

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ISHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Isham, Kettering

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122023

Headteacher: Mr M Halliday

Reporting inspector: Fran Gillam  
21498

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> –16<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 192459

Short 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: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Street  
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Northamptonshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Simon Buckley

Date of previous inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Isham Church of England School is smaller than most other primaries. One hundred and five pupils attend the school, 53 boys and 52 girls. There are four classes, all of which have mixed ages except the reception class, which has 16 children all of Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> age. When children start school their attainment is broadly average. The pattern of children's attainment over the past three years shows that, each year, there are only a few children of lower or higher attainment admitted to the school. Almost all pupils come from a white United Kingdom background. There is a small number of Indian and Chinese origin; none of these pupils need help in learning English. There are nine per cent of pupils on the school's special educational needs register and this is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is approximately one per cent and this is broadly average. There are no pupils entitled to free school meals. There have been significant changes to staffing since the time of the last inspection. All the teaching staff, including the headteacher, have been appointed in the last two years.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Isham is a very successful school because pupils achieve well and, by Year 6, standards are high in English and mathematics and above average in science. Teaching is good because teachers get the best from their pupils. Lessons are often exciting; pupils are eager to learn, they work hard and because of this they take on new learning quickly. The headteacher, staff and governors work closely together; they have a clear goal, which is to provide a high quality education for all the pupils in their care. They do this through the outstanding arrangements they have for checking how well pupils are doing and by using this information effectively to set targets for improvement. Importantly, the action they take is very effective in supporting and improving teaching and learning, and maintaining the high standards the school achieves. The school gives very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils do well and attain high standards because teaching is good.
- Pupils enjoy school very much; they work very hard and get on very well with each other.
- The headteacher and governors work together very well to maintain and build upon the school's successes.
- Pupils are very well cared for; they receive effective support and guidance from staff.
- Parents have great confidence in the school because they know the staff and governors want the best for their children.

#### **What could be improved**

- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The improvement since the time of the last inspection in March 1997 has been very good. High standards have been maintained in English and mathematics since last year and standards in science are above average. Almost all of the areas needing improvement from the time of the last inspection are now better than they were. This has mostly been achieved in the last two years. In the year following the last inspection, governors were concerned that not enough was being done to remedy the weaknesses. They requested a local education authority review and this review confirmed their concerns. It is a credit to the present staff and governors that parents' confidence in the school has been regained, standards have improved and things are now much better than they were. The school now carefully checks how well pupils are doing and uses this information most effectively to provide support for pupils who need extra help with their work and to ensure that teaching places sufficient demands upon all pupils. The school improvement plan is focused upon raising standards and is well informed by the school's evaluation of the quality of

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<sup>1</sup> Foundation Stage – the stage of learning for children aged from three years up until they join Year 1 and begin the National Curriculum.

teaching and learning. There is a clear long-term view of what needs to be done to maintain the school's success. Teachers' marking is much improved; it gives pupils useful pointers on how to improve their work and encourages them to be fully involved in their own learning. The guidance for teachers about what should be taught in each year group has improved and this now ensures that pupils build effectively upon what they have learned before and so achieve well. There are improved resources for teaching information and communication technology and there is a clear plan of action that the school is following to raise standards. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage needs improvement. The activities for the areas of learning<sup>2</sup>, other than those to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills, reflect individual subjects such as science and art rather than the breadth of experience expected.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	A	A	B	
Science	C	A	B	C	

Each year there is a small number of pupils who take the tests and so the comparative data needs treating with caution. Whilst the trend in standards over time is broadly average, standards improved considerably in 2000 and have been maintained this year in English and mathematics. Although standards do not look as good in science it is worth noting that three pupils missed attaining the higher level 5 in science by only one mark. Had they been successful, the results in science would have reflected those attained in 2000. Importantly, Isham's standards in English compare very favourably to schools of a similar background; standards are better in mathematics and as well as expected in science. During their time in the school, pupils do well. Already, early in the school year, standards in literacy and numeracy are high in Year 6. In particular, pupils use writing skills well to relate facts in an interesting way. For example in geography, higher attaining pupils describe the 'life' of a river in a creative way rather than just writing the facts. Both pupils of average and lower attainment read and write with confidence. Whilst there is not the same level of imaginative language in their writing, they express themselves clearly. Similarly, pupils of all attainments read information carefully and pull out the key points well. By Year 6, pupils have a good grasp of mathematical facts and recall them very well in quick-fire questioning sessions. They use numeracy skills to help them solve 'real-life' problems; for example, at present they are monitoring the progress of 'shares' they have in the Stock Market. They quickly calculate the profit or loss made from day to day and over the week. This work inspires them and they clearly understand how they can display the information in a variety of ways such as in graphs, charts or diagrams. The school's targets for the national tests are realistic, challenging and based upon what is known about the pupils. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening are high. Many pupils from the very youngest through to the oldest talk clearly and show they listen carefully by the quality of their responses. By Year 2, standards are high in reading and mathematics; the test results for writing in 2001 show that the standards are very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards look set to be maintained; already pupils are achieving well and standards are above those you would expect at this time in the year. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled quickly into school and, after only a few weeks, are doing as well as can be expected in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. At present, the curriculum is not broad enough to ensure that the other areas of learning develop adequately.

<sup>2</sup> Areas of learning – there are six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and, creative development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good - pupils enjoy coming to school. Older pupils concentrate very well and younger pupils show an eagerness to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good - pupils are polite and well behaved. Outside they play boisterously but are always mindful of others and follow the school's simple but effective rules well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good - pupils get on very well together and with the adults in the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory - the attendance rate is typical of that found nationally.

Pupils of all ages are interested in their work, willingly answer questions and will try hard to do well. Older pupils in particular will ask questions to clarify their understanding and offer opinions confidently. Pupils' willingness to talk and express their views increases the effectiveness of teaching because teachers can quickly check pupils' understanding and focus help where it is needed most.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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 is good. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to learn because lessons are interesting. Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they expect them to do. Pupils settle quickly and this leads to a good work rate. Activities are often exciting and, because teachers make very good use of the information about pupils' achievement, the activities focus well upon extending learning further. This information aids planning for the mixed ages and ensures that pupils, including those who need extra help with their work, succeed and make good progress. Learning support assistants give timely and effective support; they help pupils by asking questions and talking with pupils about how well they are doing and what they might need to think about next. Teaching recognises the need for younger pupils to practise and refine their literacy and numeracy skills. There are good opportunities and this gives pupils the confidence to read and write and solve mathematical problems in subjects across the curriculum. In the older year groups, pupils use these skills very well. Teaching here capitalises upon this firm foundation and skilfully helps pupils to develop their ideas in well-focused discussions and activities. A real strength of teaching in the oldest year groups is the way that the teacher draws upon the pupils' own observations to extend learning further. At the end of lessons, the teacher focuses upon the things that the pupils found the most difficult to do. This prompts the pupils to share the ways they overcame any difficulties. At the same time, this allows the teacher to assess the pupils' knowledge and understanding and so adapt or focus work more precisely for the next day. This is effective and ensures that pupils make progress and achieve well. Most pupils work together effectively or equally well on their own; this is because they know what is expected of them. Children in the youngest class have quickly become familiar with the classroom routines because, as in the other year groups, teachers manage them very well.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good - there are exciting activities that inspire and interest the pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 but the curriculum for the youngest children does not reflect the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage sufficiently well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good - there is well-focused support for pupils who need extra help with their work. Learning support assistants are effective; they ensure that misconceptions do not develop and in activities guide pupils carefully.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good - adults provide positive examples for the pupils to follow. There are high expectations of the need to care for others and to work together effectively, and the pupils respond very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good - pupils feel safe and secure. Staff know the pupils really well and focus support very effectively.

The outstanding arrangements to check how well pupils are doing inform teaching very clearly about what needs to be done to help all pupils improve. Staff know the strengths to build upon and where more encouragement is needed.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good - in the short period since his appointment, the headteacher has built an effective team. Staff work very well together.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent - the governing body is extremely supportive of the work of the school. They know how well the school is doing and take effective action to help the school improve further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good - there are very good systems in place to evaluate how well teaching is helping pupils to learn.
The strategic use of resources	Very good - the information from the evaluation of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements is used well to focus support for pupils and in providing resources to improve the curriculum.

The governors ensure that funds are used wisely to maintain standards. They base their decisions on spending upon accurate information and with the best interest of the pupils in mind.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy school.</li><li>• Teaching is good and their children make good progress.</li><li>• The children's good behaviour.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside normal lessons.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents but disagrees that the range of activities outside normal lessons is too narrow. This is a small school with only four teaching staff. At present the school offers a craft, gymnastics, gardening, computer and a German club. This is in addition to educational visits, taking part in music festivals and residential trips. The content and quality of the activities support pupils' learning well and the range is reasonable taking into account the number of teaching staff available.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Pupils do well and attain high standards because teaching is good.**

1. From the start, teaching provides children with an effective grounding in the basic skills of reading, writing and number. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their understanding of, for example, letter sounds and numbers. This quickens the pace at which pupils take on new learning because these opportunities build confidence and help pupils to tackle activities and so become self-reliant. This is most evident by the time pupils are in Year 2. During whole-class discussions, for example, they will ask questions and willingly offer their ideas. This allows them to sound out their thoughts and clarify their understanding with the adults who work with them. For example, in a session where they picked out the words that rhyme with 'toy' pupils quickly provided some examples. Not deterred by the knowledge that some might be spelled differently such as 'boil' and 'royal', they not only gave a long list of words but the higher attaining pupils made very good attempts to give the correct spelling as well. Pupils are interested and enjoy a challenge; already at this time in the year, pupils are doing better than expected. Higher attaining pupils work at a good pace; they correctly pick out words from a story that describe the actions a person is doing and give more exciting as well as relevant alternatives. Average attaining pupils begin to understand that some stories have a hidden meaning and the motive behind why some characters behave as they do. For example, when reading a story about a hen and a wolf, they realise that the hen is tricking the wolf into eating the soup so that he will have no room left to eat her! Lower attaining pupils use letter sounds to read unfamiliar words and pick up the main points of the story. They give some good ideas to what they think might happen next.
2. A strong reason why pupils, not only in the younger year groups but also throughout the school, answer questions willingly is the way that their efforts are valued. Teachers give praise where it is merited and encourage those who are not so sure or as accurate in their calculations by asking further questions or giving useful clues to help pupils develop their understanding. This particularly benefits those pupils who need extra help with their work. Whilst the steps they make in their learning might be smaller than that of their classmates, each step is usually successful with just the right amount of demand to help them to improve and make good progress. As a result, pupils of all attainments take on new learning quickly and confidently. In addition, the effective support from learning support assistants during literacy and numeracy lessons ensures that pupils have help when they need it and the opportunity to talk about their work with an adult if the teacher is working with another group of pupils.
3. Teaching focuses well upon making sure that pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear, straightforward and often lively. This captures pupils' interest and they are eager to get started on their work. Because of this, pupils work at a good pace and their thirst for knowledge means they enjoy a challenge and try hard. Teaching of the oldest pupils is effective in getting pupils to think more deeply about what they have read or heard. This came through strongly when pupils were discussing the differences between a biography and an autobiography. They talked about how someone who is writing a biography might have an ulterior motive and their description of the individual could be coloured as a result. They used as an example the view that a conservative politician might have of Tony Blair compared to that of a labour politician. In addition to the level of discussion, pupils have a very good understanding of the differences between a biography and an autobiography and use this knowledge well to analyse different texts and then to pick out the most important features. This type of work features well not only in English but also in other subjects such as history, geography and science. Teaching in the oldest class gives many varied and exciting opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills to

develop their ideas in history, record their experiments in science and recount factual information in geography. What is impressive is that pupils do not just rehearse, for example, the journey of a river from its source in the mountains until it meets the sea. They use interesting language and build up a picture in the reader's mind: "the young stream bashed over its rocky bed. Rainwater and melted snow run off the hillside and over time other streams..." This is a good use of language and indicative of the work of the higher attaining pupils in particular. Pupils of average and lower attainment recount factual information in detail but the range of interesting words is not as extensive. However, the writing is often grammatically correct and well presented.

4. Throughout the school, pupils express themselves clearly and listen carefully; this is a great asset to their learning and supports teaching very well. Teaching makes very good use of the pupils' ability to talk about what they are doing to check what they know and understand. Teachers take account of this, along with the other checks made when marking pupils' work, to adapt and refine activities to ensure that the higher and average attaining pupils have enough challenge in their work. This also ensures that those pupils who need extra help with their work do not struggle and meet difficulties. This is clearly the case at the end of the lesson when teachers draw pupils together to discuss what they have learned. A particularly effective twist upon asking pupils what they did was the way the teacher in the oldest class asked pupils about what they found most difficult. This quickly identified where problems were arising and gave the opportunity for pupils to share their ways of working. A lively discussion then took place as different groups, pairs and individuals explained how they would have tackled the tasks and what methods worked best for them. Not only did the teacher pick up a great deal of information about the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding but the pupils also learned different ways of working from listening to their classmates.
5. The positive aspects of teaching throughout the school and the particularly effective teaching for the older pupils, coupled with the pupils' attitudes, are significant factors in the high standards the school attains.

**Pupils enjoy school very much; they work very hard and get on very well with each other.**

6. Children in the reception class and pupils in Years 1 to 6 really enjoy coming to school. They find the activities exciting and this fires their enthusiasm and captures their interest in lessons. This is evident in their lively talk and the way they concentrate on what they are doing. They enjoy a challenge and will persevere and make every effort to overcome any difficulties.
7. The children in the reception year are friendly and chatty, and talk clearly about what they are doing and what they like best. They work well with each other, sharing equipment and taking turns sensibly. Both boys and girls willingly answer questions and listen well in whole-class talks and activities. This was particularly evident when the children were practising counting up to and back from five. Almost all of them were able to wait their turn, with some help or on their own provide the correct number in the sequence, and pay attention to what others were saying. This, together with their good behaviour, is a bonus for teaching because it allows activities to run smoothly and speeds the children's learning.
8. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils build effectively upon these positive aspects of behaviour and their eagerness to learn. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 listen very well. This helps them to tackle activities confidently and settle quickly to their work because they know what is expected of them. It also shows in the way in which they talk about what they are doing and the carefully thought out answers they give. Throughout the school, both boys and girls offer their ideas willingly. They have excellent relationships with adults who work with them and they know their efforts will be valued. Older pupils co-operate very well and check what they are doing to avoid errors. For example, when adding large sets of numbers to find the average age of the England football squad, they organise themselves so that one pupil reads the ages out while the other enters the amounts on the calculator. They recognise that this is

a better use of time rather than working separately and also there is less chance of error. Their level of talk is very good and they confidently discuss what they are doing. Both boys and girls are eager to take part in lessons, keenly shown by the way they waited with baited breath for a progress report on the Stock Market. Within a very short time the profit or loss was calculated and the reasons why explored. The pupils' thirst for knowledge and the way they concentrate and work hard make lessons run smoothly, aid learning and contribute well to the high standards they attain.

9. Although, out on the playground, play is boisterous, the excellent relationship between pupils ensures that it remains friendly and fun. Pupils of all ages willingly play together and older pupils make a good job of looking out for the younger children. The good behaviour on the playground is also evident in lessons and around the school. Pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others and act independently of adult support, for example, setting up the break time arrangements for serving drinks and getting the games out on the playground. This reflects the high level of maturity the older pupils show in and around the school when they move from classrooms to the hall or out onto the playground.

**The headteacher and governors work together very well to maintain and build upon the school's successes.**

10. After a period of staff changes and parental concern, the school is experiencing greater stability and is looking forward to continued success. Parents have commented upon the many positive changes in the last two years; they say the "school looks better and the ideas are fresher". This is very much linked to the very effective leadership of the headteacher and the strong team effort of all the staff. Couple this with a proactive governing body which has an extremely clear idea of where the school's strengths and areas for further improvement lie and you have a recipe for success.
11. The school does a very good job of building on the pupils' achievements; this is a big improvement since the time of the last inspection. There is very careful analysis of the test results taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. How well the school does compared to all schools and to those of a similar background is analysed and is used very well to assess how successful the school is in raising standards. Any areas that look stronger or weaker by comparison are rigorously checked against what is taught to identify what is working well and not so well. This gives clear pointers to what it is in English, mathematics and science that might need improving. As staff regularly check how well pupils are doing in their work the school is able to tell if things have gone as well as expected, better than expected or worse. The careful analysis of test results and the regular evaluations that are carried out are accurate and, more importantly, the headteacher, senior managers and governors make very effective use of the information to direct support and resources for individuals and groups of pupils. This shows in the investment made in appointing learning support assistants to help in the literacy and numeracy sessions. This is proving successful with the improved standards in mathematics by Year 6 and in writing by Year 2 in the 2001 tests.
12. A clear example of how the school actively seeks to improve led on from the analysis of the results by the end of Year 2 in the 2000 tests. Whilst, on the face of it, the results in writing showed the school did very well compared to schools of a similar background and all schools nationally, closer analysis showed that girls had not done as well as boys. Even though in that year only four girls took the test, the school set about looking at how writing was taught in Years 1 and 2 and what it was that the pupils found most difficult. This led to the reorganisation of the time in literacy to dedicate one session entirely to the teaching of the skills of writing such as openings, developing characters and using lively words to bring appeal to the reader. This is a clear example of the school taking effective action to raise standards as in this year's tests the results for writing are in the top five per cent nationally.

13. The headteacher very usefully draws together the information about pupils' achievements and the standards that the school attains. This is clearly explained to the governors so that they know exactly what areas should be concentrated upon to raise standards further. The governors have an excellent grasp of what is happening in the school and they take part in the regular reviews of teaching and learning. The systems to check how well pupils are learning are well established. The staff undertakes two types of evaluation: subject managers carry out one, and the other is a whole-school evaluation that leads to an agreement about the levels pupils are achieving. This means that not only do the headteacher and governors have a very clear idea of how well the school is doing but each member of staff knows too. The careful checking of teachers' planning gives subject managers a clear idea of what pupils in each year group will learn. The subsequent checking of pupils' work indicates how successful the plans have been and, importantly, whether the pupils have learned enough. Observation of teaching is regular and carried out by the staff and governors. This leads to good practice being shared, and support focused upon areas where staff need extra help. This steers the developments set out in the school improvement plan and ensures that funds are spent wisely and the resources to help pupils learn are well matched to their needs. This supports teaching and learning extremely well but importantly gives help in subjects or year groups that appear weaker in comparison to the high standards achieved by Year 6.

**Pupils are very well cared for; they receive effective support and guidance from staff.**

14. Helping and supporting pupils is central to the school's aims as well as developing a challenging learning environment. The ways in which the school monitors and evaluates how well pupils are achieving, both in their schoolwork and in their personal skills, ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively. Parents endorse this; they are regularly informed about how well their children are doing. Parents, whose children need extra help with their work, describe how they are involved in setting targets for their children to work towards. They also explain how teaching staff give freely of their time to discuss the work that needs to be covered. Parents appreciate how the school involves them in their children's learning.

15. Pupils are happy in their work and play. They feel safe and secure and know that adults who work in the school care for them and want them to do well. Staff know the pupils well. They quickly develop effective working relationships with the pupils because they gain their respect by being fair and open with them.

16. The arrangements for checking how well pupils are doing are first class. There is a range of ways that the school keeps track of pupils' achievement: analysing their individual test scores by Year 2 and Year 6, regular checks on their reading ability and by looking at their work to identify that enough progress is being made over time. Teaching uses all these indicators to build a picture of the strengths in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and where they need to focus more attention. They do not waste time re-assessing what it is that pupils can or cannot do when they move into a new class and so pupils make a flying start to their learning. From Year 1 to Year 6, teaching identifies targets for the pupils to achieve. These are shared with the pupils, often listed at the front of their exercise books, and the targets concentrate upon the areas where pupils need to improve. This sets out clearly for both pupils and learning support assistants what will be learnt over the course of a term. Regular checking ensures that these targets are current and change in line with pupils' successes. Older pupils, in particular, indicated how they welcome this direction because it allows them to know what they need to do to improve further and helps them to try hard.

**Parents have great confidence in the school because they know the staff and governors want the best for their children.**

17. Over the past two years the school has regained the confidence of parents and they are very pleased with the way that it is being led and managed and with the progress their children are making. There is a very good partnership with parents, firmly built upon their knowledge that

their children will be well cared for and that they will do well during their time at Isham School. Parents are very happy with the standards the school attains. This is not only in how well their children are learning but also in preparing them for later life. They are now confident that their children will get an effective start to their school life because of the major changes that have taken place to improve the quality of teaching and the way their children are challenged to do better. This fosters very good working relationships between home and school and reflects in the way that parents regularly hear their children read and ensure that homework is completed. Parents recognise that the work the school asks their children to do at home is of good quality and is helping them to build upon what has been learned in school so making sure that they continue to improve and do even better.

18. Parents recognise that the staff want the best for their children. They value the way staff encourage good behaviour and the way in which older pupils care for those younger than themselves. They are proud of how the children behave both in school and whilst on visits, such as the residential trip to Scarborough and their appearances in singing and dancing festivals. The values that parents hold important are supported and promoted very well in the way staff encourage pupils to care for others. A good example of how the school promotes a sense of care and consideration is seen in the daily assembly. Here pupils learn that you do not need to be important to do good things and that all of us can contribute in a small way to helping others less fortunate than ourselves.
19. Parents find the staff very approachable; staff will always spare time to talk to them about how well their children are doing. Parents know they can talk over problems with teachers safe in the knowledge that they will receive accurate information and prompt action. Parents feel that the school is quick to contact them over a problem and that they are kept fully involved until the situation is resolved. This sort of contact with parents strengthens the parental partnership because they know they are being listened to and that the school recognises the importance of parents' involvement in their children's learning. In addition, the school regularly checks how well children are doing and so, for example, one parent explained how a difficulty with reading, identified by the school, pointed out that her child had a problem with their eyesight and she was able to get prompt help as a result.
20. There is a very active and supportive parents' association and they have raised substantial funds for the school - over £7000 - in the last year. The school very much appreciates the contribution this makes to teaching and learning, particularly in information and communication technology.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The curriculum for the Foundation Stage.**

21. In the last two years the focus for much of the school's work has been upon gaining parents' confidence and raising standards in literacy, numeracy and science. A great deal of effective work has been done in a very short period. However, there has been insufficient staff development linked to how young children learn and the requirements for teaching the Foundation Stage. Whilst literacy and numeracy are taught well and the school improvement plan recognises the need to improve the facilities for children's physical development, the curriculum for the youngest children requires further improvement.
22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective in developing the basic skills of reading, writing and number but not enough account is taken of the other areas of learning to give children the breadth of experience they need to develop and make progress. At present, areas such as the knowledge and understanding of the world, and the creative and physical development of children, are split into subjects of the National Curriculum. Some of this comes about because there is an expectation that subject managers should have planning from every year group including the reception class. This has put pressure on the teacher to

produce planning by each subject and so has led to the curriculum for the Foundation Stage becoming fragmented. As a result, the teaching of children by subject rather than by the curriculum for the Foundation Stage does not ensure that sufficient importance is given to the steps children make before they attain the early learning goals.<sup>3</sup> This is of particular concern so early in the year and when children have only been in school a short period of time. In addition, what the children are to learn over the course of a week or over longer periods focuses upon what would be typical at the end of the reception year. The school's own assessments of children show that most are of average attainment and so setting work at this level does not ensure that activities build effectively upon what children have learned before they come to school.

23. In terms of children's personal, social and emotional development, planning again tends to be broad and does not focus upon what individuals might need to do to develop the skills of independence, persistence and concentration. Generally, there are too few chances for children to explore and investigate things for themselves because adults decide when children should begin and end an activity and this is irrespective of their level of interest. Because of this, children are not able to show a high involvement in activities, or persist at those that they choose themselves. Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding amongst senior managers about the Foundation Stage and not enough staff development has taken place to implement the curriculum effectively.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

24. The headteacher, senior managers and governors should:

- (1) Improve the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage by:
- improving the knowledge and understanding of this stage of learning not only for those working with this age group but also for senior managers;
  - ensuring that the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is implemented fully;
  - ensuring that planning reflects what children are to learn in each of the areas of learning; and
  - ensuring that full attention is given to the stepping stones to learning so that children build effectively upon what has been learned before.

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<sup>3</sup> Early learning goals form the final stepping-stones and set out what children are expected to know by the end of the reception year before starting the National Curriculum in Year 1.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	6
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	1	2	2	0	0	0
Percentage	17	17	33	33	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. When the total number is substantially less than 100, care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 15 percentage points.

### 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)	105
Number of full-time pupils known to be 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	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	7	9	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

\* Numbers of pupils omitted where there are fewer than ten boys or girls.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (100)	87 (86)	93 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (100)	87 (93)	93 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

\* Numbers of pupils omitted where there are fewer than ten boys or girls.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	102
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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	26.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	215167
Total expenditure	209624
Expenditure per pupil	2231
Balance brought forward from previous year	420
Balance carried forward to next year	5963

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	105
Number of questionnaires returned	60

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	28	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	62	30	2	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	30	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	35	7	2	8
The teaching is good.	65	27	0	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	40	5	2	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	2	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	28	3	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	45	43	3	0	8
The school is well led and managed.	70	20	2	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	32	0	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	37	27	5	8