

INSPECTION REPORT

PARK SPRING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bramley, Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107964

Headteacher: Ms A M Larg

Reporting inspector: Mrs O M Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 5th – 6th November 2001

Inspection number: 193736

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	17 th – 21 st March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Park Spring is an above average sized community primary school serving the relatively disadvantaged area of Swinnow, three miles west of Leeds City centre. There are 262 full-time pupils on roll and a further 40 children attend the nursery part time. The proportion of pupils from families in which English is not the first language is a bit higher than in most schools, the principal non-English first languages spoken being Arabic, Croatian or Punjabi. Both the proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals and the proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs are above average. Attainment in language and number on entry to the school is below average and declining. The school has Investors in People status and is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative. The school has experienced severe staffing problems in the last year owing to the promotion of the deputy headteacher and two members of the senior management team taking long-term sick leave. This has had some negative effect on standards due to frequent changes of teacher initially.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which has a number of very good features and provides a good education for all its pupils. Overall standards are average by the time pupils transfer to secondary school, rising from below average on entry. This is because the school is very well led and managed, the teaching is good and pupils achieve well, are happy, well-cared for and have very good attitudes towards school. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school's management provides very clear educational direction, concentrating on standards.
- The teaching is good, with almost half the teaching seen being very good.
- Expectations are high and most pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum provides a good range of experiences and opportunities for learning.
- The school looks after its pupils very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and behave well.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing and handwriting could be higher.
- Some of the marking of pupils' work does not help them to improve.
- Some pupils' reports are not as helpful to parents as they could be.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and good improvement has been made since then. Standards, overall, have risen in line with the national trend, the quality of teaching is better and the school has made good progress in all the points for improvement in the previous report. Most notable improvement has been in raising standards to average levels in information and communication technology through the use of the computer suite and the increased confidence and expertise amongst staff following training. Standards in art and design are now average by the end of Year 6 and governors are actively involved in monitoring the work of the school and making decisions, based on their knowledge of the school and its work. The school's involvement in the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative has been beneficial in sustaining attendance levels and improving links with parents.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	E	E
Mathematics	C	B	E	C
Science	C	C	E	E

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

Children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) make good progress. Despite this good start, overall attainment is below average by the end of the reception year and the proportion of children on course to achieve the national Early Learning Goals in language, personal development and knowledge of the world is lower than in most schools. In mathematical, physical and creative development, most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The results of national tests in 2001 at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, but were average when compared with similar schools. Teachers' assessments in science showed attainment was well below average. The attainment on entry for this year group was particularly low and the overall results do not show how well these pupils achieved and how close the results were to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards of the current Year 2 pupils' work are average in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. A significant number of pupils do not read regularly at home and this hinders their progress.

The results of national tests taken at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were well below the national average in English and science, both in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. In mathematics, the results were well below the national average, but were average in comparison with similar schools. These results are not typical for this school, as shown by the table above and, overall, standards are high enough. The decline in standards was not unexpected owing to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. These pupils achieved satisfactorily and a few, mostly boys, achieved well, particularly in English. The school did not meet its targets in English and mathematics due to a few higher attaining pupils leaving the school earlier in the year. Current standards of Year 6 pupils' work are average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils know and understand more than their written work indicates and they achieve well. The targets set in English and mathematics for 2002 are challenging and likely to be met.

Pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those who are, or have been, in the care of the local authority all make good progress. Each child and their needs are known and understood by staff and this helps their rate of progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy school, they are co-operative and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in class and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' personal qualities are very well developed. They accept responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils' relationships with other pupils and adults in the school are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The overall attendance figure was close to the national average last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of the teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection through more effective monitoring procedures. Whilst teaching seen during the inspection was very good overall, the scrutiny of work indicated that in the longer term the teaching is good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout all the classes, with examples of very good lessons in both subjects. The skills of reading and numeracy are taught well, but there is room for improvement in the teaching of skills in writing and handwriting. The strengths of the teaching are in the high expectations of all pupils, the very effective deployment of teaching assistants and special needs support staff, the use of time and learning resources and the very good management of pupils. A particular strength is in the procedures for managing pupils with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, which minimise disruption for others. Homework is set regularly and supports pupils' learning as all are expected to complete and return it. Lessons are planned well to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils. The teaching is the key factor in the good pace in pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A wide range of interesting experiences and opportunities is provided for all pupils, which meets the needs of the pupils well and complies with statutory requirements. The curriculum is enriched by many visits, visitors to the school and a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The provision is co-ordinated well and the effectiveness of pupils' individual education plans and the monitoring of pupils' progress is good. Support assistants provide good support and understand each pupil's needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are supported effectively by their class teachers who check they understand the specific vocabulary being used in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for the development of pupils' personal qualities, such as their ability to take responsibility for themselves and others, is very well developed. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good and a strength of the school. Very good procedures are in place to ensure child protection, pupils' welfare and safety. Procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour are excellent. Arrangements for tracking the progress made by each pupil are very good and support is provided to boost the performance of selected pupils where necessary. The school has a very strong partnership with most parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher, deputy and senior staff provide excellent leadership, example and clear direction for the school. The senior staff have established a very good climate for learning characterised by high expectations. Responsibilities are delegated effectively and the subjects of the curriculum are well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are involved effectively in the daily work of the school and in its financial management. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Assessment data is used very well to compare the school's performance with other schools, to identify areas for improvement and to take appropriate action to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are managed efficiently with due regard to the best interests of the pupils and the principles of best value. The carry forward in the budget is too high, but this is earmarked for improvement to the buildings and to ensure stability in staffing levels, as pupil numbers fluctuate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • They can approach staff with concerns or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons is limited. • The amount of work pupils are given to do at home is insufficient in the opinion of some parents and too much in the opinion of others.

Inspectors agree with all the parents' positive comments about the school, but do not share their concerns. Parents were consulted about the arrangements for setting homework. The arrangements are effective, follow national guidelines and the homework set builds on what pupils have learned in lessons. The range of activities outside of lessons is good: it is wider than that found in many schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school's management provides very clear direction concentrating on standards.

1. The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy and senior managers are excellent, providing very clear direction to the work of the school. Senior staff lead by example and build a strong staff team, all totally committed to helping pupils achieve their full potential. At a time when the school has faced severe staffing difficulties, senior managers have taken on additional responsibilities to maintain the development of all aspects of the school. There is no room for complacency or mediocrity in this school and the staff are the first to question themselves when events do not go according to their plans. The high level of professionalism, along with the hard work and commitment of all staff and the dynamism of the headteacher, are the key features of the school's effectiveness.
2. All curriculum leaders are held accountable for the development of their subject areas. They are given time to carry out audits of the provision in the subject, identify the areas for development and produce an action plan for improvement, which is considered when determining the whole school priorities to be included in the school improvement plan. There are very good records of the lesson observations that have been carried out, for example in mathematics, and how these have led to improvements in teaching. The implementation of the performance management policy has been beneficial in enabling the monitoring procedures to be developed further and these are now excellent and evident in the consistently good quality of teaching.
3. The governors now play a more active role in decision making and monitoring the work of the school; this has improved notably since the previous inspection. Governors have undertaken training to increase their knowledge and awareness of their roles and this has been beneficial. The progress towards the targets set in the school improvement plan is monitored by governors each term to ensure sufficient progress is being made and time scales are met. Governors visit the school frequently to monitor how well their policies are being implemented in practice and gain first hand information from pupils and staff. Strategic planning for the future development of the school has also improved, with a three-year plan for developing aspects of the school. The governors have a programme of meetings to ensure all aspects of the school are considered when setting the budget. There are good relationships between the headteacher, staff and governors, with a free exchange of information and opinions. Decisions are made in the best interests of the pupils and expenditure is monitored in terms of the impact on raising standards.
4. The school improvement plan is a good document for school development and includes all the required information. It contains useful information on the source of funding for each priority area. This enables governors to monitor the expenditure in relation to the school budget plan. The weaknesses identified in the school improvement plan at the time of the previous inspection have been overcome. The plan includes monitoring procedures, which are clearly linked to raising standards and are helpful for governors.
5. The school makes very effective use of management information systems to aid its efficiency. All pupil information, financial information, attendance and assessment records are kept on computers. In addition, the school is looking to add behaviour records to the system.
6. The parents have every confidence in the leadership and management of the school, finding staff approachable and often seeking their help or advice when experiencing problems or difficulties not always connected with the school. Some parents have such confidence in the school that they choose to send their children to Park Spring although they live some distance away. Other parents keep their children in the school after moving out of the immediate locality.

The teaching is good, with almost half the teaching seen being very good.

7. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning seen in lessons was never less than good and, overall, it was very good. However, when the scrutiny of work is taken into account, the overall teaching and pupils' learning are judged to be good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The monitoring of teaching has become more rigorous and the support provided to overcome difficulties, along with further training, has led to the improvement. Of the 28 lessons seen, three were excellent, all in Year 5/6 classes, and ten were very good. The very good lessons were evident throughout Years 1 to 6 and in the reception class. The excellent lessons were in information and communication technology, physical education and personal and social education.
8. The key strengths in the teaching are in the level of challenge set for pupils and the expectations that pupils will rise to the challenge and complete the work in the time allowed.
9. Pupils respond by working as hard as they can and behaving well, so they make good progress. The teachers have secure knowledge of the areas of learning for children in the nursery and reception classes, and of the subjects they teach. There is some use of particular subject expertise, for example in art and design and in information and communication technology, which has led to the good improvement in these subjects since the previous inspection. For example, in an excellent lesson in information and communication technology in Year 5/6, one teacher took another class. The pupils enjoyed the lesson on rotation of shapes and exploring patterns and were eager to learn. The teacher used his specialist knowledge to explain the new program and task very clearly. This enabled the pupils to undertake the task independently and with greater confidence as they increased their knowledge and understanding of elements of control technology. The excellent relationships supported all pupils and they become totally engrossed in their work and were keen to succeed. Similarly, in a very good Year 2 art and design lesson, where music was used as an inspiration to create group pictures, a teacher with interest in the subject worked with the class. The lesson had been well planned and prepared, with music reflecting very different moods and feelings. The pupils were encouraged to listen and feel the mood of the music before beginning to draw. The lesson made a very good contribution to pupils' personal development as the art boards were turned round after each piece of music, so pupils could add detail to the work of others, without going over or spoiling it. The finished pictures were of good quality and the pupils were proud of their achievements.
10. Another strength of the teaching is the use of time for learning each day. Lessons begin promptly and a brisk pace is maintained throughout most activities. The learning resources available are used very well in most subjects to make lessons interesting. The need to make the reading material more interesting for younger pupils has been identified and action taken. Where the school does not have sufficient resources of its own, items are loaned. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils are studying bones and skeletons and a range of animal bones and artificial human bones were available for pupils to investigate and observe closely. By the end of the lesson, the pupils could explain the different types of bones and joints in the human body and where they were located. The teaching assistants and special needs support staff are deployed very effectively to support pupils' learning and they add much to the quality of the teaching in general. For example, in Year 4, the teaching assistant takes responsibility for issuing the homework tasks and collecting them in. This allows the teacher to concentrate on settling the pupils and completing the register quickly, so that the first lesson can begin, but also emphasises the importance of completing and returning the homework.
11. The management of pupils is a further strength of the school. There are a significant number of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems and difficulties who are affected by changes in teacher or by visitors to the school, such as inspectors. Some of these pupils reacted to the tension among their teachers by behaving in an unacceptable way. The examples seen confirmed the parents' views on the school's successful strategies for handling such incidents and minimising the disruption for others. The teachers and special needs support staff know exactly how to react to each situation, when to ask for further help and when pupils require time out of the classroom.
12. There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching and lessons planned meet the learning needs of all pupils well, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. Teachers are using their skills in information and communication technology to aid their

lesson planning and plan well together in teams. They use a range of teaching methods, selecting the most appropriate for the subject being taught. Marking of pupils' work is kept up to date and there is evidence of further teaching to help pupils overcome problems identified through marking their work.

13. The quality of the teaching is one of the key factors in the rate of pupils' learning and the above average or average standards achieved in most years.

Expectations are high and pupils' achieve well.

14. The school's ethos is one of high expectations of everyone within a caring, stimulating environment. The strong ethos raises perceptions and aspirations and provides much needed stability for some pupils. Nothing but the best is good enough for these pupils. This is made clear to parents when their child is admitted, as the school prospectus informs them of the school's expectations in terms of attendance, punctuality, behaviour and dress, if the school's aim of helping each child to achieve their full potential is to be realised.
15. In lessons, all teachers expect pupils to put every effort into their work and complete it in the time given. Those not making sufficient progress in lessons are kept behind at lunchtime to complete tasks. Sometimes further teaching is carried out at lunchtimes to help pupils overcome problems and so keep up with their classmates. Pupils are expected to return their homework on time and are required to give explanations when this does not happen. In extreme cases, the work has to be completed in school. In discussions with pupils, they say they like coming to this school because their teachers help them to learn and do not leave them to struggle. In return, they work hard and do their best.
16. Within the school, pupils' work is displayed to a high standard to create a climate conducive to learning and to make the school a pleasant place for pupils to be. Classrooms are tidy and the school is kept clean and well maintained, emphasising the high expectations placed on everyone. Pupils are required to keep cloakrooms tidy and to change into indoor shoes on arrival to keep carpets and floors clean.
17. The attendance record of each pupil is maintained from their entry to the school and, where attendance rates fall below the 90 per cent benchmark, action is taken and pursued until improvement is evident.
18. Assessment of pupils soon after entry to the school shows attainment is below average for their age and, in some years, it is well below. The weaker aspects vary from year to year and the school plans tasks to overcome particular weaknesses. The comparison of national test results at age seven and eleven for pupils who left the school in July 2001 showed that, despite the staffing difficulties and the high proportion with special educational needs, most pupils made satisfactory progress and a significant number made good progress. For pupils who left in July 2000, their progress from Year 2 to Year 6 was very good when compared with schools with similar results at the end of Year 2. The high expectations of everyone in the school is the key to helping most pupils achieve their full potential each year.

There is a good range of experiences and opportunities for learning.

19. All adults working in the nursery and reception classes pay close attention to young children's individual learning needs and this helps them to make a good start to their education. Although one class contains both reception and Year 1 pupils, the curriculum is very well organised to ensure all reception children are working within the areas of learning contained in the Foundation Stage curriculum, whilst the Year 1 pupils are working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Activities are varied and well planned and children soon gain in confidence to explore their surroundings. The curriculum develops children's motivation to learn, which for some children is a particular area of weakness as identified in their assessment soon after entry.
20. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 includes all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and

personal and social education, which includes sex education, the safe use of drugs and citizenship. The school uses the PRIDE (Parents Role In Drug and safety Education) project, a valuable resource, which involves parents working with their child. High priority is given to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, as well as the development of personal skills through class councils, 'circle time' and 'golden time' when pupils are allowed to choose which subject they work on. The curriculum is designed to motivate pupils to learn and so raise their aspirations. The curriculum is fully inclusive and all pupils have equal opportunities and access to what the school has to offer. The quality of the curriculum is a major positive influence on the standards that pupils attain in most years.

21. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors to the school. There are annual visits from theatre and music groups and Victorian or Roman days when actors in costumes bring history to life for the pupils and they gain much from these experiences. An incubator is used to hatch hen or duck eggs in school and this makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. There are visits to museums and other places of interest and residential visits for older pupils. Other extra-curricular activities include sport, dance, music and 'Wild Life Watch'.

The school looks after its pupils very well.

22. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection issues and has a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures and ensures all staff receive regular training to keep up-to-date with any changes in requirements. The day-to-day care of pupils is a particular strength and pupils feel safe and secure, knowing they can turn to any adult for help. All pupils and their needs are known well and pupils are valued as individuals for their contributions to the life and work of the school. For example, a mobile classroom, called the 'Cool Hut', is used at lunchtimes to provide a range of activities for any pupil who is distressed, having difficulty in coping with the playground situation, or behaves in an unacceptable manner and needs time away from other pupils. It is also used during lesson time when pupils need to calm down after outbursts of unacceptable behaviour. This is one reason why this school is able to admit and integrate successfully pupils experiencing problems and therefore refusing to attend other schools.
23. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is very good. The school tracks the progress of each pupil to ensure at least satisfactory progress is made each year. The information, along with teachers' views, is used to highlight pupils who would benefit from additional support to boost their performance. The headteacher knows exactly why any pupil has not made sufficient progress and often this is linked to poor attendance records, learning difficulties, medical problems or problems beyond school. For example, an incidence of truancy was identified during the inspection, parents were contacted, action taken and the situation resolved before the end of the morning. The success on this occasion was due to the effective use of funding from the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative and the appointment of a learning mentor to support pupils from families experiencing difficulties or problems. The learning mentor works closely with families to encourage more positive attitudes to learning.
24. The attendance of every pupil is tracked closely and action taken to remedy the situation if any pattern of irregular attendance becomes evident. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are equally good. The behaviour policy is included in the school prospectus and so parents are fully aware of the procedures to be followed and the rewards and sanctions applied. Most parents are fully supportive of the school in this respect. There are clear procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour and for making the school a pleasant place for all pupils and staff to work.

Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and behave well.

25. The responses to the parents' questionnaire show that 95 per cent think their child likes school, including 63 per cent who hold this view strongly. The pupils' responses to lessons confirm the views of parents and this includes pupils with special educational needs. Most pupils arrive promptly each day and enter school happily. There are still a few tears among children in the

nursery who often take some time to settle to school routines, but once settled they work and play happily. Throughout the school, the pupils are eager to enter class and often want to share a piece of news briefly with their teacher. In lessons, pupils work hard and show interest.

26. Most pupils behave well in lessons. That is the expectation of all teachers and teaching assistants and is very much part of the ethos of the school. In a very good mathematics lesson with the more able pupils in Year 6, the pupils rose to the challenge of the mental questions, working independently and quickly. When working on their tasks, they worked hard and quietly to complete their work in time. The quiet atmosphere benefited all of them. These good attitudes were a consequence, in the main, of the teacher's firm, positive, encouraging manner and clear communication of his expectations. In all lessons, the pupils are kept very busy and there are usually follow-on tasks when initial tasks are completed. This helps to inculcate a strong work ethic. Behaviour when moving about the buildings, in the hall, at breaks and midday is generally good. Outdoor play is often boisterous but no oppressive behaviour was seen.
27. Relationships between pupils are very good. They develop good levels of mutual respect and courtesy. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to work collaboratively and this helps with personal and social skills. Pupils show good levels of personal development and a willingness to take responsibility; as they get older, they take the initiative in common courtesies such as greeting people and opening doors for them. The teachers help the process of personal development by giving pupils responsibility for everyday routines, such as taking registers to the office and setting out or putting away equipment. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting spoke highly of the caring community ethos and the rarity of bullying and racist behaviour. No bullying or racist behaviour was seen by inspectors and none reported by pupils. There have been three fixed period exclusions in the last school year, which were necessary to maintain the good standards of behaviour. Attendance is satisfactory and close to the national average. Unauthorised absence is slightly below the national average.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing and handwriting could be higher.

28. The school has experienced long-term staff absence in the last year and this has involved the English co-ordinator. This has had some effect on the development of aspects of the subject. The deputy headteacher who joined the school in September 2001 has taken over responsibility for the subject and in a short space of time has identified weaknesses, which need to be overcome.
29. The school places due emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, as many enter school with low levels of development in these aspects, particularly the range of vocabulary. Strong emphasis is placed on developing these skills and extending the range of vocabulary to support pupils in their writing and recording of their work.
30. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented fully, but some of the more recent training materials have not been used to increase the level of expertise in teaching specific aspects of language. As a result, teachers of younger pupils sometimes use worksheets for recording pupils' work and teachers of older pupils turn to textbooks, which do not always lead to the most interesting lessons. Whilst pupils answer many questions in formal exercises correctly, they do not transfer this learning when creating their own stories or poems. Spelling is a particular weakness for a significant number of older pupils, as they have not had the benefit of the National Literacy Strategy throughout their primary education. There is a lack of confidence in their abilities as writers evident among average and lower attaining pupils and this hinders their recording of work in many subjects and their performance in national tests. For example, in science in a Year 5/6 class, the teacher used a globe and powerful torch to explain day and night in relation to the movement of the earth. Pupils could explain clearly how day changed to night, showing good understanding and using words such as 'sunrise', 'dawn' and 'dusk'. However, their written explanations were not so clear.
31. The scrutiny of pupils' work in English and other subjects showed heavy reliance on worksheets,

especially in history and religious education, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This does not help pupils to develop their writing skills, including spelling through other subjects. In English, there was little evidence of pupils in Years 3 to 6 writing longer stories. Although their work includes the use of words for effect and interest, it is often very brief.

32. The presentation of work would be improved if pupils developed a fluent joined style of writing from an earlier stage. Too many Year 5 and 6 pupils are still printing when they have been taught to join letters and handwriting books show they are capable of much better presentation of their work if they persevere in developing a joined script.
33. The new English co-ordinator has started to address some of the issues by carrying out an audit of the subject, which involved staff views on where additional support was needed. The recent training modules have been acquired to provide additional training and more exciting reading materials have been purchased for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to stimulate more interest in reading and writing. The school acknowledges there is further work to be done in improving pupils' spelling, writing and handwriting skills through establishing clear developmental guidelines for written work.

The marking of pupils work in some classes does not help them to improve.

34. The marking of pupils' work is kept up to date in all classes, but in some it is often just ticked to indicate work has been completed satisfactorily and the teacher has seen it. Where the marking indicates the work is good, it does not say why it is good, or what could be improved. There is consistently good marking in the Year 1/2 and 3/4 classes and some very good examples in other classes but all marking needs to be of the same quality. Clear targets for improvement are set at regular intervals in English and mathematics and, where evidence of further work to help pupils achieve the targets is not evident in their books, this is recorded elsewhere, as support is often given by teaching assistants. The school's marking policy needs updating to reflect the very good practice in the school and needs to be implemented consistently throughout all classes.

Some pupils' reports are not as helpful to parents as they could be as the format is not consistent in Years 1 to 6.

35. The same format is not used in all classes for end of year reports to parents. This leads to some parents receiving more information on their childrens progress in foundation subjects than others. In some classes, they use a separate heading for each subject of the National Curriculum and religious education, which prompts teachers to include specific information on every subject. In other classes, there is simply a heading of 'foundation subjects' and it is not always clear what has been achieved in which subject and occasionally subjects such as music, art and design or design and technology are missed out completely. Taken overall, reports are good, they include a printed summary of the relevant areas of National Curriculum programmes of study, comprehensive attendance data and a grade for progress, attainment and attitudes, with a key for parents to interpret them. Personal achievements are also recorded. A piece of work in English and mathematics completed by the child is included and parental responses are invited and where received are attached to the report. Future targets are recorded for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, to show parents where pupils need to concentrate their efforts in future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

36. In order to continue the improvement and raise standards in the school, the headteacher and staff, supported by the governors should:

a) Raise standards in writing and handwriting by:

- placing less emphasis on formal written exercises and more emphasis on encouraging pupils to write their own stories;
- implementing a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of spelling patterns and greater importance to accurate spelling;
- developing pupils' writing skills through other subjects by making less use of worksheets;
- providing further staff training in teaching writing skills;
- updating the policy on handwriting and teaching pupils to join letters at an earlier age and so develop a fluent style to aid the recording of their work.

(Discussed in paragraphs 27 – 32)

This issue has been identified by the school and is contained in the school improvement plan.

b) Improve some of the marking of pupils' work to bring it all up to the high quality evident in some classes by updating the marking policy to reflect the very good practice in the school and ensuring the policy is consistently implemented.

(Discussed in paragraph 33)

c) A consistent format for pupils' reports in Years 1 to 6.

(Discussed in paragraph 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	15	0	0	0	0
Percentage	11	36	53	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	270
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	90

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	85

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

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	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

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.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	17	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	14	16	16
	Total	28	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (64)	85 (85)	88 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	11
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	28	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (77)	79 (85)	71 (74)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	20	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	17
	Girls	11	14	16
	Total	25	26	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (80)	63 (84)	80 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	16
	Girls	11	13	16
	Total	25	26	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (78)	63 (84)	78 (90)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	6
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	212
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	26.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	265.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	691,080
Total expenditure	690,074
Expenditure per pupil	2,248
Balance brought forward from previous year	55,400
Balance carried forward to next year	56,406

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	32	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	6	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	43	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	42	14	3	2
The teaching is good.	63	33	0	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	55	6	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	14	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	19	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	49	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	42	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	36	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	38	8	1	10

Other issues raised by parents

Five letters were received, all praising the work of the school, but two also expressing some concern at the number of supply teachers working with reception pupils during the absence of the class teacher and the lack of extra-curricular activities.