

INSPECTION REPORT

TARPORLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tarporley

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111260

Headteacher: Mr Richard Coates

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Thomas
17711

Dates of inspection: 1 - 2 October 2001

Inspection number: 193296

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mark Ravenscroft

Date of previous inspection: 18/03/1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Tarporley Church of England Primary School is situated in a rural commuter village, but the catchment area is wider than the immediate school vicinity. Almost all pupils come from private housing. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are mainly above average and there is little evidence of pupils being socially disadvantaged. The school is very popular with parents and there are waiting lists in some year groups. There are 218 boys and girls on roll taught in seven classes and the school is about the same size as other primary schools. There are no children with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average at less than one per cent as is the percentage of pupils on the register of special educational needs at 7 per cent, however, this gives a false picture because the number of pupils requiring the extended support that the Code of Practice determines is higher than stated. No pupils have a statement of special educational need. Most pupils have attended the neighbouring nursery school with which there are good links. When they enter the reception class, most pupils' attainment is as expected for their age and for a significant proportion it is better, but about one quarter have lower than average levels of attainment. In the recent past the impact of long-term staff absence has slowed the pace of developments. Two new members of staff have been appointed at the start of this academic year and staffing is now stable. There have been no significant recruitment or retention concerns. The school has successfully bid for grants to improve information and communication technology, which is a major initiative to improve standards imminent at the time of the inspection. It is also involved in the Healthy Schools initiative. Strong links with the local church and community are in place.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tarporley CE Primary School provides an effective, well-organised education for its pupils. This is evident, not least, in the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science in 2000 national tests at the age of 11. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school because teaching is good. The Headteacher provides very effective leadership and good management supported well by the recently appointed senior management team and very effectively by the governors. The high quality school improvement plan gives a critical review of its work which is leading to more precise identification of what works well and what needs to get better. All areas identified by this inspection are already planned for improvement but some need reprioritising. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils' performance in the national tests at the age of 11.
- The leadership and management by the Headteacher, notably the quality of the school improvement plan.
- The good quality teaching, which pervades the school and enables pupils to learn well.
- The governing body is very effectively involved in financial planning and holds the school to account very well through critical questioning.
- The very good pastoral care, effective provision for personal development and vigilant moral guidance available to pupils.
- Parental support and the links with them.

What could be improved

- The identification of pupils who require extended support for learning and the partnership with parents about their needs.
- Standards in writing and its use in the other subjects.
- The accuracy and use of assessment to predict and support standards and progress.
- Standards in information and communication technology.

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 issues identified in the previous report have been tackled in a structured way in spite of staffing difficulties. Schemes of work and policies are in place and used well in the main to support continuity of learning. Swimming is in place at Key Stage 2 as required. Teaching quality has improved significantly with a high proportion of lessons seen being of good quality. Planning of the curriculum and assessment procedures are both much better. The use of assessment still needs further work. A very clear management structure has been set up, new staff appointed and roles and responsibilities redefined to capitalise on staff strengths and move forward the pace of improvements. Performance management is well in place. The school has set up a useful structure of regular monitoring but this has not yet had time to impact fully. The quality of the approach to self-evaluation and the compilation of the school improvement plan are now very good. Special educational needs provision has improved but challenges remain to fulfil requirements fully. Class teachers mainly plan well for the pupils' broad needs and they take a more active role in supporting those designated with special educational needs. All teachers are undergoing training in provision for special educational needs and a new coordinator has been appointed. In most cases, higher attaining pupils are achieving well. The delivery of information and communication technology does not meet requirements because the school has not kept pace with the subject's development although it is now a major priority for the school. The school is securely placed to move forward with stable staffing, re-designated roles, questioning and knowledgeable governors, the support of many parents and good teaching under the Headteacher's capable leadership.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A*	B	A*	A	very high A* well above A average above B average C below average D well below E average
Mathematics	A	C	A	A	
Science	A	C	A	A	

These are impressive results with English results in the top five per cent nationally. However, whilst still above average the school's results are moving closer to others. This can be explained by acknowledging that nationally standards are moving upward but importantly reflects information over time on five year old pupils entering the school, showing that although a significant number are higher attaining, an increasing minority are below. Writing, handwriting and gross motor skills are lower than expected for many. National test results in 2000 for seven year olds were generally good in reading and mathematics but writing was weak and in all areas more pupils attained at the lower level of 2. Results for 2001 (not verified) for seven year olds show more pupils attained at the higher Level 3 and fewer attained at the lower Level 2 in part due to the action taken following analysis of past results. The results for 2001 were positive for 11 year olds although fewer pupils attained at the higher Level 5 and no pupils attained Level 5 in writing. The school's targets in English, mathematics and science for the current Year 6 are very challenging. Given the current achievements of the Year 6 pupils, it is doubtful they will be achieved. The targets place considerable pressure on the teacher to achieve them.

The inspection finds that in English, mathematics and science most pupils by the ages of seven and 11 are working at national levels with a smaller number than in the recent past working beyond what is expected of them. Reading is a strength of pupils' achievements whilst writing is improving it is not strong. In mathematics, pupils attain as expected with good standards in number and computation but investigation and application of mathematical knowledge is weak. Standards in science are in line with what is expected nationally but no better. Standards in information and communication technology have declined to below what is expected since the last inspection. In the other subjects, standards look to be as expected with some good quality work in art.

Pupils with special educational needs attain suitably for their competencies and their progress like other pupils is mainly good. However, there are pupils within all year groups who have not been placed on the register of need and some who need to be moved up the stages. The school acknowledges this

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. A good proportion are ready and willing learners but this is not so for all. Too many lack concentration, do not listen or settle quickly to their tasks. This detracts from their own and others' learning because it takes up too much valuable teacher time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Mainly good but there is a lack of responsible behaviour by a minority when not directly supported by teachers at lunchtime.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development and sound relationships. The school provides ample opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills and expects cooperation. Some pupils have difficulty in understanding that they are one of many.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The main focus of observations was on English and mathematics. Sixteen lessons were seen, three judged to be very good, ten good and three satisfactory. Teaching is good overall and supports pupils' learning well, enabling the majority of pupils to make good progress. Lessons are purposeful, well structured and the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are strengths of the school. The teaching of writing and information and communication technology can be further improved as can the regularity and quality of marking of work to set targets for improvement. In a few lessons, teachers could challenge pupils more thoughtfully and increase the pace of the lesson for the higher attainers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant with the exception of information and communication technology where pupils do not have sufficient systematic access. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well grounded and effectively delivered. A very good range of extracurricular provision extends pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory and improving. Teachers plan to meet pupils' needs but for some the school has been slow in identifying their special needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The school's provision for moral development is very good, good for social and cultural and satisfactory for spiritual. The school satisfactorily prepares pupils for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good care for pupils' pastoral needs emanating from the Christian ethos. Procedures for assessment are good but their use is not yet impacting in checking on how good progress is or setting targets for pupils to get better.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the Headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very effective leadership and good management by the Headteacher, supported well by the two assistant Headteachers. Recent changes to responsibilities are impacting well and have set the tone for teamwork and greater accountability at all levels.

How well the governors fulfill their responsibilities	Very well indeed. Incisive questioning to hold the school to account and very good financial support and planning to achieve best value. Effective plans in place to meet the requirements for ICT.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The newly devised school improvement plan points the way to the school knowing itself well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff deployment is very good, resources are well used and the accommodation is used to good advantage.

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 school's expectation for hard work and good achievement. • The progress their children make. • Behaviour is good in lessons. • The quality of teaching. • The leadership and management of the school. • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. • That their children like school. • The ability to approach the school with problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework provision. • The range of extracurricular activities. • The information parents receive about their children's progress. • The quality of midday supervision. • The numbers in the classes are becoming too large.

The inspectors agree with the positive points raised by parents although the behaviour and work ethic of some pupils are not as might be expected of them in spite of the school's vigilance and high expectations. In relation to the areas parents would like to see improved: planning for homework by all teachers is evident and this supports class work well. Year 6 receive regular homework to prepare them for secondary school. The regularity and amount of homework given is a matter the school may wish to consider further but whether and how it is completed is a matter for parents, therefore in some cases homework does not effectively support all pupils' learning. The range of extracurricular activity is very good. The information to parents is good; the school is open and welcoming, but the quality of communication regarding special educational needs has been insufficient in the recent past. Pupils' behaviour is naturally more lively at lunchtimes but at times this does become overly so and the school may wish to review how it helps pupils exercise greater self-discipline and also give further support to non teaching staff on how to respond. The inspection does not have enough evidence to confirm that the size of classes affects pupils' good progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils' performance in the national tests at the age of 11.

1. The 2000 results are very good and show well above average attainment over time in English, mathematics and science. The English results were in the top five per cent nationally. The abilities of the cohort of pupils tested will affect results year on year and it is important to remember this. These results do mask a changing picture in the standards being attained because of a shift downward in the attainment of pupils on entry. Whilst still above average the school's results are moving closer to others. This can be explained by acknowledging that nationally standards are moving upward but importantly, reflects baseline information about pupils, which indicates that over recent years their abilities, behaviour and attitudes are more diverse when they enter this school than has previously been the case. Whilst a significant number are higher attaining, many more are of average ability and an increasing minority, about one quarter, are below. A good example of this variance in attainment is the current Year 4 who completed the national tests in 2000 at the age of seven. The results were generally good in reading and mathematics but writing was weak and in all areas more pupils attained at the lower Level 2c, with writing showing more than half the pupils gaining this lower level; this has raised questions about how well these pupils will fare in the tests at age 11 in 2004. When the attainment on entry of these pupils is tracked back to the reception class baseline information shows clearly that most were weak on writing and also on personal and social skills.

2. The school is working hard to ensure its pupils attain and achieve well, not least through the good quality teaching but more recently by instigating the need for the careful analysis of its results and trends. For example, the identified weakness in writing has resulted in a stronger focus on writing and the impact of this was reflected in the 2001 results as more pupils attained at the higher Level 3 and fewer attained at the lower Level 2. Although not verified against national averages, the results for 2001 were positive for 11 year olds but less pupils attained at the higher Level 5 and no pupils attained Level 5 in writing. The initiatives have not yet impacted fully for the older pupils.

3. The school's targets for the current Year 6 are very challenging. They suggest almost every pupil will attain Level 4 and looking at their current work and the range of need within the class, the standards currently do not suggest this will be the case although past work suggests they make rapid progress in Year 6. The proportion of pupils attaining at Level 2 when these pupils were seven was high but this has not taken into account the proportion at the lower and higher levels which is a better indicator of how many are set to achieve at Level 4 or above in Year 6. The school has appointed additional staff to give support in Years 3 to 6 including a part time qualified teacher. It has also planned for booster support.

4. The pupils who have recently arrived in the reception class exemplify the recent trend because early observation of their abilities suggests that the spread of ability is broad although, their personal and social skills are good and these pupils cooperate well. They have settled in happily, are making good progress in all the areas of learning especially literacy and numeracy, and show that they are willing learners who listen well. The teacher and classroom assistant are already getting to grips with assessing these young pupils to match work carefully to their needs.

5. Pupils achieve well and improve their knowledge and understanding systematically because of the good teaching. At times pupils' achievements are slowed because of the pupils' attitudes to learning. Some, lack concentration, in spite of the teachers' vigilance and others have a lazy work ethic.

The good quality teaching, which pervades the school and enables pupils to learn well.

6. Teaching is good overall and supports pupils' learning well, enabling the range of ability to make good progress. Teaching judgements are based on lessons, scrutiny of pupils' completed work, planning and teachers' assessments.

7. In the Foundation Stage, teaching quality has been sustained since the last inspection and shows some very good features. The planning is well linked to the Early Learning Goals and the teacher and classroom assistant use baseline assessments to establish pupils' abilities quickly and systematically support them as they move through the 'stepping stones' of learning. The activities planned are relevant, practical and motivate the children to be fully involved. The teacher creates a safe, secure atmosphere where children feel able to join in and express their ideas with growing confidence. They learn to recognise the letters of the alphabet through the teacher's creative use of letter fans. Many are quick to say the letter name and sound and point out objects beginning with the letters. A few need support with this. The classroom is attractive and supports all areas of learning well. For example, the interesting table of natural objects which pupils are prompted to observe using a variety of magnifying lenses. Pupils' efforts are valued, such as where they have made models from construction materials, they are displayed to share with the class and talk about.

8. In the infant and junior classes, teachers use time effectively to keep pupils on task. Teachers have vigilantly high expectations for pupils to listen and concentrate and this is a key reason why most make good progress. Explanations of the work to be done are clear and allow pupils to understand fully what they have to do. Questioning is good; enabling the teachers to check on what pupils have grasped. Lessons are largely purposeful and well structured. Teachers' short term planning is mainly good but clear learning objectives in the planning are not consistently evident and this is bound to affect the match of work because in a few lessons, teachers could challenge pupils more thoughtfully and increase the pace of the lesson for the higher attainers. This aspect, a weakness at the last inspection, shows significant improvement.

9. The main focus of observations was on English and mathematics. The format of the literacy and numeracy lessons follows the recommended guidance well. In English, teaching in Year 1 makes a very good impact on how well pupils of all abilities learn how to read and how what they know about sounds can help their reading and spelling. Pupils improve how they make sentences from jumbled words, recognise letter blends and begin to use picture clues to make predictions about what might happen. In Year 2, good teaching helps pupils learn how to read aloud with fluency and expression and develops their understanding of 'adjectives' which make the story more exciting. Useful follow up work requires pupils to practise using new words to make their own writing more interesting. This work is part of the school's drive to have a 'writing morning' to support standards. This work is well extended in Year 4 where pupils learn about adverbs and how they explain what the 'verb' is doing and this adds interest. The teacher leads pupils systematically to this understanding through demonstration, explanation and questioning. The tasks are very well matched and although this is the first lesson in the programme most pupils because of the teaching clarity and structure, have some fun constructing and reordering sentences to

make sense and most, by the end of the lesson, can explain three ways and read them aloud. However, pupils given a task using the computer are hindered because too many of them want to access it at the same time. Older pupils are learning the complexities of Standard English well. They also extend their understanding of how authors and playwrights have used language to add richness and give greater meaning to their stories, plays or poems. Pupils are encouraged well by the teaching to use their listening skills to retain information and explain the relationships between the lovers in Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

10. In mathematics, pupils are challenged by all teachers to use mental strategies to work out sums. In Year 1, the teacher reminds pupils to always 'read' the number sentence and reinforces the words they use to describe 'adding', taking away, subtracting and equals. These pupils are making such good progress that some are already adding numbers to ten and recognising patterns such as $2+8 = 10$ so $8+2=10$. In Year 2, the teaching prompts pupils to tackle money problems using addition and subtraction. The higher attainers add more parts together. By the age of seven, pupils' ability to calculate mentally is good and they have learned to choose the right 'rule' to solve a problem. Pupils improve their knowledge of number facts using multiplication in Year 3 and also learn to identify right angles in two-dimensional shapes. The teacher's good subject knowledge drives the learning forward and the effective lesson preparation and pace leads to gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 5 are challenged by powerful questioning from the teacher which makes them think about how to calculate fractions, however, the higher attaining pupils find some of the work too easy. In Year 6, the teacher's subject expertise is evidently impacting strongly on pupils' learning about improper fractions and the chance to explore their ideas pictorially supports understanding. Again some higher attainers could have been challenged further but overall the revision element of the lesson provided a useful assessment task.

11. Where information and communication technology (ICT) was seen being taught it impacted well on pupils' learning about changing fonts, point and style of text. The work was well supported by parental help. There is no reason to doubt that the school's own plans for teacher training and the imminent building of a computer suite will support standards in information and communication technology given the teachers' commitment to supporting pupils.

The leadership and management by the Headteacher, notably the quality of the school improvement plan.

12. Many parents feel that the school is well led and managed and the inspection agrees with them. The school has tackled the issues for action from the previous inspection in a structured way. The governors, as described elsewhere in this report, play an active and supportive role in the school's direction. They have confidence in the Headteacher to drive the school forward and rightly so. The ethos of the school is positive, welcoming and calm. The Headteacher is reflective about how the school can get better and this is nowhere more apparent than in the high quality school improvement plan which sets the school on a path of self-evaluation and critical analysis of what works and what does not. It has placed an onus on individuals to reflect on themselves as classteachers and subject managers and consider the degree of success being achieved and to determine how to improve. As part of its self-evaluation the school has been analysing data and tracing back attainment to predict targets for the future. As yet this valuable work is not yet fully developed and requires systematic rigorous analysis to ensure all understand how to move it forward.

13. Given some turbulence in the recent past in staffing with long term absence and a number of temporary staff the Headteacher has very effectively re-designated roles to impact on standards and ensure there is a strong structure of monitoring and accountability set up. The Headteacher has identified that shared responsibilities require a delegated and accountable response from individuals to contribute to the overriding task of meeting the school's aims of high standards and pupils fulfilling their potential. With this in mind he has successfully set up a senior management structure with two assistant Headteachers, one in each key stage. Key staff have been released from class teaching to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum delivery and this is continuing. Key stage groups meet to review practice and are working on the whole well towards a team effort, but this aspect is not yet fully embedded. Lines of delegation are now far clearer, job descriptions well devised and with the governing body asking pertinent questions the stage is set for accountability at all levels. A new ICT coordinator and special educational needs coordinator are in post. This bodes well for the future as the appointments have been carefully chosen to attack the deficits in these areas with enthusiasm. Performance management is well in place. Together these initiatives point to a well thought out strategy to stabilise the school with the focus firmly placed on the business of the day of raising standards.

14. The school is well resourced and managed so that all funding is spent with a view to impacting on standards. The accommodation is well used and cleaned to a high standard. The school's administration runs smoothly and ensures that as far as possible teachers are freed from trivia to get on with teaching.

15. The Headteacher's very effective leadership, with the support of the governors and staff sets the school on a secure path to address the issues identified and move the school onward and upward.

The governing body is very effectively involved in financial planning and hold the school to account very well through critical questioning.

16. The governors are very well led. They meet their responsibilities very effectively save for the requirements for the delivery of ICT, though even this is well in hand. They are a strong group who bring a valuable range of skills to complement the work of the Headteacher and staff. They understand the challenges facing staff in their day-to-day work and this is an essential part of their success, along with their openness to listen and be informed. The most obvious strengths lie in their application of the principles of best value, erudite planning and use of funding to impact on pupils' learning. All spending is carefully costed and linked firmly to educational priorities. For example, the governors have bid up to three years hence for future monies in capital funding, to be made available now to help with major building works to provide a suite for computers and to provide additional teaching space and staff facilities. They have also used monies to employ a part time teacher to support pupils' achievements in Key Stage 2. A member of the governing body has expertise in ICT and is using this directly to coordinate the implementation of the plans with the Headteacher and subject coordinator. This work should have started during the summer holiday but has been delayed. It is planned to start at the end of the inspection. Governors have successfully bid for grant funding to support ICT work in the form of the Seed Challenge Grant and also successfully applied for funding to take part in the Healthy Schools Initiative. Governors have scrutinised performance data and ask pertinent questions about what it means and what the school is doing to improve. Governors have a suitable range of sub groups and have in the past benefited from staff sharing the progress of initiatives with them. The school benefits significantly from this committed and knowledgeable governing body and their support is greatly appreciated by the Headteacher.

The very good pastoral care, effective provision for personal development and vigilant moral guidance available to pupils.

17. The school provides very good moral guidance for pupils during learning and this supports their personal development contributing well to the good progress they make and standards they achieve. The good work starts in the reception class where these young pupils are helped to feel safe and secure. They have settled into school well because the teacher has established clear routines in a happy atmosphere and their broad personal and emotional needs are of paramount importance. All staff build well on this positive start and as they move through the school pupils grow in confidence, develop social skills and acquire a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils with special educational needs are supported sensitively in classrooms and the care for their personal and academic needs ensures there is no discrimination or disharmony to their learning. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of education and many parents agree. Each classroom has a set of rules agreed by the pupils and during lessons teachers refer to them and remind pupils about taking turns, listening when others are speaking and showing respect for what others have to say. This aspect of the school's work is most important because overall pupils' attitudes to learning are only satisfactory. The school has to be vigilant to prevent some pupils falling behind in their learning as some have a lazy work ethic and lack the levels of concentration expected of them. Many but not all say they like school. Those who do not have little clear explanation of why, other than they do not like work.

18. The teachers know the pupils well and are sensitive to their personal and emotional needs. The school's personal, social and health education programme combined with the occasions it uses such as assemblies to celebrate pupils' successes, no matter how small, support their confidence and self-esteem well.

19. The school has well-established procedures and policies that illustrate appropriate conduct and support the development of pupils' understanding for consideration and respect for the feelings and values of others. Within the school's 'Pupil Discipline Policy' is the code of conduct for all pupils and rewards and sanctions support this. The school encourages the pupils to be responsible for their own conduct and they are provided with opportunities for responsibility as they move through the school. The youngest children in the reception class already have the confidence to take the register to the office accompanied by a friend. Pupils in Year 5 organize the music for assemblies and in the dining hall older pupils show good care for younger ones. This is spoiled somewhat by the lack of responsibility shown by some pupils during lunchtime play when small groups fail to acknowledge that they are one of many and responses become overly boisterous. The vigilance of teachers in the classrooms has not yet been emulated by support staff in the playground, which hinders the school from becoming excellent in its levels of care.

20. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular activities, which support pupils' social and moral skills, including a broad range of residential visits which pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the chance to join in. These visits are, for some pupils, the first time they have been away from home without their parents and serve to give pupils a sense of responsibility and a chance to show independence and initiative. In addition, a before and after school club is run in cooperation with the school. The club opens at 8 a.m. and finishes at 6 p.m. whilst staff are not directly responsible for its running, nevertheless it is yet another example of the school's willingness to cooperate with outside agencies to support its pupils.

21. To enhance pupils' personal development the school is expanding its work to support pupils' cultural knowledge to help them in their awareness that they are growing up in a diverse and multicultural society. The school has plans to make links with another in Africa; it is keen to expand pupils' understanding of global citizenship and its anti-racist strategy to support respect and tolerance is currently in draft form. This development is most important given that all pupils are of white UK heritage. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.

22. The school's efforts make a very valuable contribution overall to pupils' broader education. Staff help to improve pupils' moral awareness so that they may live harmoniously with others and take their place in a world where respect and the differentiation between right and wrong are important.

Parental support and the links with them.

23. Most parents have high regard for the school and this is justified given the efforts the school makes to involve them in their children's learning. A number of parents provide assistance in the classroom on a regular basis and several are involved in assisting with after school activities. For example, a parent regularly comes into school to help pupils with information and communication technology. He works with groups overseeing the pupils as they complete the tasks set by the teacher. Parents help with reading and also some come in on a regular basis to help with class work, for example, in Year 2, when the pupils are busy with their 'writing morning'. An active parent and teacher association raises funds and organises recreational activities. Information on these activities is published through regular newsletters and the school is proactive in providing parents with information on their children's academic activities and progress. Many parents appreciate this information so that they can support the children with their learning. The school's standing and reputation with parents is clearly illustrated in the level of over subscription, with several instances of parents achieving entry for their child through appeal. In its drive to respond to parents and be receptive to their suggestions and concerns the school as part of its self-evaluation conducted a questionnaire last year. It achieved a 75 per cent response. Most parents expressed satisfaction with many aspects of school life not least the standards the school achieves. The governors responded by replying to parents and itemising their intentions about matters raised.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The identification of pupils who require extended support for learning and the partnership with parents about their needs.

24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is improving but still only satisfactory. At the last inspection special educational needs and the support for higher attainers was judged to have some weaknesses, in that classteachers were not taking an active enough role in planning for these pupils' needs. Too much of the success of pupils depended on their being withdrawn from the classroom for additional support. This disrupted their other learning. This has improved greatly but not in every case. Teachers now plan well for the range of ability although there is still scope for the level of challenge to be greater for some higher attaining pupils. These need to pursue investigations and lines of enquiry independently and apply their well gained literacy and numeracy skills to the rest of their work. In some classes, too often there is not enough balance in the time that teachers focus on quality input with pupils who require extended support; in some

cases the work is planned by the teacher but delivered by non-teaching staff. This is acceptable on occasion but not each day.

25. Changes have occurred recently in the management of special educational needs and this augurs well for the future. The coordinator is wholly aware of the need for improvement and enthusiastic to begin. Pupils have had individual educational plans but the format of these has recently been reviewed to be more specific and detailed; this is a positive step. All staff have or are imminently about to receive training in providing for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom to heighten their knowledge about provision, identification and action. This is essential as scrutiny of the current register when matched to the needs of pupils and their responses to work leaves no doubt that there are individuals in virtually all classes who are not identified on the register of need at any stage and require to be. This does these children a disservice. It is also unhelpful to the school by not presenting an accurate picture of the extent of needs on which requests for support and allocation of funding to help the pupils now and possibly in the future should be based. In addition, the school has been remiss in the depth and detail of communication it has had with some parents. Whilst parents may decide if their child is placed on the register the school has not done enough to explain to parents the importance and benefits to their children of identification, extended support and sustained review as the national Code of Practice determines. Further work is needed to help parents understand and to work in partnership with the school for the pupils' benefits.

Standards in writing and its use in the other subjects.

26. Standards in writing are average but not strong. Considerable effort has been put into improving pupils' achievements as the writing skills of too many are weak on entry and not good enough at the ages of seven and 11 in comparison to their other abilities. The school's action is already beginning to show results because in 2001 seven year olds did much better. Further improvements are needed to drive standards and achievements forward. A focus on writing has been introduced when pupils have an extended time to discuss their ideas and write stories. This is useful but there are some fundamental areas the school has not looked at closely enough. For example, pupils' achievements as they progress through the school are not closely matched to the National Curriculum level descriptors in order to identify what pupils do well and where gaps exist. This kind of search has been done in analysing test data and the actions needed are well documented in the school improvement plan. However, in the pupils' day to day to work marking and intervention by teachers is not constructively critical enough to say 'you have done these things well, but these elements need to get better' with targets set which are shared with pupils for them to check for success. Some teachers mark work effectively but others do not. Not enough onus is placed on the pupils to improve for themselves. Too few examples of pupils, planning, drafting, editing and improving their ideas were seen.

27. The school has a policy for English and follows the National Literacy Strategy, which is implemented well. Good levels of competency are achieved in many aspects of the subject, particularly reading. However, the school recognises weaknesses exist in writing. The time is right for a review of how writing is taught and how, in planning, teachers need to look for, when and how they can use the pupils' well acquired skills in literacy to support work in other subjects. The ways of stimulating pupils to write about their own experiences, new ideas and related work in say history, art or music have not been thought through to capitalise on using their senses fully. Standards in handwriting are very variable and at times not good enough. There is too little understanding amongst staff of the importance of handwriting and presentation as a tool to improve spelling, punctuation, fluency, speed writing and note taking. Pupils need to be aware that when we write it is always for an

audience even if that audience is ourselves, so the work must be legible and readable. The school's subject action plan has not addressed these issues in sufficient detail.

Standards in information and communication technology, which are below those expected nationally by the age of seven and 11.

28. Standards in information and communication technology (I.C.T.) are below average by the ages of seven and 11. There have not been sufficient opportunities for pupils to build up adequate knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to be in line with national expectations by the end of their time in the school.

29. The work in I.C.T. does not completely meet statutory requirements as not all of the elements of the National Curriculum for the subject are being taught. This was not the case at the last inspection, but the national picture has changed and many developments have been made within the subject. The school has not been able to keep pace.

30. In the school improvement documentation, the need for change and improvement is recognised. Recently the school designated funding and grant aid to purchase computer hardware, which will give a good ratio of pupils to each computer and would allow class teaching, individual and small group use of both suite and stand-alone computers in classes.

31. The current work in the communication element of the subject is close to national standards. Pupils show sound keyboard skills, being able to change fonts, use a spellchecker, highlight text and use the cut and paste facility. Very few have a clear understanding of how to import graphics into their writing neither have they had experiences of multi-media presentations, a requirement at the Year 6 level of work.

32. Within the data-handling element of the prescribed work, pupils from Year 3 have produced graphs from information they have put on to screen. Their understanding of databases is sound but there have been very few opportunities to put this type of information into their computers, interrogate the information and answer questions based on the information they have.

33. Pupils do not use ICT enough in the other subjects but in the junior classes some have had sound opportunities to use CD-ROM on a number of occasions. Their work in mathematics has been supported by the use of CDs, which help them with number, shape and data handling activities. Year 6 pupils explain confidently how they used encyclopaedia type CDs in order to find information about topics they have studied. Some pupils remember using a simulation program about life in a tropical rain forest, helping them to appreciate the environmental problems of such an area.

34. Pupils in both Year 5 and 6 can recall using a programmable toy, giving it numerical directions to make it move around a space or even making it draw shapes on the floor. Not all pupils questioned could recall using the same numerical instructions to make an on-screen object trace a prescribed pattern following their instructions.

35. The final area of work prescribed by the National Curriculum for I.C.T., is "measuring" using a computer. Pupils did not understand how a computer could be linked with sensing devices in order to record temperature, light or movement.

36. Teachers make the best use they can of the computers currently in their classes to support work in both literacy and numeracy lessons. Within literacy lessons, for example,

pupils are seen using spelling programs, whilst in numeracy lessons they use programs, which help them understand their work as in classifying two-dimensional shapes in Year 4. However, little evidence was seen of its use in any other curriculum area. Equally, limited evidence was seen of direct teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding of classes or small groups. Pupils in Year 3 did make some good progress in changing font and type faces under adult supervision.

37. The newly appointed coordinator for the subject is aware of all the issues surrounding the lack of progress made within the subject and is awaiting the installation of the new hardware and the training of teachers, through the government funded scheme. Once this has been accomplished, there remains the additional task of ensuring that all elements of the Programme of Study for the subject are taught throughout the school. He also needs to provide a clear understanding for his colleagues of the nature of the development of skills within the subject and across the school. Once this has been effected, there still remains the task of organising and implementing an appropriate time table for the use of the computers and an assessment scheme, upon which to judge not only pupils response to the work, but upon which to base the future needs of training and support for teachers. Some of the above can, and should, be tackled without waiting for the hardware to be in place. This will help to ensure further time is not wasted.

The accuracy and use of assessment to predict and support standards and progress.

38. The school has made improvements in its procedures for assessing academic progress since the last inspection at which time they were not effective. The school now analyses well the results of the National Curriculum tests at age 7 and 11. The school has made a good start at the process of target setting for its pupils both as individuals and as members of classes. However there still remains a number of issues, which if addressed, would support the process even further, making further improvements in standards possible.

39. Although the school has a marking policy, all teachers do not consistently adhere to it. In two sets of books, seen in the scrutiny of work, one set had been carefully marked with many good and helpful comments made by the teacher, designed to show the pupils how they could make their work better. In another set of books, no marking had taken place for three weeks. This day-to-day assessment is a core issue in terms of supporting pupils' to make progress in their knowledge and understanding, and in the development of skills.

40. The results of the school's "Baseline" tests administered when pupils first start in the reception class show that whilst pupils come to school with several areas of understanding higher than the county average, in the crucial area of readiness to write, pupils are below the same average. The school is currently trying to improve its writing results.

41. An analysis of the results of recent National Curriculum tests shows that assessments made by teachers are not always accurate. There are too many discrepancies. For example, at the time of the tests for seven year olds last year, the teacher said that 23 per cent of the pupils would achieve higher than national expected scores in their mathematics. In fact 40 per cent achieved the Level 3. At the same time, in Year 6, the teacher said that 23 per cent of the class would achieve the higher level 5 score in the tests for writing. In fact no pupils achieved this level.

42. Teachers do not have a full understanding of the levels of the National Curriculum and as a result make too many mistakes in their judgements. A collection of work, for core subjects, analysed and levelled against the descriptors of the National Curriculum, would

support teachers and give them a ready point of reference for their judgements. This has recently been started for aspects of English and now needs to be extended.

43. Recent analyses of results of national tests have resulted in the school noting where gaps in understanding or teaching have occurred. As yet, this has not led to the school taking action to remedy these gaps. For example, the school recognised that its results in mathematics shows that pupils' use of mathematical knowledge and their ability to carry out investigational mathematics are weak. This has yet to be taken account of in teachers' planning.

44. The current format for recording assessments is too fragmented, with teachers unable to have a complete overview of progress throughout the school, so that they might feel part of a larger quest for improving standards. An opportunity now exists for senior managers to present current useful information about pupils' progress in an extended format, and use teachers' own knowledge to involve them further in predicting standards over a longer period. This would support a more holistic approach to both assessment and target setting.

45. Annual school reports are well written, based on teachers' use of assessment information. Some, but not all, use this information well to indicate ways in which pupils' might make further progress.

46. The school does not yet use its assessment material to point to pupils who may be gifted or talented in one or more areas of the curriculum. Whilst many teachers know who these pupils are, they are not yet listed or their talents clearly stated. In the same way, the school does not always identify pupils who should be on the register for special educational needs. This lack of identification needs to be seen against the difficulty some parents may experience without full information, of accepting that their children have extended needs.

47. The school has moved forward in its target setting, but has yet to make them specific enough in order to improve standards. Currently targets are set for elements of mathematics and English. These do not yet give a clear enough picture of precisely what pupils need to do to improve. For example, many pupils have targets, which indicate they need "to improve their handwriting". For some pupils this is an extremely difficult and long-term process, therefore, it must be broken down into manageable units and should be seen over a much shorter scale such as a half a term or a term, rather than the six month period now used.

48. It is also vital that these targets are more directly shared and discussed with pupils to meet on a regular basis. Targets do not currently appear in their writing books and as a result pupils often forget what their targets are and their impact on raising standards is lost.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:

Improve the identification of pupils who require extended support for learning and the partnership with parents about their needs by ensuring that:

- teachers use daily observations to record any difficulties pupils may be experiencing with aspects of their learning;
- the guidance on the stages of support in the Code of Practice is used more carefully to identify pupils who require extended support;
- they share information at the earliest stage with the SENCO and parents;
- pupils are placed on the register, in consultation with parents and ensure their needs are closely monitored to meet fully the recommendations of the Code of Practice as needs suggest;
- the school communicates its special educational needs policy and strategies with all parents so that they are well informed about arrangements and actively involved in partnership with the school should their children's needs change.

Raise standards in writing and its use in the other subjects by ensuring that:

- early information on pupils' abilities is carefully analysed to identify what pupils can and cannot do well and used to set realistic but challenging targets;
- the way in which writing is taught is reviewed and all staff follow the guidance agreed;
- targets for improvements are shared with pupils and checked often for success;
- pupils are required to plan, draft and improve work more often;
- when pupils are required to write extended pieces they are relevant and meaningful to them or their other subject work.

Improve the accuracy and use of assessments to predict and support standards and progress by ensuring that:

- all teachers adhere to the school's marking policy to show pupils how they can improve their day to day work;
- teachers use the National Curriculum descriptors more carefully when checking the level of pupils' achievements to improve the accuracy of target setting;
- the identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are actioned swiftly;
- the formats of recording information are organised to save teacher time and present a quicker interpretation of the data;
- information is used to identify and record pupils who may be gifted and talented;
- targets are specific to individual needs, shared with pupils and parents and reviewed more regularly.

Raise standards in information and communication technology, which are below those expected nationally by the age of seven and 11 by ensuring that:

- the school's own plans for the subject's improvement and allied staff training are instigated fully.

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	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	10	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	62	19	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than six percentage point[s].

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)	n/a	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	15

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	15
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	28	25	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	78 (91)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	15	15
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	27	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (91)	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 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	27	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (71)	96 (71)	96 (77)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	23	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (77)	96 (74)	96 (94)
	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	0
White	187
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86.75

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000./2001
	£
Total income	397,403
Total expenditure	386,580
Expenditure per pupil	1,807
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,996
Balance carried forward to next year	18,819

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	7	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	61	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	59	17	4	1
The teaching is good.	32	59	3	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	56	19	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	45	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	55	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	29	59	7	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	33	56	8	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	56	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	55	21	4	8