

INSPECTION REPORT

Stepney Primary School

Kingston upon Hull

LEA area: Kingston upon Hull

Unique reference number: 117716

Headteacher: Mr S A Ali

Reporting inspector: Mr R A Robinson
No: 21024

Dates of inspection: 18-19 June 2001

Inspection number: 193209

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Beverley Road
Kingston upon Hull

Postcode: HU5 1JJ

Telephone number: 01482 343690

Fax number: 01482 348681

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: The Revd. J Leeman

Date of previous inspection: December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
21024	Mr R A Robinson	Registered inspector
9327	Mr S Vincent	Lay inspector
22380	Mrs P K Parrish	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Yorkshire Educational Services Ltd
16 Burn Hall
Darlington Road
Croxdale
DURHAM
DH1 3SR

Tel/Fax: 0191 378 4031

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years that serves mainly the local neighbourhood close to the centre of Hull. The area has many social problems. There are 182 pupils (107 boys and 75 girls) who attend full time; 19 of these pupils are taught in the reception class. In the nursery there are 31 boys and 16 girls who attend either in the morning or afternoon each day; their attainment when they start school is well below average for three-year-olds. The school has a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, of whom 27 are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Eighty-six pupils (44 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs, which is well above average. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about 67 per cent which is well above the national average. The number of pupils at the school has increased significantly since the last inspection because of the rising number of primary aged pupils in the area and the popularity of the school. The area the school serves is very mixed and includes local authority and private housing. A small proportion of pupils is from travellers' heritage, 'safe houses' and residential care. The transient nature of the school population leads to extremely high turnover of pupils; very few pupils who start their education in the reception class are at the school by the age of eleven. In the last academic year 101 pupils joined the school at a time other than the usual time of first admission in the reception class and 90 pupils were unexpected leavers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. Pupils achieve very well. The quality of teaching is very good overall with particular strengths in the teaching of the oldest pupils, resulting in pupils learning very well. Pupils' attitudes to work and their personal development are of a high standard and their behaviour is very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The overall quality of teaching is very good enabling pupils to achieve very well.
- The school fosters pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, very effectively.
- The care and welfare of the pupils are very good.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive.
- The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

What could be improved

- The planning of the curriculum in the reception class is not focused sufficiently on the children's small steps of learning.
- The tracking of children's progress in the nursery and reception classes is underdeveloped.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in December 1996. The areas for improvement have been addressed very successfully as shown below:

- Standards by the age of eleven have risen significantly above the national average trend. Pupils' performance in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science is average overall. Pupils' performance is well above the national average of similar schools in English and maths and very high in science.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress is very good in Years 1 to 6 though still needs further refinement in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school's priorities for improvement are most appropriate. Putting them into action has been very effective in raising of standards.
- The attendance of pupils has improved significantly and is now at the national average.

The particular strengths in the leadership and management, the high quality of teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to work and their good behaviour place the school in a very good position to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	D	A
mathematics	E	E	C	A
science	D	C	A	A*

Key	
very high (highest 5% nationally)	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds shown above are very good considering the transient nature of the school population. The school has pushed up standards at a much faster rate than the national trend since 1996. In recognition of the gains made in standards, the school has achieved recently a national award for improvement. The work seen during the inspection reflects the results of the national tests.

The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed pupils' performance, compared to the national average, to be well below average in reading and writing and in line with the national average in mathematics. In comparison to pupils' performance in similar schools, standards are above average in reading, in line in writing and well above average in mathematics.

Overall, pupils achieve very well. Children enter the school with low levels of language skills; they make good progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in the reception class; however, standards in communication, language, and literacy are still below average by the age of six. Pupils between the ages of six and eleven make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and those learning English as an additional language make good progress relative to their prior attainments.

The school will exceed its targets for the proportion of eleven-year-olds to reach expected levels in English and mathematics as the teaching and learning of the oldest pupils are of a very high, consistent, standard.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and this contributes to the overall standards achieved.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; overall behaviour is good, even though some pupils have difficult problems to overcome.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils take on responsibilities enthusiastically. They collaborate very well during lessons. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are very good and are a particular strength of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory; attendance has improved and is now in line with national average and this too has contributed to the school's success. Punctuality of some pupils still needs to be improved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was excellent in two out of the twenty-three lessons, very good in seven, good in eleven and satisfactory in three.

Teaching is of consistently high quality and is never less than good in each class except the reception class. It is characterised by a very strong commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. Teachers establish clear plans for learning in the nursery and Years 1 to 6 and the school has very high expectations for success for both teachers and pupils. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy are thorough and very effectively. A good range of imaginative resources assists pupils' learning. The management of pupils is of a very high standard and pupils behave well, generally concentrate fully and often achieve very good progress.

Teaching in the reception class, while satisfactory overall, is of lower quality than in the rest of the school and does not build sufficiently upon the good teaching in the nursery. Teachers' planning lacks clarity and focus to push children's small steps of learning on at a faster pace.

The teaching caters overall very effectively for the many different groups of pupils at the school including pupils learning English as additional language, those with special educational needs and pupils from the travellers' heritage.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	An appropriately broad and balanced curriculum provides well for the needs of pupils in the nursery and Years 1 to 6. The most recent national curricular guidance has not been fully implemented for children in the reception class. A good range of activities available outside lessons supplement learning well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; very well managed systems and purposeful use of plentiful support staff meets the needs of these pupils very well. The high expectations for these pupils lead to very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school provides well for the pupils learning English as an additional language. Support systems are well thought out and pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils'	The school provides very well for the personal development of

personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	pupils, with especially strong provision for their social, moral and cultural development. Members of staff demonstrate the school's intention that the pupils learn to avoid prejudice and discrimination in the treatment of others. The school encourages the development of pupils' self-respect and care for others, with an emphasis on a responsible, productive style of behaviour.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. It works very hard to understand the personal circumstances of all pupils and treats each as an individual.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent. They work extremely industriously as a harmonious team acting as exemplary role models for both staff and pupils. The co-ordinators work very effectively with the senior managers and fulfil their roles very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective and provides very good support to the school. It has a strong vision for the school to provide a high quality education for the pupils which is apparent in practice.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is an extremely strong determination to improve standards. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are very effective resulting in the exceptionally sharp rise in the academic performance of pupils in recent years. The procedures for staff development place the school in a very good position to develop teachers' existing skills and to provide training for new teachers.
The strategic use of resources	The use of local education authority specialist teachers, classroom support staff, ancillary staff and voluntary helpers is very well thought out and assists very positively the learning of pupils throughout the school. Money available to the school is used prudently for the benefit of pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy school, behave well and become more mature and responsible. Children make good progress because the teaching is good and the school has high expectations that their children will succeed. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and find the staff approachable. The school works well with parents. Parents are satisfied with the amount of homework and the range of activities outside lessons. Parents agree strongly that the school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents expressed no significant concerns about any aspects of the work of the school.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents that this is a very good school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The overall quality of teaching is very good enabling pupils to achieve very well.

1 The magnificent performance of the pupils, in a school with an extremely high movement of pupils to and from the school, is attributed to the high quality of teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to work and good behaviour. The quality of teaching and learning was:

- consistently good in the nursery and Year 1;
- never less than satisfactory in reception;
- never less than good, and very good in most lessons in Year 2;
- never less than good, and very good in a third of lessons in each class in Years 3 to 5;
- very good or excellent in all lessons observed in Year 6.

2 In the nursery, teachers prepare activities well and pupils are keen to learn and settle quickly to their tasks; for example, they developed their limited language skills through purposeful discussions with teachers and other children in the role-play area when they dressed up and acted out the roles of doctors and nurses. Members of staff pay very good attention to the development of social skills through positive praise, and children respond very well as a result of the staff's high expectations. The children are well behaved and take responsibility willingly for tidying up. Children at all levels of attainment learn well. For example, higher attaining children discussed the pictures in a book with support from teachers and began to recognise individual letters and some familiar words such as 'mum'. Lower attainers enjoyed working in the 'garden centre' selling plants and operating the 'till'. Most children learnt to recognise and name the parts of a plant: leaves, roots, stem and flower. They began to mix powder paints carefully to produce a range of colours for their painting of Jack's beanstalk.

3 In the reception class there are strengths and weaknesses in the teaching though, overall, it is satisfactory. Class teachers celebrate children's work well and classroom support staff work effectively. The children enjoy their work and have a good rapport with their teachers. The planning of lessons often lacks a clear focus of the skills to be taught, and questions specified to check understanding and pupils' progress. The organisation and management of lessons are good as children behave well, and teachers ensure children are well prepared so that they get on quickly with their tasks.

4 In Year 1 the teachers ensure pupils understand what they are expected to learn during the lesson. Teachers manage behaviour well and when necessary are able to refocus pupils' attention quickly and effectively. Members of staff use resources well to develop the skills of speaking and listening; for example, in an information and communication technology lesson the teacher used a pre-prepared tape and listening centre well to challenge pupils to listen carefully and to discuss with partners and the whole class what they thought they had heard. The organisation of the lesson was good providing opportunities for whole class discussion and collaborative work with a partner. The pupils were enthusiastic and, when given the opportunity, they were keen to write about the activity in small books prepared previously by the teacher. Throughout the lesson pupils with special educational needs were given effective help from a classroom support assistant to enable them to take a full part in the lesson.

5 In Year 2 the teaching is of a high standard. The management of pupils is very effective resulting in pupils' good attention and behaviour. Teachers present lessons in a lively way and gain pupils' attention even when they are rather passive; for example, in a literacy lesson on a Monday morning the pupils were unresponsive, but the teacher persisted with enthusiasm and, gradually, more and more pupils became actively involved in the lesson. By the end of the discussion most pupils were intrigued with different tongue twisters and enthusiastically wrote, very neatly, in joined up writing, tongue twisters such as, 'Six silly spiders said sausages'. In a

mathematics lesson there was very effective help from the teacher and classroom support assistants for pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils from the travellers' heritage. This enabled them to take a full part in the lesson gaining a much better understanding of recognition and use of money.

6 In Years 3 to 5 the very good teaching in Year 2 is maintained effectively, resulting in pupils learning very well. In a high quality literacy lesson in Year 3, the planning of the lesson was very clear and pupils and classroom support assistants were fully aware of what they had to do. High expectations of all pupils resulted in a quiet working atmosphere and pupils making very good progress in the use of connectives to improve their writing. In Year 4 the whole class discussed together their learning. The teacher questioned very well and pupils were happy to answer. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge of mathematics and this enabled the pupils to gain a better understanding of equivalent fractions. In Year 5 the teacher gave very clear explanations of the day's literacy work; pupils were very attentive and discussed with partners suggestions for writing a letter to persuade parents of the value of a residential visit. The discussion between pupils was very effective in allowing all to contribute and to practise the skills of speaking, listening and literacy. Pupils learning English as an additional language were provided with very effective help from a classroom support assistant to develop spellings and singular and plural words. These pupils enjoyed their work and were keen to succeed.

7 The quality of teaching in Year 6 is of a consistently high standard. In an excellent geography lesson there was a very good evaluation of the last lesson - 'Was it hard? - What would have made it better?' The teacher encouraged pupils to exchange ideas before answering. In this lesson a fierce pace and exceptionally high expectations of all were apparent. The level of challenging questions was most effective in drawing out pupils' understanding of travel by different methods. The teacher's very good subject knowledge and understanding enabled pupils to develop improved skills of interpretation of maps, brochures, road maps and the Internet.

8 In a very good literacy lesson in Year 6 the teacher got off to a very prompt start and no time was wasted during the lesson. The teacher led pupils skilfully to understand verses chosen in a poem about country life, such as, 'The early lambs, still fleecy, look bulkier now than their mothers'. Higher attaining pupils were able to define the difference between similes and metaphors and tried to annotate the poem to identify examples of different styles. The teacher was very good at keeping pupils on task through her enthusiasm, good subject knowledge, very good pace and very high expectations of all. Most pupils in the class were attaining at least at the standard expected level of eleven-year-olds.

9 In an excellent science lesson in Year 6 the teacher organised the class very well to enable the teacher to push on the learning of higher attainers whilst other pupils were working productively and independently on their tasks. The higher attainers were given intensive help from the teacher to develop an understanding of recording data. The teacher developed extremely well numeracy skills such as measuring in millimetres, dividing by ten and plotting results of two sets of data on graph paper to produce line graphs. Pupils gained experience of translating data from the results of an investigation to a graph using an appropriate scale. The teacher ensured step-by-step build up of understanding and moved the group on efficiently. The pupils made exceptional progress in developing recording and interpretation of an investigation. They compared the length of the stem and leaf of a dandelion found in either long or short grass by recording and evaluating two sets of data on one graph in order to spot trends.

10 Parents rightly praise the high quality of teaching, their children's positive attitudes to work and behaviour and the good progress their children make at the school.

The school fosters pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, very effectively.

11 The overall provision for the personal development of pupils is very good. The school is a very caring and harmonious community where each pupil's academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of paramount importance to the staff. The school's motto - 'a small school with great expectations' - is fulfilled admirably. The pupils accept the trust which the school places upon them resulting in pupils having, in particular, an awareness of the needs of others and a sense of responsibility for their own behaviour. Parents confirm that the school helps their children to develop in a mature and responsible manner.

12 The curriculum assists pupils' personal development well, although there is no specific planning to detail opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In practice, a sense of awe and wonder within lessons is apparent, such as in a Year 1 science lesson when pupils gained a better understanding of plants through observations of the roots when the plant was extracted from compost. Teachers enable pupils to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and those of others; for example, pupils in Year 6 considered their response to a poem and previous studies of the work of Ted Hughes. Teachers encourage pupils to pause to think, listen and take in the atmosphere during visits to a church or mosque.

13 The policy for behaviour gives clear guidance to staff and pupils on acceptable behaviour and ways of treating others, and its application is very consistent in all classes. Teachers display class rules in all classes and, in many classes, these have been agreed and written by the pupils. The staff make clear to pupils systems of rewards and sanctions; for example, 'golden tickets' for 'great' behaviour are given out for a wide range of positive behaviour and these are collected by the class with a termly treat given to the class with the most cards. The school sends home reports to parents acknowledging their child's good or improving behaviour. An assembly each week focuses on the presentation of bronze, silver and gold awards for achievement and positive behaviour. In addition, teachers award pupils in each class with the accolade of being 'star of the week'.

14 The school council gives pupils very good experience of considering the needs of the whole school, and an understanding of how and why rules are made. Teachers and classroom support staff, without exception, provide tolerant, sensitive and genial models of social interaction. The headteacher provides a very strong lead to the rest of the staff as well as pupils. Full acknowledgement of the needs of all pupils and full respect for differences is a strong feature of the school. Throughout the school teachers plan regular work for pupils to work with partners for discussion of questions posed by teachers before answers are discussed. This is achieved quickly and effortlessly with partners changing for different subjects and with groupings ranging between those of similar attainment to random partnerships. Residential visits provide good opportunities for social development. Older pupils have a day out at Christmas rather than Christmas parties that worked against the general social teaching and values of the school. A day out at a local sport centre, where pupils could choose to swim, play team games and share a celebration meal addressed the need in an extremely sensitive manner of the different groups of pupils at the school.

15 In literacy lessons teachers develop within pupils a love of literature and authors very well. The school respects the skills of art demonstrated by visits to art galleries in local towns. Residential visits for Years 5 and 6 alternate yearly between a visit to an outdoor pursuits centre and to centres providing opportunities for cultural development such as York, to develop an understanding of art and history. The school celebrates the contributions of families represented within the community; for example, the history of travellers' art, jewellery making and dance from the South Pacific, visits to the local church and mosque and visitors to the school from local faith and cultural groups. The wide range of ethnic backgrounds represented within the staff and pupils of the school present pupils with excellent role models. The school is anxious not to present stereotypes and this is seen in the selection and use of resources. For example, to avoid inferring that females from the Indian continent always wear saris, regular dressing up material in the reception is carefully selected and saris are available only for occasional and special use.

16 Daily duties for pupils provide them with very good opportunities to assist the smooth running of the school, such as register collection and delivery, management tasks in class and responsibility for the care of equipment. Pupils accept readily their responsibilities to look after and fully involve new entrants into the school life. They assist the learning of one another very well; this is particularly apparent with the care and concern given to new entrants who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The new entrants are paired as far as possible with another pupil with the same home language.

17 The overall very good provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is a particular strength of the school and very positively enhances pupils' confidence, behaviour, attitudes to work, their relationships and their understanding of the cultural diversity of British society.

The care and welfare of the pupils are very good.

18 The care and welfare of pupils is very good and all of the staff, under the direction of the headteacher and governors, share responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils.

19 The governing body ensures that statutory risk assessments take place. The policy for health and safety is effective and provides for monthly detailed inspections by the caretaker with a written report. Any issues reported to the office are prioritised according to risk and action is taken accordingly. Parents report that during the recent major alterations to the building they have felt that the school has ensured the health and safety of their children.

20 Child protection procedures are very well developed. A significant number of pupils are on the 'at risk' register and the member of staff responsible for child protection, has very good systems to ensure the needs of each pupil are met. All members of staff understand the child protection procedures and staff new to the school are provided with information and training during their induction by the headteacher. The staff gets plenty of support from parents who generally trust that the school has the best interests of the children at heart.

21 The procedures for attendance are very good and have resulted in a steady improvement in attendance to about the national average. The school has a dedicated attendance officer on the staff who monitors attendance daily with support from the education welfare officer each week. A reward system operates for good and improved attendance with tokens awarded. The school presents certificates for good or improved attendance at an achievement assembly. 'Attendance weeks' provide information and opportunities for parents to attend a meeting addressed by the education welfare officer. Punctuality is still a problem at the school; however, the school has recently provided a 'breakfast club' to encourage pupils to improve their punctuality.

22 The school has a very high incidence of exclusions (18 in the last academic year), although these involved a relatively small number of pupils. The exclusions have been necessary to ensure both the safety of the pupils excluded and of other pupils in the school. There have been no permanent exclusions since the last inspection.

23 The school makes very good provision for all its pupils. Early identification of pupils with special educational needs enables their progress to be closely planned and tracked through very effective individual education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, works very hard to provide best support for these pupils. The school's systems of support are very effective in enhancing all pupils' motivation and good behaviour. Pupils from the travellers' heritage have full access to the curriculum through high expectations and frequent use of classroom support staff. Particular improvements in attendance have been achieved through liaison with families from the travellers' heritage and their children's attendance is now about

average.

24 Systems to develop the skills of pupils learning English as an additional language work well in practice and these pupils, including recent arrivals of refugee pupils, make good progress in learning English. Limited support is available from the local education authority and the onus is mainly on the school to make its own arrangements, which it does successfully. The expertise amongst the staff adds to the understanding and commitment to these pupils.

25 The checking of pupils' progress is very good in Years 1 to 6 and links very effectively into teachers' day-to-day planning in all subjects of the curriculum. Teachers plan activities according to the levels of the National Curriculum and they evaluate the outcomes of the planned learning objectives according to the criteria of 'can do', 'understands' and 'needs to work on'. The results of the evaluation determine future work for the pupils. The senior managers arrange a timetable for checking pupils' progress each term using national and commercial tests and for the completion of records. Teachers set challenging targets yearly based on the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the potential of each pupil.

Parents' views of the school are very positive.

26 Parents hold the school in very high regard which is supported by inspection evidence. A larger proportion of parents than normal responded to the parents' questionnaire and almost all of the responses were positive (98 per cent overall of those who expressed an opinion). A parent of a child with special education needs summarised the positive views of parents at the parents' meeting by stating, 'My son was very unhappy at his previous school and now has lots of friends and he's a totally different boy who is gaining in confidence and is very independent. He's treated the same as the others and he likes it. This is a truly remarkable school with excellent teachers and helpers'.

27 Almost all parents consider that their children make good progress and state, in particular, that standards in writing and numeracy are good and that there is a year-on-year improvement in their children's progress. Every opinion expressed in the parents' questionnaire agreed or tended to agree that the quality of teaching is good. Parents welcome the opportunity to work alongside their children each week. They are pleased with the help children with special educational needs receive. They consider that problems with their children are identified early and that their children get help and work to suit their needs. The parents are kept well informed and see their children's individual education plans. Parents find the breakfast club and after-school clubs helpful.

28 All parents who expressed a view considered that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible and ensures that behaviour is of a high standard. Most parents state that their children enjoy school and behave well. They are pleased, particularly, with the improvements in lunchtime behaviour and the systems of rewards and sanctions. 'There are lots of activities at breaks and lunchtime to keep children busy. There is a designated area for play and it is well managed.' Their children have lots of responsibilities such as the school council, looking after new starters, helping in the dining room and acting as class monitors. Parents believe that bullying is not a problem and if it did occur parents were confident it would be dealt with quickly. The parents know that good attendance is important and are pleased that if a child is absent, and the parent has not contacted the school, a member of staff will follow up the absence at 9.30 a.m. on the same day.

29 Parents are satisfied with the amount of homework their children receive. The annual reports on their children's progress are informative. They appreciate the regular weekly newsletter which keeps them up-to-date with school events and news.

30 Parents rightly praise very strongly the leadership and management of the school and are appreciative of the improvements that have been made since the last inspection and of the good

support they receive from the headteacher and staff. A parent stated that 'The last inspection report was good, but I am confident that this one will be better'.

The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

31 The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are outstanding. They are both extremely hardworking and skilled at managing change so as to improve the school and opportunities for pupils. The senior managers delegate very effectively to subject co-ordinators and they fulfil their roles very well. The headteacher has a clear vision 'to develop a school where everyone gives of their best, staff and pupils, to achieve their full potential'. The headteacher has a very strong determination to improve the quality of teaching so as to push pupils' learning on at a fast pace. Much staff development takes place which has resulted in extremely rapid improvements in standards. The very high quality of teaching of the deputy headteacher in the role of Year 6 teacher and advanced skills teacher has had a most beneficial impact on developing the teaching at the school.

32 The governors are very effective and have been instrumental in appointing key members of staff of high quality to reflect the ethnic mix of the school. There is a strong belief, shared by the headteacher, to appoint a nucleus of highly skilled teachers to move the school forward at a rapid rate. The governors work very well with the staff and share responsibility for many aspects of management, such as financial control. They find out for themselves about the school through visits, observation of lessons and reports from the head teacher and co-ordinators. The governors analyse the overall pupils' performance yearly and seek parental views through questionnaires. They have responded very well to the previous inspection and work with staff to improve the school further. The governors have high expectations of all who work at the school and are very aware of the strengths as well as areas for improvement. At all levels of management of the school there is an extremely strong determination to make a difference in the lives of the pupils, no matter how long they are at the school, through high quality teaching and pastoral care.

33 The monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning is very good. Very well established procedures monitor teachers' planning, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The procedures for staff development place the school in a very good position to develop teachers' existing skills and to provide training for new teachers. The subject co-ordinators take responsibility very well for monitoring their subjects and have a role in monitoring planning and the teaching and learning. Strong analysis of the results of national tests and commercial tests takes place, as well as very effective monitoring of individual pupils' progress from Years 1 to 6. The tracking of pupils' progress linked to the recent national curricular guidance for children in the nursery and reception classes is at an early stage of development. There is no consistent system in the nursery and reception classes to enable teachers and the senior management to monitor children's attainments in all their areas of learning.

34 The use of funding to support pupils with special educational needs, pupils learning English as an addition language and pupils from the travellers' heritage is very good. Classroom support staff and specialist teachers from the local education authority are very well organised and assist very positively the learning of all pupils throughout the school.

35 The bursar from the local education authority, school administration staff and a very effective governing body's finance committee ensure that finances are kept in good order. The school has a very high surplus built up through repayments from the local authority for the rapid increase of numbers of pupils. During the previous financial year; however, the governors have identified clearly the use of this money to improve the building and to provide further high quality staffing to support pupils' learning. The governing body considers carefully initiatives before

spending the school's financial allocation to make sure it uses funding effectively for the benefit of pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The planning of the curriculum in the reception class is not focused sufficiently on the children's small steps of learning.

36 The school's guidance to assist teacher's planning in the reception class is unsatisfactory. There is no recent policy for the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes), although a draft policy is being developed. The draft policy relates mainly to the nursery and provides limited information of procedures for the reception class. Changes of staffing in the reception during the year have militated against developing the policy to link more closely to the national recommended curricular guidance for children in the foundation stage.

37 In the first two terms of this academic year little attention was given to ensuring that work suited individual children's level of attainment and unsatisfactory progress in the development of letter formation and writing resulted. The work of higher and average attainers was similar and consisted of too much emphasis on copying letters and copying teachers' writing. Children made little progress in writing their names correctly and a bad habit, such as putting a capital letter in the middle of a name, remained. In the final term children began to make satisfactory progress in letter formation and writing; however the marking of some work was inappropriate, an example being where the teacher's comment 'excellent' for work which was below the standard expected of children of this age. Lower attainers, by the end of the year, were beginning to write and copy words but their letter formations were poor.

38 The recent planning in the reception class follows broadly the national recommended small steps of learning; however, there is an insecure link between the learning objective, the activities to assist pupils' learning and the criteria for checking children's attainment. The planning often identifies too many objectives resulting in a lack of clarity and focus for the teaching. Within the planning there are too few references to activities to assist the learning of different groups of children. No planning is apparent for developing the outdoor play for children in the reception class.

39 The senior managers of the school are fully aware of the weaknesses in the reception class through the monitoring of planning and classroom observations, and have taken action to address the situation; these initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect on the practice in the classroom.

The tracking of children's progress in the nursery and reception classes requires further development.

40 The school is at an early stage of developing systems to track children's progress from the time they start school in the nursery to the end of the reception class. In the nursery a record of achievement has been commenced recently which provides limited details of children's attainment on entry in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literature and mathematical development. Teachers maintain a record sheet to show children's attainments; however, these records are neither dated to enable progress to be judged over time nor levelled to show the small steps in the children's learning. Good features of the record of achievement are the inclusion of samples of work and photographs, although these are

not dated.

41 In the reception class there are no records which show an overview of children's progress referenced to their small steps of learning. Teachers track children's progress relative to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy; this is inappropriate for many children as they have not reached this stage of development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should improve standards further in the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes) through the following measures:

- Review the guidance for teachers in the reception class so that it follows more closely the nationally recommended small steps for children in all areas of learning;*
(Paragraphs 36 - 39)
- Refine the present tracking of children's progress in the reception and nursery classes to link to the small steps of learning identified in the recent curricular guidance for children in nursery and reception classes.
(Paragraphs 40 - 41)

** This area for improvement has been identified already by staff and governors.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9%	30%	48%	13%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	122

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	81

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	101
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	90

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	17
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	22	20	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (64)	74 (64)	96 (86)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	16
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	21	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (64)	89 (64)	93 (64)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	15
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	20	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (45)	89 (65)	100 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	12
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	20	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (50)	89 (50)	100 (80)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	5
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	14
Chinese	2
White	153
Any other minority ethnic group	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	18	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	188.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	79.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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
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	£
Total income	456,994
Total expenditure	430,177
Expenditure per pupil	2,253
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,373
Balance carried forward to next year	69,190

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	194
Number of questionnaires returned	86
Percentage return rate	44

Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
72	24	1	0	3
71	26	1	0	2
54	42	1	0	3
53	37	6	1	3
78	19	0	0	3
61	26	4	1	8
84	14	0	0	2
86	11	2	0	1
78	19	1	0	2
83	12	0	1	4

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

64	34	0	0	2
80	16	2	0	2