

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **OVERTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Overton, Basingstoke

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116305

Headteacher: Mrs Jo Baker

Reporting inspector: Tim Boyce

20932

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 192556

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 Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Overton CE Primary Court Drove Overton Hants
Postcode:	RG25 3ES
Telephone number:	01256 770249
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ed Wicke
Date of previous inspection:	24/02/1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Overton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is a larger than average school, providing full time education for 300 pupils aged from 4 to 11 years. The school is situated in the village of Overton, to the west of Basingstoke, in Hampshire. Pupils generally come from Overton and the local area. Just under one per cent of pupils have a white European heritage and have English as an additional language. The social and economic circumstances of the majority of parents are above average. Five per cent of pupils in the school are eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than average. A below average percentage of pupils, (17.4%), are included on the school's register of special educational need. The majority of these have minor learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Assessments administered by the school show that attainment, on entry to the reception classes, covers the full range of abilities and is broadly average. There are, however, a slightly higher than average number of higher attaining pupils.

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

This is a good school, with many strengths, that serves its pupils well. Pupils achieve high standards in most academic subjects and develop positive attitudes. They behave very well and get on very well together, achieving very good levels of personal development. The teaching is good overall, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. The curriculum is broad, but there is an imbalance in the time and emphasis given to some curricular subjects. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with some good features. The school has achieved good improvement since the last inspection. When all these factors are weighed together and considered against slightly above average costs, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards are higher than are usually found in English, mathematics and science, and have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Attendance is very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes, behave very well, get on well together, and are very confident and independent learners.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. There is some very good and excellent teaching in the classes for older pupils.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good progress.
- Procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils are very good and teachers make very good use of assessment information when planning their lessons.
- The school has a very positive ethos. The pastoral care and support provided by the head teacher is a particular strength.

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

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are too low. There are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to apply ICT skills across the curriculum.
- There is insufficient balance between the different subjects of the curriculum and, as a result, some subjects are given insufficient time and emphasis.
- The quality of the partnership between certain staff and those parents who wish to work more closely with the school.

*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 improved significantly since the last inspection, in February 1997. All of the key issues identified in the previous inspection report have been addressed and, in most cases, have been fully met. Several of these areas have now become significant strengths of the school. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are now very good and the information gained is used very effectively to inform teachers' planning. As a result, work is very well matched to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils, including the less able. The school now has appropriate subject plans and curriculum guidance for

all National Curriculum subjects and religious education (RE). The school has now developed a more effective strategic approach to the management of the school's performance and most staff are now co-operating together effectively to achieve common goals. The development of a fully effective senior management team has been delayed by changes in key personnel in the intervening period.

In addition to the improvements in those areas identified as key issues, there have been many other significant improvements that have resulted in the raising of academic and personal standards throughout the school. All of the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and a higher than average proportion of good teaching was seen. The potential for further improvement is good.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The National Curriculum assessments administered in 2000 indicated that, when compared with the national average, standards were well above average in English and mathematics, and very high in science. When compared with similar schools (those with up to 8 per cent of pupils' eligible for free school meals), results were well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics, with almost twice as many pupils than average achieving the higher Level 5. Trends over time show a steadily improving picture and the school attributes the high standards achieved in 2000 to improvements in its provision and the quality of that particular age group, which contained a much higher than average proportion of higher attaining pupils. The school sets and achieves appropriate targets for its attainment in English, mathematics and science. Levels of achievement are good and all pupils are working to their potential. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and the majority achieve the national expectation. Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve similar standards to their peers. Those pupils identified by the school as being gifted and talented are making good progress.

Inspection evidence, supported by the preliminary results of the national assessments for 2001 indicate that standards are well above average in English, with pupils achieving very high standards in listening and speaking. Standards in mathematics and science are well above average. Pupils are making very rapid progress in ICT, from a low starting point, and whilst the majority achieve appropriate standards, older pupils are not attaining standards in line with the national expectation because they have not experienced the full range of activities required by the National Curriculum. Standards in other national curriculum subjects are at least in line with national expectations. Standards in physical education (PE) are much higher than are usually found and are particularly good in games and swimming. Standards in RE are at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Children learn very effectively in the foundation stage and most achieve the required standard by the time they finish their reception year. Many pupils exceed these expectations in the areas of learning dealing with physical development, their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average in English, well above average in mathematics and at least satisfactory in science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and do their very best in all their lessons. They are very interested in the work that they do and understand the importance of achieving high standards.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good in class and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Behaviour on the playground and around the school is very good and there is very little bullying or other oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together and appreciate the implications of their actions on others. They have respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Personal development is very good and pupils are independent and responsible learners.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is much higher than average. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons start on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is a strength of the school. All of the 37 lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory. Of these lessons, 24 per cent were satisfactory, 43 per cent were good, 27 per cent were very good and 6 per cent were excellent. English, mathematics and science are taught well and good attention is given to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils very effectively. Higher attaining pupils, including those identified as being gifted and talented, are well provided for and are achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress.

Whilst the overall quality of teaching is good, and good teaching was seen in every class, there is some variation in the quality of learning from class to class, and lesson to lesson. The main strengths of the very good and excellent teaching seen were very high expectations, the very positive relationships that teachers form with pupils and good subject knowledge. Other positive features of the better teaching seen include a brisk pace, with deadlines being set for the completion of work, the use of a wide variety of teaching strategies to keep pupils on task and the way pupils are given very good opportunities to become responsible and independent learners. As a result, pupils come to school willingly and enthusiastically, concentrate very hard in their lessons and make good, and sometimes very good, progress. Good use is made of teachers with specific subject expertise. Several members of staff teach their subject specialisms to a number of other groups. The teacher of swimming, for example, teaches across the school, to very good effect.

Whilst always at least satisfactory overall, the quality of learning in the three Year 3/4 classes is sometimes adversely affected by the large number of pupils in these classes. It is difficult, for example for pupils to get sufficient "hands-on" experience when there are thirty-six pupils and only fifteen computers in the ICT suite.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad, in that it contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. However, the school is not currently teaching the recommended minimum number of hours per week, particularly for its older pupils, and certain subjects are not receiving sufficient time or emphasis. There have been significant improvements in the provision for ICT in recent months, but most of the older pupils have not had experience of the required range of activities. The teaching of literacy across the curriculum is very good and pupils are given many, very good opportunities to practise their skills. Opportunities to apply numeracy skills are satisfactory, but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their developing ICT skills in other subjects. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils receive very good support from their teachers in class and when they are withdrawn for additional support by the special needs co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for moral and social development is good and makes a positive impact on the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils. The provision for cultural development is good and gives pupils a good understanding of their own and other cultures. Planned opportunities for spiritual development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very Good. Child protection procedures are good. Teachers know the pupils very well and take very good care of all their personal and academic needs. Assessment procedures are very good and assessment information is used very well to match work to the needs of individual pupils.

The school has a generally positive relationship with parents. Most parents have very positive views of the school and are very pleased with the standards that their children achieve. The written information provided for parents is very detailed and many good, formal opportunities are provided for parents to find out about the progress their children are making. Personal links between the school and parents are very variable, and certain governors and staff are perceived as defensive and dismissive by a significant proportion of parents who would like to work more closely with the school. This is a weakness.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall with some good features. The head teacher provides effective leadership and, with the governors and senior staff, has been successful in driving up standards in English, mathematics and science. Her management of pastoral issues is a major strength. The management of the curriculum is satisfactory and, despite the recent, very significant contribution made by the acting deputy, the effectiveness of the senior management team has been disrupted by the loss of two deputy head teachers in recent years. The Early Years/Key Stage 1 co-ordinator provides effective management of her area of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall with some good features. Governors have a clear understanding of their role and are appropriately involved in the strategic development and day-to-day running of the school. All statutory responsibilities are met apart from some weaknesses in the curriculum for

	ICT.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring arrangements are effective and the head teacher and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that exist. The school improvement plan is a useful document that clearly identifies the main areas for future development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The financial management of the school is good and is closely linked to the school improvement plan. Teaching staff are deployed very effectively and good use is made of specialist teaching in a number of areas. Good use is made of the good quality resources that exist for most subjects. The school makes very good use of the spacious accommodation available. The principles of best value are applied effectively and the school gives good value for money.

There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified teaching staff. Resources are generally of good quality and are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. Whilst there are good quality computers in the ICT suite, there are not enough machines for the larger groups and the computers in classrooms are not of a sufficiently good standard to enable pupils to practise and apply the skills they are learning. The external accommodation is excellent. There are very spacious and attractive grounds, with playing fields, plenty of hard play space, seating areas and a well-maintained swimming pool, for example. The school has identified the further development of the external environment as a focus in the school improvement plan. The internal accommodation is good overall, but spans the range from very good to unsatisfactory. There is a large hall, ten classrooms of an appropriate size, and specialist accommodation for special educational needs, food technology, music and resource storage, for example. Two classes, however, are currently housed in poor quality temporary accommodation, but this is due to be replaced once the current building program has been completed. The current situation where the ICT suite and library are housed in the same room is unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this weakness and has plans to relocate the library.

#### **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>• That their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The good progress made in most lessons.</li> <li>• The behaviour in school.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• That the school staff are approachable if parents have a question or a problem.</li> <li>• That the children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• That the school encourages pupils to become mature and independent learners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consistency and regularity with which homework is set.</li> <li>• How well informed they are about the progress their children are making.</li> <li>• How closely the school works in partnership with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with all the aspects identified by parents as strengths. Of the areas identified by parents as areas for improvement, the team feels that an appropriate amount of homework is set. Parents are kept very well informed about the progress that their children are making and the quality of written information provided for parents is very good. However, a significant proportion of parents find certain members of the governing body very defensive and approximately one third of the parents who replied would like better day-to-day contact with certain staff, who are perceived as distant and dismissive of their views. These parents would like a stronger partnership with the school in the education of their children. The team agrees that these are areas for improvement.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Standards are higher than are usually found in English, mathematics and science, and have improved significantly since the last inspection.**

1. Standards in English are very good at the end of both key stages. Pupils have very good reading and writing skills, whilst their speaking and listening skills are very high. Pupils enter the school with above average communication skills and these are very effectively built upon as they move through the school. Pupils speak clearly and confidently and most have a large and interesting vocabulary, including a good range of technical terms that serve them well when completing assessments in mathematics and science, for example. The standard of reading is very good and most pupils read accurately and with admirable expression. They generally have very high levels of comprehension and have a very clear understanding of the subtle nuances contained in quite complex texts. Writing skills are very good and the standard of grammar, spelling and punctuation are consistently very good. The quality of handwriting and presentation is good in most classes, but is an area for further development in one of the classes for older children, where the teacher concentrates on speed and content, and places insufficient emphasis on the quality of presentation and handwriting.
2. The teaching of literacy is good overall and, on occasions, very good and even excellent, and as a result pupils learn very effectively. They are given a wide and fascinating range of tasks and activities to complete in literacy lessons which motivate them to do their very best. In addition, a very good range of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their language and literacy skills in other subjects. Whilst some use is made of ICT, most older pupils have had insufficient practice to develop appropriate word processing skills.
3. Standards in mathematics are very good at the end of both key stages and pupils achieve very well. In all classes, pupils' work is carefully matched to their needs, which has contributed effectively to the improvement in the schools' national test results over recent years. The work is highly structured to build on previous learning and to meet specific targets, which are shared daily with the pupils and with their parents at the end of each term. Older pupils take responsibility for their learning by recording written evaluations of their individual achievement and identification of where they need to improve.
4. Throughout the school, teaching and learning in mathematics is very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, which is effective in raising standards. Higher attaining pupils in years three and four, for example, have a secure understanding of the difference between ratio and proportion and of pattern in number. Often the teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject stimulates the pupils at the end of the key stage to consider an above average range of mental strategies for pupils to apply their understanding of the value of numbers to three decimal places. Pupils make very good use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary to explain their answers and to challenge each other's ideas.
5. In several classes, teacher create a competitive atmosphere for learning, which pupils greatly enjoy. Pupils are encouraged to work at speed in class and when completing their homework, this effectively focuses their concentration and improves their learning. All pupils have a very good awareness of their own learning, because teachers' provide clear explanations and question them closely to re-enforce their understanding of their answers. Although pupils are taught the basic skills of collecting and interpreting data, greater opportunities could be made for pupils to apply these skills more frequently and systematically in other subject areas.
6. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 are at least in line with national expectations and, at the end of Key Stage 2, they are currently well above national expectations. Teacher assessment completed last year found that pupils were not reaching the higher levels in scientific enquiry. The school has improved the quality of provision this year and this has impacted very favourably on the

- standards achieved in Years 1 and 2. At both key stages, pupils achieve very well in scientific knowledge and their achievement in scientific enquiry is good.
7. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, most pupils develop good observational skills and they use the correct vocabulary to label their diagrams of flowering plants and many write complete sentences. Teachers carefully evaluate how well pupils learn what is taught and patiently help them to respond correctly both orally and in writing. By the time they are seven, most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. From exploring the school grounds, for example, they discover a variety of grasses and other plants, which they represent accurately using a graph. They develop their ability to investigate ideas about materials and forces so that higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 recognise how to make a test fair. They use measurement correctly to compare their results with their predictions, for example, about the distance cars will travel on different surfaces or from different heights of a ramp.
  8. By the time they are eleven, most pupils provide high levels of explanation of various phenomena such as the force of gravity and how this is proved, and can relate the concept to a wide range of activities in everyday life. Although they repeat measurements for accuracy in their investigations, these are not always recorded clearly to assist them look for patterns in the data and pupils sometimes draw the wrong conclusions from their results. They have yet to be given sufficient opportunities to use ICT to help them seek patterns in the data.
  9. Teaching and learning in science is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 classes enjoy sharing ideas about how to investigate changes in plants if they are provided with different quantities of water. They work with a high level of independence to plan successfully in a scientific way. The marking of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 is exemplary, and teachers use their very good subject knowledge to write detailed comments, which improve pupils' understanding of science.

**Attendance is very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes, behave very well, get on well together, and are very confident and independent learners.**

10. Attendance is very good and has a very positive impact on the standards achieved by most pupils. Punctuality is very good and lessons start on time. Pupils are keen to come to school and are very enthusiastic about the work that they do. They frequently told inspectors how much they liked school and, in particular, about the fun they had in their mental mathematics sessions. This was well illustrated in a punchy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, where the teacher's infectious enthusiasm rubbed off on them as they devised different strategies to add, subtract and divide "in their heads". The pupils responded by being inquisitive and eager to learn. Pupils are keen to get the most out of lessons and their hands frequently shoot up in reply to teachers' skillful questioning. Inspectors were constantly impressed with the pupils' ability to concentrate and to enjoy their lessons in spite of the very high temperatures experienced during the period of the inspection that made working conditions far from ideal.
11. Children in the reception classes are keen to come to school and show that they are highly motivated by bringing in items from home to share with the class and by actively participating in lessons. In one literacy lesson based on the story, "The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch", there was a purposeful buzz of activity in the room and all pupils were busily engaged. Children were clearly proud of their achievements and were very keen to show the inspectors how much they could do. The fact that many of them could work well on their own, moving without fuss to the next activity without the teacher's direct support, was particularly impressive. Such good reinforcement of both independent learning skills and a real joy of learning is enabling pupils to become keen and confident at an early age.
12. Several teachers inject just the right amount of humour to add sparkle to a lesson and they often encourage their pupils with reassuring smiles. Pupils quickly warm to this approach which ensures that even the most nervous pupils are keen to join in discussions and contribute to the lesson. Examples of this were seen when pupils in a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson for Years 5 and 6 were reporting back on interviews with parents about their jobs. The teacher

maintained a cracking pace by peppering the lesson with witty comments that kept pupils on their toes as they vied with each other to join in. At the same time, the teacher made it plain that she valued everyone's contribution by listening carefully and supporting pupil's opinions with a reassuring smile. Pupils took the lead from her by listening well and showed real appreciation of their classmates' efforts.

13. Pupils are able to sustain very good attitudes to learning even in the larger classes where conditions are sometimes cramped or where they have to share resources. This was well illustrated in a geography lesson for Year 5 pupils where pupils were debating the pros and cons of keeping hedgerows. Whilst there were 35 pupils in the class and it was extremely hot, the lesson went well and pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the economic advantages of larger fields as well as the impact on the environment of leaving hedgerows as they are. Similarly, in a year 3/4 class, the same number of pupils worked very well in the computer suite when sharing computers co-operatively and thoughtfully.
14. Pupils show high levels of interest in all aspects of school life. Older pupils were seen rehearsing hard after school for a production of Cinderella. They were drawn in by the teacher's lively teaching style and were clearly enjoying themselves. They worked hard to rise to their teacher's high expectations for them, learning to speak clearly and confidently above the music, and using excellent facial expression. All pupils were very focused and attentive and this helped them improve the quality of their performance.
15. Standards of behaviour in lessons, in assemblies and around the school are very good. Pupils display great courtesy and respect for each other and all adults. They uphold the school rules very well and were heard reminding each other how to behave. Good behaviour is positively reinforced with praise and a smile, and pupils respond well to this clear approach. This very good behaviour has a positive impact on the progress pupils' make. Behaviour is equally good in the playground, where there is a strong sense of harmony and where pupils of all ages mix well. No signs of bullying or oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection.

**Teaching and learning are good overall. There is some very good and excellent teaching in the classes for older pupils.**

16. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is a strength of the school. All of the 37 lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory. Of these lessons, 24 per cent were satisfactory, 43 per cent were good, 27 per cent were very good and 6 per cent were excellent. This is a much better standard of teaching than was found in the previous inspection.
17. Teachers are particularly good at teaching the key skills of literacy and numeracy and this is resulting in the very high standards achieved in recent years in English and mathematics. The teaching of science is also good and an appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of scientific investigation and experimentation. Some of the key skills of ICT are now being taught to the pupils, but many of the older pupils have not been taught effectively in the past, mainly because of the lack of subject expertise and suitable equipment. Resource levels are now much improved and pupils are currently making good progress. They are beginning to make good their shortfall in the skills and knowledge of the subject. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils very effectively. Higher attaining pupils, including those identified as being gifted and talented, are well provided for and make good progress. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are very well taught and do very well. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection that identified the teaching of lower attaining pupils as a key issue for development.
18. The teaching and learning in the reception classes is consistently good and the children are learning very effectively. The main strengths of the teaching seen at this stage are good subject knowledge, very high expectations, detailed planning and the way that pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Whilst the overall quality of teaching in the rest of the school is good, and good teaching was seen in every class, there is much more variation in the quality of learning from class to class and lesson to lesson. Whilst always at least satisfactory overall, the

- quality of learning in the three Year 3/4 classes is sometimes adversely affected by the large number of pupils in these classes. It is difficult, for example, for pupils to get sufficient “hands-on” experience when there are thirty-six pupils and only fifteen computers in the ICT suite.
19. The main strengths of the very good and excellent teaching seen were very high expectations, the very positive relationships that teachers form with pupils and good subject knowledge. Other positive features of the better teaching seen include a brisk pace, with deadlines being set for the completion of work, the use of a wide variety of teaching strategies to keep pupils on task and the way pupils are given very good opportunities to become responsible and independent learners. As a result, pupils come to school willingly, concentrate very well and make good, and sometimes very good, progress.
  20. Weaknesses identified in those lessons that were judged to be satisfactory overall included overly long introductions, a slower pace to teaching and learning, and the use of teaching techniques that leave pupils as more passive learners. Good use is made of teachers with specific subject expertise. Several members of staff teach their subject specialisms to a number of other groups. The specialist teacher of swimming, for example, teaches the subject across the school, to very good effect.

**The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good progress.**

21. From the foundation stage, pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support to enable them progress as well as they can. The school adopts a flexible approach to grouping for pupils who need to repeat a year, or for lower attaining pupils to be taught in a smaller group in subjects such as in mathematics. Class teachers and learning support teachers take good advantage of a weekly workshop held by the special needs co-ordinator for their continuing professional development.
22. All pupils who find difficulty in learning are provided with very useful individual education plans from the point at which the slightest concern is identified. This early intervention prevents pupils’ regression to higher stages on the Code of Practice. The special needs co-ordinator has developed an effective system for maintaining an overview of pupils’ needs and progress. Documentation is detailed and shows that pupils make very good progress for example, in one year group eighteen pupils were on the register at the beginning of the school year and of these only four remain in the Summer term. The special needs co-ordinator holds frequent reviews with those who support pupils on the register, however, only one third of the parents invited to these meetings respond.
23. The school uses a wide range of assessments to monitor pupils’ progress and to identify those pupils who are not making sufficient progress. This ensures that pupils maximise their potential in English and mathematics. Staff collaborate well when addressing the needs of these pupils, several of whom are provided with an individual action plan for English. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, the results of several tests are used to identify pupils who need additional literacy support. During Key Stage 2 assessment data is used to identify those pupils who are designated as independent readers. Class teachers meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties in mathematics by teaching them in small groups. This has a very positive impact on their levels of achievement.

**Procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils are very good and teachers make very good use of assessment information when planning their lessons.**

24. Procedures for monitoring pupil’s attainment and progress are very good for all pupils, including higher attaining ones and those with special educational needs. This was a key issue at the last inspection and the school has responded by taking effective action.
25. All statutory requirements for assessment are met and the results gained at the end of each key stage are analysed carefully to identify any significant trends so that changes can be made in the planned curriculum, if required. Pupils are assessed at the beginning and the end of their reception year using a “baseline” test. Pupils’ progress in English and mathematics is tracked regularly to

- monitor their progress against the predicted grades. Teachers are then able to identify any unexpected changes in performance and make any required adaptations to the teaching programme.
26. The day-to-day' assessment of individual pupils is very good. Marking is detailed and constructive and informs pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers challenge pupils' thinking during lessons, which pupils appreciate, since it helps them understand new ideas. Most teachers respond sensitively to pupils' learning needs and make minor adjustments as they go along to ensure that work is always accurately matched to individual needs. Year group teams share their weekly evaluations of the progress made by each pupil when they plan lessons for the subsequent week in literacy and numeracy. This enables pupils to build on previous learning and to raise standards still further. The school has an effective system for matching pupils' achievement to National Curriculum targets that are used at the end of each term to plan the next steps in teaching and learning to raise pupils' standards even further.
27. Whilst the school has a very realistic understanding of the on-going achievement of each pupil in the school, this information is not used effectively when teachers match achievement to National Curriculum levels at the end of each key stage. Procedures for levelling work are weak and staff err far too much on the side of caution, particularly when attributing the higher levels at each key stage. In 2000, for example, all of the teacher assessments for English, mathematics and science underestimated the likely grade by a significant proportion at both key stages. The average error was 8 per cent at Key Stage 1 (reading, writing and mathematics), and a staggering 17per cent at Key Stage 2.

**The school has a very positive ethos. The pastoral care and support provided by the head teacher is a particular strength.**

28. The school has a very positive ethos that is firmly based on mutual respect and admiration and every pupil is effectively encouraged to achieve their potential. The head teacher gives very good leadership in this aspect by knowing all the staff and pupils as important individuals, and having a very clear understanding of their relative strengths and weaknesses. Pupils with concerns, for example, regularly come to the entrance hall at break and lunch times to seek her advice and support.
29. The school has an effective procedure for keeping "field notes" of pupils' emotional and intellectual development to enable staff to give appropriate support when it is needed. There is a general staff commitment to the achievement of high standards. The identification of able and gifted pupils, and the setting arrangements for English and mathematics, are examples of this commitment.
30. The school has a very positive approach to personal, social and health education (PSHE). Circle time, for example, is used effectively to provide good opportunities for pupils to share their achievements and concerns. This time also enables the staff to have a positive input on pupils' personal and social development. Observations of the good teaching of sex education to the oldest pupils support this view. Teachers have a good rapport with the pupils and deal with the subject in a sensitive manner.
31. The very positive ethos encourages pupils to be enthusiastic and to show very positive attitudes towards school. When questioned about their likes and dislikes, almost every pupil stated that they liked coming to school. Pupils support each other well. Pupils new to the school, for example, are allocated someone to look after them until they settle in. This has worked particularly effectively for the small number of pupils with English as an additional language who have settled in well and are making good progress.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are too low. There are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to apply ICT skills across the curriculum.**

32. Until very recently the school did not have sufficient good quality equipment or software to enable pupils to develop an appropriate IT capability. Since leasing 15 good quality computers and locating them in a specialist suite, there has been a significant improvement in the progress made and the standards achieved. However, most pupils have had only a very superficial experience of a very narrow range of applications, and the resultant standards, at the end of Year 6, are below the national expectation for most areas of the subject. The school is aware of this weakness and the sustained development of ICT is a key area in the school development plan.
33. Standards in control technology, an aspect that has been taught thoroughly over the past few weeks are in line with national expectations and pupils can manipulate screen and floor “turtles” with appropriate levels of expertise. Standards achieved further down the school are not as far below the national expectation and pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 are broadly in line with national expectations.
34. The teaching of ICT, which is generally done by those staff who have better subject knowledge, is generally good, and is enabling pupils to make good progress and make good some of the shortfalls in their experience. The school has yet to receive its designated training and some staff are very reluctant users.
35. Whilst the computers available for teaching ICT skills are now of an appropriate quality, there are not enough of them to enable pupils in the larger classes to work at the minimum access level with two pupils sharing one machine. In addition, the standard of the computers in classrooms is poor and pupils have little opportunity to practise the skills they have learned in their designated lessons. Whilst there is some limited use of ICT as a useful tool in other subjects, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in a range of activities. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and is well aware that a lot of work will need to be done adapting existing policies and schemes of work to include opportunities for pupils to receive worthwhile experiences.

**There is insufficient balance between the different subjects of the curriculum and, as a result, some subjects are given insufficient time and emphasis.**

36. The school had understandably responded to government pressure to concentrate its attention on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, and this has been achieved with significant success through the introduction of the strategies for literacy and numeracy, for example. The school has worked hard to maintain all of the other subjects at an appropriate level. However, since there has been no increase in the overall amount of teaching time available, the allocation of more time to English and mathematics has led to a reduction in the emphasis given to some other subjects. As a result there has been some reduction in standards in these areas. This has also been exacerbated by the fact that the length of the working week is below the minimum recommended by the government. The acting deputy is aware of these weaknesses and already has plans to modify the structure of the curriculum planned for September.

**The quality of the partnership between certain staff and those parents who wish to work more closely with the school.**

37. The school actively encourages parents to become involved in the life of the school. School policies encourage teachers to involve parents and several make a regular commitment to help in classrooms and to accompany pupils on outside trips. Parents seen in classrooms during the inspection worked very well with the teachers and spoke warmly of the welcome they receive. Several said they are made to feel valued by the teachers. The school would not be able to run and maintain the swimming pool were it not for parents’ continued help and support. Parents have



already signed the home/school agreement and most co-operate readily, for example, by listening to their children read at home and by reporting absences promptly.

38. However, a number of parents were dissatisfied with the way in which the school works in partnership with them. A significant proportion of parents, approximately a third of those who completed the questionnaire and a number of those who attended the meeting for parents, said that they were wary of approaching some governors and staff with questions, minor complaints and suggested improvements.
39. Inspectors recognise that the school has worked very hard to provide parents with a wide range of good quality written information. However, many parents would like opportunities to work more closely with staff and to be more involved in the education of their children at school.

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

40. In order to further raise standards and better meet the needs of all its pupils the school should:
1. Raise standards in ICT by:
    - a) increasing the number of computers so that pupils are given better opportunities to learn and develop appropriate skills;
    - b) improving the range of software available so that pupils have better opportunities to apply their skills in a range of different subjects;
    - c) providing all staff with appropriate training, where required;
    - d) establishing better links between ICT and all other subjects so that better and more frequent opportunities are provided for pupils to apply and develop their ICT skills across the curriculum.
  2. Improve the balance between the different subjects of the curriculum by:
    - a) ensuring that the amount of teaching time at Key Stage 2 is at least in line with the nationally recommended minimum;
    - b) ensuring that the time and emphasis given to all subject of the National Curriculum, and RE, other than English, mathematics and science, are appropriate.
  3. Improve the quality of the school's partnership with parents by ensuring that all parents are effectively encouraged, by all governors and staff, to work more closely with the school in the education of their children.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	27	43	24	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	300
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	16

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	55

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.2
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	28	25	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	26	24
	Girls	22	23	21
	Total	45	49	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (78)	92 (85)	85 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	23
	Girls	22	19	19
	Total	43	42	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (76)	79 (87)	79 (62)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88

*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	18	21	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	18	18	20
	Total	33	34	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (65)	87 (71)	95 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	29	27	29
Percentage of pupils	School	74 (56)	69 (62)	74 (65)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)
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*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	27.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

***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.*

***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	548,305
Total expenditure	553,192
Expenditure per pupil	1,757
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,061
Balance carried forward to next year	13,174

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	71

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	46	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	60	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	48	8	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	57	16	3	1
The teaching is good.	45	48	4	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	14	58	24	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	45	5	7	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	49	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	9	52	25	9	5
The school is well led and managed.	23	52	12	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	48	9	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	49	5	3	9

**Other issues raised by parents**

Several parents raised concerns about the quality of learning in the larger teaching groups.