

INSPECTION REPORT

ABBOTT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collyhurst, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105387

Headteacher: Ms Heather Riley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lesley P A Clark
25431

Dates of inspection: 25 - 26 June 2001

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Livesey Street Collyhurst Manchester
Postcode:	M40 7PR
Telephone number:	0161 834 9529
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Haggett
Date of previous inspection:	9 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Abbott Community Primary School is average in size with 190 pupils on roll aged from three to eleven. The school is very close to the centre of Manchester and serves the local district of Collyhurst as well as the adjacent area of Ancoats. The area has many social problems and there is an unusually high turnover of pupils due to the transient nature of the local population: approximately 50 per cent of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual during any one year. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals fluctuates between 70 and 80 per cent, which is extremely high compared to the national average. Forty per cent of pupils have special educational needs and two per cent have statements of special needs: these proportions are above average. Twelve pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Currently ten per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school roll has increased significantly since the last inspection and there are now eight classes including a foundation unit for nursery and reception children. Attainment on entry is very low and children's speech and vocabulary are particularly poor when they join the school. The school is part of the North and East Manchester Regeneration schemes. Extra funding, through Excellence in Cities and other initiatives has enabled the school to employ additional specialist staff (learning mentors) and classroom assistants to promote social and educational inclusion.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an extremely effective school. Pupils achieve highly and they attain standards at the ages of seven and eleven which are well above those achieved in similar schools in English, mathematics and science and compare very favourably with those attained nationally. There is an extremely good atmosphere for learning. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or who have joined the school for a very short time, achieve a high measure of success because of the very good teaching and the excellent leadership and management. Pupils feel valued and believe they can do well. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is very good, pupils really want to learn and they behave very well; as a result, pupils make excellent progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Children in the foundation unit are very well taught and they make considerable progress.
- The school fosters pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- Through a variety of initiatives, including excellent links with parents and the wider community, the school has created a distinctive, successful and happy atmosphere that includes everyone in purposeful learning.
- Leadership and management are excellent.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing should be higher.

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 excellent improvement since the last inspection in December 1996. Standards are much higher throughout the school, as shown by the improved results for seven and eleven-year-olds in national tests over the past three years. The quality of teaching has improved considerably and pupils now achieve highly. The school has developed a very close partnership with parents and rates of attendance have risen substantially. The school has addressed all key issues of the last inspection exceedingly thoroughly. Pupils use the computers in the new computer suite confidently to help them to learn in other subjects. Staff expertise in this area has improved greatly. Pupils carry out investigations in science and they learn independently in other subjects too. Self-evaluation has become part of the working practice and culture of the school and the role of co-ordinators in all subjects and areas of the curriculum is very well developed. Provision for pupils' personal development is now excellent. In addition, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and

for those who are gifted and talented has been strengthened to enable these pupils to make excellent progress.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C	D	A
Mathematics	C	D	C	A
Science	B	E	C	A

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

The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 shown above are impressive considering the transient nature of the school population and the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Since 1996 the school has pushed up standards at a faster rate than the national trend. Standards are well above those achieved in similar schools. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed pupils' performance, compared to the national average, to be above average in reading, close to the national average in writing and well above the national average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, pupils were in the top five per cent for reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. The school acknowledges this was an exceptional year group.

Inspection judgements support the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds and the indication in the tests for seven-year-olds that pupils get better results in reading and mathematics than in writing. Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 read slightly better than average for their age, achieve above average standards overall in mathematics and below average standards in writing. In science, as in mathematics, most pupils attain the nationally expected standard and about 20 per cent achieve more highly. Pupils attain standards expected of their age in ICT and religious education.

Overall, pupils achieve highly in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Most children come into the nursery with very limited language and very little knowledge of number or understanding of the world. By the time they leave the reception class, they have made enormous progress and although standards are generally below average several children achieve standards expected nationally of their age, particularly in reading and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs, those who are gifted or talented, and those who have English as an additional language, make excellent progress, as do those pupils who have joined the school recently. This is because there is a very favourable ratio of adults to pupils and so pupils receive the individual help they need.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils listen intently, ask lots of questions and often become quite engrossed in their work. They clearly enjoy coming to school to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave very sensibly in lessons. They work and play together very well and older pupils often look after younger ones.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils take on responsibilities willingly and take their duties very seriously. Relationships are warm and friendly and pupils delight in correcting their teachers' deliberate mistakes.
Attendance	Attendance has improved dramatically in the last six months because of the school's excellent procedures and is now in line with the national average. This is a strong contributory factor in the school's success.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was very good or better in 60 per cent of lessons. It was excellent in 20 per cent, very good in 40 per cent, good in 30 per cent and satisfactory in 10 per cent of lessons. Teaching is of a consistently high quality for all age groups and good teaching was seen in every class. English (including literacy) and mathematics (including numeracy) are very well taught and teachers are particularly good at developing the basic skills of reading and number. Much of the teaching involves pupils using computers either in the computer suite or on individual tasks in the classroom. Lessons have a very brisk pace and are very well planned to ensure that pupils have opportunities to use their initiative and to work things out for themselves. As a result, pupils learn very well indeed. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language is very good and they also learn extremely well.

Teachers take every care to meet the needs of all pupils. Additional specialist staff and classroom assistants are used very well to help pupils with specific difficulties and also to raise the standard of literacy for infants and numeracy for younger juniors. In the nursery and reception classes, basic skills in all the areas of learning are taught very effectively and so children make rapid progress. The imaginative activities, the high number of adults to children in each class, and the many ways staff find to develop children's use and understanding of language and number, ensure that these children work and play with increasing interest and skill. The infant and junior teachers' high expectations, allied to a real understanding of how to make learning interesting, both challenge and engross pupils. Homework is used effectively to extend the learning that takes place in the classroom.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; a rich curriculum that meets all statutory requirements, with many opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities. It is very well planned so that all subjects receive a balanced amount of time with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; extremely well organised to meet the needs of pupils, including those who join the school at different times of the year. The use of support staff is extremely well focused and high expectations enable pupils to achieve highly. Provision for pupils who are gifted and talented is also very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good; support systems are well thought out and pupils make very good progress in their confident use of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent provision lies at the heart of the school's very special atmosphere. Through the system of 'special friends', whereby Year 6 pupils take on responsibility for overseeing younger pupils, and a comprehensive system of classroom monitors, pupils learn to be mature and responsible. Self-esteem and caring for others are given a high priority and pupils learn to avoid prejudice and discrimination in the treatment of other people. The school broadens pupils' social and cultural awareness extremely well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; the school takes pains to understand the personal circumstances of all its pupils and treats each as an individual. In this school every child feels valued and begins to understand how to learn effectively.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key stage co-ordinators are outstanding. They work extremely well together and provide exemplary role models for both staff and pupils. The subject and special needs co-ordinators also provide very effective leadership. They manage their areas of responsibility with a good standard of expertise.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the supportive governing body is well organised and understands the strengths and relative weaknesses of the school well. There are good procedures to help new governors to feel part of the team.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent; the school sets itself high standards in all aspects of its work which it then evaluates to see how effective it is and where it could be improved. The monitoring, evaluating and development of teaching and the curriculum are of a particularly high standard and reflect the school's determination that all pupils should reach the level expected nationally of their age.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent; the use of specialist staff and classroom assistants is very well thought out and greatly benefits the learning of pupils throughout the school. Educational decisions are very firmly linked to the best possible value and their success is evident in pupils' improved results and attendance.

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 make good progress in school. • The school expects their children to work hard and to achieve highly. • They feel welcome in school and able to come in with any questions or problems. • Their children like coming to school. • Their children are well taught. • The school is well led and managed. • Children behave well and they learn to become more mature and responsible. 	

The inspection team agrees wholeheartedly with parents' positive views and think this is a fair reflection of the school's strengths.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Teaching is very good, pupils really want to learn and they behave very well; as a result, pupils make excellent progress, particularly in mathematics.

- 1 The quality of teaching is very good overall and pupils learn at a very good rate. It is good or better in 90 per cent of lessons. Teaching is excellent in 20 per cent of lessons, very good in 40 per cent, good in 30 per cent and satisfactory in ten per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils make excellent progress because they really want to learn as shown by the standards they achieve in national tests, particularly in mathematics.
- 2 The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 are impressive especially when the transient nature of the school population and the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs are taken into account. Standards are well above those achieved in similar schools in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils enter school with very low attainment, with limited vocabulary and little mathematical understanding. Pupils nonetheless attained national standards in mathematics and science, with 21 per cent attaining more highly in mathematics and 37 per cent in science. Pupils attained just below average standards nationally in English, which for most pupils indicates very high achievement. Since 1996 the school has driven up standards at a faster rate than the national trend. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed pupils' performance, compared to the national average, to be above average in reading, close to the national average in writing and well above the national average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, pupils were in the top five per cent for reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. The school acknowledges that this was an exceptional year group.
- 3 These results overall indicate that pupils achieve more highly in reading, mathematics and science than in writing. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read slightly better than average for their age, achieve above average standards overall in mathematics and below average standards in writing. Currently, in science, as in mathematics, most pupils attain the nationally expected standard by the age of eleven and about 20 per cent achieve more highly.
- 4 There are several reasons for this high achievement. The co-ordinators are very skilled and monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects very successfully. Specific help is given to pupils with special educational needs, to those who are learning English as an additional language and to gifted and talented pupils. Extra support from specialist assistants (learning mentors) is precisely targeted; for example, they help infant pupils with reading and younger juniors with mathematics in order to raise standards. Links between mathematics, science and ICT are used to the full so pupils get a lot of practical experience. Teaching in science concentrates on giving pupils factual knowledge and the correct vocabulary. Short, five-minute quizzes at the start of lessons help pupils to remember information. The teaching is quite formal and pupils are expected to present their work neatly and to explain investigations concisely. Such teaching is obviously enjoyable, however. A higher attaining pupil, writing up an investigation on 'separating soluble solids from water' explained how the covering of a teabag acts as a filter and advised: 'Follow the diagram to see what you do. Smashing fun.'
- 5 The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good and rarely merely satisfactory. Teachers are clearly skilled at finding ways of interesting pupils. In an

English lesson, for example, the teacher peeped at the next page in the book she was sharing with the class and then said 'ooh' in a way which made the pupils long to know what was going to happen next, thus subtly teaching them to want to read on. Lessons move at a good pace so that pupils have no time to become restless. Teachers recognise that some pupils require skilful management and so they give them many opportunities to participate, encouraging them to ask questions and to work independently either on their own or in groups for a specific length of time.

- 6 The introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has really helped to structure this already good teaching. In excellent lessons, teachers make full use of occasions to encourage pupils to explain their answers. In an English lesson in Year 2, for example, one pupil pointed out that 'chattering chimpanzees' was an example of alliteration. The teacher asked the pupil to explain to the rest of the class all the processes which led him to work this out which clarified the pupil's understanding, developed his ability to speak clearly and helped to explain to other pupils so they too could learn. Much of the excellent teaching is characterised by teachers' very skilled questioning, which requires pupils to think. For example, the question asked of seven-year-olds, 'What makes this a noisy poem?' elicited a range of different responses, from pointing out the frequency with which exclamation marks were used to the noises indicated on the page in speech bubbles which as one pupil rightly pointed out 'means we've got to do it for them'.
- 7 Much of the teaching of numeracy is very good or excellent and many pupils say it is their favourite subject. They like the fact that there is a right and wrong answer and enjoy trying out different methods to reach a correct solution. For instance, pupils are taught several different ways of doing multiplication so they can choose the way they find best for them. The mathematics homework club is well attended by pupils who come regularly to sort out mathematical problems. Pupils are genuinely interested. In Year 6, for example, pupils were intrigued to discover a quick way of working out the prime numbers between 0 and 100 because of the way the teacher helped them to use their knowledge of number systems to work out the pattern for themselves. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' ability to calculate rapidly and accurately and use this type of recall very well. For example, eleven-year-old pupils counted confidently in steps of 0.25 or 0.4 showing a very good understanding of place value and decimals. Teachers spend time working with different groups within the class; in this way, higher attaining pupils receive the additional challenges they need. Teachers encourage pupils' independent, mathematical thinking. Thus older gifted and talented pupils work with square, prime and composite numbers whilst higher attainers split prime numbers into prime factors. From an early age, pupils are given mathematical investigations to work on independently. In Year 2, for instance, in their weekly task pupils had to consider a map of a town and find the shortest and longest distances between two points. An additional question, 'What else can you find out?' challenged independent thinkers. Teachers also use ICT very well to develop pupils' understanding, requiring pupils to select appropriate graphs, for instance, in order to display different types of information. In these ways, mathematics becomes central to pupils' learning, a skill which they use in different contexts.
- 8 The percentage of satisfactory teaching is relatively small and shows just how well planned lessons have to be to enable these pupils to achieve. In one lesson, for example, the structure of the lesson was over-complicated and explanations a little unclear and so pupils became restless. Behaviour is of a high standard because of teachers' very good classroom management. Devices such as an audible timer, for example, help younger pupils to know precisely how long they have got to concentrate. Most pupils are eager to learn and often intrigued by how interesting different subjects can be. They organise themselves and their resources quickly and usually work

assiduously on their tasks. As a result, teachers and support assistants can really work intensively with small groups. Pupils respond very well to the trust their teachers place in them and because they feel valued as people they learn to give of their best.

Children in the foundation unit are very well taught and they make considerable progress.

- 9 Children enter school with very low attainment and their speech and vocabulary are particularly poor. By the time they leave the reception class, although standards are below average overall, several children attain expected standards for their age and most have made considerable progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative, personal and social development. They achieve highly. The teaching is very good overall and much of it is excellent and so children learn extremely well.
- 10 The curriculum for children under the age of six is very well planned and teachers and nursery nurses work closely together to decide the weeks' work. Teachers have very high expectations of children. Not a moment is wasted. As soon as children arrive they immediately settle to doing activities. Children attend full time when they start in the nursery aged three and are admitted to the reception class in the September and January nearest to their fifth birthday. Nursery children, due to start in the reception class in January, join reception children at the start of the school year in September for literacy and numeracy. This means that younger children do not miss out on more formal teaching at this time. Equally, because of the very close links between the two classes, reception children who need more time to learn through play, have opportunities to do so. The ratio of adults to pupils is very high and each class has a full-time and experienced nursery nurse as well as other assistants. The reception teacher therefore has time to hear individual children read so that all children learn to read to an adult on a one-to-one basis, regardless of home circumstances, which might make such an activity difficult. There are very close links with parents and parents are encouraged to help children to learn key words and to help them to read. This is often done quite subtly. For example, in the nursery, children were learning the letter 'S'. They made little books with an 'S' shape in a malleable material on the front, coloured pages inside to illustrate a rhyme about the sea and seaside, and they then 'read' this book with great pride, repeating the words they had learnt. When parents come in to collect their children, adults help children to show their parents what they have been doing.
- 11 The foundation unit seems to buzz with many interesting activities. These are well thought out so that different skills are taught simultaneously. In the 'ice cream' shop in the nursery, children put colourful screwed up paper into plastic glasses and learn the correlation between name and colour as in 'lime' and 'strawberry' as well as simple money sums. In one lesson Children selected different prices to stick on the display board at the back of the shop and then had to work out the cost when the teacher asked for 'One scoop of each colour, please'. By the time children join the reception class, they work together very well and quite independently as in the 'Travel shop', filling out forms, stamping brochures and answering the telephone. For example, one child went in and said, 'I'd like to go to America', a boy immediately picked up the telephone 'doing the numbers', while the customer continued, 'I'd like some of my people to come with me, my husband and my little girl Gemma'. Meanwhile, another customer commented with satisfaction, 'You're a very good travel agent'.
- 12 The provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is very good and children imitate in their play the praise and support they receive from the adults in their classroom. Teachers encourage children to talk about what they are doing, helping

them to understand their world through language and through playing together. The very good outdoor facilities are in constant use so that children have a great deal of energetic play in the course of a day. Adults are very skilled at organising outdoor play and consequently children play imaginative games. Two boys were quite engrossed as they drew in the sand, explaining 'I drew a big castle. We drew big circles didn't we?' Although their speech is immature for their age, they noticeably want to communicate through language and use what they are learning as part of their games. Through dance, teachers extend pupils' imaginative awareness as well as reinforcing their understanding of language and physical development. Although pupils find some of the actions and instructions quite difficult to follow initially, they are drawn into an imaginary fairground by their teacher's skill in helping them to make-believe. The effect was quite magical as children moved round in circles, faces alight with wonder as they swirled strips of crepe paper with imaginary balloons on the end, dancing patterns through the air trying to keep pace with the music.

- 13 Teachers record carefully what children know and can do and target activities appropriately to suit their stage of development. Activities are subtly adapted to challenge higher attaining children who are given as much support as those who find learning more difficult. Whilst concentrating on developing children's skills in communication, teachers enable children to become involved in their learning through a smooth and coherent sequence of subtly related activities.

The school fosters pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.

- 14 Pupils are given many opportunities to develop as responsible citizens. Within lessons, teachers encourage pupils to use their initiative, assess how well they have understood an aspect of work and what they need to do to improve. In this way, all pupils, including those with special educational needs or who are gifted and talented, are made aware of their learning and its importance to their future development. Alongside this, the school fosters pupils' personal development in a broader educational and social sense, preparing a very firm foundation for pupils' moral and social behaviour as adults.
- 15 The system of 'Special Friends' is highly successful. Towards the end of Year 5, pupils who wish to may submit a formal application to be a 'Special Friend'. They are interviewed and a number selected to take on this responsibility in Year 6, for which they have special training. During one assembly, pupils gave a very coherent account of the responsibility of being a 'Special Friend': 'I'm not the only one with problems...In my training I was taught to focus attention on the person but not to sort out problems for them but to help them sort it out themselves. I like the job because it makes me feel important. I like the people I work with as they're very friendly'. The school's evaluation of the scheme shows that these pupils become excellent role models for the rest of the school, which has a very positive impact on the ethos of the whole school. Through this, pupils learn to listen, to mediate, to offer understanding and to help resolve problems, especially at lunchtimes. The success of the scheme can be seen in the aspiration of all pupils in Year 5 this year to become a 'Special Friend'. In order to preserve the distinction of the post but to encourage nonetheless pupils' keenness to take on responsibility, this year pupils have also applied for jobs as 'reading buddies' or take on the organisation of games at lunchtime. A striking feature of this whole process is its formality. Pupils respond really well to the very real responsibility of a job application. It raises their self-esteem and gives them a positive insight into adulthood.
- 16 Throughout the school pupils of different ages are encouraged to take on responsibility. For instance, in the nursery, teachers expect three and four-year-old children to tidy away resources and to be courteous. Two pupils in each class are appointed as ICT

'trouble-shooters' and they are responsible for helping to sort out any problems pupils or adults might have with computers. Each class has its set of rules and the consequences of misbehaviour are consistently applied. There are very many means by which teachers and support assistants reward good behaviour in ways which are valued by pupils, such as colourful stickers and certificates. There is excellent support for pupils with behavioural problems. These pupils have a special time set aside each day to see the headteacher with their record of behaviour book, which is kept both at home and at school. This is seen as a time to celebrate success and, by giving pupils' additional time and attention, has a very beneficial effect on their attitudes to school.

- 17 The school deals very openly with issues such as racism and sexism through a sensible Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship (PSHCE) curriculum, which is relevant to the pupils' lives. Health needs, including dental and personal hygiene, diet and exercise, drugs awareness, relationships and parenting skills are all taught together with managing finance, caring for the environment and democratic rights. In addition, some aspects are included in other subjects. The school's monitoring shows that giving a lot of time to the PHSCE curriculum in the summer term is successful. Because this curriculum is taught in all classes, pupils have a good knowledge of children's rights.
- 18 The school is extremely good at enabling pupils to behave responsibly by providing excellent exemplars of mature behaviour and attitudes. The school foresees possible trouble spots and tackles these very sensibly. Lunchtime supervisors, for instance, organise and involve pupils in games, which show them how to play constructively together.
- 19 The excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is felt in all aspects of the school. Discussion times in religious education lessons are used very well to extend pupils' understanding of social and moral codes of behaviour. In one lesson, for example, pupils discussed how we show respect for each other. Some pupils began to talk at length; especially when considering what the world would be like if everybody broke some of the Ten Commandments. Pupils are quite startled at some of the wonderful things they discover and their wonder is almost tangible, giving a strange intensity to some of the occasions when they listen or when something fires their imagination. For example, pupils listened raptly to the melodious playing of the school's steel band. On another occasion, young pupils were entranced by the magic dust which transformed a large cushion into a magic carpet. Pupils say the school prayer with conviction.

Through a variety of initiatives, including excellent links with parents and the wider community, the school has created a distinctive, successful and happy atmosphere that includes everyone in purposeful learning.

- 20 On entering the school, the calm and purposeful atmosphere is immediately striking. A notice board in the entrance hall celebrates attendance, displaying certificates awarded each week for the best attenders in infant and junior classes. Graphs showing the rates of attendance are displayed prominently in each classroom and frequent letters to parents help to stress the importance the school places on regular, punctual attendance. A year ago, pupils' attendance was very low in comparison with other schools. Using money from the Excellence in Cities initiative, the school employs a 'learning mentor', part of whose job is to improve attendance. Characteristically, the school considers working with home as important as working in school and accordingly, parents are closely involved. The learning mentor in Years 5 and 6 works with pupils who are disaffected, often because of emotional and behavioural problems associated with outside circumstances. As a result of this special support, the number of

exclusions has been reduced and some pupils have started to attend regularly because of the individual attention they receive. This greatly benefits pupils' attainment.

- 21 The school has excellent systems to ensure that parents are fully included in all aspects of its work. Up to 50 per cent of pupils enter and leave the school at different times during the year yet this transient nature of the school population is not discernible within the school itself. The school often takes in pupils who have been excluded from other schools and offers these children a chance to make a fresh start. Part of the secret of the school's success lies in its concern to involve parents very fully from the moment their children enter school. The atmosphere is very stable and calm and helps to impose its own discipline on newcomers. For example, pupils are expected to use formal means of address to visitors and to say 'Good morning' or 'Good afternoon'. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, adhere absolutely to the same approach when dealing with pupils. Policies to promote good behaviour are based on praise and support and are successful because of the very early and scrupulous analysis of pupils' needs. The type of adult intervention and assistance which individuals or groups of pupils would benefit from is carefully assessed and appropriate provision is then made.
- 22 The systems for promoting educational inclusion are very well thought out. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has very well defined systems to keep track of every single pupil. The co-ordinator is allowed a realistic amount of time to organise well-focused support, which is also monitored to check its effectiveness. Because of the high mobility factor, there is a constant need for assessment and review. For example, there are weekly meetings to assess the progress of individual pupils and to adjust what they are taught. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good indeed. Teachers are extremely good at analysing particular aspects which are causing confusion and then finding the appropriate resources to enable pupils to understand. In a lesson with a Year 5 pupil, for example, who was confused about tens and units, the support teacher used money, single pennies and 10 pence pieces highly successfully to illustrate the difference between the two. Currently two pupils in Year 5 have been identified as gifted and talented in mathematics in particular. They are taught alongside pupils in Year 6 but also have individual work to challenge them fully. They are very well integrated into the school and other pupils are very accepting of their difference.
- 23 The school is very successful in promoting social inclusion largely because the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have been very well trained. For example, a 'learning mentor' for social inclusion works closely with a small number of pupils helping them to follow their individual programmes of work which include a counselling session as well as weekly targets. This too has helped to raise attainment by reducing the number of exclusions and improving behaviour.
- 24 The school has an excellent partnership with parents. It provides stability for some parents as well as pupils and so even though some families move out of the district, many parents try to keep sending their children to this school. Parents speak very highly of the school and praise unreservedly the support it offers them and their children. During the last two years Parents as Educators courses have been held regularly in the school, during school time. The courses running at the moment include ICT and 'Parents and Reading' and enable parents to gain qualifications. The popularity and success of the courses is an indication of the positive links between home and school. Parents agree that this helps them to understand how their children learn and gives them an insight into the value and importance of education. For example, pupils' reading diaries invite equal contributions from parents as from pupils and teachers. Parents say that the school makes them feel valued and that the headteacher treats them with respect.

Leadership and management are excellent.

- 25 The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The headteacher's passionate belief that all pupils have equal rights and an equal capacity to succeed underpins the school's drive to foster each individual's talent to the full. The leadership and management have high expectations of everyone and as a result standards are high and pupils coming new to the school are immediately influenced by its caring, supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. The headteacher has an excellent understanding of how to manage a school and how to get the best out of parents, adults and pupils alike, to make the school highly effective.
- 26 One of the keys to the school's success lies in the very clear management structure in which everyone plays an equally strong part. The senior management team comprises the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator who teaches Year 2 and the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator who teaches Year 6. The teaching, evaluating and monitoring of the national tests is an integral part of the responsibility of the senior management team. Each co-ordinator and person in charge of specific areas such as Early Years and special educational needs has very specific responsibilities and is required to evaluate the effectiveness of all that they do. Thus each co-ordinator keeps a 'Position Statement', which lists the most significant achievements or developments in the last 18 months, areas they would like to continue developing, details of any monitoring and evaluation, a summary of spending on resources, including staffing costs and staff training.
- 27 Self-evaluation is integral to the management system. Teachers are accustomed to observing each other teach, discussing their observations with teachers, giving reports to the headteacher and governing body, as well as carrying out audits of their subjects as a starting point for the next year's action plan. Teachers also have individual targets which are linked to this. Curriculum co-ordinators' non-contact time is precisely determined and they are given targets so that all time is used purposefully. In these ways, the evaluation of teaching and learning is very thorough and teachers receive a great deal of professional support and development. The belief of the SMT in staff development ensures that staff go out on courses and to keep abreast of current development in other schools. The quality of training for teachers within the school is outstanding as a result, for all co-ordinators know their subjects very well and are involved in training. In addition professional development helps to motivate staff and contributes to the happy, positive atmosphere in the school.
- 28 The governing body is good and very supportive. Because of the transient nature of the school's population, parent governors also tend to come and go. The governing body has efficient systems in place to ensure that new governors become quickly knowledgeable about the school, which involves receiving regular information from curriculum co-ordinators as well as the headteacher. Financial management is excellent and spending is very precisely targeted to ensure pupils achieve as well as they possibly can. The school makes the most of financial opportunities such as the Social Inclusion Fund or monies from the Excellence in Cities initiative and puts in bids for any additional funding which could improve the education of its pupils.
- 29 The management of special educational needs has a significant impact on pupils' attainment and on integrating newcomers to the school successfully. Special educational needs support is very well targeted. The special educational needs co-ordinator co-ordinates the results of termly assessments to monitor improvements. Quite often pupils arrive at school with no records from their previous school. A very simple but effective system is used to highlight pupils' attainment on entry and to monitor their progress. The success of these approaches is seen in the high achievement of all and the particular achievement of individuals such as pupils who

enter the juniors unable to read and six months later begin to read and write successfully.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing should be higher

- 30 The school has rightly identified writing as an area for development in order to raise standards in English to a level to those in mathematics and science. By the end of Year 2, pupils write in a good range of writing styles and most have a sound grasp of sentence construction. There is, however, little writing of any length and much that is marred by poor spelling and command of punctuation. There is little that is imaginative and fluent and much that is copied or dictated, with the same words in the same order. Pupils lack confidence in their ability to write. By the end of Year 6, pupils write at greater length: lower attaining pupils, for example, can fill a page with factual content about the differences between African and Indian elephants and average attainers can write in different styles for different purposes. The written work of higher attaining pupils is quite imaginative but is still marred to a certain extent by mistakes in spelling and punctuation. Generally, explanatory writing (on scientific methods of investigation) is very good.
- 31 Pupils clearly achieve very well given their initial attainment when they start school and the teaching of literacy is very good in English lessons. While much has been done to raise standards of writing through reading and through following ways of writing demonstrated by the teacher, there has been comparatively little done to explore the links between speaking and writing. Pupils have few real reasons for writing and fewer opportunities to practise writing incidentally rather than formally in order to get used to putting their thoughts down on paper. Links between older and younger pupils are not explored as fully as they could be, for example, by having 'writing' as well as 'reading buddies', and by the encouragement of pupils to write stories or letters for different age groups, or by helping them to produce newsletters for parents or to use ICT to produce a school newspaper. Many pupils seem to find factual writing easier; this too is an area that could be explored more fully.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- ◆ improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
 - exploring the links between talking and writing;
 - creating realistic and purposeful contexts for writing.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	40	30	10			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	161
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	132

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	75

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	58
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	10.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	20	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (79)	86 (74)	95 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	13	15	15
	Total	19	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (79)	100 (100)	100 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	8	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	7
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (67)	79 (56)	84 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	13	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (65)	74 (71)	79 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	128
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		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	13	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	23.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	227

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.0

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	526436
Total expenditure	455253
Expenditure per pupil	2335
Balance brought forward from previous year	34275
Balance carried forward to next year	105458

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	72

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31			3
My child is making good progress in school.	74	25			1
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	32	1		4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	55	17		1
The teaching is good.	78	19	1		1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	23	8		3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	32		1	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25			1
The school works closely with parents.	51	40	8		
The school is well led and managed.	69	26	3		1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	42	3		3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	41	10	3	8