make • The management and leadership of the school • The information the school provides • The school helps pupils become mature and responsible • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework pupils receive • More activities out of school • Information about pupils' progress

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. It does not support parents' concerns. Homework is consistently given and supports pupils' learning. The school provides a satisfactory range of activities out of school and many pupils enjoy this provision. There is an appropriate written annual report that provides a clear picture of each pupil's progress and three formal occasions when parents can discuss their child's work with teachers. These arrangements are sufficient to keep parents well informed. An added bonus is the opportunity for parents to see teachers informally at the end of the day as they collect their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Attainment in English and mathematics, particularly numeracy, is high. The most recent test results are well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. Results are much higher than those achieved by pupils from a similar background in other schools.

1. In the 1999 national tests the proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reaching the expected level (Level 2) was above the national average in reading and writing and well above in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level (Level 3) was twice as many as usual in reading, three times as many in mathematics and four times as many in writing; really outstanding results. When compared with schools with pupils of a similar background the school's results are well above average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics.
2. All pupils show a keen interest in books and even the youngest children are happy to read a story from their reading book to an adult. In reception, when reading the story of 'Peace at Last' many children understood and incorporated the use of speech marks into their reading showing good expression. By the time pupils leave the school, the majority read fluently whether reading stories for pleasure or seeking information, for example when using a CD ROM, most Year 2 pupils confidently read words such as 'percussion' and 'pitch'. They display good skills in reading unfamiliar words and recognise when they have misread a word. When talking about the stories they have read the majority of pupils identify the main points and express their opinion about ideas. Pupils use the library frequently and have good library skills. They understand, and confidently use, the index and contents pages to find information from books and read the appropriate text well.
3. Writing skills are well taught across the school. In Year 1, after discussing how authors use language to create a setting, the higher attaining pupils are able to use their understanding of this in their own written work. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils express their ideas well in sentences, showing good skills in spelling and in the correct use of grammar. The higher and average attaining pupils plan their stories carefully so that they have a beginning, middle and end, and learn how to improve what they write. They write well imaginatively and select appropriate forms for different purpose. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects, for example when writing about Bushey in geography, famous people in history, such as Grace Darling, and highlighting the characteristics of animals in their local environment, in science. However, the standard of presentation of their work and their handwriting skills do not match the high standards achieved in other aspects of writing.
4. In the reception class, the children are introduced to challenging mathematical concepts such as estimation. The children show they understand what an estimate is and confidently guess the number of cupfuls of water to fill various containers, how many cubes to fill a grid or the number of words on a page. They record their estimate and then carefully count to see how close their guess is. Much of the number work is practical and the children use their knowledge and mental skills well in everyday practical situations.

5. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on practical activities and pupils are provided with many strategies to help them find answers to numerical questions. In a Year 1 lesson, for example pupils were able to choose the appropriate mathematical operation and mental strategy to solve written problems. In discussions with a partner pupils explained, 'We need to add the numbers because we are finding how many altogether' or 'I think we need to subtract because we are finding the difference'. In finding their answers pupils showed a good knowledge of number bonds to 10. By the time pupils leave the school, they have acquired good range of strategies for answering written numerical questions and are confident in mental recall of number facts. In a Year 2 lesson involving solving problems requiring the addition of two and three digit numbers, the pupils displayed a variety of strategies. Some pupils used doubling, others used their knowledge of number bonds to 10, a minority used rounding up to 10 whilst others take the larger number and add the smaller number after rounding it up to the nearest multiple of 10. The higher attaining pupils clearly explained their thinking and show an understanding of partitioning for example, $17+14 = (10 + 7) + (10 + 4) = (10+10) + (7+4) = 20 + 11 = 31$.
6. The high standards in reading, writing and number contribute significantly to pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is good; they form very good relationships, try hard with their work and accept responsibility well.

7. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils displayed high levels of interest in first considering and then applying different strategies to solve numerical problems. The teacher revised the strategies pupils had previously learnt and pupils could hardly wait for the opportunity to solve the problems. In the classroom, pupils listen attentively to their teacher as well as each other. They are very interested in their work, particularly when it provides them with challenge as for example, in a Year 2 information technology lesson, where pupils were excited but totally focused as they inserted a CD ROM to seek information for themselves. They are co-operative both in the classroom and at break and lunch times. Where teaching provides opportunities for paired or group work, pupils respond well, supporting one another with positive and kind comments.
8. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. Under fives are well integrated into the school and mix very well with all age ranges within the school. For example, at lunch times pupils of all ages interact harmoniously with each other. During the inspection period pupils were seen to behave well and quickly settled to work with positive effort. For example, in a reception class studying estimation, the mixed groups worked very well collaboratively, deciding what their estimate was going to be and checking how close they were. Pupils are courteous and polite both in the classroom, and in other areas around the school and grounds. They know the difference between right and wrong. They show respect for their own and other people's property and for their values and beliefs. There have been no exclusions from the school in recent years.
9. Relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves are very good. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of their pupils and pupils respond positively to being valued as individuals. This was evidenced by the polite and pleasant manner in which adults, including the inspectors, were treated both in the classroom and around the school. For example, in the dining hall at lunch time pupils were respectful to mid day supervisors and eager to explain the lunch time system to inspectors. Personal development of pupils is good throughout the school. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities, acting as classroom monitors, tidying up and helping the staff to

prepare. For example, before morning lessons begin, older pupils help in the classroom by putting out chairs for classmates and sensibly record which activity they would like to take in during "Golden Time" at the end of the week.

The quality of teaching is good; no teaching was unsatisfactory. Good assessment in English and mathematics enables teachers to build effectively on past learning and pupils' efforts and contributions are greatly valued.

10. In the previous inspection the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in four per cent of the lessons; this was mainly due to teachers not managing time and resources efficiently. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved; there were no lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory and in almost one quarter of the lessons it was very good. A number of factors have contributed to the improvement in the overall quality of teaching. The development of effective schemes of work has improved the continuity in the teaching and good assessment procedures in English and mathematics give teachers a clear picture of pupils' attainment. Teachers' short term planning has improved and lessons have clear learning objectives. The headteacher regularly evaluates the performance of all the teachers in the classroom and a professional dialogue follows on the strengths of the teaching and areas for improvement. The quality of teaching helps pupils of all abilities to make good progress in most lessons and to raise their levels of attainment.
11. A strength of the teaching is the ability of teachers to build on pupils' past learning. Good assessment procedures in English and mathematics provide teachers with a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers clearly state what pupils are to learn by writing the objective of the lesson on the whiteboard and sharing this with the pupils. At the end of the lesson, the teacher checks on whether pupils have achieved this. This was the case in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2 when pupils were exploring different strategies that they could use to solve numerical problems. The teacher began the lesson by discussing the various strategies the pupils had used in the past to solve addition problems. Pupils transferred these strategies well as they strove to find the solution to the written problems. They made good use of mental skills and their knowledge of number bonds. All lessons are well planned, cater for the needs of all pupils, have a clear purpose, include challenging activities and proceed at a good pace. In a good literacy lesson, reception children effectively developed their skills in prediction when they tried to guess what the title of a book might be after studying the cover. The teacher was skilful in assessing the children's needs and provided good support directing children on how to make sensible guesses. Discussion and questions were used to challenge pupils and check understanding. A strength is the great value teachers place on pupils' contributions for example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson as pupils discussed how they could change a statement into a question. The teacher skilfully used pupils' responses, whether they were correct or not, to help them develop their ideas further and to see alternative possibilities for example, 'Could you explain that a little better' or 'Have you thought about....?'. Good use is made of pupils' own experiences which often help pupils understand more easily and make their learning more meaningful.

12. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In a good art lesson in Year 2, the teacher effectively transferred his own knowledge of Picasso. At the start of the lesson, the teacher provided pupils with sufficient information through explanation and questioning to enable them to successfully appreciate the style of his painting. Planning is of a good standard providing effective coverage, balance and breadth. Teachers plan long-term for a period of weeks; this is particularly effective in year groups where their teachers plan together, ensuring pupils cover the same work. The management of pupils in the classroom is very good, and teachers achieve high levels of discipline. In English and mathematics, a variety of teaching methods are used effectively to achieve good levels of concentration by pupils, and create an industrious learning environment. Class teaching is very effective and successfully encourages and supports pupils, who as a result make good progress. In a Year 2 literacy lesson the teacher provided an interesting range of resources for all pupils to discuss in order to gain a clear understanding about statements and questions.
13. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and there is mutual respect. In the teaching of under fives, staff value greatly children's efforts and responses. They have high expectations of the children in all areas of learning. They plan appropriate activities carefully and intervene in the learning when necessary to challenge the children to make further progress and to improve levels of attainment. Homework is used consistently and supports the work in classrooms. The regular use of homework is effective in promoting the development of reading, spelling and number work. The reading diary provides a good link between home and school. Most parents are happy with the amount of homework given and expressed this view at their meeting with inspectors.
14. The quality of support that pupils with special needs receive is good. Individual education plans (IEPs) exist for all pupils who have been identified and placed on the special needs register. They are well planned and structured and identify appropriate and realistic goals. Good provision for pupils with special needs is made by planning tasks that are well matched to their needs, enabling pupils to make good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils who work in small groups with a specialist teacher and support staff make good, and at times very good, progress. For example, in a Year 1 lesson when pupils were learning about money, a good range of tasks and high expectations by the teacher motivated pupils well and pupils' comments of "I'm really trying hard" reflected their great effort. Pupils successfully completed the task and gained a clear understanding of the value of coins to 50 pence.

The headteacher and governors lead the school very well, and with the support of a conscientious team of teachers, successfully plan and evaluate the work of the school.

15. The school is very well led by a very conscientious headteacher, who provides a clear educational direction for the school. She sets a very good example to the school's community in upholding the ethos of the school and has the respect of staff, pupils, governors and parents alike. The headteacher has successfully implemented the introduction of monitoring of teaching, target setting and developing a team approach to curriculum management. Through her endeavours, the school has twice received an Investors in People award. This has helped bring about an improvement in the management of the school. There is a very effective management structure in place that leads to regular involvement of all staff through clear channels of communication. Teams of teachers share each curriculum area; this has proved to be particularly effective in actively involving all staff in the development of the school. In providing

professional support, the headteacher has built a loyal, hard working team who share her commitment to creating a happy, stimulating environment for its pupils.

16. A strength is the effective monitoring which takes place. The headteacher rigorously monitors teaching and curriculum development. Every term the headteacher monitors each class and discusses her findings with the class-teacher. This provides opportunities to exchange thoughts about successes, as well as to discuss areas of improvement to the quality of teaching. Coordinators have clear and realistic responsibilities that are laid out in their detailed job descriptions. Relevant targets set for the development of their area are a feature of the school's development plan. Appropriate structures exist for coordinators to monitor teachers' planning, give advice on, and develop their subject. Teachers complete an audit of their subject and produce a written report indicating areas of strength and areas in need of development. From this an action plan is created indicating how improvements can be made. This information is then shared with colleagues and governors and a review date is set. This has been particularly effective in English, where through classroom observation, areas of development have been identified and are being improved for example, extended writing. However, at present there is no time allocated for the monitoring of teaching by coordinators. As a result, it is difficult for them to evaluate improvements based on the success criteria they have identified. The school has plans to re-establish this practice.
17. Development planning is a strength of the school and involves the whole staff and governing body in the setting of relevant priorities and targets for the coming year. The format shows good practice. It successfully identifies key areas for development, is carefully costed and has criteria to judge success by. Progress on areas of development is evaluated carefully for example; the headteacher receives termly reports from coordinators on the progress made in the priorities identified in the development plan relating to its impact on pupils' performance. Adjustments are then made to the plan in the light of these evaluations where necessary; this creates a working document and an effective management tool.
18. The school has a detailed spending plan that is carefully linked to the development plan and consequently, the school uses the money it receives well. Educational developments are supported well through financial planning; for instance, large amounts of money have been spent on priorities such as literacy and numeracy. Members of the governing body are appropriately included in consultations and receive regular updates on income and expenditure. The headteacher and governors conscientiously evaluate the impact of spending. For example, as a result of monitoring, the school provided each class with its own classroom assistant to support pupils with special needs. As a result pupils with special needs are well supported and teachers appreciate the help they receive. Monitoring the progress of these pupils has shown how successful this provision has been. The modest surplus has been carefully acquired over several years by careful budgeting and is seen as a necessary security against the need to provide extra non-teaching support for pupils in order to raise standards further; this is a major priority for the school.

The school provides a happy, caring environment, with many opportunities for personal development. Particularly good provision helps pupils develop socially and morally.

19. The effective support and guidance shown to all pupils are features of the school. There is a strong principle of care, respect and consideration for others that parents value highly. Staff are very responsive and accessible to the pupils and show a genuine concern for their welfare. This very secure environment, where pupils are confident with adults, impacts favourably upon their progress. This progress is carefully recorded and monitored using well-formulated assessment procedures in English and mathematics. New pupils are sensitively introduced to the nursery and reception classes and quickly settle into a welcoming environment. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the school. Their progress is monitored regularly at termly review meetings.
20. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. There is a clear moral code for good behaviour and this is embedded in the teaching and life of the school. All staff provide excellent role models by setting a clear example. Pupils learn from the respect and consideration shown to them. Themes in assembly particularly support the shared values and principles, and opportunities are provided in 'Circle Time' when pupils discuss many issues. Opportunities for social development permeate every area of the curriculum and helps pupils develop high self-esteem and positive skills of social interaction. Their achievements are acknowledged with special certificates for good behaviour and positive attitudes. A strong incentive for pupils is 'Golden Time' at the end of the week when they choose an activity they wish to do in recognition of their hard work and good behaviour. There are many opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively in class, through extra-curricular activities and the visits that are planned during the year. A strength of the school is the way in which it encourages the pupils to take the initiative in lessons and to develop their interests further. Pupils begin to organise their own learning and to make decisions.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

By the time pupils leave the school, the quality of the presentation of their work and of their handwriting is not as high as their other language and numeracy skills.

21. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy strategy. Pupils are taught these basic skills well and achieve high standards. However, the quality of presentation of their work and the standard they achieve with their handwriting do not meet the high standard achieved in other aspects of their work for example, in their spelling, use of grammar and computational skills. Children are appropriately introduced to letter formation in reception classes and achieve a satisfactory standard. However, in Year 1 and 2 classes insufficient attention is given to further developing these skills and pupils do not regularly practice their handwriting. As a result on many occasions letters are not consistent in size and are not correctly joined. At times, pupils' work is poorly presented. In exercise books, pupils regularly cross out their mistakes, work is not dated and pupils do not have a clear format of how to set down their work; this is particularly so in mathematics. As a result, in mathematics pupils make mistakes in their computations and in English punctuation is not always used correctly.

The good assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics are not evident in other subjects. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand or what they can do in these subjects.

22. The school has good systems in place in English and mathematics to assess and record pupils' achievements. Current assessment procedures successfully reflect the National Curriculum level pupils have achieved. At the end of the week, teachers evaluate the pupils' work and record those pupils who have achieved the learning objectives and those who have not. This information is used to plan future work. The school has also introduced target setting for pupils, which has proved successful in motivating pupils. For example, the target in one Year 2 pupil's literacy book was 'to use more adjectives in my stories' or in another Year 2 pupil's book was 'to make sure I use capital letters and full stops in my work'. These procedures are well established in English and mathematics. However, this good practice is not in evidence in other subjects and pupils are not regularly assessed resulting in little recorded evidence of their achievements. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand or what they can do in these subjects. As many subjects are taught in termly blocks with long periods of time in between them it makes it difficult for teachers to plan lessons that effectively build on pupils' past learning in these subjects.

Coordinators do not regularly monitor the teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible; consequently, it is difficult for them to identify and evaluate areas for improvement.

23. Curriculum development is appropriately planned and monitoring systems are in place. This is mainly by the headteacher and coordinators who review areas of the curriculum through regular staff meetings and analysing teachers' planning. Coordinators have clear responsibilities laid out in their detailed job descriptions and relevant targets for the development of their area are a feature of the school's development plan. Appropriate structures exist for coordinators to give advice on and develop their subject. However, recently time has not been given within the school day to effectively monitor the teaching and learning of these subjects by coordinators. As a result, it is difficult to evaluate improvements based on the identified success criteria, for example, in design and technology - 'to monitor woodwork in each classroom,' or in information technology (IT) - 'to develop staff understanding of IT strands and improve continuity'. Equally it is difficult for coordinators to identify areas that could be improved. Last year the English coordinator monitored the teaching of literacy in all classes and highlighted important areas to focus on in order to improve. Based on these observations the school has revised how it organises the teaching of extended writing and the teaching of phonics, and as a result, both have recently shown improvement. The school has plans to re-establish a planned programme for coordinators to monitor the teaching of their subjects next year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

24. Overall, the school is doing well but further improvements can be made by focusing on:
- 1) further improving pupils' handwriting skills and raising the standard of presentation of pupils' work;
 - 2) extending the good assessment and recording practice established in English and mathematics into all other subjects;
 - 3) re-establishing the planned programme to allow coordinators the time and opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects at classroom level.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	21%	58%	21%	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 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	176
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	27

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	33	29	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	31
	Girls	28	29	29
	Total	55	56	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89	90	97
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	29	31
	Girls	28	29	29
	Total	55	58	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89	94	97
	National	82	86	87

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	3
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	108
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.46
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	401,331
Total expenditure	387,790
Expenditure per pupil	1,930
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,000
Balance carried forward to next year	58,541

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	44	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	49	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	45	16	2	9
The teaching is good.	55	35	8	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	44	19	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	6	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	52	15	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	49	44	1	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	48	20	5	10