

INSPECTION REPORT

CROSSCRAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kendal, Cumbria

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112316

Headteacher: Mrs V Hailwood

Reporting inspector: A C Davies
3639

Dates of inspection: 7-8th November 2001

Inspection number: 193510

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

Crosscrake Primary School

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stainton
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Cumbria

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs K East

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary aided primary school is smaller than most others with 96 pupils attending full time. Pupils start school in the September of the academic year that they reach the age of five. The school is very popular and it has grown in size over the past few years. It is situated in the delightful hamlet of Crosscrake, just outside Kendal in Cumbria. Very few pupils are entitled to school meals free of charge. However, an above average number of pupils are on the special educational needs register with a high proportion having statements. All pupils are white and no-one has English as an additional language. When they first start school most pupils display academic and personal skills that are expected for their age. However, whilst there are some very able communicators, there is also a significant number who have learning difficulties at this time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an excellent school with many outstanding features. Standards are high and have been for the past few years. Pupils achieve very well; particularly the more able and those with learning difficulties. This is chiefly due to the outstanding leadership, which helps teachers to focus on the learning needs of all pupils. Teaching is very good and having a substantial impact on the way pupils learn. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils are helped to analyse their own work and to understand what it is they need to do to improve.
- Very careful consideration is given to how pupils learn best and to find ways of helping create the right atmosphere and environment for this to happen.
- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and ensures that all staff work effectively as a team.
- The quality of pupils' writing is outstanding and they use this very well so that it has a very powerful impact on the rest of their work.
- Standards in science are very high with pupils being able to carry out independent investigations and evaluate their findings in a most mature way.
- The teaching is very good with many outstanding features evident.
- Pupils with special educational needs are extremely well provided for and this helps them to make very good progress as they move through the school.

What could be improved

- There are no key issues for the school to deal with because it has already accurately identified the areas within its school development plan that will help them to make the school even better.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997 and it has made very good progress since that time. It was reported as a good school during the previous inspection but it is now an outstanding school. It has dealt very effectively with the main issues noted at the time of the previous inspection and has since grown in strength. Indeed, all the issues identified as weaknesses last time are now strengths in the school.

The main reasons for this improvement have undoubtedly been the careful consideration given to how pupils learn and what could be done to raise standards still further. The headteacher has had more time

to put her stamp on the school. The leadership was reported as very good at the time of the previous inspection but it is now outstanding. The teaching has improved, with many of the lessons being outstanding or very good. Standards have risen with pupils now achieving very well and making very good progress.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	A	A*	A*
mathematics	A	A	A*	A*
science	A*	A	A*	A*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Standards are very high and improving. The school's national test results for 11-year-olds show that it is frequently in the top 5 per cent nationally in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In 2001 the school was in the top 5 per cent for each of the three subjects when compared with national and similar schools.

The pupils have a very good start in the reception class with very good progress being made by all, enabling them to be confident communicators and well on the road to being effective readers before they start Year 1. The school builds on this early success as pupils move through the school. The excellent standards in reading help pupils to become very effective writers with examples of pupils displaying maturity in their writing that is far in advance of their age. They learn to write with flair and imagination and are particularly successful in showing their emotions in poetic form.

In mathematics, pupils are able to cope with solving problems because this is a major part of their work from the moment they start school. They use their literacy and numeracy skills to very good effect in other subjects. This is having an exceptional impact on their levels of confidence helping them to plan and evaluate their own and others' investigations and problems. As a result, the standard of work in science is very high. The national tests in 2001 saw all pupils attain the higher levels in science with one pupil going on to attain a very high level.

Standards in information and communication technology are also high with very effective use of ICT in other subjects. This results in all work of a historical, geographical, religious and scientific basis benefiting from good use of literacy, numeracy and ICT and, as a consequence, being of a high standard.

The school successfully supports the learning needs of all pupils and this results in pupils with special educational needs making very good progress. The more able pupils are also exceptionally well challenged and produce some stunning pieces of written work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Outstanding. Pupils show a great enthusiasm for learning and are keen to do well. They are highly motivated because they are encouraged to consider what they need to do to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very Good. The pupils behave very well in lessons, in the dining area and at play. They are very polite, well mannered and a pleasure to spend time with.
Personal development and relationships	Outstanding. The pupils are extremely good at taking on additional responsibilities and know by instinct when things need doing. Older pupils take pride in looking after younger ones and there is a strong sense of community in the school because of the strength of the relationships that have been established.
Attendance	Very Good. The attendance levels are well above the national levels and pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good

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

The teaching is very good with many outstanding features. The main strength is the way the teachers use extremely successful methods to help pupils become effective learners. The staff have spent time considering what makes pupils effective and efficient learners and have put into practice methods that enable this to happen. The quality of teaching is very good in English and mathematics with many aspects being outstanding.

The pupils are provided with an outstanding start to their school life thanks to the methods used by the teacher of the youngest group. She starts the process of helping pupils to appreciate whether they have done their best possible work and this is something that is then maintained and developed as they move through the school. Teachers use a variety of physical exercises to deliberately stimulate the brain and to get pupils prepared for the activities they are to participate in. This is done as a natural and integrated part of different lessons and it helps to ensure that pupils are prepared for learning and able to concentrate that much more effectively. The staff also use carefully thought-through methods to help pupils assess their own work and to consider areas for improvement. This enables pupils to talk about their learning and to be aware of what they need to work at next.

There is very good consideration given to needs of different aged pupils in each class with effective support provided from a range of other adults to support this. The quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding and helps them to improve their work rate and the quality of the work they produce.

This is a school where every opportunity is provided for all pupils to achieve well. This is due, in no small measure, to the dedication of the staff. The teachers are very committed to the methods used and work as a team. Their preparation is excellent and they think deeply about how to stimulate the maximum amount of interest when planning their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very Good. This is a school that has successfully managed to provide pupils with a balance of basic skills teaching and opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in interesting and stimulating contexts. This has resulted in pupils having the best of both worlds in as much that their high standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT are having a real positive impact on their work in the creative arts.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Outstanding. The school has carefully analysed the needs of all these pupils and found methods that best suit their needs. This has helped to maximise the progress they make.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very Good. The pupils feel at home in this school because of the way they know about what is and is not expected of them. They interact with each other and with adults in a very mature way and feel confident about talking about a range of issues. They appreciate that there are other children and adults in the world who are not as fortunate as themselves and have a deep understanding about many national and international issues affecting our planet.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Outstanding. The staff know each and every pupil in this school and provide for their academic as well as pastoral need. They have very impressive methods to help set individual targets that are realistic and yet challenging.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Outstanding. The headteacher is at the heart of this school. Her drive, energy and innovation have helped all staff to be clear about the way forward. She is very dedicated to the successful methods employed to help pupils become efficient learners.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very Good. The governors are very knowledgeable and give a great deal of time to the school. They have efficient methods in place to help them in their management role. They know the school well and feel proud of its achievements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Outstanding. The school uses the information available to it to analyse its strengths and weaknesses. The depth of this analysis has led to the school taking action to implement many exciting and stimulating ideas

	that have helped to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Outstanding. The decision to keep the reception class small is one of many examples of carefully considered decisions that have been made to ensure that all pupils have every chance to succeed.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority appreciate that their children attend a very successful school. • The dedication and energy of all the staff. • Standards are high. • The school’s part in helping children feel proud of their own achievements. • The standard of behaviour and children’s positive attitudes to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework arrangements. • A wider range of after-school activities.

The vast majority of parents are very appreciative of the way the school deals with their children. The inspection team can well understand this and acknowledges that parents are right to feel this way. All the positive points made by the parents are acknowledged as strengths by the inspection team. The school has attempted to gain parental views about homework and recognise that the parents are divided about the amount of homework they feel is right for their children. In this respect, the school cannot win. It uses the information received from several past pupils and their parents to set the present levels of homework. These pupils indicated how helpful the school had been in setting appropriate amounts of homework in the latter years in the school, thus making it easier for them to take on the amount of homework expected in secondary schools. This small school provides pupils with a very wide range of additional activities although most have to occur at lunchtime because many pupils have to be transported home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils are helped to analyse their own work and to understand what it is they need to do to improve.

- 1 The school puts high emphasis on self-evaluation procedures to help pupils' learning. This starts in the reception class where children are encouraged to use a 'traffic light' system to indicate if they are happy with the work they have produced. The children in the reception are able to discuss their work and show very mature attitudes when considering questions, such as, 'Do you think you have worked hard?', 'Do you think you have worked hard enough?' and, 'Is this your best piece of work?'
- 2 This emphasis on self-evaluation is major feature throughout the school. All discussions with pupils indicated that they had good knowledge of how well they were doing and what they needed to do to improve. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are encouraged to use the red, amber and green system to show if they felt that the work was hard, just right or too easy. In Year 2 pupils are involved in full discussions about how they feel about the progress they are making. As a class they are read a piece of someone's writing and all are asked about what they feel can be done to improve it.
- 3 A very impressive lesson was observed in Years 5 and 6 when pupils were mostly involved in reading, writing and information and communication technology activities. During this session the teacher worked with a small group of 6 on a self-evaluation exercise focused on writing. The pupils worked with a partner and each was very aware of each other's written work. Each pupil is encouraged to read his or her partner's work and to analyse it. During the lesson pupils showed that they were confident about discussing what they could, and could not, do. Most acknowledge that they find spelling and using a width of describing words most difficult. Pupils are provided with a sheet which helps them to record their evaluations. This is successful in providing pupils with a structure to record their findings. Pupils have sheets which help them recognise what constitutes different levels according to the National Curriculum. The pupils are able to talk about these and are clearly very familiar with the structure. The teacher uses past examples of their own written work to help them clarify exactly the points made on the sheets. For example, the teacher talks about the appropriateness of certain sorts of terminology associated with letter-writing, for instance, 'Hi mate, how are you doing?' She helps pupils to clarify the use of language appropriate for the purpose by asking if this type of terminology is appropriate to different people that they may write to.
- 4 As the lesson moves on, the pupils demonstrate good levels of articulation as they describe aspects associated with their own and partner's writing. They are very successful in organising themselves and draw upon past work to underpin what they are saying to their partner. The pupils are highly motivated and self-disciplined and show high levels of interest in their work. The partnership system, where one pupil looks at the work of another and then comments on it, is very successful. They show good levels of maturity during the session. The ease with which pupils talk about the work of others is very impressive. The teacher's level of intervention is expert. She knows exactly when to stop pupils and talk to them as a group because she is clear about what she wants the pupils to get from the session. At the end of the lesson each pupil has agreed two or three specific targets to work on. These are recorded and will form the focus of the next session they have.

- 5 The process of self-evaluation underpins the school's basic belief about the way pupils learn. Even at lunchtime the pupils are asked about how they feel the noise level has been or whether they feel it has been a pleasant lunchtime. The school's self-evaluation process is making a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

Very careful consideration is given to how pupils learn best and to find ways of helping create the right atmosphere and environment for this to happen.

- 6 The staff at the school and the headteacher in particular, have given a great deal of time (including significant periods of professional development) to consideration of the way pupils' learn. They have been able to implement many good ideas, including the self-evaluation procedures described above.
- 7 One of the most noticeable features is associated with the physical exercises that pupils are engaged in at various times of the day. These sessions are introduced at different times of the day according to the teacher's view of the pupils' response. For example, one teacher was using certain exercises in the morning to help pupils be more alert, while another was using it late in the afternoon when she felt the pupils were flagging. These exercises do not take up an undue amount of time. Indeed, many do not take more than a minute. The staff are very familiar with the theory behind the process and can recognise that different types of exercise are more beneficial than others according to the situation or time of day. In the lessons observed, carrying out the physical exercises did not stop the flow of the lesson. Indeed, in all cases there was a marked improvement in pupils' concentration after the exercises had been completed.
- 8 The school also has a large number of pupils diagnosed as having dyspraxia, which can of course, be a bar to effective learning. The headteacher has much expertise in this area and has developed some interesting and stimulating games and exercises to help these pupils to be more effective and efficient in their learning. There are connections between the physical exercises noted in the previous paragraph and some of the games and ideas used with pupils who have dyspraxia and unintegrated reflexes.
- 9 Another strong feature of the school's awareness of creating effective and efficient learning opportunities for pupils, is the way in which full consideration is given to the classroom environment. There are many examples of pupils' work being extremely well displayed, which helps to motivate pupils and gives them a sense of pride. The way in which desks are set out is also a main consideration although in one classroom, in particular, the room is so small that it cuts down the options. Table layout is frequently changed to take account of the type of lesson taking place. The main emphasis is on creating a layout that aids pupils' concentration and helps them to be able to participate fully without hindrance. Music is also a major feature of the learning environment. Pupils are played different extracts of music according to the type of work being undertaken.
- 10 Another system that is used to help pupils learn is 'mind mapping'. This involves pupils in using different colours and spidergrams to help them remember key facts to do with the topic being studied. There is a high emphasis on the visual impact of learning.

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and ensures that all staff work effectively as a team.

- 11 The headteacher is very much at the heart of this school. She has set out to create a school that mirrors her vision. She has an appropriate, strong belief that pupils learn best if they have knowledge of their own learning and are provided with the basic requirements to make their learning more effective. She has been able to get her views across to the staff and they work very effectively to create a strong sense of team work. She is a deep analytical thinker who knows her school, her pupils and her staff extremely well. In this way she is able to get the best from all.
- 12 One of the key factors to her success is her ability to analyse national and other standardised tests and recognise what needs to be done to move on the pupils' learning. She is very practical in her approach. She uses the information she gains from her analysis to make it more possible for pupils to learn. She has, for example, used a teacher with specialist science knowledge to improve standards in that subject. She has also supported the reception teacher to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have every opportunity of making good progress as they move through the school. One of the important outcomes of her style of leadership is that she has a dedicated and very hard working staff. She has managed to create a strong sense of team work and knows that her staff are clear about how to achieve the school's aims.
- 13 The school's improvement plan is well organised and is based on the results of the analysis that continually takes place. The school is now at a stage of being able to revisit areas that it has already looked at with a view to move on that area even further. Each of the areas in the current improvement plan is therefore not there because of weakness, but more as a result of the school's wishes to spend more time on fine-tuning that aspect of the school's work. For example, the school is about to give even more time to focusing on learning methods.
- 14 The staff are provided with regular feedback about their own practice. This is as a result of an appropriate programme of visits from colleagues, both within and outside the school. The teachers value this approach, as they are keen to further develop their own thinking and practice. New staff to the school are quickly helped to settle because of the supportive and professional attitudes that pervade the school. The one teacher who was new to the school at the time of the inspection already felt that she was an established part of a very happy and dedicated staff.
- 15 One of the other strengths that the headteacher possesses is her ability to raise funds from a variety of sources. As a small school, the school's own budget does not necessarily stretch as far as she would like. However, the headteacher has been quick to seize on opportunities to gain more funding from various national and local initiatives. As a result of involvement in these initiatives the school is better funded for ICT, with one computer available for every 4 pupils. It is also wealthy in terms of its learning resources thanks to involvement in schemes such as the physical programme development and collaborative arts project. Each of these projects has involved the staff in more work but there is belief that the spin-off, in terms of better resourcing, is worth it.
- 16 The headteacher rightly feels proud of the school's achievements and is delighted by the support she gets from her staff. She has enabled them to play a major role in ensuring that this excellent school has much to commend it. Each member of staff has additional responsibilities that are carried out dedicatedly and enthusiastically. There is a real sense of joy in the staff

room with all staff feeling valued and cared for. This is in no small measure due to the way in which the headteacher involves each and everyone in the decision making process and is quick to praise everyone's efforts.

The quality of pupils' writing is outstanding and they use this very well so that it has a very powerful impact on the rest of their work.

- 17 Standards in writing are outstanding. This is confirmed by the school's excellent results in the national tests for 7 and 11-year-olds. For writing, the school's national test results for 7-year-olds have been in the top 5 per cent for the past two years when compared with national and similar schools. Similarly, the English results for 11-year-olds have also been in the top 5 per cent nationally for the past two years with nearly all pupils attaining the higher level in 2001. Pupils are confident enough to make the most of their written skills in other subjects. There is much evidence of pupils having carried out research and presented work in a written form. The excellent quality of pupils' writing is enhancing the quality of their work in science, geography, history and religious education.
- 18 An analysis of their writing shows that 7-year-olds are using a full range of descriptive words in their stories and are confident enough to use words like, 'quacked', 'grunted' and 'barked' as a natural part of their unaided work. Their book reviews reveal that they can evaluate and present findings in a precise way. They work towards targets that are set for them and have good knowledge of what they do well and what they need to do to improve still further. The quality of handwriting is very good with many pupils joining their letters in a mature manner.
- 19 As pupils move through the school, so the quality of written work improves. Poetry is a focus with many pupils writing stunning pieces. Year 4's poems show great awareness of writing for impact and explore sensitive issues, such as animals being forced out of their natural habitats by encroachment of humans. Many poems are also written for humorous impact, for example, 'Kind bugs, fine bugs, Hanging on the line bugs. The same age groups' story writing matches the high standards attained in the poems. They use imagery and vocabulary to good effect. This is seen in descriptions with extracts such as, 'His muscular chest and arms were as hard as a brick.', and, 'Here at last', snarled Chimadera. The sentences are correctly demarcated and there is the correct use of commas. Proper nouns all have capital letters, speech marks are used correctly and ideas are organised appropriately for both purpose and style. Spelling is also mostly accurate.
- 20 Year 5 pupils build on the work that has happened in Year 4. Poems are now longer and conform to a variety of styles. There are more examples of pupils writing factual information in the way of diaries, book reviews and questionnaires. Non-narrative writing is well structured and its layout appropriate for its purpose. The writing has well chosen phrases and pronouns and tenses are consistent throughout. The work explores mature themes, such as badger hunting and dolphin survival. Many pupils are capable of sustaining an argument and they write persuasively showing success in considering an alternative point of view. Their short stories are entertaining, lively with a good vocabulary and accurate punctuation. They take full account of the appropriateness of style as they write articles, such as, 'The Royal Family Murdered' or, 'The mouse and the elephant'.
- 21 By the time they move to Year 6, pupils write with great maturity. They display a depth in their writing that is normally associated with adult writers. In one poem, for example, a pupil uses the child/adult relationship most effectively when going shopping in a supermarket. The poem

is based on a child 'asking' and the adult 'refusing'. The child starts with a scooter or a £100 worth of clothes and ends up being content with a chocolate bar. The opening verse sets up what follows:

'Can I have a scooter or that shiny bike,
Or a £100 of clothes I really, really like!
I'm waiting for an answer, there's a tingle in my toe,
Here it comes, but again the answer's – 'no'.'

There are good examples of Year 6 pupils using ICT to help develop their own questionnaires and for setting out their results and findings. The results have been set out in an interesting way using ideas, such as, bubbles to contain individual answers.

- 22 Extracts of short stories reveal that pupils use a very good range of adjectives and vocabulary. Phrases, such as, 'I wasn't going to ponder over this question' or, 'Out of the gloominess of the corner..' exemplify this point. Much of the writing contains humorous extracts, for example, 'Porky died in Wolverhampton'. In an obituary piece about the surviving pig from the 'Three Little Pigs' story the writer concludes that 'Porky Porker was revered, well-liked and all his friends said he was a tasty piece of work.'
- 23 The writing benefits from the targets that are set and from the deeply, informative self-evaluation procedures that the pupils participate in.

Standards in science are very high with pupils being able to carry out independent investigations and evaluate their findings in a most mature way.

- 24 Standards in science have been high for the past few years. In 2001, all pupils attained the higher levels (Level 5) in the national tests for 11-year-olds and one attained at a very high level (Level 6). Teacher assessments for 7-year-olds also show that all pupils attain at least the level expected and more than half have moved on to the higher levels for the past few years.
- 25 At the time of the previous inspection there was a minority of pupils not making the expected progress because science was being taught as part of a project involving other subjects. Since that time there have been many changes – all of which have been extremely positive and made an impact on the standards attained. There was also insufficient assessment related to the National Curriculum levels happening at the time of the previous inspection. This is no longer an issue as the assessment arrangements are a strength of the school.
- 26 A specialist teacher teaches science for pupils in the 5-to-11-year age range. This has ensured that all pupils are appropriately challenged and having access to expert help as they attempt to cope with more demanding tasks. In one lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils she led a very interesting discussion on how a lump of jelly can dissolve as quickly as possible. This expert way she led the discussion helped pupils to come up with very detailed ideas as to how they thought they could increase the rate of dissolving. One pupil states that, 'The wider the surface area the quicker the dissolving.' The planning for work in science is exceptionally detailed and shows that each lesson builds on what has happened previously.
- 27 There is very much emphasis placed on investigational work, with pupils being very familiar with how to set up fair tests and isolate variables, when needed. There is good use made of the local environment, including the school grounds. The example of working with outside

experts on developing a living sculpture underlines this. The school grounds include a willow igloo as a result of this work.

- 28 The school has clearly given a great deal of attention to helping pupils to investigate and to be inquisitive. This has made a great difference to the standard of work that is taking place. It has also helped pupils to develop very positive attitudes to the subject. All the pupils enjoy the subject and the way in which they evaluate their work is very much in line with other self-evaluation practices that exist in other subjects.

The teaching is very good with many outstanding features evident.

- 29 Teaching is always at least good and, in most cases, it is very good with many outstanding features evident. Outstanding teaching is prominent in the reception class and with Years 5 and 6.
- 30 In the reception class the teacher uses resources very effectively to both stimulate additional interest and as a teaching aid. For example, in a literacy lesson she uses the puppet 'Boris' when introducing the letter 't' and to also motivate the pupils, who all enjoy seeing 'Boris' make an appearance. This teacher has a very positive relationship with her pupils. Almost incidentally she re-reinforces issues associated with personal, social and emotional development because of the way she helps to promote confidence in the pupils. During a numeracy lesson, the same teacher is very good at emphasising the correct language to be used. She helps pupils with terms, such as, 'between', 'more than', 'less than' and helps them to use them in practical contexts. Whenever the need arises the teacher is quick to use physical exercises to help gain greater attention from the pupils. This is a positive feature of the teaching, which is encouraging pupils to learn more effectively.
- 31 In the Year 1 and 2 class, taught by a teacher new to the school, the way in which pupils are asked to consider how well they have done is very impressive. The teacher's calm and considered approach helps the pupils to think deeply about their learning. The teacher also uses questioning most effectively to help check on how much pupils have understood and to consolidate new learning. A positive feature in this class is the way all pupils join in with tidying up or with taking part in setting up equipment. A very positive working environment has been established where pupils feel they are valued and cared for.
- 32 The teacher working with Year 3 and 4 frequently opens lessons with dramatic explanations, which capture the pupils' interest from the outset. She provides just the right amount of excitement to get the pupils inspired. Pupils are often required to discuss, agree and present different ideas. The teacher is not afraid to use drama to develop ideas and, when doing so, she demands that pupils work collaboratively and in the process they make use of their good communication skills. Evaluation forms a very important part of the way in which the teacher works. She consistently requires pupils to consider how successfully they have worked and this frequently involves aspects of self and partner evaluation.
- 33 The teaching of the oldest pupils is often outstanding. During a lesson where pupils are considering the demanding text from an extract of 'Midsummer's Night Dream', the teacher successfully uses 'mind-mapping' to help pupils think about the learning that has already taken place. The teacher uses 'modelling' as a way of helping pupils consider more deeply the characteristics associated with different individuals from the play. The teacher's methods are successful in helping pupils gain access to a text that at the beginning of the lesson was not

clearly understood. She uses a combination of her own modelling and the pupils' acting and draws attention to pupils' own writing to do this. During another lesson, self-evaluation again pre-dominates with pupils consistently asked to consider how well they have learnt and what they need to do next in order to improve. As a consequence of this, pupils are extremely confident and come up with their own ideas when they feel it is appropriate. For example, in a numeracy lesson pupils suggest their own formula for working out the perimeter of a triangle. There is a very good balance between the teaching of new skills and the application of these in different contexts, usually through problem solving. This is seen at its best when pupils set out presentations using advanced ICT (information and communication technology) skills. The pupils work independently and can access information and use a variety of ideas to present their work.

- 34 Overall, the quality of teaching is consistently very good with huge benefits evident for pupils' learning. One of the most important features is that all teachers work to the common ethos of pupils taking control of their learning. In emphasising this teachers give great attention to self-evaluation, questioning and to building up very positive and trusting relationships.

Pupils with special educational needs are extremely well provided for and this helps them to make very good progress as they move through the school.

- 35 The school has maintained, and built on, the good provision for pupils with special educational needs reported at the time of the previous inspection. The number of pupils on the register is above the national average and there is a large percentage with statements, especially for such a small school.
- 36 There is a great deal of expertise amongst the staff to help deal with the specific and more moderate learning difficulties that these pupils have. There are very effective meetings held regularly to discuss the progress of individuals and to consider new approaches. Staff have been involved in many professional training programmes, including those specifically to do with considering 'dyspraxia' and how best to help pupils. Most courses have been focussed on BRAINGYM and Accelerated Learning. Additional funding has been found to support the school's work in this area. The headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator work effectively together in discussing the best way forwards for individual pupils and in seeking ways of providing additional support for them. They have established very strong links with the Local Authority's 'Speech and Language' Service and with the Educational Psychologist. As a result of the school's hard work and dedication to pupils with special educational needs it is involved in a special project known as Sulp (Social Use of Language Programme). The project involves the school selecting a group of pupils across the school to work on a specialist language programme. Two support assistants run this programme and it is focusing on the needs of pupils with specific language needs.
- 37 The physical exercises, which are now used throughout the school, originate from a BRAINGYM study. Other physical exercises, especially designed to aid co-ordination involving balance, crawling and spiralling were also introduced in reception and for pupils aged 5 to 7. Additional specific exercises were also introduced to support a small group of pupils with dyspraxia. The support involved pupils receiving a twenty-minute session each day for 7 weeks. Aspects of this scheme were eventually extended to all pupils and the school now provided professional training for other schools in the area. A further programme developed in September 2001 has been designed to help the integration of childhood reflexes and improve

learning behaviour for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. The evaluation of the project shows that pupils have made significant improvement in their learning.

- 38 Parents are fully involved in working with the school to help support their children. They have termly briefings and they all attend the reviews. The provision for pupils with special education needs is a strength in the school. The staff think deeply about the pupils' needs and there is very good liaison with parents.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- 39 There are no key issues for the school to deal with because it has already accurately identified the areas within its school development plan that will help them to make the school even better.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 40 The school needs to carry out the actions outlined in its school improvement plan and this will ensure that it continues to build on the very strong position in which it now finds itself.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

20

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	8	8	0	0	0	0
Percentage	20	40	40	0	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, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		13

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	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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
		2000	4	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	7	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	92 (91)	100 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (91)	100 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	

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)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.8
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61.2

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	nil
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	nil

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	225,937
Total expenditure	226,664
Expenditure per pupil	2126
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,008
Balance carried forward to next year	19,363

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	96
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	1	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	5	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	47	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	35	18	14	2
The teaching is good.	62	34	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	29	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	22	9	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	12	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	56	30	13	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	26	5	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	38	6	23	6

Other issues raised by parents

The issues regarding homework are particularly difficult for the school to deal with because a very large group believes that the amount is about right and would not want to see it reduced whilst another group strongly disagrees with homework during holiday times.