

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITEHEATH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Ruislip

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102400

Headteacher: Mr B Harmer

Reporting inspector: Mike Phillips
7704

Dates of inspection: 25th & 26th June 2001

Inspection number: 193537

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Whiteheath Avenue Ruislip Middlesex
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Gibb
Date of previous inspection:	21 st April 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whiteheath Junior School is a Beacon School of 339 pupils aged from seven to 11. It is in Ruislip, at the northern end of the London Borough of Hillingdon, close to the Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire borders. The school is almost fully subscribed. There are 153 boys and 183 girls who are taught by 15 teachers in 12 classes whose average size is a little over 28. Over the past three years, six teachers left and were replaced. Most left for promotion or for domestic reasons. The school has grown since the last inspection, when there were 300 pupils. Pupils come to the school from a wide area. Most pupils live in owner occupied housing, some in social housing and a significant minority come from housing provided by the Royal Air Force. One-third of all pupils enter the school at seven with numeracy and literacy attainments above the national averages. The school has achieved numerous awards, for example the Sunday Times Award for Excellence and the National Achievement Award for Basic Skills. Over the past three years about 20 per cent of pupils joined or left the school other than at the usual times when they were seven or 11. This mobility is mainly because families move to be near to a grammar school or because they are moved to or from the area by the Royal Air Force. Eleven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is below the national average. One and a half per cent of pupils learn with English as an additional language and this is below the national average. About 17 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, most for learning difficulties, and this matches the national average. However, three per cent of the pupils have statements for special educational needs, and this is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This extremely effective school promotes very high academic standards, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science and very high standards of behaviour. It has made good progress since the last inspection in April 1997 from a strong position under the excellent leadership of the headteacher. His very effective senior management team work very well in partnership with critically supportive and well-informed governors. The achievements and progress of pupils who learn with English as an additional language, and of those with special educational needs, are excellent. The school is extremely good at evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, learning and the use of resources. This contributes to the excellent teaching that ensures pupils with different levels of attainment, and from diverse cultural backgrounds, consistently receive challenging work that matches their learning needs. Spending decisions follow the principles of best value in order to maintain high standards and improve them where necessary. As a result, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school ensures pupils achieve very well and attain high standards by the time they are 11.
- Excellent leadership and management are supported by the strong teamwork of all who work in the school and by a shared commitment to high standards.
- The high proportion of excellent and very good teaching results in pupils' excellent learning. Teachers never accept second best, whether from themselves or the pupils.
- There is excellent practice to make sure all pupils are included in all the school offers and that pupils respect beliefs, traditions and cultures different from their own.

What could be improved

- The ways the school communicates with parents need improving so that they work even more effectively with the school to help their children learn.
- Governors do not evaluate systematically all elements of risk that may be present in school activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has very successfully built upon the achievements reported by the last inspection in April 1997, when it was judged to be a good school. Since then, strong leadership has taken decisive action upon the key issue to improve the use of assessment. This has improved further the effectiveness of the evaluation of teaching, the curriculum and the use of resources to help pupils

learn. As a result, standards continue to rise because teaching has improved significantly, a high proportion being very good or excellent.

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	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A*	A	A*

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

Standards of attainment for pupils who enter the school at seven are above the national average and by the time they are 11 they make very good progress. Since 1997, the improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science has been in line with the national trend. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who learn with English as an additional language, make excellent progress. Pupils who enter school other than at the usual time when they are seven make very good progress because of the excellent teaching they receive. Excellent teaching and provision for those who enter the school in Years 5 and 6 ensures they make excellent progress. By the time pupils leave the school at 11, the proportion of them who reach or exceed the nationally expected levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science is well above the national average and well above the standards of similar schools across the country. Standards of attainment in science were in the top five per cent of schools nationally in 1999 and in the top five per cent of similar schools across the country in 2000. During the inspection, standards of work seen closely matched those of the 2000 national test results, with evidence to suggest a slight increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding levels of attainment expected nationally in mathematics and English. Standards of attainment in information communications technology and for religious education, and for all other subjects, are above those expected nationally. The school will meet the challenging targets for 2001 for numeracy and literacy agreed with the local education authority.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Highly motivated pupils work extremely hard. They respond cheerfully to challenging work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is excellent in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils willingly accept increasing responsibilities as they grow older. Pupils have excellent relationships with teachers.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average.

The school has very good procedures to identify and eliminate oppressive behaviour should it occur.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

There is an exceptionally high proportion of very good and excellent teaching. One hundred per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, of which 65 per cent is very good or excellent, 30 per cent is good and five per cent satisfactory. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when there was no excellent teaching and three per cent was unsatisfactory. There is a very high proportion of very good and excellent teaching of numeracy and literacy. The high proportion of excellent and very good teaching has a direct effect on the pupils' high standards of attainment and the excellent progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those whom English is an additional language. Teachers have very high expectations about what pupils are capable of achieving, and this is particularly evident in the planning of challenging work in science. The planning teachers do in year groups is very good and ensures that each class experiences similar teaching approaches; that literacy and numeracy skills are rigorously reinforced in other lessons, and that teaching assistants are consulted about their learning support for those who need it. Teachers make sure that pupils understand each lesson's learning objectives. Learning is constantly measured in order to set learning targets for improvement, and the information gathered is used to make sure that interesting and challenging work is provided for pupils with different learning needs. This means that pupils know their own strengths and areas for improvement. Very good and excellent teaching is conducted at a challenging pace and sweeps pupils along in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The effectiveness and quality of the curriculum are constantly evaluated.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. These pupils benefit from a very high quality of learning support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent. These pupils also benefit from a very high quality of learning support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for all aspects of pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are excellent procedures to assess pupils' attainment and monitor their academic progress. Procedures for child protection follow national and local guidelines.

The school has very good procedures to identify and eliminate oppressive behaviour should it occur. The school constantly evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum with a strong emphasis on developing numeracy and literacy skills. There is a very good range of activities provided before and after school and at lunch times. Residential visits for Year 5 and 6 pupils have a good effect on their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The firm commitments of the headteacher and senior staff to high standards and highly effective teamwork are shared by all who teach and work in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well-informed governors work in partnership with the school to help shape its future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Highly effective procedures evaluate the school's performance, including the effectiveness of the school's aims and values, and these have a significant and beneficial effect on the pupils' attainment and achievements.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Highly effective strategic use of resources maintains high standards.

There is an excellent match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum and the learning needs of the pupils. Very good accommodation and learning resources are used extremely well to help pupils learn. The exemplary working partnership between governors and the school ensures that all financial decisions apply the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are pleased that their children like school, that they are expected to work hard. • They believe teaching is good and that their children make good progress. • Parents consider the school well led and they are comfortable about approaching the school. • They consider the school provides a good range of activities for their children before and after school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents want more guidance about what their children are expected to do for homework. • Some parents want more information about what their children will learn and how they are getting on. • A few parents say the school does not work closely enough with them, especially when dealing with their concerns.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They consider the school provides clear homework guidance for parents. Inspectors consider that further improvements are needed to the information parents receive about what their children will learn and how they are getting on.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school ensures pupils achieve very well and attain high standards by the time they are 11.

1. The 2000 national tests for 11 year olds show that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the nationally expected levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science was well above the national average and well above the average for similar schools nationally. Standards of attainment in science were in the top five per cent of similar schools across the country.
2. The percentage of pupils who enter the school at seven with standards above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. Almost all these pupils make good progress and reach high standards by the time they leave the school at 11. In the 2000 national tests for English, 39 per cent of pupils exceeded the level of attainment expected of them nationally and in mathematics 31 per cent of them did the same. The best performance was in science, where 66 per cent of 11 year olds exceeded the national level of attainment expected for their age. The standard of work seen during the inspection indicate that standards have risen a little since the 2000 national test results and that the school will meet the challenging targets for literacy and numeracy agreed with the local education authority. Inspection evidence indicates that in science 11 year olds' pupils' very high standards of attainment will be maintained.
3. Over the past four years, and since the last inspection in April 1997, 11 year olds' standards of attainment have risen steadily in line with the national average.
4. Throughout the school, most pupils achieve well. Achievements and progress are excellent for over half the pupils who join the school in Years 5 or 6 and for the others, who join the school at the same time, their progress and achievements are very good. Twenty per cent of pupils leave and join the school other than at the usual times at seven or 11, and most of them do so in Years 5 and 6. The reasons why pupils leave or join the school are either because parents move home to be nearer to a grammar school, or they are relocated by the Royal Air Force. The attainment of well over half the pupils who enter the school after the age of 7 is below that of most other pupils of their age in the school and a few of them have special educational needs. Their learning needs are expertly assessed and they soon rapidly improve their academic performance because they receive highly effective support for their learning, challenging work that interests them and teaching that inspires them.
5. A number of factors explain the very good achievements of so many pupils. Foremost is the atmosphere of high expectations that permeates all that the school strives to achieve. The school continuously evaluates all it does in order to maintain high standards and improve them wherever possible, including the ways teachers plan. Teaching is rigorously evaluated and the information gathered is used for improvements. As a result, teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection when there was no excellent teaching and a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Now 95 per cent of teaching is very good and excellent and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers do not expect second best from themselves or from their pupils, who respond cheerfully to challenging work. Pupils know what

they have to learn each lesson and what they have to do to succeed because of the good advice and support they receive. Excellent teaching of English and mathematics in Year 3 sweeps pupils along in their learning so that they all grow in confidence to tackle yet more challenging tasks. This impressive beginning to their time at the school continues as they grow older and was seen in Year 6 science, mathematics and English lessons, where very good and excellent teaching inspired them to work hard all the time.

6. Pupils at seven enter the school eager to learn and teachers swiftly build upon their excellent attitudes to school. Pupils willingly work on their own or in groups whilst help is given to others. They say it is their responsibility to learn and there is no point in not working hard. This was seen in a Year 4 history lesson about Tudor homes, where pupils worked hard and enthusiastically all the time with teaching assistants, the class teacher or on their own.
7. Other strengths of the school are the quality of pupils' listening skills and their confidence to 'have a go', 'find out for themselves' and to learn from their efforts. These skills improve significantly as the pupils grow older because teachers plan to improve these skills all the time from Year 3, by teaching them to research, problem solve and to share their findings and ideas with others. It is also the result of the school's emphasis on respect for each other's feelings. Consequently, pupils become increasingly effective and confident learners because teachers and their assistants ensure that pupils' contributions to lessons are valued. In a Year 3 numeracy lesson about fractions, the class listened intently as a pupil with special educational needs explained her learning, and then they sensitively showed her how to improve with the help of the teacher and then the learning assistant. This is typical of teaching throughout the school and it helps pupils with different learning needs to improve all the time.
8. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been put in place extremely well. One of the reasons why numeracy and literacy standards are so high is that the school constantly evaluates the effectiveness of these strategies, and then amends them to suit the needs of the school. For example, the school has adapted the nationally recommended spelling list to improve pupils' spelling. In 2000, the school bought resources to support a new mathematics policy and adaptations to the numeracy strategies. This was done to meet even more effectively the different learning needs of the pupils, and inspection evidence shows that standards continue to rise. In addition to all this, very good planning makes sure numeracy and literacy skills are reinforced in other lessons. This was seen in a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 5 about smoking, when pupils calculated mentally how to divide into eight equal parts a piece of paper on which scientific data was to be shown.

Excellent leadership and management are supported by the strong teamwork of all who work in the school so that there is a shared commitment to high standards.

9. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is very ably supported by a recently appointed deputy, who has been in post for seven months. The last inspection judged leadership of the school to be very good. It has now improved to be excellent. The headteacher combines a determination to maintain high standards and improve them where possible with care for the well being of pupils and staff. The senior management team, staff and governors work closely as a team to share the headteacher's commitment to high standards. All members of the school

community consider themselves to be members of the team, including administrative assistants and caretaking staff. It is this teamwork that sets the tone for the school and contributes powerfully to the learning atmosphere in the school. The whole school community understands the school's priorities for continuous improvement and shares the headteacher's belief that every pupil has the ability to excel at something, regardless of their gender, cultural or ethnic background.

10. One of the reasons why this is a high achieving school is because it evaluates all it strives to achieve. The well-informed governing body works in partnership with the headteacher and senior managers to measure the effectiveness of policies and to ensure that all financial decisions are securely based on the principles of best value, in order to maintain high standards and improve them where possible. Over the last six years, the headteacher, governors and teachers have continuously tried to improve the effectiveness of the ways it evaluates all it does. A key issue as a result of the last inspection was to improve the use of assessment information when planning. The headteacher and governors decisively managed this key issue so that over the last four years assessment procedures have undergone a series of improvements. As a result, the ways teachers assess pupils' attainment through questioning, testing and the marking of work, and the ways teaching assistants are deployed to monitor pupils' progress and gather assessment information, are excellent. Planning is influenced extremely well by assessment information, as are learning targets for year groups, for pupils with special educational needs and for those who learn with English as an additional language. Excellent use of information gathered through the monitoring of pupils' progress and the measurement of their attainment contributes enormously to the outstanding progress of so many pupils new to the school in Years 5 and 6.
11. Excellent induction practices make sure new staff are effective as soon as they join the school. Newly qualified and newly appointed teachers have opportunities to spend time in the school so that they understand how the school works, and the support they will receive, as they become familiar with the school's learning atmosphere and high expectations. The school makes very good use of qualified mentors to induct staff new to the school. Very well led year groups of teachers provide extremely good guidance for colleagues new to the school, especially when planning. Newly qualified teachers and those new to the school value very highly the support and advice they receive and claim it helped them settle swiftly and very effectively into the school.
12. There is excellent delegation of management responsibilities for senior teachers and those responsible for year groups and subjects. Their responsibilities are clearly set out with targets to achieve. They receive support from senior colleagues to undertake their tasks successfully and they are fully involved in procedures to measure how well they have managed their duties. A significant feature of the job specifications for senior teachers, is the identification of responsibilities for evaluating the effectiveness of the school's values and aims. The headteacher believes it is the school's values and aims that underpin its success. For example, teachers have responsibilities to evaluate differences in attainment, progress and achievements between boys and girls and between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, to support and evaluate the learning and social development of the few pupils in the care of the local authority and to evaluate the effectiveness of equal opportunity policies so that all pupils have opportunities to excel and feel valued. Information gathered influences the performance management of teachers and the choice of priorities in the school development plan.

13. Year group leaders carry out their responsibilities extremely well. They provide excellent leadership for teams of teachers in their year groups by ensuring the school's policies are met and standards remain high and improve where possible. They make sure pupils in each class in their year receive similar learning experiences that match their different learning needs, that well informed learning support assistants are very well deployed as part of the teaching team, and that all pupils are valued and have equal opportunities to succeed.
14. Subject leaders contribute greatly to the highly effective leadership and management of the school. They evaluate very well the effectiveness of the curriculum and the use of resources to help pupils learn. They use information they gather extremely well to influence planning and evaluate curriculum policies in order to improve further the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. They work successfully with year group leaders to provide excellent support and advice for colleagues.
15. The well-informed governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and is very well led by an experienced chairperson. Governors work very closely with the headteacher and senior management team. They use their skills and experiences well to shape the future of the school. For example, an accountant is the leader of the finance committee and a parent pays close attention to the curriculum and the school's standards. They are very well organised into committees with a clear understanding of their duties. There are governors responsible for numeracy, literacy and special educational needs. They provide very well-taken opportunities for teachers to inform them about the subjects they are responsible for, with plans securely in place to increase opportunities for governors to learn more about each subject. Governors work in close partnership with the headteacher and senior staff to manage the excellent financial monitoring and evaluation procedures, supported by the very good and secure day to day financial management of the school.
16. Governors make a strong contribution to the priorities in the school improvement plan, all of which are focused sharply on continuous school improvement. This is seen in the rising standards over the last four years and is illustrated in the improvements to the building over the past three years, with good improvements to classrooms and specialist accommodation to improve pupils' learning. All spending decisions are critically examined and follow in exemplary fashion the principles of best value, with a sharp focus on maintaining high standards. This is seen in the management of a relatively large balance in the school's budget. At the time of inspection, governors and the headteacher were prudently examining ways to spend the budget so that they could improve further the provision for pupils with special educational needs and increase learning resources to maintain high standards for other pupils.

The high proportion of excellent and very good teaching results in pupils' excellent learning. Teachers never accept second best, whether from themselves or their pupils.

17. During the inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in class were never less than good, and in 91 per cent of lessons they were very good or excellent. This exceptionally high percentage reflects the extremely positive learning atmosphere that permeates the entire school. Pupils enjoy learning enormously; they respond cheerfully to challenging work and take a great pride in all they do. They settle down to work in lessons straight away and work hard all the time. They are polite and helpful to each other and to visitors. These exemplary attitudes to learning reflect the high expectations of the headteacher and his staff. There is a real sense of partnership between the headteacher, senior staff, teachers and everyone else who works in the school, and they all share the same commitment to high standards. A significant feature of this partnership is the high level of consistency in the management of pupils' learning and behaviour.
18. One of the most important factors that contributes to the outstanding attitudes and behaviour of almost all the pupils is the high proportion of excellent and very good teaching. One hundred per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, of which 30 per cent is excellent, 35 per cent is very good, 30 per cent is good and five per cent is satisfactory.
19. A very important teaching feature throughout the school is the way teachers share the lesson's learning objectives with pupils so that they know what they have to learn. Where the teaching is excellent, for example in a Year 6 lesson where pupils researched and wrote about famous authors, the teacher reviewed with the class their previous learning to clarify their understanding in order to introduce the next step in their learning.
20. The very good and excellent teaching makes sure pupils with different learning needs understand what they have to learn and what they need to do to improve. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson about fractions, the teacher involved pupils with different levels of attainment in their learning as her questions, explanations and excellent use of resources improved their learning step by step. In another excellent Year 4 mathematics lesson about converting fractions into decimals, pupils with special educational needs made extremely good progress because of the highly effective support from a very well prepared learning support assistant. In an excellent Year 3 science lesson, about how water travels up the stems of plants, a pupil in the early stages of learning with English as an additional language made excellent progress in the use of scientific language. This was the result of exemplary planning and the excellent support she received from the class teacher and learning support assistant.
21. One of the reasons why such a high proportion of pupils make excellent or very good progress is because teachers skilfully use probing questions. Information gathered by these challenging questions informs the teacher about the pupils' strengths and areas to improve, so that emerging learning needs are met. This was seen in a very good Year 6 English lesson where pupils were learning how to plan imaginary interviews with famous authors. The teacher's questions assessed the pupils' learning and, as a result, the lesson was amended to make sure they continued to make very good progress.

22. There is a great deal of excellent management of pupils' learning and behaviour. Teachers use praise to reinforce pupils' learning and self-esteem so that they sustain concentration when tackling challenging work. This contributes to pupils having the confidence to 'have a go', to solve problems and sustain concentration when they find work demanding. As a result, they learn very effectively from their efforts. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson about translating and recording shapes, when pupils demonstrated their learning to the class. There are many examples of very good use of time. In a Year 4 games lesson on a very hot day, no time was wasted from the time the pupils changed for the lesson to the time they began their next lesson. In the Information and Communication Technology room, teachers ensure pupils are constantly learning new skills. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were swept along in their learning, and in a Year 4 literacy lesson pupils worked hard all the time to earn house points for effort and good behaviour. All this very good and excellent practice contributes to the very positive learning atmosphere, in which pupils accept as normal that they are to work hard and behave well all the time.
23. High quality teaching is underpinned by the excellent planning teachers do together in year groups and by their very good subject knowledge. Pupils' attainment and progress are measured and monitored and information gathered informs planning exceptionally well. Excellent planning contributes to teachers' very good records of pupils' learning, as was seen in a Year 3 science lesson about plants, where the use of records contributed to the excellent learning support for pupils with special educational needs. This was typical of so many lessons, where exceptionally well prepared lesson are taught with excellent subject knowledge so that pupils with different learning needs confidently use correct technical vocabulary to talk and write about their learning.

There is excellent practice to make sure all pupils are included in all the school offers and that pupils respect beliefs, traditions and cultures different from their own.

24. A feature of the school's self-evaluation is the importance placed on making sure all pupils are included in all the school offers, including the very few pupils or who are in the care of the local authority. This excellent practice underpins the aims and values of the school, which are based on high standards, equal opportunities, valuing the individual and, for all who work and learn in the school, respect for beliefs, traditions and cultures different from their own.
25. Numerous very well presented displays of pupils' work throughout the school underpin learning about different cultures, faiths and traditions from the past and in the present time. For example, there are historical displays about the beliefs and cultural traditions of ancient Egyptians and Aztecs and information about the birth of Christianity. There are geographical displays about research pupils in Year 5 undertook about the lives and cultural traditions found in Liberia, South Africa and Japan. As part of a display about the school's many sporting achievements there are posters made by pupils entitled, 'Kick Racism Out of Sport'.
26. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about the main world religions and the different faiths and religious traditions practised in the United Kingdom. In school and religious assemblies, pupils learn about the many different interests, skills, faiths and cultural traditions represented in the school as well as the wider community. In a whole school assembly a girl proudly demonstrated her first language, Gujerati, and a teacher spoke to the pupils in Hebrew.

27. In many lessons pupils are taught about different cultural traditions. They learn about different types of music from around the world. In an excellent Year 5 English lesson they studied a text about the feelings and experiences of a Jamaican woman coming to England, and in art lessons throughout the school they learn about different artistic traditions from around the world.
28. One of the most impressive aspects of the school is not just the planning teachers do to increase pupils' knowledge about different faiths, cultures and traditions, but the way the school strives to put these values into practice. For example, excellent planning ensured that the Year 4 pupil who is in the early stages of learning with English as an additional language settled swiftly into the school. This resulted in her extremely good progress because of the support she received from pupils, teachers and their assistants. The care and welfare of the very few pupils in the care of the local authority are meticulously measured and managed with great sensitivity. Teachers have very good knowledge of the pupils so that their individual learning needs are met. This was seen in a very well taught Year 4 games lesson about cricket, which made sure that the particular needs of left handed pupils were met. Teachers make sure that in class the beliefs and cultures of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are understood and respected. The impressive range of activities before and after school and at lunch times is evaluated to make sure the interests and aspirations of as many pupils as possible are met. When planning the residential outings for Year 5 and 6 pupils, great efforts are made to ensure that the diverse needs and cultures of the pupils are met.
29. In addition, the learning needs of very able and talented pupils are impressively planned for. This Beacon school works with other schools in the neighbourhood to provide challenging work for these pupils for part of their time at a secondary school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Improvements are needed in ways the school communicates with parents so that they can work even more effectively with the school to help their children learn.

30. Whilst the school provides much information for parents about what their children will learn and how they are getting on, inspectors agree with those parents who think this could be improved. Parents have high expectations of the school and greatly value its aim to work in partnership with them, as well as its commitment to high and improving standards. In order to participate even more closely with the school in order to achieve the high standards it sets itself, some parents would appreciate more information from the school, and improved formal opportunities to find out more about what their children will learn, and how they are getting on. Too many annual reports to parents provide too little information about their children's strengths and areas for improvement, particularly in foundation subjects. Whilst there is some good practice in the use of home / school books for teachers and parents to correspond, this has yet to spread throughout the school and so opportunities are missed for some parents to work even more closely with the school to help their children learn.

31. Although there are many examples of the governing body working in partnership with the school to evaluate its effectiveness, there are areas for further improvement. There is too little information in the School Prospectus, and in the Annual Report of Governors to Parents, about the provision for pupils with special educational needs. These documents may be incorporated into one.
32. At their meeting with inspectors before the inspection, and in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire they received, parents were very appreciative of the 'open door' policy of the school and the approachability of the headteacher and his staff. However, a few parents expressed concern that, at times, concerns they had about how their children were getting on were not taken seriously enough. Inspectors investigated this concern and found the headteacher and senior staff spend much time replying to written requests from parents and meeting those who have concerns. From the evidence seen, it is clear that a very high proportion of concerns is successfully dealt with. At the meeting with parents, it was said by most of them that their concerns, as well as suggestions for school improvement, were dealt with swiftly, successfully and efficiently. Whilst inspectors judge that the procedures for dealing with parents' concerns and suggestions are at least satisfactory, they are in need of the same high quality of evaluation as almost all other aspects of the work the school does in order to ensure that they are as effective as possible.

Governors do not evaluate systematically all elements of risk that may be present in school activities.

33. The governing body is committed to ensuring the safety of pupils and staff whilst at school and on educational outings. They regularly check that the building and its fixtures and learning resources are safe. However, governors do not have a plan to make sure that all aspects of the school's work are regularly and frequently checked in order to identify, and then reduce as much as it is possible to do so, health and safety risks for all who learn and work in the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

34. The headteacher, senior management team, teachers and governors should:
- (1) improve further the ways the school communicates with parents so that they work even more effectively with the school to help their children learn:
 - by increasing the information parents receive about what their children will learn and how they are getting on, and
 - by evaluating even more rigorously ways parents' concerns and suggestions for improvement are dealt with;
 - (2) improve further the management of risk assessments so that all aspects of the school's work are covered.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
30	35	30	5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	336
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	66

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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	40	40	80

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	37	35	39
	Girls	37	36	40
	Total	74	71	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (86)	89 (89)	99 (97)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	35	39
	Girls	36	36	40
	Total	69	71	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (84)	89 (89)	99 (97)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	4
Indian	6
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	2
White	317
Any other minority ethnic group	22

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	197

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	670,102
Total expenditure	650,687
Expenditure per pupil	1,920
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,990
Balance carried forward to next year	56,405

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	336
Number of questionnaires returned	131

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	34	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	2	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	54	7	4	0
The teaching is good.	64	33	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	50	8	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	30	1	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	47	40	7	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	27	2	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	30	3	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

Inspectors investigated the concerns of a few parents about their children's homework being unmarked and concluded that this occurred during the time a teacher left the school suddenly due to ill health and was replaced by a temporary teacher. Arrangements to set and mark homework regularly are now securely in place.

A few parents expressed concerns about the amount of information they receive about what their children will learn and how they are getting on. A few others were dissatisfied with the ways the school deals with their concerns and suggestions. Inspectors note that most parents at their meeting were highly appreciative of the ways the headteacher and staff deal with their concerns and suggestion. Inspectors investigated both these concerns and found that, in comparison with most other schools, parents receive satisfactory information about what their children will be taught. They

found that the headteacher and senior staff deal with parents' concerns and suggestions promptly, spending much time corresponding with and meeting parents. However, inspectors consider that the arrangements that gave rise to concern need to be subjected to the same rigorous evaluations as most other aspects of the work of the school.

Inspectors do agree with those parents who said at their meeting with inspectors that more specific information is needed in the annual reports they receive, especially about how their children are getting on in foundation subjects.