

INSPECTION REPORT

DUDLEY INFANT SCHOOL

Hastings, East Sussex

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114455

Headteacher: Mrs Janet Wyatt

Reporting inspector: Lynn Adair
21095

Dates of inspection: 26th - 28th March 2001

Inspection number: 193576

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harold Road Hastings East Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Val Hindson
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dudley Infants is an average-sized, community infant school for boys and girls aged 4 to 7 years old. It has 165 full-time pupils on roll. In addition, 17 children attend the reception class on a part-time basis in the morning only. Attainment on entry is below average compared with pupils of the same age nationally, although their social circumstances are generally similar. Thirty one pupils in the school have special educational needs, almost 18 per cent of those on roll, a figure which is below average. Two pupils have statements of special educational need which constitutes a broadly average proportion of pupils on roll. Almost no pupils belong to ethnic minorities, although 3 pupils speak English as an additional language, their first languages being Danish, Spanish or Thai. Almost 19 per cent of pupils have free school meals, which is a broadly average figure.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Dudley Infants is a very effective school. Standards achieved by pupils by the time they leave the school are good. The good quality of educational provision in the school, which includes very good teaching, makes a significant contribution to the high standards obtained and the very good progress which pupils make during their time in the school. The school is very well led, and management is vigilant in identifying where further improvement may be sought. Expenditure per pupil is average and the school makes very good use of its resources to secure very good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress during their time in school. Good standards achieved in national assessments are reflected in the work of current Year 2 pupils in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and personal development, and the good behaviour and quality of relationships throughout the school have a significantly positive impact on the way in which they learn.
- The very good quality of teaching, especially in terms of setting challenging work, well taught basic skills and good use of resources to make learning interesting for pupils, all make a very strong contribution to the high standards attained by pupils.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager of the school. She collaborates closely with staff and governors to provide a clear direction to the school's work, and all demonstrate a strong, shared commitment to its continued improvement.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The information which parents receive about how their children are getting on, as well as the level of consultation with parents to gather their views about the work of the school, in order to strengthen further the communication between home and school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Dudley Infants was found to be a school with many strengths in the last inspection, conducted in March 1997. The school has made good improvement since that time to maintain its strengths. It has also improved on the sound standards observed at that time among its pupils to achieve the currently good standards. Key issues identified in the previous report have been addressed well. Senior staff conduct more formal monitoring to gain information about the work of the school, and the role of co-ordinators has been strengthened so that they have a clearer understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. The role of the governing body has significantly improved. Governors have been much more active in seeking information to ensure that they have a clear oversight of the school's work. They take a key role in monitoring developments, particularly in curriculum matters. School improvement planning has been improved by the establishment of clearer links with the budget, and by the inclusion of more sharply focused criteria for judging progress and success, based on pupils' attainment.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	D	D	B	A
Writing	C	B	C	A
Mathematics	C	A	B	A

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

Results of national tests show that, overall, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is above the national average. While writing is broadly in line with national averages, the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 is well above that of most schools nationally. It is the smaller number of pupils attaining higher than expected levels which reduces the overall average shown above. However results in reading, writing and mathematics are well above those in similar schools¹. In science,

¹ Comparison with similar schools is based on those having free school meals entitlement of more than 20% and up to 35% in 2000.

teacher assessments show the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 is higher than most schools nationally and a significantly high

proportion of pupils attain above average standards, comparing very favourably with similar schools. The school's targets for last year were exceeded by pupils in all subjects, showing good progress among that group in relation to their broadly, below-average attainment on entry. Pupils' performance in statutory tests has shown some variability over the last 4 years, but there is a generally upward trend, with some good improvement noted in writing and mathematics since 1996. Year 2 pupils have been set very challenging targets in all subjects this year, particularly in view of their attainment on entry, but they are on course to attain them. Standards observed during the inspection in the Foundation Stage² are broadly average, showing good progress by these children since they entered the school. In Key Stage 1³, very good teaching helps these pupils to make very good progress, and standards among current seven year olds are good in English, mathematics and science. The provision for pupils with special educational needs helps these pupils to make very good progress, and many achieve the expected standards for their age, despite their low attainment on entry.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Real enthusiasm shown by pupils in lessons, with a high level of involvement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils are well behaved in lessons and at other times around the school. A small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs sometimes distract others, but their behaviour is well managed by teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. A high level of co-operation is seen among even the school's youngest pupils and good relationships exist across the school. Pupils learn to use their initiative well, especially in the Foundation Stage when choosing activities, and in science lessons in Key Stage 1, when they confidently bring their own ideas to learning.
Attendance	Good. All lessons begin punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in the school is very good overall. In the whole school, just over a quarter of all teaching was satisfactory, while the remainder was at least good. Teaching in almost a quarter of

² Foundation Stage refers to children in a school aged between three and the end of the reception year. In the case of Dudley Infants these are children in the reception classes.

³ Key Stage 1 refers to those children in Year 1 and Year 2 at Dudley Infants.

all lessons was very good and one lesson seen was excellent. These highly effective lessons were all contained in Key Stage 1, which contributes to the even more rapid progress which pupils make overall in Years 1 and 2 than in the Foundation Stage. Teachers across the school are particularly good at teaching basic skills in literacy and numeracy and in helping pupils to use and apply their language and mathematical skills in other subjects. Clear learning intentions are evidenced in all teachers' plans, which specify work that is well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils in each class. In the Foundation Stage, children are provided with a good balance of activities, both with and without adult support. Children are encouraged to make choices in their learning from these activities. In Years 1 and 2, very effective questioning challenges pupils to think more deeply about their work, and they make significant gains in their knowledge. Resources are particularly well chosen to make learning interesting for pupils in all classes. They are well prepared and organised to help pupils to work independently of the teacher.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Curriculum planning is well structured, with learning intentions sharply focused on the development of skills. The curriculum is well balanced to ensure that pupils have lots of opportunities for first hand experiences, both in the classroom and outside of it, in order to make learning relevant for them. Good implementation of National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Individual targets for pupils are clear. A good level of support by the special needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants ensures that individual education plans are implemented well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is good. Provision contributes effectively to pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for supporting pupils' welfare ensure that pupils are taught in a safe and secure environment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides a strong lead to the work of the school and has managed very well changes brought about by national initiatives. Staff with key management roles also provide good leadership in relation to developments in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have developed a much greater awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's work since the last inspection. They are well informed through a range of means, including regular first-hand involvement through focused visits to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The rigorous evaluation of teaching has led to improved performance in the whole school. Very good analysis of pupil performance data helps to identify where improvement may be made and informs the school's development process.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are well considered and applied to the school's context. The school development plan is a useful tool in identifying priorities, and resource implications are well defined. Regular evaluation ensures that resources are used effectively and assesses how much improvement has been made.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children are making good progress and they are expected to work hard to achieve their best. • Teaching is very good and the school is very well led and managed. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work their children are expected to do at home. • To be better informed about their children's progress. • For the school to work more closely with parents. • The range of activities for pupils outside of lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive comments. Inspection evidence also shows that some of the parents' more critical comments are not substantiated. Inspectors judged the amount of homework to be satisfactory. Although there are few extra-curricular activities, common for this stage of education, the school does ensure a rich range of experiences for pupils outside of the classroom, such as visits to the beach for study. However, although the school provides a range of information about its work, both written and oral, parents could be better informed about their children's progress during the course of the year. Parents could also be consulted more to enable them to share their views about the school, which may help to address concerns that the school does not work closely with them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress during their time in school. Good standards achieved in national assessments are reflected in the work of current Year 2 pupils in English, mathematics and science.

1. The school's results in the 2000 national tests for seven year olds are above the national average in reading and mathematics, and are in line with national averages in writing. The overall average result in writing is a combination of a much higher-than-usual proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2, and a smaller-than-average proportion reaching the higher Level 3. When performance is compared with that of schools with similar levels of free school meals, all results are well above the average. Teacher assessments in science indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 is above average and a much larger proportion than average attain the higher Level 3. Again results compare very well with similar schools. Results over the last 4 years show that standards have improved well overall, especially in writing and mathematics. Results have varied year on year, in line with the differing levels of ability of successive year groups, but the general trend is upwards. Challenging yet realistic targets have been set for each group of pupils. Last year, the school's seven year olds exceeded their targets and this year's group look set to meet their even more demanding targets, continuing the trend of improvement. Good standards are evident in the work of current Year 2 pupils, which is also an improvement on the findings in the last inspection. This is mainly because the teaching staff plan challenging work for pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, which has resulted in pupils attaining good standards and making very good progress during their time in school.

2. When the current children in the reception class entered school in September, their attainment was often below that expected of those of similar ages nationally in language and mathematical skills. Most have made good progress since September in developing their communication, language and literacy as well as mathematical skills, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, so that most are on course to achieve the recommended outcomes for children at the end of the Foundation Stage. All children listen well and are beginning to talk confidently about the activities they are doing. They were particularly involved in role-play, using the story of 'Peter and the Wolf' and the 'shopping' corner to develop their own imagined situations using expressive language. Most children are able to recognise and name letters of the alphabet and are using their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt to read common words, such as 'he' and 'cat'. Children show increased legibility in their writing to produce recognisable letters and words, with some good attempts at writing their own names and common words independently. Children have made good progress with simple number recognition and counting skills. They are able to count objects to at least 10 and many children go beyond this with accuracy. All have a sound understanding of continuing sequences of two objects according to shape or colour, and higher-attaining pupils are confident with three. They reinforce their understanding through a range of practical activities, such as making bead necklaces or use of a computer program. Children have a good understanding of positional language, placing objects in a required place according to instructions by the teacher. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. They recognise that plants have different parts and help to plant seeds, knowing that they will need to water them in order for them to survive.

3. In English by Year 2, pupils make very good progress in their reading helped by good opportunities to read regularly with adults individually, in groups or as a whole class. They use a good range of strategies, such as their knowledge of letter sounds and blends, and looking at pictures to give them clues about the text. Many pupils, even lower-attaining ones, make very good attempts at unknown words through making sense of the context of sentences. In Year 1, they make good and sensible guesses about words which might appear in a story. They look and listen carefully to spot them in the text as the teacher reads the story aloud. Pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of fiction and non-fiction books. They write simple but good quality book reviews expressing their likes and dislikes. They have also produced their own non-fiction book on 'British Woodlands' using features such as contents and glossary. Pupils produce accurately punctuated pieces of legible, well-structured writing, and often write at length. They write descriptive, imaginative and instructional pieces, and are developing a very lively personal style using a good vocabulary. They write sensitive pieces about rainfall and also demonstrate good humour in extended pieces, for example when 'rewriting' a traditional tale called 'The Big Bad Pig' based on the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Other subjects are often used as a means of developing pupils' language skills further. For example with science, in Year 1, pupils create seed packets with instructions for planting. In Year 2, small booklets are created about 'Bob the Builder', which support work on materials. Information and communication technology (ICT) is often used as a medium for recording written pieces, such as effective group poems based on a Japanese tale.

4. By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of basic mathematical concepts. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 show good mental skills in counting forwards and backwards, doubling and halving. In Year 1, pupils apply their skills to count different amounts of money and give change. Most can accurately count two sets of amounts and higher-attaining pupils count three sets accurately. Early counting skills are built on effectively as pupils move through Key Stage 1. By Year 2, a good proportion of pupils are able to calculate two-digit numbers, where ten is not crossed, without using apparatus. Higher-attaining pupils are able to round numbers up or down to the nearest ten to aid such additions and explain what they are doing and why. A small number use these acquired skills to calculate two digit numbers where they cross ten and do so accurately, illustrating high attainment for seven year olds. Pupils employ their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects. For example, in science in Year 1, they compare the sizes of different plants they are growing using standard units of centimetres. In Year 2, they weigh accurately, using conversion of grams to kilograms appropriately, to ensure that a fair test is carried out.

5. Scientific knowledge, understanding and skills are very well developed. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a good understanding of basic scientific concepts such as living processes, light, sound and materials. Their enquiry skills are very good. In Year 1, they understand the impact that different conditions may have on the growth of plants. Through close observation, they note differences in plants grown in different places and under different conditions. They note similarities and differences in a range of flowers and make good observational sketches of key features. They also record their observations well, for example to note different growth patterns in nasturtium seeds from a variety of commercial sources to assess best value for money. In Year 2, pupils make well-reasoned predictions about what

will happen to different types of paper when weights are added: *'I think this is the strongest because it is thickest and won't tear easily'*. They test their predictions carefully and use their findings to arrive at simple conclusions. They show that they have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test.

6. Pupils across the school with special educational needs are well supported and are given good encouragement to achieve success in their work. They are provided with a good number of opportunities to read in school, on a one-to-one basis and, as a result, are making very good progress in developing their skills in this area. In addition, support helps them to improve their writing. Some notable examples were seen, during the inspection, of pupils' excellent progress in this area where, on entry to school, they could barely make marks, but by Year 2 were writing well structured pieces with clear punctuation and good attempts at spelling. In mathematics, pupils with special needs are helped to achieve a high level of success, for example in Year 2 when calculating numbers they use equipment well to understand more difficult concepts in addition to aid their accuracy.

Pupils' very good attitudes and personal development, and the good behaviour and quality of relationships throughout the school have a significantly positive impact on the way in which they learn.

7. All pupils are keen to come to school and learn, a view supported by 100 percent of parents who expressed their views through the parental questionnaire. Across the school, pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning are highly evident in lessons. In Year 2, pupils with special needs relish the challenge of adding more difficult numbers in a mathematics activity, and are still keen to have another go when they are not at first successful. When set to work on their own or in groups, pupils quickly become engrossed in tasks and work with good concentration, so that work is almost always completed in the time allowed. In the reception class, pupils are engrossed in independent tasks when using the role-play areas for 'pretend' shopping or stories about 'Peter and the Wolf'. Pupils listen to teachers well and are keen to answer questions and involve themselves in discussions, as was noted especially in literacy sessions in Years 1 and 2. They express their views confidently about the 'Big Books' they are studying and most want to answer questions. They express real disappointment if they are not called on to answer but eagerly try again, when the next question is asked. In science they ask questions confidently about the experiments they are about to conduct and show a high level of curiosity which helps to develop their investigation skills. Pupils' very positive attitudes are a key factor in the high standards which are attained.

8. Pupils' behaviour is good overall, and for most it is frequently very good, both in lessons and at playtimes. Most are very helpful when talking to visitors about their work, and are extremely courteous to adults and each other when moving around the school. Pupils' good behaviour ensures that they work in a calm and positive atmosphere for the most part and this results in high levels of productivity and focused activity. A small number of pupils have emotional problems which creates some distraction in a minority of lessons when they call out rather than taking turns and listening to each other. These pupils have a high level of individual adult support which, combined with good management by the teachers, helps to minimise disruption and improve their concentration span.

9. Pupils get on well with each other and adults. A high level of co-operation is seen in group activities, for example in science work, where pupils generally share the tasks out fairly so all take an active part. The school's youngest pupils are establishing very positive relationships with each other. Pupils throughout the school value each other's contributions in discussions and discuss each other's points of view sensibly. In a literacy lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils reacted sensibly when one pupil thought the picture of a rainforest looked like broccoli and all considered the similarity carefully. Such consideration acts as an incentive to others to contribute their views with confidence. In circle time in Year 1, pupils show consideration when talking about what kindness means and provide good examples of kindness drawn from their experiences. Pupils are helped to develop a very good level of personal responsibility. In the reception class, children are encouraged to choose activities independently. In science in Years 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to bring their own ideas to investigations and they respond well. This is very helpful in developing their enquiry skills. At playtimes, older pupils are nominated as 'helpers' to set out a wide range of equipment, which ensures a productive play period, and to collect it in at the end. They also take responsibility for being playtime 'friends' and 'buddies', watching out for those who may need someone to play with and help to make playtime happier for all children. They carry out such roles conscientiously.

The very good quality of teaching, especially in terms of setting challenging work, well taught basic skills and good use of resources to make learning interesting for pupils, all make a very strong contribution to the high standards attained by pupils.

10. One of the most significant factors which contributes to the good standards attained is the high level of challenge in the work provided. Learning objectives are spelled out clearly in plans for different groups of pupils within each class, so that work is well matched to their needs and builds effectively in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding on their prior level of attainment. In the Foundation Stage, teachers plan a good balance of focused and free choice activities, so that children can work with help and with independence. Teachers throughout the school are quick to adapt their planning, should the need arise, after reviewing learning in each lesson. They are confident in their subject knowledge. This means that pupils are given appropriately demanding work, which engages their interest, encourages them to investigate for themselves and helps them to make effective gains in their learning. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 2 science lesson on testing the strength of paper. Here pupils were asked to consider the previous lesson when they examined different types of paper. A very good focus was placed on employing accurate scientific vocabulary in their explanations and in using this learning as a basis for the ensuing investigation. This approach helped pupils to not only use a good level of scientific vocabulary but also to apply their knowledge and understanding well in their investigations.

11. In Key Stage 1, teachers' enthusiasm is often inspirational to pupils. Their exposition and ability to engage pupils' interest in an imaginative way strongly encourage pupils to want to learn more. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, even when it is very demanding. Very effective questioning encourages pupils to deepen their understanding. For example, when pupils ask questions, a feature which is strongly encouraged, the teacher often responds with a question rather than simply providing the answer. Such interchange of questions not only checks pupils' understanding but often helps pupils to arrive at their own answers and decisions about learning. As a result they have a very good understanding of where they are in terms of their own learning and

what they need to do next. Throughout the school, lessons are well organised. Resources are prepared thoughtfully to engage the pupils' interest and also to help them to work independently. In a Year 1 science lesson, the teacher used a range of different plants to develop pupils' learning about life processes through first-hand enquiry. In most lessons, support staff are also deployed very well. They improve the pace at which pupils work and also their productivity. They are effective in giving just the right amount of direction and support. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson when pupils did not look closely enough to find a word in the dictionary. The assistant checked that it was there and then gave just enough clues to enable the pupils to find it for themselves. This helped to develop their understanding of alphabetical order. Very occasionally, the number of adults working in a classroom can be distracting, during story sessions, for example, but usually teachers and classroom assistants work well together as a team.

12. In English and mathematics, teachers are very effective in teaching basic skills. Teachers' knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy frameworks is very good but they also have the confidence to adapt the basic framework to suit the needs of pupils in their classes. Lessons are well structured, with a good balance of word, sentence and text level work in literacy, and opportunities for oral and mental work in mathematics. Skills are very well taught. In one excellent lesson in literacy, the teacher made very effective links with science, and used every opportunity possible to extend pupils' learning. For example, the teacher used a highlighter pen on enlarged text to discuss the properties of different words showing particular blends and pupils had identified all possible answers as a result by the end of the session. All teachers employ effective questioning to draw pupils' attention to, for example, key features and specific words in a text. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the teacher used spelling homework well to aid pupils' understanding of non-fiction work on rainforests and helped them to construct tables containing the words accurately. In the Foundation Stage, children have lots of opportunities to learn through talk, especially in small groups, when working with adults. This helps to develop their vocabulary well.

The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager of the school. She collaborates closely with staff and governors to provide a clear direction to the school's work, and all demonstrate a strong, shared commitment to its continued improvement.

13. The headteacher provides very good leadership of the school. She allocates part of her time to teaching reading, which provides her with a very good insight into pupil performance, as well as gaining credibility among teaching staff. In collaboration with governors and teaching staff, she has been very effective in improving the quality of the work of the school since the last inspection. The key issues identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed. For example, teaching staff improve their leadership skills by having clear roles with delegated management responsibility for developing different areas of the curriculum. The headteacher and staff work closely together to ensure an effective contribution is made by all staff to school improvement. Changes brought about by new national initiatives, such as the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, have also been managed well, with improved standards as a result.

14. Governors are very active and conscientious in fulfilling their roles to provide effective support to the headteacher and staff. This is a much improved situation compared with that identified in the last inspection. The current chair of governors has been instrumental in bringing about the changes

required to help governors achieve a better understanding of the work of the school, for example by obtaining information through greater first-hand involvement. Governors have a well-organised structure for fulfilling their roles. They have between them a good range of expertise and experience, which benefit the school. Governors visit the school regularly, either to help in lessons on a general support level or to gather information about specific issues, such as finding out about higher-attaining pupils. They have gained a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through such involvement and are able to ask the right questions, which helps them to act as a constructive yet appropriately critical friend to the school. They are aware of the challenges which the school faces at local and national level, and make an effective contribution to identifying the school's priorities, and in helping to plan for and shape the direction of the school.

15. The headteacher is vigilant in monitoring and analysing standards among pupils. Performance data has been used to very good effect to track pupils' progress as they move through the school and to ensure they are making the best possible progress based on a realistic assessment of their prior attainment. A good programme of monitoring and evaluation has also been conducted to assess the quality of teaching. This has become more formalised since the last inspection where it was identified as a key issue for improvement. Support and advice from the local authority have been used to provide an external view of the quality of education provided, and internal systems operated by the headteacher and key members of staff also evaluate provision. The process is rigorous and focused clearly on strengths and weaknesses in practice. Feedback is provided for each teacher and the targets set for improved performance are followed up in a systematic way. This has resulted in a recognisable improvement in the proportion of good and very good teaching since the last inspection. The monitoring process is also used to inform school priorities and to plan carefully for them. In response to a key issue in the last inspection, the school improvement plan contains much clearer information about how the success of one plan's implementation will be assessed. This is achieved through a clearer definition of the expected impact of any improvement on pupils' attainment. There are also much closer links with the budget so that the use of resources can be carefully assessed.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The information which parents receive about how their children are getting on, and more consultation with parents to gather their views about the work of the school, in order to further strengthen the communication between home and school.

16. The school's partnership with parents overall is good. Parents who completed the questionnaire before the inspection, or who came to the meeting with the registered inspector, expressed good support overall for the school and its work. They feel that the school is very well led and managed, and that very good teaching and high expectations help their children to make good progress. They are pleased with the promotion of good behaviour and feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. This creates an environment in which children enjoy coming to school. Parents' positive views are supported by inspection findings. In the questionnaires, some parents criticised the school's provision for homework but this was judged to be satisfactory during the inspection. Parents also felt that more could be done to provide more activities outside of lessons, but inspection findings showed that pupils are provided with a good level of enriched experiences outside of the classroom, which contribute effectively to their learning.

17. A significant proportion of parents claims not to be well enough informed about how their children are getting on. These more critical views are supported to some extent by inspection findings. The school recognises that it may be more helpful for parents to meet teachers formally at consultation meetings in the spring as well as the autumn and summer terms, and is looking to review its system for meetings with parents. This would help to address parents' concerns that they would like to be better informed about their children's progress during the course of the year so that they could help them more at home. The school encourages parents to make informal contact with teachers to discuss their child's progress if they wish. Most parents surveyed in the questionnaire feel that they can approach the school, and the headteacher, if they have any concerns and that these are usually dealt with swiftly and to a satisfactory conclusion. However, many parents do not feel happy to approach the school to find out about their children's progress if there have been no concerns raised by either the teacher or themselves.

18. Although most parents feel that the school works closely with them, a significant minority does not. The school makes a good commitment to promoting partnership with parents by keeping them informed of events and activities. Some parents help regularly in school, for example with reading. Surveys of parents' views have been conducted about specific aspects of the school's work, such as the induction of pupils into school and transfer arrangements to the junior school and this has helped to improve procedures. However, these surveys have very much originated from the school's perceptions of parental needs rather than any survey of what parents generally feel about the school and its work, and what they would like see improved.

19. The school recognises the need to continue to improve communication between home and school, so that parents always feel that they are welcome and to encourage more active parental involvement in children's learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

20. Working together, the governing body, headteacher and staff need to:

- Further improve communication between home and school by ensuring parents are more effectively informed about their children's progress and the work of the school, and also that they are consulted more frequently on school issues.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	19	48	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	174
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	31

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	24	30	30
	Girls	25	27	27
	Total	49	57	57
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (72)	95 (89)	95 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	30	31	31
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	57	58	58
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (92)	97 (89)	97 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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	119
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.2
Average class size	24.9

Education support staff:

YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	201

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	318 588.00
Total expenditure	321 071.00
Expenditure per pupil	1755.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	6439.00
Balance carried forward to next year	3956.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	60	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	44	12	0	3
The teaching is good.	66	31	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	41	19	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	3	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	38	13	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	60	35	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	27	31	11	21