

INSPECTION REPORT

**NEWTON ON TRENT C of E PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Newton on Trent

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120578

Headteacher: Mrs Chris White

Reporting inspector: Tom Shine
24254

Dates of inspection: 19th – 20th June 2000

Inspection number: 192123

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Newton on Trent Lincoln
Postcode:	LN1 2JS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Rhys Prosser
Date of previous inspection:	21 st – 23 rd January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small voluntary Church of England primary school, serving the village of Newton on Trent and surrounding areas. It has 65 pupils on roll aged 4 to 11 and is organised into two classes, with under-fives and Key Stage 1 in one class and pupils in Key Stage 2 in the other. The gender balance is broadly even. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities, but there are 18 pupils with special educational needs (SEN) – 28 per cent, which is above average. Two of these have statements of SEN. Attainment on entry fluctuates significantly because of the small size of any given cohort, but is broadly average. The reception intake this year, on the other hand, is above average. There is significant pupil mobility, with over 14 per cent joining the school other than at the usual time in the last full year. Most pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are broadly favourable with the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Newton on Trent is an effective school, achieving good standards. Good teaching and the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, very ably supported by the staff and governing body, who all work well together, ensure that the school achieves its aim *to help all its pupils to fulfil their true potential*. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By age eleven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average and are also above average in mathematics.
- Ninety per cent of teaching is good; ten per cent is very good. High quality questioning and purposeful teamwork and planning are particularly strong features of this positive teaching.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership that focuses on the achievement of high standards and is very effectively supported by her staff and a well informed governing body.
- Pupils of all attainment levels are highly motivated to learn; they have very good relationships with all members of staff and with each other.
- The school provides high quality support for pupils with SEN, who make very good progress.

What could be improved

- Information and communication technology (ICT) is insufficiently used to support other areas of the curriculum.
- The attendance rate is below the national average.
- There is a lack of clarity and consistency in the use of homework.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very pleasing progress since its last inspection in January 1997. The school is led by its third headteacher since then, the current headteacher having been in post since September 1998. She is to be congratulated on taking a very positive lead in bringing about substantial improvements to the weaknesses identified in the last report. For example, all subject schemes of work are now in place and the quality and consistency of work for pupils in Key Stage 1 is much improved because of effective collaborative planning that is now evident. This, together with improved monitoring arrangements and assessment procedures to evaluate the quality of work in the classrooms, has measurably enhanced the quality of teaching. All statutory requirements are met, including those for child protection and governors are now involved effectively in monitoring the work of the school.

STANDARDS

The usual table showing results in English, mathematics and science for 11-year-olds is not included here, as there were fewer than 10 pupils, aged eleven, entered for the National Curriculum tests in 1999. In practice there were no more than 8 pupils entered for the tests and this makes comparisons unreliable, both with national averages and similar schools, that is, schools with a comparable proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. This is because intakes to the school are rarely stable in terms of ability year-on-year and small variations to a cohort, as in the number of SEN or gifted pupils, can lead to disproportionate percentage changes in the results. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven, only 6 pupils were entered for reading and mathematics and 7 for writing. Pupils' performance was in line with the national average in reading and writing, but was below when compared to similar schools. In mathematics, results were well below the national average and were very low when compared to similar schools. The school was disappointed by these results, believing that the cohort was capable of better things and attributes the results to the under-performance of some pupils on the day. There is evidence to substantiate this view showing that these pupils, currently in Year 3, are performing at high levels, much beyond what their performance in the tests last year would have predicted.

The results for pupils aged eleven, when only 8 pupils sat the tests for English, mathematics and science, show that standards in all three subjects were well above average compared to the national picture and were above compared to similar schools. The judgement about progress however, is a difficult one as only 4 of these pupils were at the school at age seven. Inspection finds that children under five make good progress and standards in the cohort for pupils aged seven are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. At age eleven there are only 5 pupils in the cohort, some of whom are on the school's SEN register, although the nature of their needs is not all related directly to learning. It is not, therefore, possible to make direct comparisons with previous years' results. Nevertheless, inspection finds standards to be above average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. Standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. At age eleven, standards in mathematics are above average. In this short inspection there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very positive towards learning and their teachers. They enjoy school, are keen to take part and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good in and around school, including break-times and lunchtime.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with all members of staff. They willingly take on responsibility for school and classroom routines.
Attendance	The attendance rate was well below the national average. The rate of authorised absence was well above the national average.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are positive features, contributing to pupils' effective learning. The main reason for unsatisfactory attendance is the taking of holidays in term time; the school is intending to take action to discourage this.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching has improved since the last inspection when the overall standard was satisfactory, with some very good lessons and some that were unsatisfactory. Findings from this inspection show that in the lessons seen, there were no lessons that were judged to be less than good. Indeed, 90 per cent of teaching was good with 10 per cent very good. Teaching was good for the under-fives and in both key stages, overall, and is the main reason pupils have made good progress by the time they are ready to leave the school. Throughout this small school, teachers have a good grasp of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and teach these skills well.

Good questioning that effectively challenges pupils to recall their previous learning and to use it to solve further problems is directed well to all groups of pupils. In a school with only two classes covering the under-fives and both key stages, a high degree of good planning is required to ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met. Teachers and support staff plan very well together and work as effective teams to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, most pupils make good progress. The quality of support staff for both SEN and general support is exceptionally good and these pupils make very good progress. ICT is not used sufficiently as a tool to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum and homework is not given consistently throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, reasonably well balanced and meets statutory requirements, although ICT is not used consistently throughout the curriculum. Music provision is good. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and visitors, including parents who willingly give of their time, and by a reasonable range of activities outside school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is very good. Support provided by teachers and classroom assistants is very effective and well co-ordinated and pupils make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, this is good. Opportunities through the curriculum and elsewhere ensure that pupils' personal development is enhanced effectively through good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school provides very high levels of care for its pupils.

The school provides an effective curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. All staff know the children very well and ensure that their individual needs are fully met. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of all pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' skills in ICT are developing, but the school is right to identify this as an area for continuing reinforcement and development in its forward plan for the academic year 2000/2001. In this small school, teachers and other adults know the pupils very well and are quick to identify their needs as soon as they develop.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be, identifying <i>respect, responsibility and improvement</i> as the key values in the school. Her excellent leadership qualities have enabled her staff to evolve as a cohesive and effective team, fostering learning and creating an impressive ethos in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body are very well informed and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very effectively. They are committed to maintaining high standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. Teachers and other staff know their pupils very well and track their progress effectively. Governors monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their initiatives on the quality of standards achieved.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very effective use of specific grants, for example for SEN.

The headteacher and her staff, well supported by the governing body, provide very clear educational direction for the work of the school, and are successful in achieving the aim *to offer a happy, caring and stimulating environment with equal opportunity for all our pupils*. Governors are much more actively involved in the work of the school since the last inspection. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable. • It has high expectations. • The school is well led and managed. • Helps pupils become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The range of activities outside school.

Inspectors strongly support parents' positive views. A significant minority of parents, both in the questionnaire and at the meeting, were not entirely satisfied with homework. Some would like to see it increase as children move through the school and all would like a consistent approach taken to homework. Inspectors agree with these comments. Some parents would like a broader range of outside school activities, for example cricket and tennis, and others would like the existing activities open to younger pupils. Inspectors found the range of activities to be very reasonable given the size of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By age eleven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average, and are also above average in mathematics.

1. There are only 5 pupils in Year 6, some of whom are on the school's SEN register. Whilst the school's threshold for access to SEN support is generally lower than in many schools, with some pupils, therefore, benefiting from support they would not receive elsewhere, the school nevertheless has done well by these pupils. Because of a large proportion of pupils with SEN in the cohort the standard is not as high as in 1999, for example, when the National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics were well above average compared to the national picture and were above when compared with similar schools. Because of the small cohorts there are fluctuations in results year on year, but, taken together, the overall standard is above average, with the general trend in results over the past four years broadly reflecting the national trend.
2. By age seven, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. These standards are better than the 1999 National Curriculum tests might indicate, when the overall standard in reading and writing was broadly in line with the national average and well below in mathematics. However, only 6 pupils took the reading and mathematics test and 7 pupils took the writing test. The results were below the school's assessment of the general standard of the cohort and attributes what it considers disappointing results to the performance of some able pupils who did not perform up to expectations on the day.
3. Throughout the school, teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills which are above average. In all lessons, pupils listen well. Teachers give good emphasis to technical vocabulary. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils used vocabulary such as *partitioning*, *place value*, *tens*, *units* and *hundreds* with confidence and understanding. Many of these opportunities arose in response to the teachers' good questioning. In Year 6, for example, the teacher asked the class: "*Embellished? What does it mean?*" A girl confidently replied, "*Things have been added to in a story*". In a mathematics lesson in the same class, pupils studied *probability*, the teacher asking: "*Who can think of a way of describing an even chance?*" After a momentary pause, a boy in Year 6 replied clearly: "*When the captains flip a coin at the start of a football match.*" These confident responses to many such questions derive from the very good relationships between the teachers and their classes and engender in the pupils the confidence that their responses will be valued and respected.
4. By age eleven, pupils read well, their skills being above average. Both when they read on a one-to-one basis and to the class they show accuracy, read with fluency and expression and are able to explain the meaning of what they have read. Most pupils have positive attitudes to books and reading. They are able to name their favourite authors and can define what attributes of books appeal to them. They have good understanding of some of the technical aspects of books; for example, they know the meaning of *blurb* and can tell the difference between *index* and *glossary*. They have good research skills and can find books on specific topics by using the school classification chart.
5. There is appropriate emphasis on the use of literacy to support pupils' learning in other subjects. In a religious education lesson, for example, one pupil in Year 6 wrote: *We ask God for his help because we know that God created us and the world around us.* Writing is above average for pupils aged seven. There is good use of imagery: "*He looked high and low*". Higher attaining pupils make very good use of punctuation: *'And when the sea came in Alfie said, "You must have missed me."*' By age eleven, the overall standard is in line with national expectations. This is because, in a very small cohort, there is a significant proportion of pupils achieving below the expected level as their learning needs are mainly language-related. However, they are very well supported and make very good progress. By age eleven, most pupils' handwriting is in a good cursive style. Higher attaining pupils' narrative writing, both descriptive and creative, is very good. In commenting on the potential opposition to proposals

to place an industrial development on a *green field* site, a pupil wrote: *"The point in protesting is to see which side wins, the factory or leave the field alone."* An average attaining pupil uses punctuation well, including speech marks in good, descriptive writing: *"Watch out...I stepped away, it came closer and closer. What could I do? I tripped up, then I knew I was doomed. I screamed as loud as I could."* Below average attaining pupils are still struggling with their general presentation, handwriting, spelling and punctuation.

6. By ages seven and eleven, standards in mathematics are above average. Numeracy is emphasised well. Most pupils make good progress and SEN pupils respond well to the high quality support and make very good progress. At age seven, pupils are very secure in adding and subtracting two-digit numbers. They are rapidly developing increasing confidence in their knowledge and understanding of place value, identifying the correct values in three-digit numbers. Pupils benefit from the daily mathematics lesson and the teacher's quick-fire questioning increases their mental dexterity effectively. They count in tens to one hundred confidently and count down in tens starting at 95. High attaining pupils use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20. By age eleven, the overall standard in this small cohort is above average. Pupils have a very secure grasp of mathematics in general and numeracy in particular. Evidence from pupils' past work shows a wide range, including work on fractions, decimals, percentages, ratio and proportion. In *handling data*, many have a very good understanding of the situations in which estimates of probability are based. In one mathematics lesson for example, pupils were reviewing their understanding of the probability scale of 0 to 1. The teacher said; *"There is a one in two chance of a boy coming through the door into the classroom."* In response to this, one pupil astutely replied: *"But what if there are more girls than boys in the school?"* to which others in the class nodded in agreement. This showed their understanding that the probability of likely outcomes depended on a number of variables remaining constant.

Ninety per cent of teaching is good; ten per cent is very good. High quality questioning and purposeful teamwork and planning are particularly strong features of this positive teaching.

7. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. In ten per cent of lessons it is very good. Teaching has much improved since the last inspection when it was judged to have been satisfactory, overall, but there was some unsatisfactory teaching. The main reasons for this improvement can be attributed to improved lesson planning and monitoring of teaching. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, including the strategies for literacy and numeracy, the teaching of which is good throughout the school.
8. The quality of questioning pupils is consistently high. This challenges pupils to recall the work they have previously learned and then to build on it to solve further problems. These questions also enable the teachers to evaluate accurately pupils' understanding and recall of concepts previously taught. In the class for Key Stage 1, for example in mathematics, the teacher asked: *"Who can tell me what we did yesterday?"* This gave the children the opportunity to display their knowledge and the teacher to gauge their understanding of the concept of odd and even numbers. In the same class the pupils were working on market research as part of their preparation for their *Ice Cream Parlour* open day. She wished to evaluate their understanding of the meaning of the concept *slogan* used in marketing. *"When we have a poster we have an important name for a few words. Does anybody know?"* In the event nobody did, and the teacher spent the next few moments explaining clearly what it meant, reinforcing the children's learning by asking them for examples: *"Who can give me short snappy slogans?"* Similar challenging questions were heard in Key Stage 2, reflecting the teacher's high expectations and getting the best out of pupils. In an English lesson, pupils studied a text recounting the journey of Hercules to find the garden of *Hesperides*. In introducing the text she said to the class: *"I want you to help me out here. What's the difference between Myth and Legend?"* A stimulating discussion then followed, in which the class responded well to the challenging questioning, skilfully led by the class teacher.
9. The teachers plan well and this reflects their commitment to high standards. Planning contains clear learning goals and these are made known well to the pupils. In a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2, the class teacher announced: *"Today we are going to learn how to express probability as a fraction."* The lesson then followed a clear structure in which this aim is

effectively achieved. The school is well staffed with support assistants both for SEN and general support that make a very impressive contribution to pupils' learning. This is because they are fully involved in the planning process and are, therefore, fully prepared, under the direction of the class teachers, to support their pupils to enable them to give of their best. In the responses to the questionnaire, parents were very happy with the quality of teaching. On the evidence of this inspection their confidence is well founded.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership that focuses on the achievement of high standards and is very effectively supported by her staff and a well informed governing body.

10. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has a very clear vision of what sort of school Newton-on-Trent should be and has the necessary leadership and management skills to achieve it. When she was appointed less than two years ago, she realised that due to instability in management, arising from a number of changes of headteacher in a short space of time, the morale of the whole staff was very low. She quickly sought to raise this, knowing that the ultimate aim of focusing on high achievement could not be realised, if the staff was not working effectively as a team. Morale is now very high and this has been achieved formally through staff professional training and staff meetings and informally through her own example, acting as a good role model. The headteacher believes her strength is "to be able to get staff to work as a team, acknowledge differences, but accept that the strength comes from working together with good humour." She encourages her staff to take risks, to try out ideas and not to be afraid of failure. This is reinforced by the catchphrase "Stickability" which is prominently displayed throughout the school. The headteacher defines this as meaning: "you keep going, through thick and thin, no matter what." Based on the evidence from this inspection this mantra is observed well. Staff know they are valued and in return they provide good, loyal support in the running of this effective school.
11. Because she teaches in both classes for part of the week she is well placed to monitor standards in the classrooms. In addition formal monitoring takes place through statutory and non-statutory National Curriculum tests. Pupils' progress is effectively tracked and appropriate action taken when necessary.
12. The governing body is well informed and is very effective in shaping and supporting the school and providing an overall sense of direction. During the previous headteacher's period of office, it was not sufficiently involved in the work of the school and soon realised how quickly a school could change in a short space of time. It has taken the criticisms in the last report very seriously and is now very aware of what is going on. In addition to the appropriate committees, there are governors with an oversight of key curriculum areas, such as literacy, numeracy and SEN. It is very involved in the preparation and review of the school development plan. Whilst they are very supportive of the headteacher and value her leadership skills, they have not lost sight of their role as a *critical friend* and believe they call her to account. For example, governors visit the school regularly to monitor and evaluate the individual subjects for which they have responsibility and report back to the full governing body. This helps to ensure that it has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The chair of governors visits the school frequently to discuss progress with the headteacher.
13. The headteacher writes that: "*The main strength of the school is the school team and the commitment to working as a team.*" In this she includes the children, parents, teaching and support staff and the governing body. The ethos in the school is a harmonious one and reflects the good working relationships that the headteacher has successfully re-established. Parents value the leadership and management of the headteacher, and feel that she inspires confidence. A recent overseas visitor remarked: "*This is a little school with a big heart.*" This is a view with which inspectors would find it difficult to disagree.

Pupils of all attainment levels are highly motivated to learn; they have very good relationships with all members of staff and with each other.

14. The headteacher's claim in the school brochure that its pupils are well motivated is fully borne out by inspection. All pupils respond very well to good teaching and enjoy learning. They remain focused and concentrate for long periods of time, for example during the literacy and

numeracy sessions. In a music lesson in Key Stage1, the children were given the opportunity to choose their instruments to accompany the sounds described in Shirley Hughes' poem *Noisy*. The potential for some disruption was present, but the pupils remained very motivated to do their best and remained on task. This was because the teachers, including the headteacher who was present, managed to hold the class's attention, partly because they involved *all* pupils in the tasks, but also because they had developed good habits of concentration. This lively session ended with a quiet, reflective moment, when pupils continued to show high levels of motivation and tranquillity, listening well to taped music quietly accompanying the sea gently lapping on the shore.

15. There are a few pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties who, left to their own devices, would not show as much motivation and stick to their tasks as well as their peers. However, the good support these pupils receive from the classroom assistants and, on occasion, parents as voluntary helpers, directed overall by the very good classroom management skills of the teachers, ensures that a purposeful working environment is maintained in the classrooms. This reflects the headteacher's view that: "*Stickability is the cornerstone to the school's culture and we like to think that all our children reflect this in their attitude to learning*". Inspection finds that they do. In the responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting, parents said they were very happy with the attitudes of their children promoted by the school.
16. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very positive and there is a strong sense of community in the school. Children help one another appropriately. In a literacy lesson in Year 2 for example, a girl was seen willingly to offer to write words in a younger child's wordbook. At the end of an assembly, the children generously applauded the recorder players who accompanied the hymn. Teachers, support staff and parents who freely give of their time, work very well together. Pupils accord all adults in lessons the same degree of respect.

The school provides high quality support for pupils with SEN, who make very good progress.

17. Provision for SEN pupils is very good and this is the main factor contributing to their very good progress. This level of provision has improved since the last inspection when it was described as good. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), and is knowledgeable and well-informed. She shows great concern for pupils as individuals, making sure that their needs are met within their own community as far as possible. For example, a child in a wheelchair attends the school for two half-day sessions a week who otherwise is on the roll of a special school. The headteacher emphasises that provision for children with SEN is the responsibility of all staff in the school and works closely to ensure that it is tailored to meet these pupils' needs. Class teachers work well with very skilled classroom assistants, who are fully aware of the targets in pupils' individual education plans.
18. The school also works effectively with outside agencies provided by the local education and health authorities. The school's commitment to raising the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties is reflected in its decision to buy-in provision for a half-day a week for a teacher from the *Learning Support Service*. From a very tight budget, this is considered to be more than most other schools in the county, but represents money well spent. The governor with responsibility for SEN is a professional in the field and is clearly fully aware of the needs of these pupils and monitors provision well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Information and communication technology (ICT) is insufficiently used to support other areas of the curriculum.

19. At the last inspection it was reported that “every teacher uses information technology successfully to support different subjects”. From this inspection it would be difficult to reach the same judgement. A small ICT suite networked to the Internet has recently been opened and pupils make good use of this. Because of limited accommodation, a classroom assistant gives effective support to small groups to improve their skills, whilst the class teacher remains with the rest of the class. Older pupils are also allowed the use these facilities during the lunchtime to access information from the Internet related to the projects on which they are working, for example the *Ancient Greeks*.
20. However, apart from these sessions, there are few planned opportunities for pupils to consolidate and develop their skills and there is insufficient use of ICT to support other subjects, including Literacy and Numeracy throughout the school. Word-processing is underused as a tool to support pupils’ drafting skills and ICT generally is focused as a subject rather than as a tool to be used to access ideas and experiences across the broader curriculum. Greater use of ICT will be easier to achieve when additional funds become available, including those due from the *National Grid for Learning*, to ensure that computers are in all classrooms and are available to be used on a daily basis.

The attendance rate is below the national average.

21. The attendance rate is well below the national average of 94.1 per cent. This is because the authorised absence rate is above the national average and depresses the attendance rate. Although there are signs that attendance has improved recently, absences are mainly due to holidays being taken in term time, with some long-term sickness also contributing. In a small school, a few pupils’ absence can have a disproportionate effect on percentages and the school cannot be blamed for sickness. However it could do more to discourage holidays being taken in term time and the school is addressing this.
22. At the parents’ meeting, parents said that taking pupils out of school on holiday was quite common because of the cheaper cost of package holidays during school time. However, this practice deprives their children of valuable school time. Currently, the school brochure does not take a firm enough line to promote attendance, including discouraging parents from taking such holidays.

There is a lack of clarity and consistency in the use of homework.

23. In the responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting a significant minority of parents expressed some concerns about the use of homework and the school’s general policy for homework. Whilst there were differing views on a number of issues, there was general agreement that homework should increase as children move through the school. Others felt that there was no clear pattern to homework and all agreed that it should include a balanced approach. Inspectors agree with these views.
24. Currently, the homework statement in the school brochure is too vague and leaves too much discretion to individual teachers, leading to inconsistency in provision. It does not meet the guidelines from the *Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)* regarding the time that is recommended to be set. Parents have a right to know what the policy is and to have it applied consistently. The school has reviewed its homework policy and the draft now meets *DfEE* guidelines and provides a clear framework for homework. The school intends to consult with parents or carers on this draft with a view to issuing the final version in time for the new academic year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

25. The school should now:

- extend the use of ICT to enable pupils to support their work in other subjects, especially Literacy and Numeracy throughout the school (*paragraph 20*);
- take appropriate measures to improve attendance including encouraging parents not to take holidays in term time (*paragraphs 21 and 22*);
- consult with parents on the draft homework policy and redraft as necessary to ensure that it meets *DfEE* guidelines and is given consistently throughout the school (*paragraphs 23 and 24*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	10
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	90	0	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	65
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

The usual tables showing results in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged seven and eleven in 1999 are not included because there were less than 10 pupils in both age groups and the results of such small cohorts would be unreliable.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.5
Average class size	9.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	150,730
Total expenditure	147,728
Expenditure per pupil	2,344
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,750
Balance carried forward to next year	23,752

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	65
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	30	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	31	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	51	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	44	15	7	0
The teaching is good.	62	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	45	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	20	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	23	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	36	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	36	18	8	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

These responses indicate general strong support for the school. Areas of concern centred around homework and the range of activities aside school. Inspectors found there is not clear guidance given about homework and note that a draft policy is ready for consultation with parents. They found that the range of out of school activities is as much as could be expected in a small school.