

INSPECTION REPORT

TRELEIGH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Redruth

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111841

Headteacher: Mr T Harman

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham R Sims
28899

Dates of inspection: 19th – 20th March 2001

Inspection number: 193982

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:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	28 th April 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Treleigh Community Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Redruth in Cornwall. The school is part of the Redruth, Pool and Camborne Education Action Zone. At present, there are 210 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and eleven. Of these, 21 children in the Reception class attend part-time. It is an average-sized primary school. The school has grown in popularity, and the number on roll has increased significantly since the last inspection. Most pupils come from the town of Redruth where there is a high degree of economic deprivation and unemployment. Around a quarter of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, a figure which is above average. Almost all pupils are from a white ethnic background, and none come from homes where English is not the main spoken language. Over a third of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. Nine pupils have statements of special educational need, a proportion which is much higher than in most schools. The attainment of children when they start school is generally below average, with many pupils showing poor linguistic ability and social skills. The school has had a change of headteacher since the last inspection.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Treleigh Community Primary School is a good school with some very good features and few weaknesses. Good teaching enables pupils to make better progress than in most schools; they improve from low attainment when they enter the school to achieve standards which, overall, are close to those expected of eleven year olds by the time they leave school. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is very well supported by the governing body and a dedicated team of teachers, who make very good provision for pupils' personal development. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good leadership has resulted in many improvements since the last inspection
- Good quality teaching enables pupils to make good progress
- The school caters very well for pupils with special educational needs
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development
- The school provides good additional learning opportunities for pupils

What could be improved

- Pupils' writing and speaking skills
- Pupils' ability to work independently
- The level of attendance

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a very good degree of improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. The school has tackled all of the key issues from the last inspection successfully. Much effort has been put into improving the school's facilities for information and communication technology, and standards have risen, as have those in geography. The school's curricular planning documents are now much more effective and give clearer guidance to teachers.

The quality of teaching has improved as a result of monitoring what happens in lessons and providing training opportunities for staff. The school development plan now sets out a much clearer agenda for improvement.

Governors play a greater role in the life of the school and are better informed about their roles. The school now provides more teaching time in Key Stage 2. The governors have ensured that the headteacher has more time to exercise his leadership role.

Academic standards have improved throughout the school. Although they dipped last year, standards at Key Stage 1 are significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved markedly in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. The rate of improvement in both key stages is much better than the national trend. The school recently received a School Improvement Award for substantially improving its results between 1997 and 2000. Parents comment favourably on the way the school has improved in recent years. The growth in the number of pupils on roll is also testimony to the school's growing popularity.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			similar schools	Key	
	all schools				2000	
	1998	1999	2000	2000		
English	D	C	C	B	Very high	A*
Mathematics	E	A	A	A*	Well above average	A
Science	E	A	B	A	Above average	B
					Average	C
					Below average	D
					Well below average	E
					Very low	E*

The school's results have improved significantly and were much higher in 2000 than they were five years ago. Despite this improvement, the results at Key Stage 1 were below the national average in reading, well below average in writing and average in mathematics. When compared to schools in similar contexts they were average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. The overall results at Key Stage 2 were above the national average. Pupils in this year group made very good progress in Key Stage 2, improving considerably on their Key Stage 1 results. When compared with schools in similar contexts, their results were well above average and, in mathematics, were amongst the top five per cent of schools. The school has been setting itself appropriate targets and has been successful in meeting them.

Most children enter the school with below average levels of attainment. They make good progress towards, but do not fully achieve, the learning goals expected for children by the time they start Year 1. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve standards which are close to the national expectations in reading and science and are above them in mathematics. Progress through Key Stage 2 varies between classes, generally improving as pupils move through the school. Standards currently achieved by pupils in Year 6 are lower than those in 2000. Pupils are set to achieve the nationally expected standards in reading, mathematics and science; given their prior attainment, this represents good gains in learning through Key Stage 2. Standards in speaking and writing are below average throughout the school. Although pupils' writing skills are improving, the school needs to do more to encourage pupils to write with greater accuracy and to present their work more carefully. More could be done to develop these skills through work undertaken in other subjects. Teachers do not always help pupils enough to improve their powers of oral expression. Standards in some other subjects, such as art and music, are above average, which is largely due to interesting additional learning opportunities provided for pupils.

Much effort has been put into making better provision for information and communication technology; standards in this subject are rising, and pupils reach an appropriate level by the time they leave school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the

additional help they are given by teachers and assistants. Girls achieve significantly better than boys at Key Stage 1, but the situation is reversed at Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the school. They settle very well to tasks in class and enjoy the full range of activities provided by the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They have a good awareness of the standards expected and are polite and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils show a good sense of responsibility and contribute well to the community. They need to develop a greater pride in their written work and to show a greater level of independence when working.
Attendance	Very poor. The level of attendance is amongst the lowest in the country. Although the school has appropriate procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and following up reasons for absence, the high level of absence has a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. Quite a number of pupils arrive late in the mornings, which prevents a brisk and purposeful start to the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 teaching was at least satisfactory in all of the 29 lessons seen during the inspection. It was very good or better in 17 per cent of lessons and was good in a further 45 per cent.

The overall quality of the teaching is good. Lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are carefully prepared and well taught throughout the school. Good attention is given to the development of basic skills in English lessons, but this work is not consolidated effectively through the production of written work in other subjects. Greater emphasis could also be given to the development of pupils' speaking skills. In some classes, there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets which offer little challenge and inhibit the development of writing skills. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a significant impact on raising standards in mathematics in both key stages and has helped to improve pupils' abilities in mental mathematics. Imaginative use of resources is helping teachers to raise standards in information and communication technology.

The school works hard to meet the needs of all pupils. Good use of learning support assistants and the provision of booster sessions for the oldest pupils ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those who require additional assistance receive it. The very good relationships between staff and pupils, the pupils' positive attitudes to their work and the dedication of the teaching staff ensure that the quality of learning is good throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school fulfils its statutory obligations and offers pupils a good range of opportunities to learn in the classroom, as well as a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits, including two which are residential.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well. Staff are aware of their needs and provide them with appropriate work. Through well-formulated individual education plans, they are given suitable targets for improvement and their progress is monitored carefully and effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Staff provide good role models and help the pupils to develop socially and acquire a sense of responsibility. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures, particularly through art and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a very caring school, which has very high standards of pastoral care. Staff know their pupils very well and give good attention to their individual needs. The school manages child protection issues and all matters to do with pupils' health, welfare and safety very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has been responsible for instigating many improvements since the last inspection, which have resulted in better quality education and higher standards of attainment. Subject coordinators are now better informed and undertake their roles more effectively than they did.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governing body exercises its role effectively, ensures that statutory responsibilities are met, and provides good support for the headteacher. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and, as a result, have a good understanding of what happens.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and key staff monitor teaching, planning and pupils' work effectively and have established priorities for future monitoring. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for future development.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its resources, including funding for pupils with special educational needs, well. The school applies the principles of best value in the purchase of resources and services. Involvement in the local Education Action Zone has been of significant benefit to the school, bringing improved levels of resources and good training opportunities for staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are very pleased with almost all aspects of the school. In particular, they are pleased that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● their children like school and are making good progress; ● the standards of behaviour are good and the school promotes the right values and attitudes; ● the school is very supportive, and staff care for their children; ● there is good communication between school and home and they are well informed about what is going on and their children's progress; ● the school is an integral part of the local community; parents feel welcome in school and comfortable in approaching staff with any problems or concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The range of extra-curricular activities. ● More opportunities for their children to use computers in Key Stage 1. [Parents also acknowledged that provision for information and communication technology is rapidly improving.]

The inspection findings support all of the positive views expressed by parents, and show that there is little justification for the few concerns which were expressed. The school provides a better range of additional learning opportunities and extra-curricular activities for pupils than most schools. Pupils participate in a full range of sporting activities and there is a strong musical tradition, with many pupils singing in the choir and learning to play a brass instrument. Visits to places of interest, visitors to school, residential visits and the newly-established homework club are all important aspects of the extra-curricular opportunities offered to pupils. Pupils are getting appropriate opportunities to use computers throughout the school. The school's innovative 'Robolab' enables staff to set up a full computer suite quickly in the school hall, and all classes use this facility once a week, as well as using computers situated within the classrooms.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Very good leadership has resulted in many improvements since the last inspection.

1. The school has been very well led over the last few years. This has resulted in many improvements in all areas of the school and rising academic standards. The headteacher has built a team of dedicated teachers who are not only committed to their tasks, but keen to bring about further improvement. Careful analysis of the school's needs has identified areas for improvement and resulted in many opportunities for staff to improve their teaching skills. Since the last inspection, all staff have attended a wide variety of in-service training, which has helped to improve the quality of teaching in science, music, geography, history, religious education and information and communication technology. Staff also received much additional training in connection with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, both of which have been implemented successfully. This training has brought changes to teaching practice, and there is now a greater focus on helping pupils to improve key skills which is having a positive impact on improving standards in English and mathematics.
2. The school now has a much better and clearer leadership structure which has resulted in more efficient and effective management in many areas. Three years ago, the headteacher had substantial teaching commitments and was not given enough time to lead and manage the school. This problem has now been solved, and the headteacher has a non-teaching role. This not only gives him time to manage the school, but enables him to give additional support to staff, for example, by releasing senior members of staff each week to carry out their responsibilities, or by providing additional, clearly focused support to pupils in Year 6. A senior management team has been created which has helped to spread responsibilities for developing the school. There were no subject coordinators at the time of the last inspection, but their introduction has been a positive move. Although staff have taken some time to grow into the role, the support and guidance they have received have helped them to become enthusiastic in carrying out their tasks, and they have started to come forward with new ideas and initiatives. The school now has a much clearer picture of what is happening in each subject, and what needs to be done to make further improvements. Funds are managed more effectively as coordinators now bid for and manage their own budgets.
3. Governors are now playing a much more prominent role within the school. They are a committed group of people, who provide the headteacher and school with much support. However, they also exercise the role of 'critical friend', holding the school to account for what is happening, questioning where necessary and ensuring that any new decisions and directions are in the best interests of the school. The governing body now has a range of committees which meet regularly, and this has helped governors to become more aware of what is happening within the school and what the school's needs are. Training has improved their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governors and headteacher have ensured that all the key issues from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully.
4. The very good leadership has ensured that all staff have had opportunities for further development. In addition to the in-service training provided for teachers, nearly all of the school's learning support assistants have attended a training course run by the local authority, and they are fully included in the school's in-service training days. This has helped to raise their awareness of autism, dyslexia, and speech and behavioural difficulties. As a result, the assistants have been able to play an important role in raising standards within the school.

5. The headteacher has promoted very good relationships within the local community and with partner institutions, such as the local technology college and the playgroup which is situated within the school grounds. Active involvement within the local Education Action Zone has resulted in significant benefits for the school, particularly in the area of information and communication technology. The improvements are now starting to have a positive impact on improving pupils' skills in this subject. Other benefits, such as the funding of additional classroom support and work with a sculptor, have also had a positive impact on pupils' learning.
6. A measure of the success of the school's leadership is the significant improvement in standards over the last five years. The rate of improvement in both key stages is much better than the national trend. Even though the school's results at the end of Key Stage 1 dipped last year, standards are now significantly better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved markedly in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. The school recently received a School Improvement Award for substantially improving its results between 1997 and 2000. The growth in the number of pupils on roll, from 126 in 1996 to 200 in 2001, is testimony to the school's growing popularity and the improvements that have been made.

Good quality teaching enables pupils to make good progress.

7. The overall quality of the teaching throughout the school is good. Of the 29 lessons observed during the inspection, 45 per cent were good and a further 17 per cent were very good; one of these lessons was excellent. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. Lessons for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are carefully prepared and well taught throughout the school.
8. At its best, the teaching motivates and inspires the pupils. In an excellent English lesson for pupils in Year 6, for example, the headteacher used a mysterious package, which had previously been buried and then 'discovered' by a pupil in the school grounds, to stimulate the pupils' curiosity and imagination. As pupils took turns to unwrap parts of the package and examine the historical artefacts it contained, the teacher used questions skilfully to get pupils to imagine to whom the package might have belonged, why it was there and what its purpose was. The discussion was very well controlled, allowing all pupils to contribute, yet reinforcing the importance of listening to others. Pupils were asked to picture a scene in their minds and when, in a subsequent lesson, they were asked to 'pour their thoughts onto paper', the pupils responded readily. As a stimulus to imaginative and creative writing, the planning, preparation and introductory session could hardly have been bettered.
9. Good use of resources and skilful questioning were important features in a science lesson for pupils in Year 1. The teacher used everyday household commodities, such as a tin of tomatoes and a packet of sugar, as a starting point for a fruitful discussion on where food products come from. The pupils' initial responses were that they came from Tesco or from a lorry. By the end of the introductory session, however, their horizons had been widened, and pupils were starting to realise something of the complexity of the process of how food gets to us and that much of our food comes from plants.
10. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, the teacher's skilful management of pupils ensured high levels of concentration and participation, with the result that all pupils were fully involved and made good progress during the lesson. Questions were posed in such a way as to arouse the pupils' curiosity. Effective use of praise and humour, as well as the teacher's acknowledgement that "It's alright not to know", encouraged even the least confident pupils to participate. At the same time as learning how to count in 10s, 5s and 2s, the pupils were also learning valuable lessons about how to show respect for other people's answers and to listen to and encourage others. Similar qualities were observed in an English lesson, in which the well-ordered learning environment and the positive attitudes of the pupils towards their teacher contributed to the good quality of learning.

11. Careful planning, good use of resources and high expectations are features of the work in Year 6 and help to channel the pupils' ebullience into productive learning. The teacher has a very clear understanding of the needs of individual pupils and ensures that work is well matched to them. In a very good mathematics lesson, learning objectives were explained very clearly at the start of the lesson so that pupils knew exactly what they were aiming to achieve. The use of an interactive electronic whiteboard and careful explanations helped to focus pupils' attention and prepared them well for working in groups later in the lesson.
12. The school works hard to meet the needs of all pupils. An enthusiastic and well-informed group of learning support assistants gives very good support to teachers and pupils. A very good team ethos is evident. They play a valuable role in communicating pupils' progress and in helping to record assessment, as well as providing good help for individuals and small groups of pupils. Some particularly useful support is provided for information and communication technology, which enables both teachers and pupils to make good use of the available equipment.

The school caters very well for pupils with special educational needs.

13. The school has 63 pupils on the register for special educational needs, almost a third of the school population. Of these, 34 pupils require additional support from external agencies and nine have statements of special educational need. All of these proportions are above the national average. The school's register is clear, well organised and regularly updated, and the school's procedures for identifying and dealing with pupils with special educational needs are very good.
14. The special educational needs coordinator has a very good understanding of the requirements for special educational needs. Strategic planning is very good, and the school's documentation is clear and comprehensive. The right tone is set in the opening statement of a good policy for special educational needs, which states that "we believe that all children are special and they all have varying needs". The school fulfils this statement by seeking to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all educational activities. Good consideration has been given to all aspects of support, through that which the school is able to provide, the involvement of external agencies, provision of facilities for wheelchair access and adapted toilet facilities, and the training available for teachers and support assistants.
15. Parents are kept fully informed and involved at every stage. The learning support teacher, who withdraws pupils from lessons to provide additional individualised support for them, works well with parents to produce weekly materials which they can use at home to work with their children. For those pupils with statements of special educational need, there is a well-organised, up to date and detailed annual review file. Parents are invited to attend the annual review and given clear explanations about their children's needs. Clearly worded review statements inform parents, amongst other things, of the written advice received from external agencies, the views expressed by pupils and parents, the pupil's progress towards objectives, specialist equipment allocated, recommended long-term objectives and short-term targets and recommended action.
16. One day is spent each term reviewing the progress of all pupils on the register. Staff produce high-quality individual education plans for pupils. These are updated frequently and give a clear indication of the nature of the pupils' learning difficulties and problems, targets, the action to be taken and who is responsible for providing the support.
17. The school makes very good use of strategic funding for special educational needs. Most of this is used to provide additional staff to support pupils within the classroom. Excellent support is provided by the governor with responsibility for special educational needs, who is extremely well informed. She keeps regular contact with the learning support teacher, support assistants and teachers and keeps the governing body well informed. All aspects of the work to do with special educational needs are monitored thoroughly, and the governing body is kept well informed about what is happening.

18. The school's very good provision is having a significant impact on the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Good examples were observed during the inspection where positive intervention and well-directed help enabled such pupils to make good progress in their lessons. Pupils with particularly severe difficulties are well integrated, and both teachers and other pupils ensure that they take as full a part as possible. When pupils are withdrawn to be taught away from their class, there is good communication between the learning support teacher and the class teacher. Consideration is also given to pupils who are gifted and talented and may need specialised work in order to present them with suitable challenges.

The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.

19. The school provides a very caring and supportive environment for all pupils, who feel safe and secure and enjoy the learning experiences provided for them. Very good relationships between staff and pupils form the basis for this positive environment. Teachers know their pupils well and, through both formal and informal assessment and the very good records for pupils with special educational needs, have a very clear understanding of their pupils' needs. Many instances were noted during the inspection in which staff were very careful to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
20. Personal, social and health education is built into the curriculum. In science lessons, for example, pupils receive sex education and learn about healthy eating. In physical education, emphasis is given to the importance of exercise and healthy life-styles. Time is taken on other occasions to discuss matters of importance. Pupils in Year 5, for example, have had opportunities to discuss and learn how to deal with conflicts in the playground. Younger pupils have a regular circle time, during which they gain confidence to speak in front of others, and have opportunities to develop a personal response to important issues. In a good physical education lesson in Year 6, pupils were involved in activities which promoted a sense of trust and teamwork. Pupils were asked to guide a blindfolded partner along a bench and around obstacles. The challenge helped pupils to develop teamwork and a sense of trust in others.
21. The school helps pupils to develop an understanding of their own and other cultures. Prominence is given to local Cornish culture, for example, through some high quality displays. One assembly each week is led by people of different religious persuasions. During the inspection, for example, a Methodist youth worker helped to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of caring for our world and the responsibility we all have to be caretakers. The school has established an email link with a school in London whose pupils come from a much wider range of ethnic backgrounds.
22. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibility. During the inspection, many pupils were observed helping within the classroom or taking on wider responsibilities, such as helping with the organisation of the school assembly. Older pupils help younger pupils in the cloakroom and have made picture books for them. Representatives for a school council are elected in each class. The council has the opportunity to discuss matters with the headteacher and the voicing of opinions has brought about change.

The school provides good additional learning opportunities for pupils.

23. The school offers pupils a broad and balanced curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of additional learning opportunities. Pupils' experiences in art have been enhanced through a project, funded by the Education Action Zone, to create a sculpture trail in Tehidy Woods. Pupils were taught by a resident artist how to create three-dimensional models which, when finished with an appropriate varnish, are weather-resistant. Some of the resulting imaginary hybrid animals now form part of the sculpture trail, which has aroused local interest, and many others adorn various parts of the school, creating attractive displays. The finished products show evidence of high quality work.

24. The staff work hard to produce an attractive and stimulating learning environment. Good quality displays celebrate pupils' work in all subjects, and additional interesting information on display provides pupils with further learning opportunities. Following the example of 'Poems on the Underground', and to awaken an interest in poetry, staff, governors, pupils and visitors have contributed favourite poems which are carefully presented and displayed in many locations throughout the school.
25. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can attend a sketch club. Sporting activities include football, netball and cross-country and the school has had some success in competitive fixtures. Regular support from physical education specialists also enhances pupils' opportunities in this area. In music, pupils can learn to play the recorder or a brass instrument or participate in the choir. The recently introduced homework club is attended by a good number of pupils who can enhance their learning in various ways, including using computers. French is offered as part of the normal curriculum to pupils in Year 6. All pupils visit places of interest in connection with work studied in class. For example, pupils in the Reception class have visited a toy museum and health centre, pupils in Year 1 have visited a folk museum and those in Year 3 a church. Residential visits are provided for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
26. The musical tradition within the school is strong. The school choir of around 35 pupils has won local competitions and received commendations in county music festivals. During the inspection, the choir sang two songs. Pupils sang with obvious enjoyment, achieving a good standard of musicianship. Around 20 pupils are learning to play a brass instrument. A number of pupils were heard playing their instruments during the inspection. Their standard ranged from those who are beginning to play their first notes on a cornet to some very accomplished musicians who now also play in the local brass band outside school. A large group of other pupils is learning to play the recorder. The school also has a long tradition of annual plays and musicals, in which a large number of pupils achieve high standards of musicianship and acting.
27. In order to address a key issue following the last inspection, the local secondary school offered the school the use of its computer suite. As a result, pupils started to make rapid progress in acquiring information and communication technology skills. Funding from the Education Action Zone has enabled the school to improve its own facilities for teaching information and communication technology and to save the time and expense of transporting pupils to the secondary school. The previous coordinator designed and built some excellent movable workstations, each housing four computers. The stations can be moved easily from the classroom and are frequently grouped together in the school hall to form an instant computer suite. Not only do pupils respond very positively to the opportunity to work in this way, but standards are rising. Staff have received appropriate training, one of the learning support assistants acts as a technician and further possibilities of extending pupils' skills in information and communication technology are being explored. At present, pupils are working to create the school's own web site.
28. Another initiative which has been particularly successful is the pioneering work in the development of story-sacks and reading resource banks, which has involved much parental help. Each story-sack contains a reading text and a collection of resources which the teacher can use as teaching aids in connection with the story. Although use of the story-sacks was not observed during the inspection, this rich resource has had a good effect in creating positive attitudes towards reading.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' writing and speaking skills.

29. Although older pupils are keen to contribute in lessons, pupils' ability to express themselves orally is weak throughout the school. Initial assessments show that many pupils enter the school with poorly developed oral communication. Some of the younger children are very reticent to speak in front of others, but the very good relationships between staff and pupils quickly help them to overcome this. Staff are generally good at encouraging pupils to participate in class discussions and value their responses. However, they do not help or challenge pupils frequently enough to think of better ways of expressing themselves. Many are reluctant to correct or improve what pupils say, even when incorrect expressions are repeated.
30. Some useful formal opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking skills. Pupils in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, for example, were observed participating in circle time. The structure of these sessions is helping pupils to develop the ability to listen to what others have to say and to respond appropriately. However, in a class of 30 pupils, each individual receives only a brief opportunity to speak. Other adults were present during these sessions, but played little part, as proceedings were directed by the teacher. Splitting the class into smaller groups, each with adult direction, could have provided pupils with more intensive and useful practice.
31. A number of pupils require additional assistance from speech and language therapists but, because of a dearth of such specialists, they are not receiving this help at present. Funding from the Education Action Zone is providing full-time help for pupils in the area but, because of the backlog of work, pupils in this school will not benefit for some time.
32. The pupils' oral skills adversely affect their writing, which is the weakest aspect of their work. Standards in writing are below average at the end of both key stages. Pupils find it hard to write independently or at length, and much of their written work is inaccurate, with frequent spelling and grammatical errors. Few pupils have a wide range of expressive vocabulary, and many write in a colloquial style which is often inappropriate.
33. The school has already identified writing as one of its most important priorities for development and has initiated additional opportunities to help pupils to improve. Pupils in Year 6 are currently receiving additional help during the literacy hour, and an outstanding lesson and very good follow-up session provided pupils with an excellent stimulus for writing. One of the governors with business connections has secured sponsorship for a writing competition in order to provoke greater interest in writing. A useful new initiative in one class is the provision of a book in which pupils produce unaided writing, which is then marked according to National Curriculum levels and targets are set. There are few such pieces of work at present, but the initiative has the potential to provide a clear record of pupils' progress and give clear indication of what they need to do to improve.
34. In the Reception class, all children are developing the ability to write their own name unaided. The older children are starting to write individual words, using the help of a word book and adult guidance. In one lesson observed during the inspection, children were encouraged to write about what they had done at the weekend. However, the repetition of the same exercise at the start of every week does little to develop the pupils' ability to broaden the scope of their writing. In general, not enough opportunities are provided for the younger pupils to write in other contexts.

35. Although purposeful use is made of the literacy hour, there are insufficient opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their ability to write at length. Much of the work in English is done on worksheets which involve pupils in writing single words or short-sentence answers. Although these help to cover certain basics in English, they do not help pupils to develop the ability to write in continuous sentences or produce extended writing.
36. Although pupils produce some written work for other subjects, including history, geography and science, not enough is done to develop pupils' writing skills through such work. Some of the written tasks given in these subjects involve little more than copy-writing, which does not help pupils to develop writing skills. In a lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils copied details of an experiment from a pre-printed sheet, inserting just the initial prediction and final results.
37. Some of the pupils' written work in English is corrected carefully and pupils are given clear indication of how they can improve their writing. However, when pupils produce written work for other subjects, little attention is given to the correctness of their writing or their range of expression. As a result, mistakes are perpetuated and pupils receive no guidance on how they can improve the quality of their writing. When work is corrected, pupils are rarely asked to revise what they have written, and there are few examples of pupils improving on what they have done and learning from their mistakes.
38. The quality of pupils' handwriting varies throughout the school, but many pupils find it difficult to present their work well. In some classes, pupils are not helped by the writing implements they are given. In one class, for example, young pupils were attempting to write with very short pencil stubs which they were unable to grip properly.

Pupils' ability to work independently.

39. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility and independence. Older pupils take on roles of responsibility and carry them out effectively, for example helping to set the hall up for assembly. Others represent their peers on the school council. However, not enough is done to help pupils to become independent learners.
40. Whilst the teachers set very good examples by the quality and presentation of displays throughout the school, the same high standards are not demanded of the pupils. For special occasions, pupils show the ability to present individual pieces of work well, but this is not the case with much of the pupils' recorded work, which is frequently untidy. Teachers need to set higher expectations as to the standard of presentation which is acceptable. Outside the Key Stage 1 classrooms, for example, are booklets which contain samples of pupils' work, which have been collated and presented by the class teacher. These present an attractive reminder of work undertaken during a lesson or on a particular topic. However, pupils are not encouraged to gather together their own samples of work, for example on a history project, and present them in a similar manner. The school also lacks good exemplars of past work which could be used to indicate clearly to pupils the standards expected and to inspire them to produce work of equally high, or better, quality themselves.
41. In some classes, the teacher's expectations as to the amount of work which pupils ought to complete in a lesson are not high enough. In one class, for example, pupils were given a task which they finished quickly and well before the end of the allotted time. The pupils then sat, quietly but unproductively, until the teacher noticed that they were unoccupied. However, the pupils had not been prepared to cope with such situations and did not exercise their own independence and initiative by occupying their time with other fruitful activities.
42. Although learning support assistants play a very valuable role in helping pupils, the large amount of adult support does not help to develop pupils' ability to work independently. At

times, it even contributes to a lack of challenge for the more able pupils. Because there is always somebody at hand to answer their questions or direct their learning, pupils frequently rely on adult assistance, rather than working things out for themselves. Many pupils are still very dependent on the support provided by the teacher or learning support assistant and have not yet learned how to tackle problems or tasks using their own initiative.

43. Pupils enjoy practical work in science, but they have yet to develop the ability to devise, conduct and record their own investigations. They are happy to follow instructions, but many find it difficult to use their own initiative. This is also reflected in the way their work is recorded, and pupils are not developing the ability to use a wide range of methods, such as diagrams, drawings, tables and charts, to communicate their findings and data in an appropriate manner.
44. In one class, the quality of learning is impaired by a small minority of pupils who find it difficult to work independently. In two lessons observed during the inspection, there was a continuous under-current of noise while the teacher explained the tasks and again when the pupils were asked to work on their own in small groups. The pupils' lack of concentration, and inability to work independently, not only affected their own understanding of what they had to do, but distracted others from listening.

The level of attendance.

45. The level of attendance is very poor. In the previous academic year, the attendance rate was below 90 per cent, which is amongst the lowest two per cent of schools in the country. This marked a significant fall from the previous year, when the attendance rate was just above the national average.
46. The school follows appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day and has clear mechanisms for following up any absences. Letters are sent out every term to remind parents about attendance, and further letters are sent to individual parents when their children's absence is causing concern. The headteacher also meets with parents whose children persistently arrive late. The school contacts the educational welfare officer if necessary, although there are frequently difficulties in making contact. It is not immediately clear why the level of attendance is so low. The attendance of some pupils is affected by seasonal work, but rarely by parents taking extended holidays, as is the case in some schools. It would appear that the absence of some pupils is condoned by their parents or, in some cases, encouraged because it is more convenient for the parents for their child not to attend school. However, the absence rate is such that, on average, each child misses one day of school every two weeks. This rate of absenteeism not only adversely affects pupils' learning, but imposes heavy additional burdens on the teachers and the school's administrative staff.
47. An unacceptable number of pupils arrive late in the morning, which prevents a brisk, orderly start to the day. Many classes set pupils individual mathematical or English tasks to complete during the first 20 minutes of the day and this period acts as a buffer zone, absorbing those pupils who arrive late without interrupting the flow of a lesson. Whilst these tasks can be useful, they occupy valuable time which could otherwise be used for teaching.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve, the governors, headteacher and staff should work together to:

- i. Improve pupils' writing and speaking skills by:
- providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake written tasks within the context of other subjects, and using these to improve the quality of their writing;
 - becoming less reliant on the use of worksheets as a medium for recording pupils' work;
 - being much more rigorous when marking the pupils' work, and indicating ways in which the pupils can improve;
 - ensuring that pupils fulfil instructions to revise, redraft or complete pieces of work;
 - providing more formal opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills;
 - using every opportunity to help pupils to develop their powers of oral expression and the range of vocabulary which they use.
- ii Help the pupils to become more self-sufficient in their learning by:
- encouraging them from the earliest stages to reduce their dependence on adult help and to develop the ability to work independently;
 - providing more opportunities for them to devise and carry out their own investigative work in science;
 - helping them to develop a greater pride in the quality of their finished work;
 - teaching them how to develop their critical faculties by reviewing their own work more rigorously and providing critical evaluation of the work of others more frequently;
 - ensuring that the small minority of pupils whose attention is poor in some lessons improve their ability to concentrate and participate effectively.
- iii Improve the levels of attendance and punctuality by working closely with parents and relevant agencies.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of formal discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils [In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	14	45	38	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	200
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	63

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	11.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.7
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	14	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	7	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	24	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (85)	84 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	7
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	21	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	88 (89)	84 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	9	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	6	7	7
	Total	14	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (64)	90 (76)	90 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	11	11
	Girls	5	7	7
	Total	12	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (96)	90 (76)	90 (96)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	179
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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	234

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	320,368
Total expenditure	323,767
Expenditure per pupil	1,770
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,836
Balance carried forward to next year	28,437

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	196
Number of questionnaires returned	54
Percentage of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	33	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	46	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	54	9	4	0
The teaching is good.	59	39	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	56	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	28	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	52	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	55	42	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	37	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	43	13	2	9

Other issues raised by parents

49. Parents are generally very pleased with what the school has to offer. Apart from a greater range of extra-curricular activities, a small number of parents said that they would appreciate more opportunities for their children to learn to use computers in Key Stage 1, although they acknowledged that the provision for information and communication technology is rapidly improving.