

INSPECTION REPORT

PEARTREE SPRING INFANT SCHOOL

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117206

Headteacher: Mrs Irene Fielding

Reporting inspector: Ms Ruth Frith
2490

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th June 2000

Inspection number: 191907

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Munden
Date of previous inspection:	4 th November 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Peartree Spring Infant School is a community school for boys and girls of all abilities aged four to seven years. There are 241 pupils on roll including eight children aged under five. Overall, the area surrounding the school is not well favoured on a number of social and economic indicators in comparison with other parts of the local education authority and in relation to the country as a whole. The school serves a social housing estate and some parents have purchased their own houses. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. On entry to school, pupils demonstrate a wide range of attainment and have standards which are below the Hertfordshire overall average, with the weakest area being mathematics. There are few pupils from ethnic minority groups and this reflects the local population. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. There is an average percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the school, which includes one pupil with a statement of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Peartree Spring Infant School is a very good school. It achieves high standards and serves the community well. The quality of teaching is very good and encourages the pupils to work hard. The leadership and management of the school are also very good 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

- The school is a caring community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good and results in excellent personal development.
- Results in national tests and assessments for pupils at the end of their last year in school are well above average in reading, writing and science.
- Teaching is very good and supported by good curricular provision.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and their behaviour and relationships are very good.
- Management and leadership of the school are very good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and governors are strongly committed to the raising of standards and to continual improvement.
- Parents have positive views about the school and are pleased with the education it provides.

What could be improved

- Although relationships with parents are good, many do not play an active role in the life of the school or realise fully the importance of regular attendance on their children's learning.
- Although the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected for their age in mathematics at the end of the key stage is well above the national average, the percentage reaching the higher level is lower than that expected nationally.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in November 1996 found Peartree Spring Infant School to have many strengths. Since then, the school has successfully addressed the issues identified in the inspection report and has improved. Standards in reading and writing are above those reported in the last inspection and the school has maintained the high standards achieved in National Curriculum test results. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. Staff have developed their planning and reduced the complexity of classroom organisation and this, in turn, has improved the pace of learning. There has been more monitoring of teaching and the annual review now has a focus on teaching and learning. This has resulted in improvements in practice, for example, the more effective use of classroom assistants, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The leadership and management role of co-ordinators has improved and teachers are now more involved in the development, monitoring and resourcing of their subjects. Staff are now also more involved in the school development planning process. The quality of the headteacher's leadership and management is very good and the deputy headteacher and other key members of staff ably support her. Last year the school moved into new accommodation that had been built on the existing school site. This has resulted in a significant improvement in facilities.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	A	B	A	A
writing	A*	A	A	A*
mathematics	A	C	C	B

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 in 1999 the performance of pupils in reading and writing was well above the national average and in mathematics it was average. This shows an improvement in standards from the previous year in reading and a maintenance of standards in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with pupils of a similar background, the levels indicate well above average standards in reading and above average standards in mathematics. Standards in writing were very high and place the school's performance in writing in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Evidence from this inspection confirms that pupils in Year 2 are expected to maintain these high standards overall, although there is a slight decrease in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading. The school's standards are particularly impressive when taking into account the attainment that pupils demonstrate on entry to school, particularly in mathematics. Pupils' writing is of a very high quality both in their literacy lessons and in other areas of the curriculum. Handwriting and presentation reflect the high expectations which teachers have of their pupils and the very good quality of teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are interested in what they do and keen to talk about their work. They are proud of their achievements and try to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is excellent. They develop in confidence as they progress through the school and become increasingly more responsible and independent. The very good relationships within the school help to create a safe and stimulating learning environment.
Attendance	Just below the national average. Although there has been an improvement in attendance overall, a significant number of pupils still take holidays in term time. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.

The pupils' very good behaviour and relationships and their excellent personal development provide a good basis for their learning and make a positive contribution to the standards that they achieve. Staff have high expectations of their pupils who, in turn, respond well. The pupils' attitudes and values are strong features of the school

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to five years	aged 5 to 7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

The quality of teaching was excellent in 15 per cent of lessons observed, very good in 42 per cent, good in 20 per cent and satisfactory in 23 per cent. This quality of teaching represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and is a key factor in pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. Teachers manage pupils very well and have high expectations of behaviour. Staff are particularly effective in developing pupils' independent study skills. As children are encouraged from an early age to get their own resources and equipment when necessary and work as hard as they can, no time is wasted and pupils try to do their best. When questioned, pupils are confident, keen to answer and put forward their own points of view. The comments made to pupils, and the good use of marking, raise pupils' self-esteem and give them a clear idea about how they can improve. Teachers help pupils to understand the relevance of what they are doing by sharing with them the learning objectives for each lesson and encouraging them to review their achievements at the end of the lesson. The teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and meets their needs well through targeted work in class and individual or group work when appropriate. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make progress similar to that of their peers. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is particularly effective in English and mathematics both in specific literacy and numeracy lessons and in other areas of the curriculum. Teachers are effective in the way they set work for pupils to do at home, which maintains their interest and builds on the work they have done in school. During the inspection, supply teachers were well supported in their teaching with the under fives which enabled them to maintain good standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is well planned and provides a rich educational experience for pupils. Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' literacy skills across the whole curriculum. They also provide opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience in regular concerts. No formal extra-curricular activities are provided at the end of the school day but pupils have the opportunity to take part in activities at lunchtime.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and progress well towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The management and organisation of provision are good and staff work well as a team to provide a high quality experience for these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils make progress similar to others in the class due to effective teaching, which ensures that they have good access to the full curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development through the promotion of spiritual awareness, knowledge of social and moral responsibilities, and the experience of cultural activities is very good. Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent and a key factor in sustaining pupils' very good behaviour in school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff have very good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and make very good 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 and the environment.

The headteacher, staff and governors are keen to ensure that pupils experience a rich and varied curriculum as well as successfully meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum and other

national initiatives. They are also keen to ensure that pupils develop into polite, courteous and independent learners. This is achieved by good planning and effective care and support systems.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The leadership and management of the school play a key role in the promotion of high standards. The headteacher, senior staff and governors form a strong and effective team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their roles well and have been particularly effective in assisting the headteacher and staff in managing the smooth transition into the new school. They support and work with staff effectively. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good in analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the school and deciding what needs to be done next.
The strategic use of resources	The school manages and uses its resources well and priorities for development are 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 strong senior management team and effective governing body, who share a clear vision for the development of the school with a specific focus on teaching and learning. Pupils come into the school with below average levels of attainment. They are well taught and this results in pupils having excellent attitudes to learning and personal development, very good behaviour and relationships and high academic standards by the time they are seven years old.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and they make good progress. • Behaviour in the school is good; the school is helping children to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good and the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best. • The school is well led and managed. • The new school building and increased focus on security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities. • Links between home and school. • Information about how their child is getting on.

Inspectors endorse the positive views held by parents and the regard they have for the school. Teaching in the school is of a high quality and results in pupils behaving very well and working hard. The school is effective in transmitting strong positive values and pupils enjoy their learning. Leadership and management of the school are very good and have been particularly effective over the last two years during the period when the new school was being built and pupils moved into the building. The inspection team believes that the school has good relationships with parents but more could be done to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's learning. Parents receive sufficient information about their children's progress and are encouraged to contact staff either in person or by telephone if they have any concerns. Staff provide a broad curriculum during formal school hours but do not currently provide extra-curricular activities after school. However, they do ensure that pupils have a sufficient range of games and equipment to play with at lunchtime and extend the curriculum, for example, by regularly providing opportunities for pupils to perform in school productions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is a caring community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good and results in excellent personal development.

1. The school is a caring community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation and is enhanced by the very good relationships evident throughout. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good overall and helps to support the calm and peaceful atmosphere. On entering school pupils quickly become familiar with the school's policies and procedures and respond well to the high expectations placed upon them. Respect and tolerance for others are displayed by pupils in the way they work and play together. They share resources well and spontaneously help others, for example, by holding doors open and clearing up at the end of a lesson. Pupils are particularly impressive in the way they browse in the library when choosing a book and ensure that the area is left in a good condition. These aspects reflect the headteacher's belief that Peartree Spring Infant School is a school in which all pupils, regardless of ability and need, can learn and make progress within a calm, stimulating and supportive learning environment. Pupils are articulate and very positive about the school. They have a strong sense of belonging and are proud of the work that they do. They feel safe and well cared for. The aims of the school are well met and the drive for high academic standards is effectively combined with other aspects of personal development.
2. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own feelings and emotions through sessions in the school's personal, social and health education programme and these, in turn, help pupils to understand how others feel. During a citizenship lesson, pupils in Year 2 listened well to the story 'It's Not Fair' and from this were able to understand the feelings of the characters and how difficult situations could be dealt with. Pupils are also encouraged to record their own feelings and emotions through, for example, writing poems entitled 'If I Were the Snow' and 'If I Were the Sun'. Pupils' spiritual development is further enhanced by the good quality of assemblies, which contain an act of collective worship and opportunity for reflection. Music in assemblies is used effectively to create a strong sense of community and to develop pupils' responses to a range of composers. When pupils sing together they do so with enjoyment and enthusiasm and this results in a high quality performance. As well as gaining an appreciation of their own culture through specific lessons in English, history and geography, pupils are encouraged to look outward to other communities, for example, by listening to visiting speakers and seeing African dancers whilst on a visit to this country. Teachers also place a high priority on ensuring that pupils become involved in a range of musical and artistic events.

Results in national tests and assessments for pupils at the end of their last year in school are well above average in reading, writing and science.

3. Compared with all schools, Peartree Spring Infant School attained well above average standards in reading, writing and science and average standards in mathematics in the National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven-year-olds in 1999. When compared with similar schools, pupils attained well above average standards in reading and above average standards in mathematics. Standards in writing were very high and placed the school's performance in writing in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Evidence gained from observing lessons, talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that pupils in the current Year 2 are likely to maintain these high standards overall, although there is a slight decrease in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading. These standards are a reflection of the very good quality of teaching and the pupils' excellent attitudes to learning.
4. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use the different sections of the sessions to maintain pupils' interest and develop their learning. High standards in speaking and listening are seen throughout the school as pupils gain in confidence and are encouraged to put forward their views on a range of subjects. The youngest children quickly learn how to listen to others and put forward their views during 'Circle Time' when they talk about their favourite tasks in school. They give others time to talk and show respect for those who are speaking. Pupils in

Years 1 and 2 listen well to the teachers and each other and demonstrate by their answers and actions that they have clearly understood.

5. Children are confident when learning to read and this results in most pupils enjoying reading. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, the teacher successfully stimulated the pupils' interest in books by showing them her own favourite books and by talking about her reading experiences. Pupils were then encouraged to ask her questions on the books and her reading habits. By doing so, pupils gained a good understanding of a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and how important reading is in some people's lives. This development of pupils' responses to reading is, in addition, very well supported by a structured approach to phonics and pupils very quickly relate the letter, or group of letters, to the sound that they make. By the end of the key stage, pupils read fluently and expressively and are confident to tackle unfamiliar words. Also, by the end of the key stage pupils' writing is of a high quality and clearly reflects the policies adopted by the school, such as the use of joined script from an early age and the constant encouragement pupils receive to write on a range of subjects. In the best lessons, the high expectations of teachers ensure that pupils are encouraged to work hard to develop and use a wide range of vocabulary: the work on display indicates how pupils have carefully chosen appropriate vocabulary for the effect it has on the reader. In a very good Year 2 lesson, which was a session additional to the daily literacy hour, the teacher had high expectations of the quality of work required. She effectively asked questions and gave examples of writing which encouraged pupils to try hard and improve their own work. At the end of the session, pupils confidently read their work, which indicated a good use of vocabulary and interesting words that connected sentences well. By the time they leave school, pupils have had much practice in writing for a variety of purposes across the curriculum and this helps to support the very high standards that they achieve.
6. The introduction of the numeracy lessons is stimulating pupils' interest, particularly in mental calculations, and pupils are quickly gaining in confidence and competence. Teachers have been successful in ensuring that the majority of pupils reach the level of attainment expected for their age but fewer than the average percentage of pupils reach a higher level at the end of Year 2. However, pupils in Year 1 are already indicating higher than average attainment for pupils of a similar age nationally as a result of the school's focus on raising standards. Teachers generally have high expectations and plan lessons with activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Activities also maintain the children's interest, as in a reception class when numbered carpet squares were used well to identify and order numbers to 10. In two Year 1 classes, pupils were able to choose three items for a packed lunch and add the cost of these correctly by using a range of strategies. The teachers' effective questioning resulted in pupils explaining how they undertook the calculation and developed their strategies for doubling, halving and adding 10. In Year 2, pupils develop their skills further when calculating money problems. Overall, the good use of mathematical language and use of practical examples to confirm and clarify learning points result in pupils making good gains in their learning.
7. Pupils make good progress as a result of the high expectations of staff, the provision of a broad curriculum and the pupils' very good behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils reach above average standards in science in Year 1 as seen when they were making comparisons between different types of paper towel when studying absorbency. Subject specific language is used well by the teachers and pupils, in turn, use a good range of vocabulary when recording their findings. The pupils' understanding of the scientific process is further developed in Year 2 when they are asked to predict, set up a fair investigation and discuss their results. Here, very good learning takes place due to the high expectations of the teacher, very good questioning and the challenge of the task.

Teaching is very good and supported by good curricular provision.

8. Teachers are conscientious and hardworking. They have addressed the key issues identified in the last report well, and improvements in teaching, particularly in planning and classroom organisation, have resulted in a better experience for pupils. Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, some good writing can be found in the pupils' science work in Year 1 where they create 'The Big Book of Growing Seeds' and in mathematics across the school when pupils write strategies for solving problems. The pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in science.
9. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, particularly in literacy, numeracy, science and music. Teachers use their knowledge well to plan lessons which build on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding and provide activities which capture the interest of the pupils and extend

their learning. Pupils in a Year 1 literacy class experienced a good range of activities and were clearly delighted when told about one activity to improve spelling and understanding of phonics. 'I love the magic bag game,' exclaimed one pupil and the class settled quickly to take part. A particular good development since the last inspection is the way in which teachers clearly identify learning objectives for each lesson and share these with the pupils. Consequently, pupils are clear about what they will learn and have the opportunity at the end of the lesson to think about the progress they have made. Teachers are aware of the individual needs of their pupils and plan to ensure that the targets from the pupils' individual education plans are considered, particularly in literacy sessions. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs, particularly when they are working directly with teachers or classroom assistants. Pupils benefit from the personal attention they receive; this stimulates their learning and they make very good progress towards the targets set. Little additional support is currently needed for pupils who come from homes where English is not their first language. They respond well to the activities provided and make progress similar to that of their peers.

10. 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. Good cross-curricular links are made and learning in one subject is often consolidated or developed in another. Although not all areas of the curriculum were seen being taught during the inspection, it was clear from a scrutiny of display and pupils' work that they achieve above average standards in many subjects. Most pupils say that they enjoy art and are proud of the good standards that they achieve. This is a result of a good programme of activities, which systematically develops the pupils' skills and responses to a range of artists. Art is used well to support other subjects. Pupils achieve high standards in singing and are able to perform confidently in front of an audience. The high quality of pupils' singing in Year 2 reflects very good teaching over time which has developed pupils' diction and expression well. The teacher's expectations are very high when pupils prepare for the Year 2 Leavers' Performance and pupils work at an optimum pace. They acquire new skills, quickly learn new words of songs, show great interest and understand what they can do to improve. Learning is excellent in the drama element of the performance and reflects the teacher's excellent knowledge of the subject, clarity about the expected learning outcomes and the good assessment of the pupils' abilities and talents.
11. Staff say that they enjoy working in the school and are encouraged to be involved in its development. An example of this can be seen in the work of the science co-ordinator when planning a school environmental area: this project has recently been awarded funds from the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust. Staff are fully involved in the school development planning process and the writing of school policies. Support staff are seen as valued members of the teaching team and make a significant contribution to the work of the school and pupils' progress. Teachers have made the most of opportunities to develop their skills through planning in year groups and sharing experiences in school, which result in good support for new or inexperienced teachers and also ensures consistency across each year. Communication within the school is very good. These factors result in a staff which is keen to do its best for pupils and colleagues. Teachers and support staff take pride in the pupils' achievements through the display of their work. It is of a high standard and contributes positively to the raising of pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

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

12. Pupils are well motivated and respond very well to the teachers and the activities provided. Their attitudes to learning are excellent; they are eager to improve their work and have pride in their achievements. Pupils listen well to each other, and to the teachers, and settle quickly to tasks when asked to do so. They show very high levels of independence, which reflect the high priority the school places on encouraging this when children enter school. Pupils 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 and resources and display care for living things, such as the duck nesting in the outdoor play area. Pupils indicate that they have a clear understanding of the importance of their own learning and most know how they can improve. This is supported by the way teachers explain the next steps to be taken in learning and through the marking of pupils' work. The pupils' excellent attitudes to learning are a key feature in ensuring that they do as well as they can and consequently often make very good progress.
13. The school's expectations regarding good behaviour and courtesy towards others are clearly outlined by staff and demonstrated by their daily interactions with pupils. Teachers display by their responses that they like the children in their care and have very good relationships with

the pupils. 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. Formal systems of rewards encourage pupils to give of their best. In classrooms, around the school and in the playground, the behaviour of pupils is very good. Pupils play harmoniously and the school grounds and play equipment provided at lunchtime and playtime are instrumental in maintaining pupils' very good behaviour.

Management and leadership of the school are very good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and governors are strongly committed to the raising of standards and to continual improvement.

14. 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 has a very good understanding of how young children learn and this is reflected in the school's practice, which encourages independence and learning through a wide range of practical activities. This is also reflected in the way the new school building has been developed, for example, in the provision of a stimulating outdoor play area for the under fives. The headteacher is supported well in her views by staff and governors. She has a strong senior management team and the skills and expertise of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are well complemented. The headteacher is outward looking, keen to take on new initiatives after evaluating their effectiveness; and does so enthusiastically. The introduction of the school's handwriting policy several years ago has resulted in high quality standards over recent years. She helps colleagues to become fully involved in school improvements, stays up to date with developments and offers support when necessary. At the same time, she encourages staff to lead developments and take responsibility for key areas for improvement. The role of co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection and they now have greater responsibility for the development, monitoring and resourcing of their subjects.
15. Governors contribute well to the effectiveness of the school. They have a good level of knowledge and a good range of expertise, which help them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They have trust in the headteacher and staff, make regular visits to the school and use the information gained from these visits to inform their decision-making. The governing body was newly constituted at the beginning of the year when separate infant and junior school bodies were required. Governors have responded to this well and continue to extend the good relationships with Peartree Junior School. Senior staff and governors are reflective practitioners who are aware of possible changes in the future that need to be planned for. They have good control over the budget and have identified sensible priorities for spending, following savings made on maintenance costs over the last two years. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school is evidenced by the smooth transition of staff and pupils into the new school building during a time when there was long-term staff absence and a significant change in teaching staff. The high standards of leadership and management identified in the last inspection have been maintained.

Parents have positive views about the school and are pleased with the education it provides.

16. Although few parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection, those that did and those who completed the parents' questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction. Their perception is that Peartree Spring Infant School is a good school. They believe that the school aims to help children become independent, to give them a good education and to make school a happy and enjoyable place. They state that it is '... a positive school where pupils are expected to achieve good results and have good manners'. The vast majority of parents think that their children like school and are making good progress. Parents like the values of the school and the way in which individual achievement and good behaviour are promoted and recognised. The quality of teaching is seen to be good and good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. Parents like the new school building and in particular the greater attention placed on security.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Although relationships with parents are good, many do not play an active role in the life of the school or realise fully the importance of regular attendance on their children's learning.

17. Parents are supportive of the staff but formal links between home and school are under-developed. Parents do not regularly attend assemblies or help out in school activities. While

opportunities exist for parents to contact staff and discuss their children's progress, a small minority would like to see an improvement in this area. A substantial minority would like to see extra-curricular activities provided after school and some would like a wider range of school trips and activities. It is the belief of the inspection team that some parents are not fully aware of the school's provision overall and that these two topics might be suitable areas on which the school could gather parents' views more formally.

18. Despite the school's frequent reminders to parents on the importance of pupils' regular attendance on their learning and the standards they achieve, a significant number of parents still take holidays in term time. This has a detrimental affect on pupils' progress as they may miss significant areas of new learning and also affects the teachers' work as they have to ensure that pupils who have missed lessons have sufficient support to continue with their work on return to school.

Although the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected for their age in mathematics at the end of the key stage is well above the national average, the percentage reaching the higher level is lower than that expected nationally.

19. The school has identified the need to raise standards in mathematics and has responded positively to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. This is beginning to improve pupils' learning throughout the school but pupils in Year 2 have not had enough time to benefit from the new scheme of work and methods of teaching. Although provision for higher attaining pupils is generally satisfactory and in some lessons it is good, more able pupils could be further challenged in some numeracy lessons. The school has a formal system for identifying pupils' levels of attainment and setting individual targets for improvement. Teachers now need to use this information to focus greater attention on those pupils capable of reaching the higher levels in mathematics.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

20. This is a very good school with no major weaknesses; there are therefore no key issues. However, the following recommendations for further development should be considered:
- Build upon the good relationship with parents by encouraging them to play a more active role in the life of the school and to realise fully the importance of regular attendance on their children's learning. (Paragraphs 17, 18)
 - Improve the attainment in mathematics by identifying those pupils capable of achieving the higher attainment levels and use the information gained from this activity to provide work which is sufficiently challenging. (Paragraphs 6, 19)

Senior management have already identified the need to raise standards in mathematics through its school development planning process.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
15	42	20	23	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)		241
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR –Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		47

English as an additional language

	No. of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	40	47	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	40	40
	Girls	46	46	45
	Total	86	86	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	99 (97)	99 (95)	98 (95)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	40	40
	Girls	46	46	46
	Total	86	86	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	99 (95)	99 (96)	99 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	228
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y R – Y 2

Total number of education support staff	13.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	436,867
Total expenditure	420,729
Expenditure per pupil	1,761
Balance brought forward from previous year	104,149
Balance carried forward to next year	120,287

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

241

Number of questionnaires returned

48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	33	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	42	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	58	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	50	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	62	31	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	48	8	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	25	12	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	40	40	19	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	40	50	6	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	4	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	4	35	29	10	21

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents are very pleased with the new building.
- Parents believe that support for pupils with special educational needs is good.