

INSPECTION REPORT

BLACK FIRS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Congleton

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111045

Headteacher: Mr M Casserley

Reporting inspector: Mrs O M Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 5th – 6th June 2001

Inspection number: 193294

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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longdown Road Congleton Cheshire
Postcode:	CW12 4QJ
Telephone number:	(01260) 272935
Fax number:	(01260) 277285
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Whitewright
Date of previous inspection:	18 th – 20 th March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized community primary school serving the relatively prosperous West Heath area of Congleton. It caters for pupils between four and eleven years of age. Most pupils live in the immediate locality, although a few choose to travel from further afield. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and only two who have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average, with none having formal statements of their needs. A below average proportion of pupils is entitled to receive free school meals. Overall, attainment on entry to the school is slightly above average for four year olds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. It is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who is ably supported by the governors and staff; the teaching is good throughout and these are key factors in enabling pupils to attain well above average standards overall by seven and eleven years of age. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards overall are well above average for seven and eleven year olds and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Teaching is good.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and governing body.
- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school and work.
- There are excellent opportunities for parents to give their views and be involved in making decisions about the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils' independent writing skills.

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 March 1997. Since that time, very good improvement has been made and standards have risen faster than in most schools nationally, partly because of the improved leadership and management and teaching. The action plan in response to the key issues in the last report has been successful in overcoming the weaknesses.

- The school development plan is a good document, with clear priorities.
- Schemes of work have been implemented for all subjects and meet the school's needs.
- Assessment arrangements have improved and are excellent; the information is used well in setting individual targets for pupils.
- Members of the senior management team provide clear educational direction for some aspects of the school and have clearly identified roles and responsibilities.
- The school's marking policy is applied consistently and is helpful to pupils.

- Resources for teaching and learning in music, information and communication technology and religious education have improved and are at least satisfactory.

The school has the commitment and capacity to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
Very high	A
Well above average	A*
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Inspection evidence from lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books shows overall standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good. Inspection findings confirm test results in recent years, but attainment is higher in English than test results indicate, although pupils' writing skills are not as well developed as speaking and listening and reading skills. The dip in national test results in English in 2000 was partly due to a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs relating to literacy. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils currently exceeding the level expected for their age in writing is lower than would be expected. The results in mathematics have been in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally for the last two years, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining very high standards for their age in the tests in 2000. In comparison with similar schools the results were also in the top 5 per cent. In science, standards were equally high in 1999 and well above the national average in 2000. These high standards indicate results in English could be higher and the school is already working to remedy this. The trend in improvement in the school's results over the last five years was above the national trend. The school's targets in English and mathematics were met in 2000. This year's targets are higher and are likely to be met.

Inspection findings show standards at the age of seven are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and similar to national test results for the last two years. The school's 2000 results in reading and writing were in the top 5 per cent of all schools and of similar schools. In mathematics, the results were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. Teachers' assessments in science showed very high standards in comparison with all schools nationally, with a well above average proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age. In comparison with similar schools, the science results at the expected level for seven-year olds were in the top 5 per cent. Standards at age seven have improved significantly since the previous inspection.

By the end of the year in the reception class most pupils attain the level expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and a significant number exceed this level. Overall standards are broadly average. Pupils' attainment in writing is below average on entry and pupils achieve well to reach this level, although overall achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils make very good progress in most aspects of English and in mathematics, including those pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. This is confirmed by the results of national tests at age seven for the pupils currently in Year 6. Their national test results at age seven showed standards below the national average in reading and well below in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and some reach the national standard by the age of eleven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school, eager to learn and well motivated by the teaching.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and move about the school in an orderly manner. At playtimes and in the dining hall behaviour is good. There have been four exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils are very good and levels of respect for one another are high. There is a strong sense of a school community.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance rates are very high in comparison with the national average, although holidays in term time lower attendance rates.

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	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 good; all of it is satisfactory, with 88 per cent good or better, including 32 per cent that is very good and a further 6 per cent that is excellent. The teaching for children up to five is consistently good, for five to seven year olds is very good, with 66 per cent of lessons being very good and an example of excellent teaching. For seven to eleven year olds the teaching is good and occasionally very good. The overall quality of the teaching has improved since the previous inspection when 9 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and one per cent very good or better. The skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well, especially in the five to seven age group. The learning needs of the pupils are well met throughout the school, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. Significant strengths in the teaching are the teachers' secure subject knowledge, clear explanations and their skilful questioning, which challenges pupils and supports their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school interprets statutory National Curriculum requirements in a stimulating way, providing rich, innovative and diverse experiences and opportunities for learning with good links between subjects through the study units. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including visits, which further enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are very good procedures for the early identification of pupils who may have problems. With support some attain the expected level for their age at eleven.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. No pupils are in the early stages of speaking English but teachers check that pupils understand the vocabulary used which is specific to the subject being taught.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual development is very well provided for and pupils gain very good insights into values and beliefs. Pupils are very effectively taught right from wrong. Community values are very strongly promoted with high levels of respect evident. A very good range of opportunities is provided for pupils to learn about Western and Eastern cultures and traditions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Good procedures for child protection are in place and there is a high regard for pupils' health and safety. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are excellent and identify areas where improvement can be made.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and very clear direction to the work of the school. He is well supported by the senior management team and governors. The roles of curriculum co-ordinators are very well developed and they make a significant contribution to school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities and have a good committee structure and a very effective programme of meetings to ensure decisions feed into the school development planning process. The school development plan is a good document.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher has introduced very good systems to check the quality of teaching and the pupils' work. The planning is checked each term to ensure statutory requirements are fully met. Targets are set for individual pupils and progress towards them is reviewed annually.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The governors know what they want for the school and make decisions in the best interests of the pupils in order to provide the quality they want. They give full consideration to obtaining the best value for money and the impact of their decisions on pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership of the school. • The school's partnership with parents.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their potential. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements for setting homework. • The way the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.
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The inspectors agree with all the parents' positive views about the school and find their concerns unjustified. The leadership of the school is very good and a major factor in the standards attained. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The arrangements for setting homework are clearly stated in the school brochure and followed by teachers. The inspectors were impressed by the way the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible and do not share parents' concerns. Another issue raised by several parents is the way in which the school responds to parents' concerns. The inspectors judge the parents to have many opportunities to air their views and express their concerns and the procedures for individual complaints are set out clearly in the school prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards overall are well above average for seven and eleven year olds and pupils' achievement is very good.

1. When the school's 2000 results of national tests in English, mathematics and science for eleven year olds were taken together, standards were well above the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. When the attainment of these pupils at age seven and eleven was compared with other schools with similar results in national tests at the age of seven, the improvement made over the four years placed the school in the top 5 per cent and showed very good achievement.
2. In the national tests in mathematics for eleven year olds in 2000, all the pupils attained the expected level, 60 per cent of pupils exceeded this level which was more than double the national average and 13 per cent attained two levels above. These results place the school in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, the 2000 national test results showed standards well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age was again notably higher than in most schools nationally. In English, a higher proportion of pupils attained the expected level than in most schools nationally; the proportion exceeding this level was broadly average.
3. The national test results for seven year olds in 2000 showed standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and in reading and writing were very high and in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, the results were also in the top 5 per cent in reading and writing and were well above the average in mathematics. All pupils attained the expected level for seven year olds, or higher, in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion exceeding the expected level was more than double the national average in reading and writing and notably higher than the national average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science showed standards at the expected level were very high in comparison with all schools and similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was above the average for similar schools. Pupils achieve well to reach these high standards considering that when they start school their attainment is only slightly above average.
4. Inspection evidence from lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work confirms these test results but current attainment is higher in English at age eleven than test results indicate. Pupils are mature, articulate speakers and use a wide range of vocabulary by the age of eleven. They are attentive listeners, able to listen to the views and ideas of others and offer their own considered opinions. They are accurate, fluent readers and make good use of their skills when researching topics as part of study work. They are confident in using computers or books as sources of information. They readily discuss

books they have read and the type of stories they enjoy reading. They know how to write for many different purposes and how to change the style of their writing in different contexts. Spellings and the use of punctuation are usually correct. At age seven, pupils' writing shows they understand sentence and story structure and they use punctuation with increasing accuracy. Spelling is good for their age. Pupils understand the use of index, contents and glossary pages and read fluently and with understanding. They are confident readers, eager to read their work out to the class. They speak clearly and with increasing confidence and listen carefully to their teachers and to each other.

5. In mathematics, pupils have a very secure understanding of the four number operations and can apply their knowledge to solving problems involving, for example, money, percentages, fractions or decimals by the age of eleven. Their mental recall of multiplication facts is good, quick and accurate and this helps their work in other aspects of the subject. Teachers often link problems to real life situations which makes the work more interesting and relevant. Pupils have a good understanding of shapes and can identify different quadrilaterals by the properties. They can plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants accurately and can measure using metric and imperial measures. They collate data and present it in line graphs. At age seven pupils are developing good mental arithmetic skills and strategies for solving problems. They can order numbers to 999, are secure in their understanding of addition, subtraction and multiplication and are beginning to understand division. They can tell the time in hours and half-hours and identify and name a range of two and three-dimensional shapes, understanding basic properties such as the number of faces and edges. They can estimate and measure in centimetres.
6. In science, pupils plan their own experiments confidently by the age of eleven. They know how to plan for a fair test and make accurate predictions, evident when pupils were planning an experiment to determine the requirements for plant growth. Pupils record their investigations through clearly labelled diagrams, making predictions about the outcome. Work in pupils' study books show they have secure understanding for their age of different materials and their properties, and of physical processes. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to record their work in a scientific format, such as when recording the apparatus they used and what they did to set up a wormery. Work in their study books also shows good coverage of all elements of the National Curriculum programme of study.

Teaching is good.

7. The well above average standards attained by the pupils reflect the good quality of the teaching. The quality is never less than satisfactory; 88 per cent is good or better, including 32 per cent that is very good and a further 6 per cent that is excellent. There is good teaching throughout the school; the very good teaching is in lessons with Year 1, 2, 5 and 6 pupils. The example of excellent teaching is with Year 2 pupils. The teaching in literacy and numeracy is good. The teaching meets the learning needs of pupils well, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language.
8. There is some variation in the pace of learning between the different age groups. It is good in the reception class where teaching is consistently good

and enables most children to enter Year 1 having attained the national targets for their age and a significant number having exceeded these targets. A few older pupils from the reception year, who are already five, join Year 1 pupils for literacy and numeracy to help prepare them for full literacy and numeracy lessons and this works well. The teaching in the five to seven age group is very good overall and the pace of learning is very good for virtually all pupils. Currently nearly all the pupils are attaining, and a good proportion is exceeding, the level expected nationally by the age of seven in reading, writing and mathematics. The key features of the very good lessons are the level of challenge through tasks which are closely matched to the pupils' learning needs and the teachers' high expectations that the pupils will work hard in order to complete their work in the time available. The pupils rise to the challenge and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. The excellent teaching was in literacy, where the purpose of the lesson was shared with the pupils and the introduction to the lesson inspired the pupils to do their best to find information about elephants to help an adult. This was a very effective introduction to learning how to make notes and what information to record. The support teacher was very well deployed to support a group of lower attaining pupils in recording notes on boards, which could easily be wiped clean when first attempts at spelling words were inaccurate. All groups of pupils made very good progress in research skills and in learning to make notes.

9. The pace of learning in numeracy is good for seven to eleven year olds and enables a good proportion of pupils to exceed the level expected at the age of eleven, with a few attaining the next higher level in some years. The pace of learning in literacy is similar in reading and spelling but is slower in writing and the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level at age eleven is lower than in other aspects of the subject or in mathematics.
10. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented effectively and this is one of the reasons for the improvement in standards. All the teachers have good questioning skills and give clear explanations. They select texts with care to provide interest and motivate pupils who acquire a broad knowledge of children's authors and literature. Reading diaries and spelling books are taken home regularly and parents provide good support, which helps to develop pupils' skills in reading and spelling. In mathematics, brisk mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons are leading to pupils acquiring good knowledge of numbers and strategies to solve problems. The teachers expect pupils to learn and understand and take responsibility themselves to keep working hard by doing follow-on work when appropriate. The teachers' planning of tasks at different levels of complexity enables all pupils to learn and make good progress.
11. The teachers share the learning targets with the pupils and this helps the pupils to understand the purpose of the work and to see how well they have done by the end of the lesson. Where pupils do not feel confident in the new learning, they are not afraid to say so, and teachers provide further teaching to help pupils to understand. For example in Year 5, a group of pupils struggled with converting decimals to fractions and asked for further work to give them more practice. Pupils are confident that teachers will help them when they

have difficulties. Strengths of the teaching are the teachers' secure subject knowledge and the organisation and management of teaching groups, sometimes by attainment, by classes or by friendship groups. This enables pupils to work with different teachers and pupils and to make decisions about who they work with in study groups. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and expect them to take responsibility for organising and completing their work, particularly their study work. Lesson planning is good and teachers make good use of the wide range of resources to make lessons interesting and incorporate the use of computers into lessons wherever possible. The time for learning each day is maximised.

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and governing body.

12. The headteacher provides strong leadership and very clear direction to the work of the school, which, coupled with his high expectations, has been instrumental in raising standards since the previous inspection. He carried out a thorough audit of the strengths and weaknesses of the school soon after taking up the post and identified the need to focus on quality in all that the school stands for and to aim for excellence. His belief that the school can achieve excellence has been clearly communicated to governors and staff and he has implemented procedures to raise standards through good quality teaching and learning that have been successful. The school's mission statement and aims are clearly reflected in the daily life and work of the school, with a clear emphasis on learning. The school is committed to making further improvement and has the capacity to succeed.
13. There are very good procedures for monitoring teaching, involving the curriculum co-ordinators and the headteacher, with feedback given to develop aspects of teaching where necessary. The headteacher monitors curriculum planning each term and scrutinises pupils' work to check that what is planned is actually taught and also that pupils are receiving a broad range of experiences and opportunities for learning that are interesting and prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Good use is made of tests to check pupils' progress from year to year, identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills and individuals or groups of pupils who are falling behind and need support to catch up. The results are also used to set reliable targets for the national tests at age seven and eleven. The analysis of pupils' performance in tests revealed the weakness in pupils' writing skills, in particular their ability to organise their writing for different purposes.
14. The governors are very knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities, fulfil all their statutory requirements and play a significant part in shaping the direction of the school. They have an efficient committee structure and a planned programme of meetings each year to ensure decisions made by each committee feed into the school development plan and the budget plan. Financial planning and administration are particularly good, with much thought given to decisions, in order to have maximum benefit for the pupils. For example, the school has taken over responsibility for providing school meals because the headteacher did not have sufficient control over the menu provided. This decision led initially to many problems. Nevertheless, the governors were determined to pursue their plans and this has proved successful and popular with pupils and parents. The number of pupils taking school meals has increased significantly and the quality of the lunchtime experience is much improved, with all pupils eating their meals in the dining

room. Strategic planning for the longer term development of the school is also very good, with governors taking out a loan to build a second classroom whilst the building project planned by the local education authority was being undertaken. This minimised the period of disruption due to major building work and increased the accommodation.

15. The school development plan is a good document for school improvement over a four-year period. It contains relevant priorities, has clear action plans, includes all necessary information on personnel, costs and time scales and identifies the outcomes so that the governors can check on the progress being made. The governors monitor the work of the school conscientiously and closely through regular visits, scrutinising test results, attending meetings and the headteacher's reports. The leadership and management of the school have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school and work.

16. The responses to the parents' questionnaires show that 87 per cent of parents think their child likes school, including 47 per cent who hold this view strongly. The pupils' responses in lessons confirm the views of parents. In all lessons, the pupils worked well and showed enthusiasm. In an excellent literacy lesson in Year 2, the pupils had to find information about elephants. They started by writing information they knew and then went on to find more information and make notes to share with others at the end of the lesson. The way in which they settled to work using different texts showed that they had been very attentive during the teacher's explanation of the task. Pupils said they like school and work hard for their teachers. They particularly appreciate the effort their teachers put into displaying their work and making classrooms attractive.
17. Pupils behave well in lessons. This is the general expectation of all teachers and is very much part of the ethos of the school. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, the pupils worked quietly, joined in class discussions of number problems and got on with their work. This benefited all of them and was a significant factor in enabling them to complete the examples and increase their understanding of solving problems at a good rate. These good attitudes were a consequence of the teacher's encouraging manner and clear communication of his expectations. In all lessons, the pupils are kept very busy and there are usually follow-on tasks should pupils finish their initial task. This helps to inculcate a strong work ethic. Behaviour when pupils are moving about the school is orderly and lunchtime in the dining hall is a pleasant experience. Pupils mix well together at playtimes and make good use of the wide range of outdoor equipment available and the areas for quiet and more boisterous activities.
18. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. There are high levels of mutual respect and courtesy. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to work collaboratively and this helps with personal and social skills. In mathematics, for example, in a lesson in Year 1, the pupils had mathematics games to complete in groups. They took turns to collect a card and discussed which shape the sentence described, agreeing which shape to place the card next to. This extended their skills in co-operation. Pupils show a willingness to take responsibility and good levels of personal development; as they get older, they take the initiative in common courtesies such as greeting people and holding doors open for others. The teachers help the process of personal development by giving pupils responsibility for everyday routines, such as giving out or tidying equipment away, or taking registers to the office. The school council gives further opportunities to those elected to make decisions on behalf of the pupils, for example which equipment to purchase for use on the playground at lunchtimes. Year 6 pupils take responsibility for escorting reception pupils to whole-school assemblies, sitting next to them and acting as good role models. This is particularly effective and taken very seriously by the Year 6 pupils. No racist or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils are confident that incidents of bullying, often name-calling, are dealt with swiftly by teachers. There were four temporary exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period involving one pupil. These exclusions were justified in

order to prevent disruption for others. Attendance is very high and a contributory factor to the good pace of learning.

There are excellent opportunities for parents to give their views and be involved in making decisions about the school.

19. The school provides far more opportunities than most other schools for parents to be involved in shaping the future direction and work of the school. Questionnaires are sent out to parents at regular intervals to ask their views about different aspects of the school. In addition, each term an open forum is held where parents can raise any issues they wish about the school. The way in which the pupils are to be organised in lessons in the forthcoming school year is openly discussed at the summer term meeting each year and a consensus is reached about the most appropriate organisation. Further discussion takes place about the availability and deployment of teachers and support staff. This gives all parents an opportunity for open and frank discussion about what they like or dislike about the school.
20. Parents are invited to school to meet their children's teacher three times a year to receive an assessment of their children's progress. Every July parents receive a written report on their children's progress that includes targets for improvement. Parents are welcome to contact teachers or the headteacher at any other time to discuss matters that may arise. Should parents have any concerns, or wish to know more about how subjects are taught, they can sit in any lesson without prior arrangement. Only three parents have taken up this opportunity to date.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' independent writing skills.

21. The 2000 results of national tests in English for eleven year olds showed standards in line with the national average, but below the average for similar schools. When these results are compared with the results in mathematics and science, they indicate standards should be higher. Inspection evidence shows the proportion reaching the expected level may rise slightly this year, but further work is necessary to bring standards in writing in line with those in reading, particularly at the higher level. The school has already started to focus attention on raising standards in writing and this work needs to continue. Pupils have a sound understanding of the correct use of punctuation, of writing for different purposes and spelling is satisfactory. They make good use of exercise books for drafting their work, although these are often very untidy, and they redraft their work in order to improve. However, this often amounts to correcting spellings and punctuation errors without improving the content of what they have written. There are few examples in pupils' books of lengthy pieces of writing with adventurous use of vocabulary to add interest for the reader. In addition, there is little evidence of pupils being taught how to improve the quality and interest of their writing by contributing to the opening paragraphs of a story as a whole class lesson.

22. The frequent assessment of pupils' writing, concentrating on the purpose, organisation and style to check on improvement being made is beginning to have some success. However, when monitoring the teaching, there is insufficient emphasis on the teaching of writing skills to ensure pupils are being taught how to improve the quality of their work. The development of writing skills through other subjects and study work is satisfactory but too little attention is placed on the pupils' own writing in some lessons and they tend to copy from books or other information. For example, the scrutiny of pupils' study books revealed some copied writing as all books said exactly the same.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

23. The headteacher and staff are meeting the needs of pupils very well in general but need to improve pupils' independent writing skills and bring them into line with those in reading. To help in sustaining well above average standards, the headteacher and his staff, with the support of the governing body should:
- improve pupils' skills in independent writing by:
 - monitoring the teaching and assessment of writing as identified in the school development plan to ensure pupils are making sufficient progress in developing their skills; and
 - promoting the use of writing skills through other subjects.

(Discussed in paragraphs 18 and 19)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	32	50	12	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	256
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (94)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	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	23	17	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	23	22
	Girls	15	17	17
	Total	34	40	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (96)	100 (100)	98 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	20	22
	Girls	13	11	14
	Total	32	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (83)	78 (100)	90 (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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	220
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	28.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	128

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	482,898
Total expenditure	477,330
Expenditure per pupil	1,902
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,111
Balance carried forward to next year	20,679

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	256
Number of questionnaires returned	100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	40	8	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	39	10	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	46	11	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	42	19	13	3
The teaching is good.	44	40	9	5	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	39	20	10	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	32	14	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	32	14	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	26	43	17	10	4
The school is well led and managed.	37	34	14	10	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	34	20	6	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	50	4	10	4

Other issues raised by parents

Sixteen letters were received from parents but no other issues were raised by several parents.

