

INSPECTION REPORT

Hever C E Primary School

Hever

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118718

Headteacher: Mrs L Watts

Reporting inspector: Mr J Tyler
20506

Dates of inspection: 20th to 22nd March 2000

Inspection number: 193692

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hever Edenbridge Kent
Postcode:	TN8 7NH
Telephone number:	01732 862304
E-mail:	admin@hever.fsnet.co.uk
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Parsons
Date of previous inspection:	9 th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Tyler	Registered inspector	Mathematics; music; physical education.	Standards; teaching; leadership and management.
Selwyn Ward	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development; partnership with parents.
Janet Gill	Team inspector	Under-fives; English; geography; history; equality of opportunity.	Curricular and other opportunities.
Terry Elston	Team inspector	Science; information technology; art; design and technology; special educational needs.	Care.

The inspection contractor was:

Qualitas Education Consultants Ltd
Wickham Court
Layhams Road
West Wickham
Kent
BR4 9HH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	1
The school's results and achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	26
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	28
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	31

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33
---	----

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hever is small compared with most primary schools. The 93 pupils are organised into four mixed-age classes. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds and most travel several miles to attend the school. About 11% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. The number of girls and boys is broadly balanced, but there are many more boys than girls in one year group. There are few pupils from ethnic minorities and the number for whom English is an additional language is very low. There are 22 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, giving a proportion that is slightly above the national average.

A significant number of pupils enter the school part way through Key Stages 1 or 2. Attainment on entry for this particular year group is, on balance, well above average. The effect of small cohorts is to create such variations from year to year that neither this nor any other entry profile could be reliably viewed as normal.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils achieve good standards in the first half of the school, but the most and least able achieve less than they should in Key Stage 2. This is mainly because there are differences in the quality of teaching, which is an issue that is already being addressed. The school has been through a period of very rapid growth and change, which has been managed well. It is now starting to concentrate properly on evaluating and raising standards. Overall, the school is effective, is continuing to improve, and offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- ♦ Pupils in the first half of the school learn effectively because they are set work that matches their different abilities. The provision for the under-fives is a particular strength.
- ♦ The positive ethos of the school and the good provision for moral and social development, lead to pupils having good attitudes to learning and getting on well together.
- ♦ There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that broaden and enrich the curriculum.
- ♦ The school actively involves parents in their children's education.

What could be improved

- ♦ Some pupils, especially the most and least able, are not achieving as well as they should. In Key Stage 2, teaching takes too little account of assessment information in the planning of lessons and does not set appropriate expectations for all pupils.
- ♦ Time is not used well because some lessons are too long, time is not used fully within lessons, and the overall time for lessons is less than the recommended minimum for Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in July 1996, it has moved forward well. Almost all the action points have been dealt with successfully: most subjects have a scheme of work, pupil numbers have increased fourfold, standards have improved in art and design and technology. The use of assessment to help plan lessons has not improved as it should. Other developments over the four years include good extra-curricular activities, better links with the community, and considerable improvements in the leadership and management of the school. The school has the commitment and capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The number of pupils in each of the year groups that took part in the 1999 national assessments was very small. It is therefore not possible to use the results to make secure, valid judgements about standards or trends over time in school performance. The same is true for comparisons of standards now and at the time of the last inspection, when there were only 22 pupils in the whole school. Targets set for attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments reflect the variation of the ability of pupils in small year groups, and are realistic. The following judgements are based on lessons seen, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of previously completed work.

By the age of five, pupils reach standards that are above national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The present Year 6 has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In the present Year 5, which has received similar provision in terms of the curriculum and quality of teaching, standards are above national expectations. In information technology, the older pupils reach standards that are below national expectations.

In the first half of the school, pupils generally attain appropriate standards for their capabilities because they are set work that matches their particular needs. In Key Stage 2, the most and least able pupils often work at inappropriate levels and so do not achieve the standards that they should.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most have positive attitudes to learning. Younger pupils work with sustained concentration and enthusiasm, but older pupils are sometimes slow to settle.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in most lessons, and is noticeably better in the younger classes. Pupils behave very well around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils get on well together and work collaboratively.
Attendance	Attendance is below average because some parents take their children out of school during term time for family holidays.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 91% of lessons seen teaching was at least satisfactory, and in 35% it was good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching enables them to give clear explanations and question pupils effectively. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught accurately and reinforced in other lessons. Teaching is strongest in the first half of the school. In Key Stage 2, lesson planning takes insufficient account of the needs of the higher and lower attainers. This is largely because teachers are not making sufficient use of assessment information, so that the work set is often too easy for higher attainers and too hard for lower attainers, including those with special educational needs. Teachers sometimes expect too little from pupils and the available time in lessons is not always used fully. These weaknesses reduce the pace of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are sound, with some weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum, and lack of an outside play area for the under fives. There are strengths in the provision of extra-curricular activities, planning for the under fives and good links with parents and the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs mostly provide useful targets. In Key Stage 2, their needs are not planned for carefully enough in many lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is a positive emphasis on moral and social development. Adults provide good role models and pupils are given responsibility. There is sound provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development through subjects such as music and geography.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and happy environment. Pupils' personal development is monitored well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher successfully leads a team that is committed to raising standards and which has already brought about many improvements in the school during a period of growth and change.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in carrying out its statutory responsibilities. Its vision of re-establishing a popular, viable school has been fulfilled. Governors have not yet formed a clear vision for the next stage of development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has recently introduced a thorough system for monitoring teaching. The evaluation of assessment information is not yet rigorous enough.
The strategic use of resources	The accommodation and resources for learning meet the needs of the curriculum, and staffing levels are good. Financial resources are used well to meet educational priorities, taking account of best value principles.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Their children enjoy school. ♦ Children are expected to work hard and do their best. ♦ Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. ♦ The school is well led and managed, works closely with parents and listens to parents' questions and problems. ♦ Children are helped to become mature, responsible and well behaved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The amount of homework. ♦ The information parents receive about their children's progress. ♦ The behaviour of some pupils in Key Stage 2. ♦ Children of different ages in the same class do work that is too similar.

The inspection agreed on the whole with the positive views of parents and in part with some of their concerns. The school has recently prepared a new homework policy. Parents receive satisfactory information through annual written reports and open evenings, and teachers are happy to see parents at other times. A few parents express concerns about behaviour and mixed-age classes. These partly result from weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 2, where pupils make less progress than in the first half of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The number of pupils in each of the year groups that took part in the 1999 national assessments was very small. It is therefore not possible to use the results to make secure, valid judgements about standards or trends over time. The same is true for comparisons of standards now and at the time of the last inspection, when there were only 22 pupils in the whole school. Targets set for attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments reflect the variation of the ability of pupils in small year groups, and are realistic. The following judgements are based on lessons seen, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of previously completed work.
2. The under-fives reach standards that are above national expectations. They make a good start learning the basic skills of language and literacy, and mathematics. There are insufficient opportunities for them to develop physical skills on large play equipment.
3. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. However, as previously stated, the small year groups make such judgements unreliable as indicators of the school's performance. The present Year 6 has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In the present Year 5, which has received similar provision in terms of the curriculum and quality of teaching, standards are above national expectations.
4. In information technology, the older pupils reach standards that are below national expectations. Until recently, they have not had enough opportunities to practise information technology skills. Work in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is appropriate for the ages of the pupils. Pupils do particularly well when there are good links between subjects. Literacy skills are practised and used effectively in other subjects, except recording and communicating findings in science. Mathematical skills are not practised enough in other subjects, and this reduces the overall effectiveness of learning in numeracy lessons.
5. In Key Stage 1, pupils generally attain appropriate standards for their capabilities because they are set work that matches their particular needs. In Key Stage 2, the most and least able pupils often work at inappropriate levels and so do not achieve the standards that they should. Work is often too easy for higher attainers and too hard for lower attainers, including those with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils enjoy school. Many are well motivated and interested in their classroom activities and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. Younger pupils concentrate well and work hard until their tasks are completed. Some older pupil, however, can be slow to settle and become restless, particularly in long lessons such as those of up to 75 minutes timetabled for numeracy. Behaviour is good in most lessons, although again it is noticeably better in the younger classes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have had several changes of teacher in the recent past and this has led to less well-ordered routines in their class. Behaviour around the school is very good. In the playground children play well together in pairs and groups, with all ages mixing freely.
7. Although a few parents express concern over bullying, there was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour apparent during the inspection. Pupils generally get on well with one another both in class and in the playground. Pupils also get on well with most of the teaching and ancillary staff. Pupils co-operate well with each other when asked to work jointly and are ready to compliment others' achievements. Older pupils take on some responsibilities within the school and have, for example, helped younger children through shared reading.
8. Attendance is below average. Most absence is due to parents taking their children out of school during term time for family holidays. The affected pupils thus miss as much as two weeks' schooling and this inevitably affects their progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

9. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 91% of lessons seen teaching was at least satisfactory, and in 35% it was good. Scrutiny of previously completed work and teachers' planning supported the overall judgement. Teaching is stronger in the first half of the school while, in Key Stage 2, there are some significant weaknesses. This is the reverse of the situation during the previous inspection. However, the overall quality of teaching has improved.
10. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching generally enables them to give clear explanations and to question pupils effectively. In a science lesson, the teacher's questions encouraged pupils not only to observe, but also to think carefully. Questions such as 'Why did that happen?' and 'How do you think that will make it go faster?' checked and extended pupils understanding of air resistance. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught accurately and reinforced in other lessons.

11. There are noticeable differences in the quality of planning and use of assessment information. Some very effective planning was seen during a literacy lesson for younger pupils. The range of activities and integrated focus on skills and creative work motivated pupils successfully and helped them to maintain their concentration. Work was accurately matched to the pupils' needs and so they made rapid progress in the time available. For some lessons, planning takes insufficient account of assessment information, such as from marking pupils' work, and so tasks are set at an inappropriate level for some pupils. Although the majority of pupils usually work at the right level, the most and least able in the class achieve less than they should because the work is either too easy or too hard. This weakness in planning also reflects teachers' expectations, and highlights the difficulties of teaching pupils in mixed-age classes, which increases the gap between higher and lower attainers.

12. In too many lessons, time is not used as well as it should be. When younger pupils take too long changing after physical education, instead of missing part of their playtime, the playtime is moved. This, however, takes time out of the next lesson. Pupils wash their hands for lunch five minutes before the official end of the morning session. Whilst this may legitimately be regarded as good hygiene training for younger pupils, it wastes time for the older pupils, who could easily do so at the start of their lunch break. In some lessons, especially in Key Stage 2, teachers expect too little of pupils and so they work slowly. This sometimes leads to pupils becoming restless and talkative, which slows the pace further.

13. Teachers usually deal with occasional misbehaviour well, although the somewhat negative atmosphere in a class with several awkward pupils is counter-productive. In lessons seen, pupils behaved best and concentrated hardest when they felt challenged by work that was set at the right level, and when the teacher expected high standards to be achieved. Some pupils with behavioural problems responded well to being given responsibilities.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

14. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to pupils in the school are sound. All statutory requirements for the curriculum are met. There are, however, some weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum, particularly in the way the timetable is organised. The literacy and numeracy lessons are usually taught for longer than the recommended time while physical education is only taught once each week and science is sometimes taught in a single block of two hours. The school is aware that it needs to review the overall taught time to ensure that it has adequate time for subjects that it wants to teach.

15. There are now good schemes of work in most subjects, which is a considerable improvement from the last inspection. These support teachers effectively when planning lessons. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented satisfactorily and are beginning to have a positive impact upon standards. The curriculum for the under fives is appropriately organised and relevant, but a weakness is the absence of a designated play area. There are good links with pre-schools and parents, and these help children settle into school quickly and make good progress.

16. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs mostly provide useful targets. The most effective plans focus upon precise goals such as 'correctly form letters e, w, v.' In a few plans, the targets are too general and do little to help pupils improve. In one plan, for example, the goal to 'improve reading' is no more than one would expect for every pupil and is therefore ineffective. Parents are informed regularly of their child's targets, which helps them to provide support at home.

17. Provision for extra-curricular activities was criticised during the previous inspection. It is now good. Opportunities are provided for pupils in Years 1 to 6. There is a good variety of activities, including football (for both girls and boys), netball, music, art and computer. There is strong commitment from teachers and parents who run and help at the clubs. Some parents have commented that there are too few opportunities for outside visits. The school is aware of this and a variety of visits is now planned. Visitors to the school, such as the police liaison officer and school nurse, contribute towards pupils' learning about health and drug issues.

18. The school values its links with the community, which makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Large numbers of adults visit the school to hear reading and pupils are confident with a wide variety of adults who help them during the school day. There are good relationships with the local church and the vicar visits the school each week to lead assembly. The church displays pupils' work and the school takes part in regular events, such as the Annual Flower Show. The village is used effectively as an environmental learning resource for both history and geography.

19. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound overall. Provision for moral development is good. Teachers provide good role models in the way they value and respect the children and work together well. Effort, achievement and care for each other are promoted through the Excellence and Kindness Books, for which children are nominated by teachers and each other. The overall provision for social development is good. Adults encourage pupils to work well together, which is mostly successful although the behaviour of a few pupils does not show respect for the views and values of others. Older pupils have a good range of responsibilities, such as being House Captains, reading to younger children, helping at lunchtime and generally carrying out duties around the school. There have been improvements in the provision for cultural development since the last inspection, and it is now satisfactory. There is a greater awareness of other cultures. A variety of music from

different countries and times is played in assemblies and lessons. Through geography, pupils are aware of 'Water Aid' programmes in other countries, such as Africa and India. Social development is also promoted as children collect money for the charity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

20. All the school staff are very caring, and know and support the pupils well. As a result, pupils speak of feeling valued, a sentiment echoed by parents. The school's management of health and safety fully complies with statutory requirements, and includes regular checks by governors and external advisors. Staff have a good understanding of procedures for child protection, and this aspect of care has improved greatly since the previous inspection.

21. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. Even so, attendance in the school is below average because a number of parents take their children on holiday in school time.

22. The monitoring and promotion of good behaviour are well established, with clear guidelines for pupils, staff and parents. Each week, staff meet to discuss patterns of behaviour in the school, and these meetings have led to an effective system of rewards and sanctions that pupils understand and respect. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are monitored carefully, and parents informed of any deterioration or improvement in the way their child acts. These good systems are proving effective, with a significant decrease this year in the numbers of pupils whose behaviour causes concern. Incidents of bullying are rare, and effectively managed.

23. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is satisfactory, but assessment information is not used effectively. When it is used to set targets for individual pupils these are not always appropriate. End-of-year reports are informative, and valued by parents, though they lack information about how pupils can improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

24. The school has established a good working partnership with parents, and this in turn benefits pupils' learning. A number of parents, as well as some local villagers, come in regularly to assist in the classroom and to help with other activities such as running after-school clubs. Others have helped to refurbish and reorganise the library. Many parents are active members of the school's Friends' Association. Events and activities organised by the association are well supported and this has resulted in substantial sums being raised for the benefit of the school.

25. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning through the work that pupils bring home. Parents are kept well informed about news and activities in the school through newsletters, and the school has used questionnaires to survey parental views on issues such as changes to the school uniform. Some parents express concern that they are not kept well enough informed of their children's progress. Inspectors judged that there are plenty of opportunities to speak with teachers, and written reports are satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

26. The good leadership of the headteacher has resulted in the school making many improvements since the previous inspection. The very rapid pace of growth and change has been managed well. There is a shared commitment to further improvement and a common perception of how to achieve success. The effective delegation of responsibilities enables the headteacher to teach part-time and to introduce important initiatives, such as monitoring teaching and analysing performance data. It also extends the expertise of other staff and leads to a strong sense of teamwork. Subject co-ordinators are active in developing their subjects. For example, the literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced successfully and the music curriculum improved. The induction of new staff is effective and contributes significantly to the consistency with which policies are implemented and to the professional development of staff.

27. The governing body has been very active in helping the school to grow, not least through raising its profile in the area and finding funds to enable good staffing levels and the development of buildings. Its vision of re-establishing a popular, viable school has been fulfilled. Governors have not yet formed a clear vision for the next stage of development by focussing on strengths and weaknesses in standards. However, they have recently begun to do so through, for example, the curriculum committee. Where weaknesses have been identified, governors have tended to focus on the reasons rather than the solutions. Their interest in the life of the school and role as critical friends – acting as a sounding board and asking questions that clarify ideas – is valued by the staff.

28. The school's educational priorities are well supported through financial planning. Decisions about class sizes, the number of hours of classroom support, and upgrading of information technology resources have all been carefully considered; benefits are weighed against costs and other options. Such issues are reviewed with an open mind and, recently, drawing on comparisons with similar schools. This is making sound use of best value principles to ensure that the school is giving value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. Having made good improvements since the last inspection, the school should now:

- (1) improve the quality and consistency of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - making better use of assessment information so that lesson planning is designed to meet the needs of all pupils
 - raise expectations of what and how much pupils should achieve; (see paragraphs 11, 12);
- (2) make better use of time by:
 - altering the timetable so that lessons are a more effective length;
 - using the time in lessons fully;
 - reviewing the total time available for lessons in Key Stage 2. (see paragraphs 12, 14,)

32. Other issues that should be considered by the school are:

- (3) the need for new, long-term goals for the educational development of the school; (see paragraph 27)
- (4) how to persuade some parents that children's regular attendance is important if they are to do well; (see paragraphs 8, 21)
- (5) planning how to use mathematical skills more widely in other subjects; (see paragraph 51)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

23

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	30	57	9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	93
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	92
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	4.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	23.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
	£
Total income	150,565
Total expenditure	140,814
Expenditure per pupil	1,600
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,000
Balance carried forward to next year	14,751

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	93
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	38	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	2	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	62	10	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	57	21	2	0
The teaching is good.	50	43	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	38	17	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	24	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	40	2	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	38	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	0	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	57	10	5	0

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents are concerned that pupils of different ages in the same class do work that is too similar.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

33. The number of pupils in each of the year groups that took part in the 1999 national assessments was very small. It is therefore not possible to use the results to make valid judgements about standards or trends over time. The same is true for comparisons of standards now and at the time of the last inspection, when there were only 22 pupils in the whole school. Targets set for attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments reflect the variation of the ability of pupils in small year groups, and are realistic.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. Provision for the under-fives is a strength of the school, with effective teaching and a good understanding of the needs of young children. Children learn effectively so that, by the time they are five, standards are above national expectations.

35. Children's personal and social development is given a high priority, to good effect. There is very good teamwork between the staff, who act as good role models. This helps children to form positive relationships with one another. Very effective routines and discipline ensure that children behave well and work and play co-operatively. Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices about their activities. They are responsive and interested, taking part in all the activities provided for them with enjoyment. Even the youngest children are able to work very well with concentration and persevere in their learning.

36. In language and literacy, children are achieving standards that are above average. Children are provided with a wide range of activities that support the development of language and literacy. They listen attentively, responding confidently to their teachers' good questions about what will happen next in a story, identifying sentences, capital letters and full stops. The enthusiasm and expertise of the teacher leads to children having positive attitudes towards books, and learning at a rapid pace. The most able children are already reading at Level 1 of the National Curriculum, and are able to establish the meaning from the text well. They form well-constructed sentences, use dictionaries to find unknown words and phonics to find initial letters. Children have good opportunities to practice their handwriting and many are beginning to develop a clear script. Even the youngest can write their own names.

37. Standards in mathematics are above national expectations. Children make good progress in acquiring skills and mathematical understanding. The teacher's use of mathematical vocabulary is very effective and her enthusiasm in mental mathematics sessions leads to enjoyment and concentrated learning. Lessons are planned well to build on children's previous knowledge and understanding. Mathematical skills are used well for practical purposes. For example, children made a block graph to show the colour of their eyes and then interpreted the graph.

38. Children have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world. Much of their work is planned with regard to the early stages of the National Curriculum, but with appropriate links between subjects. This good planning is effective in giving them a rounded view of the world, and includes elements of science, design and technology, geography, history, and information technology.

39. No physical education lessons were observed. As there are insufficient opportunities for children to use large outdoor equipment and wheeled vehicles, it was not possible to judge standards in this aspect of learning. Through their play and work with a variety of equipment, children are satisfactorily developing co-ordination and dexterity with smaller equipment such as pencils, scissors and brushes.

40. Children are offered good opportunities to be creative. In music, after good demonstrations by the teacher, they handled instruments correctly, and offered their opinions about the different sounds they made. Children enjoy their music lessons as well as singing action songs at other times in the day. Previously completed work shows that children appropriately use different techniques when using paint.

41. The induction arrangements to the Reception class are good. Positive links have been established with the parents, local nurseries and playgroups. Children settle into school routines well and make good progress. Baseline assessment is carried out during the first few weeks in school, and is used effectively to plan work, particularly in language and literacy, and mathematics. The classroom provides an attractive, stimulating environment. The lack of a specific outside area is a weakness.

ENGLISH

42. Overall attainment in English is in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1, but well below average in Year 6. In the first half of the school, where language skills have been developed from an early stage through the national literacy strategy, there is a clear trend of rising standards. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 did not have the same, systematic approach when they were infants. Effective teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in the early years, but the rate of progress is unsatisfactory through Key Stage 2. For one class, changes of teacher have led to inconsistencies that have reduced the quality of learning. In both classes, the match of work to the needs of pupils is not sufficiently accurate to ensure that all pupils achieve the standards they should.

43. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils did not listen attentively to their teachers or to their peers. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below average. Some pupils do not listen actively to those around them and, although many speak confidently, they do not express themselves clearly and have limited vocabularies. This hinders their ability to explain their work with clarity. Achievement is higher in Year 5, however, with some pupils speaking skilfully about recently read books.

44. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standard of reading is in line with the national average, and a few pupils are working at the higher Level 3. Pupils of different abilities make sound progress in improving their skills and so achieve appropriate standards. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and expressively and gain information easily. Pupils are already benefiting from the introduction of the literacy hour and the increased focus on literacy throughout the school. Teachers organise the shared text sessions well and work effectively to maintain pupils' interest with a good range of texts. Pupils enjoy and work hard in these sessions. Most pupils have a good understanding about the role of the author; even the youngest pupils know the significance of the title page and the difference between fiction and non-fiction.

45. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 read with expression and understanding, but there are few attaining higher levels. Teachers encourage pupils to look at the text carefully, and this helps them to develop skills of scanning and skimming the text. Older pupils successfully find information in reference books, using the contents page, index and glossary. These skills help them in other subjects, such as when carrying out research in history. However, pupils are not taught library skills systematically and do not have an understanding of how to use a classification system; this, together with the limited access to the library, limits their opportunities for independent study. The school library is underused at present, though it has recently been reorganised and is due to be enlarged.

46. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is in line with the national average, with a few pupils achieving standards that are better than expectations. Most pupils still print letters, but the higher attainers have begun to write in a cursive script. Pupils form their letters satisfactorily and so can read back their own writing. They are taught to use simple punctuation from an early age and to use their knowledge of sounds to try to spell words they are not sure about. Pupils use imaginative vocabulary in stories and use writing in other subjects. When writing about a magical visit to another culture they drew on work previously completed in geography.

47. Standards in writing are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of handwriting is too variable. At best, pupils write in a neat cursive script, but a significant proportion use a mixture of print and cursive script, often in pencil. Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of basic skills such as punctuation and spelling, but do not use exciting and interesting language. Pupils learn to write in a variety of forms, and practise through other subjects. For example, they wrote instructions on the use of the Internet, evaluated a toy in design and technology and described working conditions in Victorian times. Some higher-attaining younger pupils wrote good accounts of Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. Recording in science does not reinforce writing skills because pupils are usually only required to complete sentences or put in single word answers.

48. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. The most effective lessons were brisk and the teacher set high expectations of what the pupils should achieve. However, literacy lessons are planned to take longer than the recommended time, so that a quick pace early on sometimes slows towards to end. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge. In Key Stage 2, work is not matched to some pupils' previous attainment, mainly because day-to-day assessment is not used sufficiently when planning lessons. Reading records state what has been read, but do not always show how well the pupil has done and what might be improved. The subject is well managed. Since the previous inspection, although use of the library has not improved enough, there have been other important developments. The literacy hour has been successfully introduced, book displays in classrooms are now attractive, and there is a clear plan for developing the subject and raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

49. Standards in the work seen during the inspection were in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all abilities achieve appropriate levels because they are given work that is suited to their needs. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were well below national expectations, mostly because of the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Another reason, however, is that the more and less able pupils do not achieve as well as they should, because work is not set at a appropriate level.

50. In mental and oral sessions at the start of lessons, the pace was generally brisk and so pupils concentrated hard and successfully reinforced and extended their skills. In a few lessons, pupils were asked questions individually so that the others were passive for a long time and the pace was slow. The mental tasks are often related well to the main activities in the lesson, helping to prepare pupils by practising skills that will be used later on. In Key Stage 1, where the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, teachers set work at different levels to suit the needs of groups of pupils. While lower attainers, for example, learned to find one less than numbers up to twenty, higher attainers learned early division skills. In Key Stage 2, teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers also set tasks that were different, but in the mechanics rather than the level of understanding. For example, some lower attainers found the

cost of three items before working out change from £20, while higher attainers found the cost of five items and the change from £50. In much of the previously completed work, the level at which work was set was at a very similar level whatever the pupils' ages and capabilities. The result of this approach is that some pupils make unsatisfactory progress because it is too hard and others because it is too easy. Some pupils' work is somewhat disorganised in folders, though pupils generally try to work neatly and systematically during lessons.

51. The school has successfully introduced the national numeracy strategy, giving good structure for lessons and an appropriate emphasis on mental and oral mathematics. These are significant improvements since the last inspection. Mathematical skills are not used enough in other subjects, which reduces the overall effectiveness of learning in numeracy lessons. The school has started teaching pupils to evaluate their own success in achieving learning objectives in lessons. This is helping pupils and teachers to focus on what has actually been learned rather than simply what has been experienced. More precise learning objectives would make this good approach even more valuable. The school lacks appropriate procedures for recording pupils' progress. Teachers mark work thoroughly and make positive, encouraging comments to pupils. There is insufficient guidance, however, and marking does not always lead to pupils improving their work. After marking work or carrying out other assessments, teachers do not make enough use of the information gained to plan further lessons. This is a major cause of work being set at inappropriate levels.

SCIENCE

52. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. They are well below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the previous inspection the investigative skills of older pupils were weak. Older pupils now have a solid understanding of the need for fair tests, but lack skill in devising their own experiments. The quality of their written work is poor. Experiments are often recorded on worksheets, which do not develop pupils' understanding of how to communicate their findings methodically. Throughout the school, pupils have a suitably broad scientific knowledge but insufficient understanding. This particularly affects the achievement of higher attaining pupils, who rarely move on to questioning their results, or devising alternative ways of investigating problems.

53. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers' knowledge of science is generally good, enabling them to give pupils clear explanations and ask questions that make pupils think scientifically. For example, some pupils were first encouraged to notice that toy cars move more slowly over a rough surface, and then asked to consider why. This strategy developed pupils' learning well, and prompted them to draw upon their previous learning. Teachers generally plan lessons well, except that they pay insufficient attention to the needs of the higher and lower attainers. They make lessons interesting, and generate great enthusiasm for scientific investigation. In a successful lesson, for example, younger pupils enthusiastically investigated the colour of their eyes using mirrors, and drew them on cards which were compiled into a block graph. They worked hard to complete the task, and then as a class to interpret the completed graph. The teacher's good planning, high expectations and infectious enthusiasm, helped pupils learn how to conduct an investigation, and to present and interpret their findings. However, some lessons are too long, so that pupils become tired and begin to lose interest.

54. The knowledgeable subject co-ordinator has made a good start at monitoring lessons throughout the school and discussing both strengths and areas for improvement with teachers. The school has responded well to the previous inspection report by adopting a scheme of work that gives teachers a good structure for planning lessons and the basis of systematic assessment procedures. A weakness is that neither the continuous assessments nor the national assessment tests are used sufficiently to plan work to address pupils' specific weaknesses.

ART

55. Pupils' work in art is as expected for their ages, and of a higher standard than that reported in the previous inspection. By Year 6, they produce interesting pictures, showing a good sense of line and tone. Their work when sketching vases illustrated a well-developed idea of how to show the direction of light in a picture. Their work with textured materials was particularly good, both when composing pictures and producing rubbings from textured surfaces. Teaching promotes sound learning in art, and provides a much wider range of work than that criticised in the previous inspection. Teachers provide interesting tasks to kindle pupils' enthusiasm and set high expectations. The popular art club further enriches their experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

56. Pupils' work in design and technology was in line with expectations for their ages, and significantly better than the unsatisfactory attainment reported in the previous inspection. Pupils do particularly good work when design and technology is linked with other subjects. In science, for example, they produced good working models of 'lifting and shifting' machines out of construction kits, carefully considering the purpose for their designs. Pupils' designs are relatively weak. Many of their diagrams are little more than brief sketches, and the labelling is often poor. The best designs show step by step sketches of how their project will develop, and this worked particularly well in their food technology work on making biscuits. Teachers provide a wide range of practical tasks to develop pupils'

skills. In Key Stage 1, teachers focus appropriately on the basic skills of joining materials, while, in Key Stage 2, they introduce pupils to self-evaluation, which increases pupils' understanding.

GEOGRAPHY

57. Standards in geography are broadly in line with expectations for pupils' ages. Younger pupils are developing satisfactory map skills as they learn to use keys, draw simple maps and interpret plans of their classroom. Older pupils contrast and compare life in Britain and India, which also supports their cultural understanding. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an understanding of how physical conditions can affect human activity. They are aware, for example, of both the need for water and how water borne diseases can affect people's lives in Africa. Teachers made good use of the new building as it was being installed, developing work from the actual floor plans.

HISTORY

58. The work seen in history was in line with expectations for pupils' ages. The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' personal development by causing them to reflect on past events and to find out more about their own and others' cultures. Throughout the school, teachers are successful in gaining pupils' enthusiasm, and this helps them to learn. Older pupils are developing satisfactory research skills and demonstrate sound factual knowledge. Literacy skills are used positively, such as when pupils used reference books effectively and co-operated to present their work about Victorian Britain. Good use is made of the local area as a primary source.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

59. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in information technology are below national expectations, and similar to the standards reported following the school's previous inspection. Until this year, the number of computers in the school was poor, and this gave pupils too few opportunities to develop their skills. Although the number of computers is now appropriate, pupils have yet to make up the lost ground. Many are slow on the keyboard, and work more by trial and error than by a secure understanding of what they are trying to achieve. In their best work, pupils in Years 5 and 6 cut and paste text and pictures with reasonable skill to produce effective book reviews. They have a basic understanding of databases, use spreadsheets, and are beginning to grasp how to make best use of the Internet. When using a search engine, most frame questions well enough to find the required information. The computer club is having a significant impact on standards and is supporting work in other subjects such as science and history. Pupils' understanding of control and monitoring using computers is weak, because there is a lack of appropriate equipment. The school has one robot device, but this is rarely used.

60. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on younger pupils developing mouse and keyboard skills. There are useful links with other subjects, especially in Key Stage 1. For example, the designing and printing of Christmas cards on the computer extended younger pupils' work from their Literacy Hour. Teachers use computers effectively to show pupils how musical notes rise and fall of notes. In Key Stage 2, the benefits of the good cross-curricular work are reduced because there is insufficient direct teaching of computer skills. Pupils too often consolidate information technology skills without extending them.

61. With enthusiastic leadership from the subject co-ordinator, the provision for information technology is improving rapidly. Recognising that standards were too low, the school has invested considerable sums to give pupils greater access to computers, and has adopted a good, nationally recognised scheme of work. These are positive moves, which are already having a positive effect on pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 1.

MUSIC

62. Pupils sang tunefully in assembly, with good volume and sense of rhythm. Standards are similar to those reported during the previous inspection. In the one lesson observed, younger pupils sang and played percussive instruments making very good use of dynamics, getting louder and softer as the teacher conducted them. They also made good use of correct musical vocabulary to explain their ideas. One pupil, for example, referred to the pulse of what was being played. The teacher's subject knowledge enabled her to play accompaniments, model good language and to recognise when pupils needed to improve their work. Her expertise was the key factor in pupils making good progress during the lesson. Pupils benefit from a music club and a trip is planned for the summer term to a concert. The new subject plan sets out a good, systematic approach to teaching through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

63. In the aspects of physical education taught, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1 and below expectations by the end of the school. This is largely because pupils spend less time in physical activities than in most schools, and are timetabled for a single lesson each week so that skills are not practised with sufficient frequency. The number of pupils in each year group is also a factor because of the effects on team and competitive sports. A strength in the curriculum is that pupils swim regularly.

64. In one lesson, younger pupils practised throwing, catching and batting. The teacher organised the pupils well so that all were involved and challenged. She gave clear guidance to help them improve their skills and praised them when they achieved success. This was effective because pupils understood what they had to do in order to improve

and felt valued when they did so. A particular strength was that the amount of discussion was minimal, whereas there was plenty of demonstration, practice and refinement. A weakness was that rather than hurrying pupils' changing with the incentive of afternoon playtime, the break was pushed back to accommodate the slower pupils. This reduced the time available for the following lesson.