

INSPECTION REPORT

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burnham-on-Crouch

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114821

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Twigg

Reporting inspector: Colin Henderson
23742

Dates of inspection: 26th – 27th September 2001

Inspection number: 194039

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dunkirk Road Burnham-on-Crouch Essex
Postcode:	CM0 8LG
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss C Jones
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burnham-on-Crouch Primary is a larger than average primary school. Pupils come from many different parts of the town. It currently has 424 pupils on roll (207 boys and 217 girls). Numbers have increased considerably since the last inspection. The school is fully subscribed in some year groups and teaching space is limited in some classrooms. Recent building changes have improved the facilities for the Reception classes and on the school playground and field. The pupils are mainly of white, United Kingdom ethnic backgrounds. Only two per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups or have English as an additional language. Nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is similar to the national average. The school has 61 pupils (14 per cent) on its register of special educational needs, covering a wide range of different emotional, sensory and learning needs. There are five pupils (1.2 per cent) with Statements of Special Educational Need. This is average within the local education authority area. There is a wide range of attainment when children start school although, for most, it meets the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burnham-on-Crouch Primary is a good, caring and supportive school, with many very good features. Pupils have very enthusiastic and interested attitudes to their learning. They achieve above average standards of attainment at the ages of 7 and 11, promoted by good teaching and very good relationships. The headteacher, working in an excellent partnership with her deputy and staff team, provides very good leadership and management. Good financial planning enables the school to give good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve standards that are above the national average, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good and frequently very good, for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It enables them to make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school. They behave very well and relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The leadership and management are very good. The excellent partnership between the headteacher and her deputy is clearly focused on school improvement. They have created a strong team approach with all staff and are supported well by the enthusiastic governing body.
- It has very good arrangements for educating pupils with special educational needs.
- The partnership with parents is very good and contributes significantly to the standards attained.

What could be improved

- Teachers' expectations of literacy and mathematical development of more able children in the Foundation Stage.
- The consistent use of assessment information by all teachers to identify pupils' specific weaknesses in their learning and to implement strategies consistently throughout the school to improve the weaknesses identified.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in April 1997. The strengths identified in pupils' attitudes, behaviour, leadership and management, links with parents and teaching, have been maintained at a high level. Standards of attainment have improved, particularly in mathematics and science by the time pupils are eleven years of age. The key issues of developing assessment and recording systems and using them more consistently to set appropriate work, have improved considerably. The school has developed curriculum teams to co-ordinate subjects. These have established an effective, co-operative approach, although their monitoring and evaluation role is not fully developed. Limited progress has been made on the issue of ensuring consistently high standards in classes for the under-fives. The role of the governing body has improved significantly and governors are purposefully involved in school management. The school continues to give good value for money.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	C	B	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	C	C	B	B

Key

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

Standards have improved since the last inspection. Test results show that attainment in mathematics at the age of 11 has been maintained at a high level. Attainment in English and science has improved and is above average. Inspection evidence confirms these above average standards. The school has exceeded its target for the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 4 or above in English and mathematics in 2000 and 2001. For example, its target for English in 2001 was 72 per cent and it achieved 88 per cent. Good subject knowledge supports good teaching and promotes high standards, especially in science and mathematics. The school received an Achievement Award for the consistent improvement in its standards by pupils aged 11 years. Inspection evidence shows that attainment at 7 years of age is improving. Standards are above average in reading and mathematics. They are average in writing. Each year more pupils are achieving above average standards in national tests; for example, 26 per cent achieved above average standards in mathematics in 2001 compared with 18 per cent last year. Improved subject expertise has enabled teachers to teach with increasing confidence and effectiveness.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons. They have enthusiastic attitudes and are keen to learn and succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons, assemblies and around the school. Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful. They play and work together very well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop in maturity and confidence. The way they care about each other adds considerably to the school's supportive approach. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Good. Levels are above the national average. Each school session starts promptly and efficiently.

Pupils' enthusiastic attitudes and high standards of behaviour are strengths of the school. The caring, supportive approach promotes very good relationships and pupils' enjoyment of school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6. It is frequently very good, especially in Years 3 to 6. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is sound. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. The high quality of teaching is a significant factor in promoting high standards. The teaching of English is good and enables pupils to develop above average literacy skills, especially in reading. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers' good subject knowledge, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is used very effectively to extend pupils' numeracy skills. Teachers challenge pupils successfully to apply their skills to solve problems and achieve high standards. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes. They manage them very effectively to ensure that they sustain their interest and concentration. Most teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour to which pupils readily respond. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching and support staff work very closely together to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is sound overall. In these classes, teachers are good in promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Their expectation of children's attainment in other areas of learning, for example language and mathematical development, is not consistently high enough.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school has focused strongly on literacy and numeracy. It has retained a broad and relevant programme to meet the wide range of interests and abilities. The curriculum is enhanced through good resources for information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Very good management enables high quality support staff to work closely with teachers to meet these pupils' needs. Pupils make very good progress towards their precise individual learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	It is good for the small number of pupils. Their English language needs are quickly assessed and suitable work programmes developed and implemented.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Very good social and moral provision promotes high quality relationships. Pupils have a clear sense of what is right and wrong and understand their social responsibilities. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to appreciate the values and traditions of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are very good. The staff know pupils well and show great concern for their welfare.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. It enables them to be fully included in all activities and achieve good standards in relation to their ability. The school has a very good partnership with parents. They work closely together, especially in the number of parents who help in school and in raising extra funds to improve resources and facilities. This strong partnership is a significant influence in enabling pupils to achieve above average standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher works in close partnership with her deputy to provide excellent leadership, clearly focused on improvement. The strong, co-operative approach between staff contributes positively to school effectiveness. Curriculum teams work successfully together, although their monitoring roles are not fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are enthusiastic, supportive and very committed to working closely with the headteacher and her staff. They keep fully informed of developments by attending regular training and meetings. They frequently visit school and fulfil their responsibilities successfully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has improved the range and use of attainment information to monitor pupils' performance and identify weaknesses. Some teachers use pupils' improvement targets but these are not consistently used to focus on improving individual pupils' standards. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are good and used effectively to maintain high standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good development planning and the very good use of people, time and resources ensure a stimulating and high quality education. Finances are efficiently used and the principles of best value are applied effectively.

The excellent leadership and strong-team approach are key factors in achieving and maintaining high standards. Everyone working in school is clearly committed to its success. The very active and supportive parent-teacher association makes a considerable contribution to raising additional funding to benefit pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental responses from 143 questionnaires (34 per cent) and from 21 parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. It helps them to grow in confidence and mature. • The high expectations of their children enable them to make good progress. • The school is well managed and led. • Very good behaviour. • Teaching is good. • The school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents disagree with the amount of homework that is set. • Some parents felt that they were not fully informed about their child's progress. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team fully supports the parents' positive views. Inspectors found that the amount of homework was appropriate for the age of the pupils and supported the work done in school. The school is trying to extend the range of extra-curricular clubs, especially for infant pupils. The range of information, through letters and meetings, about pupils' progress is good. The school is always willing to see parents about any concerns they may have about their child's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve standards that are above the national average, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

1. Standards at the age of 11 have improved in both English and science since the last inspection and are now above the national average. Attainment in mathematics has been maintained since the last inspection at a level that is well above the national average. The results of the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 and 2001 showed that the school considerably exceeded its targets for the proportion of pupils achieving the national average Level 4 or above in English and mathematics. The school achieved 88 per cent in English in 2001, compared with a target of 72 per cent. This improved on the 85 per cent achieved in 2000. This was above the national average and above the average of similar schools. It achieved 84 per cent in mathematics compared with a target of 68 per cent. The school had achieved 82 per cent in 2000. This was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Targets were originally based on a limited range of attainment information. The school has now increased its range of attainment information and has evaluated the impact of such initiatives as 'booster classes' and additional literacy sessions. It plans to make future targets in English and mathematics more challenging and build effectively on the recent improvements. Ninety per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above in science in 2001, with one out of every three pupils achieving above average standards. This was in line with the results attained in 2000 and is above both the average for all schools nationally and the average for similar schools.
2. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they are 11 years old. The school received a School Achievement Award in Summer 2001 for the consistent improvement in standards at 11 years of age. The key factors in achieving above average standards are:
 - good teaching. Teachers use good subject knowledge, especially in science and mathematics to fully extend more able pupils to achieve above average levels;
 - the effective use of ability banding in Year 6 enables the work to be matched closely to the needs of different groups of pupils;
 - the good implementation of the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy. Teachers have been particularly successful in improving pupils' mental mathematical skills. They maintain a brisk pace and a good range of challenging questions to ensure that pupils apply their knowledge to solve problems and explain the strategies they used;
 - pupils' positive and interested approach to their work. Many of the pupils who talked to inspectors about their work indicated that mathematics was their favourite subject – *'It is fun trying to work out the answers as quick as you can!'*;
 - a well-structured curriculum programme that enables all aspects to be covered fully. It is also planned well to enable an effective review of the skills and topics at the end of each unit and prior to pupils taking the national tests.
3. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and have developed a high level of reading skills. Teachers promote these skills effectively through regular reading activities. They closely monitor pupils' progress through assessing reading ages every half term. These are closely tracked to ensure consistent progress and are shared with pupils and their parents through the Reading Record Book. Teachers share a good range of texts to encourage pupils to use a broader range of language, both in their spoken replies and in their written work. For example, in a Year 6 literacy activity, pupils read from different texts and had a good discussion on the different genre and writing styles. This resulted in pupils suggesting some very interesting opening lines for their written work. For example,

'It's cold and miserable! And it's Monday!' set a sombre tone from which further ideas were developed. Pupils' written work clearly reflects the effective teaching of spelling, punctuation, grammar and a fluent, joined and legible handwriting style. For example, teachers identify a list of frequently misspelt words, such as 'interesting' and 'receive'. They strongly focus on the reasons for these misspellings, either a particular sound blend or the incorrect way in which pupils may pronounce the word. This increases pupils' understanding of how the word should be accurately pronounced and spelt.

4. Standards of pupils' extended written work is not as high as other aspects of their literacy work. The school is aware of this weakness and is focused on ways in which this can be improved. There were many examples of story writing that contained an interesting opening. However, pupils do not develop their stories in enough detail through imaginative ideas and a clear development. For example, a more able Year 6 pupil developed a very detailed opening that included – '*The three huddled together in suspense – what was going to happen?*' This captured the reader's interest. Unfortunately the story line, of the eventual capsizing of the boat and resulting rescue, was completed in five sentences. It did not maintain the initial high standard in its detail and use of imaginative writing.
5. Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics by the time they are 11 years of age. Most Year 6 pupils have above average number skills and apply them successfully to solve challenging problems. For example, they used their mental number skills quickly and accurately to work out the average and median of a sequence of numbers. Most pupils used specific mathematical vocabulary, such as 'mode', 'mean' and 'range', confidently and accurately when working on number sequence problems. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that learning activities are matched closely to the needs of the different ability bands. Their good subject knowledge enables pupils to be challenged consistently to consolidate and then extend their skills and knowledge. This applies similarly in science. Teachers use their very good subject knowledge, especially when working with the more able pupils, to plan interesting practical activities and promote scientific enquiry skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 6 investigation into the best temperature at which stains are removed, pupils used their observation skills very carefully and recorded their results in detail. They noted that the stain had left the edges of the material more quickly than in the middle. They used their scientific reasoning to explain that the boiling had 'irritated' the water more at the edge of the container. Some pupils had then explained how they could check their hypothesis by repeating the activity using a different stain to see if they got similar results.
6. Standards at seven years of age have improved since the last inspection. They are above average in reading and mathematics. They are average in writing. More pupils are achieving above average standards in national tests, particularly in reading and mathematics. For example, 38 per cent achieved above the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, compared with 26 per cent last year. Twenty-six per cent achieved higher than average levels in mathematics compared with 18 per cent last year. Two per cent of pupils achieved a level that is the nationally expected standard for 11-year-olds. Improved subject confidence in both Years 1 and 2 enable teachers to extend pupils' number knowledge and understanding skilfully. For example, in a Year 1 activity to develop pupils' knowledge and use of coins, the teacher used questions effectively to enable pupils to accurately describe and identify a 5p coin in a 'feely bag'. She then extended the activity to enable pupils to know which other coins could be used to have the same value as the 5p; for example, $2p + 2p + 1p$. One more able pupil explained that $2p = 2 \times 1p$ so 5p could be $2p + (2 \times 1p) + 1p$.

7. The proportion of pupils achieving above average standards in writing improved in the national tests for seven-year-olds from 6 per cent in 2000 to 12 per cent in 2001. However, inspection evidence shows that more able pupils are not consistently achieving higher standards. Teachers do not always ensure that writing activities are broad enough to enable more able writers to extend their skills. For example, after a good Year 1 shared reading session, the group writing activity did not enable those pupils who could write independently to extend their skills beyond writing simple words. This also applied in the Reception class. Attainment on entry to the school is broad, although average overall. Children settle happily into the Reception class and quickly adjust to school routines. However, the expectation is not consistently high enough for those children who start school with above average skills, especially those in literacy and mathematics (see paragraph 28). This does not always ensure that children achieve consistently the standards of which they are capable by the time they enter Year 1.

Teaching is good, and frequently very good, for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It enables them to make good progress in their learning.

8. Thirty-three lessons were observed. Teaching was very good in 14 lessons and good in a further nine. It was never less than sound. Teaching has been maintained at the high level reported in the last inspection. Very good teaching was observed in all years from Year 1 to Year 6. Teaching was consistently very good, and occasionally excellent, in Years 5 and 6. This consistently high quality teaching is a significant factor in enabling pupils to achieve above, often well above, average standards by the age of 11 years. Teaching was sound overall in the Foundation Stage.
9. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and often very good. Teachers are particularly successful in implementing the school's numeracy strategy. This is promoting high standards, for example in pupils applying their mental number skills. In a Year 6 numeracy activity, the teacher challenged pupils to use their mental skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication to manipulate numbers rapidly and gain an exact number. Some pupils worked effectively together, quickly worked it out and then explained their mental calculations to the rest of the class. For example, three pupils co-operated to work out three calculations for 1,200, 500 and 59 then put them together. The teacher maintained a brisk pace by frequently asking more challenging questions. She used her own very good mental mathematical ability to quickly challenge the most able and also give some guidance, for example multiplying by 10 or 100, to assist those who found it difficult. All pupils were very attentive and excited by the challenge of the task. They achieved high standards of work and thoroughly enjoyed the activity.
10. Teachers use an effective range of different strategies to promote pupils' skills during literacy sessions and early reading research activities. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson on instructional writing, the teacher had successfully used 'making a jam sandwich' as an activity on which to focus pupils' interest and attention. The teacher reminded the pupils that they had enjoyed watching her get into difficulties when trying to put the butter on the bread through its packaging. They had forgotten to instruct her to take the bread out of the packet first! Pupils were clearly reminded of the need to ensure the correct order of the sequence and the accuracy in their written instructions. Teachers encourage pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to support standards in some other subjects, for example, when recording investigations in science. However, there was limited evidence of these skills being widely used in a range of other subjects.
11. Teachers plan their lessons in detail. They work very effectively within their phase teams to ensure that their plans include activities to meet the needs of the full range of abilities. They clearly identify how support staff are going to be used and ways in which more able pupils are to be extended. For example, Year 2 literacy plans indicate exactly how the learning activities are to meet the needs of the five ability groups. These ensure that

lessons are well structured and effective use is made of teaching time. Teachers clearly identify specific learning objectives for each part of the lesson. These are shared consistently with pupils to give them a good understanding of what they are trying to achieve and to see how successful they have been. For example, in a feedback activity at the end of a Years 5 and 6 literacy lesson, the objective was to identify and discuss the difficulties they found in writing their 'cautionary tales'. Pupils talked confidently to the rest of the class and indicated particular problems they had encountered, especially those trying to write in rhyme. This led on to a detailed consideration of how different rhyming patterns could make their cautionary tale more difficult to read. This successful activity met its objective and clearly improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of their writing.

12. Many teachers have good subject knowledge and they use it successfully to extend pupils' skills and understanding. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson, the teacher's excellent knowledge of 'plants' was used very effectively to promote pupils' knowledge and use of such specific terms as *embryo*, *sepal*, *parasites* and *aphids*. When pupils were considering food chains later in the lesson, the teacher used the discussion to extend pupils' understanding of such terms as *photosynthesis*. This enabled them to increase their knowledge of how plants make their own food and become an important first link in a food chain.
13. Although there have been a number of changes in the teaching staff since the last inspection, relationships between teachers and their classes remain very good and are a strength. Teachers manage their classes very effectively to ensure that they sustain their interest and concentration. They give due recognition and reward to those pupils who successfully answer a question or complete a considerable amount of work. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 literacy activity, pupils applauded the efforts of several of their classmates who had made a particular effort to complete a lengthy piece of written work. Teachers are relaxed and confident in their relationships with their classes and pupils enjoy learning. This was clearly evident in an assembly when, having greeted the pupils with 'Good morning everyone', the headteacher then conducted their musical response of 'Good morning, Mrs Twiiiiiiiggggg!' The opportunity to greet the visiting vicar in a similar manner was undertaken in the same controlled and friendly way.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They behave very well and relationships throughout the school are very good.

14. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. There is a strong sense and expectation that they come to school to learn. In lessons, they are eager to participate. For example, in a Year 5 numeracy class, there was a buzz of excitement as pupils went to their group work. Pupils are smartly dressed, take pride in their school and are enthusiastic in explaining or demonstrating their work. High quality teaching maintains pupils' interest and attention.
15. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate of each other's needs and feelings. For example, they are genuinely anxious to help one another to solve a problem. Parents felt that their children's behaviour in school was very good. This was borne out by observations during the inspection. Racial disharmony or intolerance towards the less able are not issues at this school.
16. Personal development is promoted successfully from Reception onwards. Initially, simple tasks are allocated. As pupils mature, the range increases, particularly towards the end of Year 6. The older ones care for the younger ones. Peer support groups provide a caring and sympathetic 'friend' so that pupils can discuss concerns in confidence. Year 6 pupils take pride in wearing their yellow hats to identify themselves as 'support friends'. The school is developing a 'School Council' in order to provide further opportunities for

pupils to express their views. A Year 6 pupil confidently commented that, *'You can get your view over to someone who will listen – maybe even go to Mrs Twigg!'*

17. Pupils are mature in their outlook and confident with adults, yet never impolite. They know right from wrong. They extend courtesies to adults and amongst themselves. They discuss the strengths of their school with considerable confidence and insight. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils discussed homework and presented their different views eloquently and without fear of interruption. Some were aware that, although they did not always enjoy homework, they knew that 'the school was preparing them for when they go on to secondary school'.

The leadership and management are very good. The excellent partnership between the headteacher and her deputy is focused clearly on school improvement. They have created a strong team approach with all staff and are supported well by the enthusiastic governing body.

18. The headteacher continues to provide very effective leadership for the work of the school as reported in the last inspection. Her positive influence in developing and maintaining a strong, team approach is valued by the parents, 98 per cent of whom agreed that the school is well led and managed. Additionally, there were many positive comments from staff, parents, governors and pupils about the excellent working partnership between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They are constantly to be seen around the school, supporting staff and praising and encouraging pupils to achieve their best. Parents and pupils feel that they can approach either of the senior managers and are confident in knowing that any concerns they may have will be listened to and investigated.
19. Both the headteacher and her deputy have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They monitor standards of attainment by collecting and analysing an increasing range of attainment information. They carefully monitor and evaluate teaching and learning each half term and provide constructive feedback to teachers. This allows the headteacher and deputy headteacher to maintain a good understanding of teaching strengths and to point out any development points, which enables teachers to extend their skills. The senior management team use this knowledge to provide a strong direction, through good development planning and personal guidance and influence, to focus on school improvement. For example, the procedures to train and support new teachers are very good. The senior staff ensure that each new teacher is valued and supported. They are monitored closely and given training where needed to improve their teaching. This has enabled the school to adjust to a 40 per cent change in staff since the last inspection and still maintain its high standards of teaching and learning.
20. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on teamwork and the important part played by teaching, support staff, administrative and ancillary staff and the many adults who come into school and help with the pupils' learning. The headteacher has extended the team approach successfully into the way in which subjects are co-ordinated. The role of the subject co-ordinator, an issue at the last inspection, has been developed through creating curriculum teams for all subjects. Each team includes staff from different age-phases in the school. Although these teams are in their early stages of development, they are contributing significantly to enhancing the successful team ethos. They enable teachers to work closely together and understand what is being covered in each phase. The teams show some understanding of the standards being achieved in their subject in classes other than their own. However, the procedures to enable team members to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and to share good practice are not yet fully effective.

21. The involvement of the governing body and its contribution to managing the school has improved since the last inspection. Several new governors have taken up their roles in the last few years. Governors benefit from good quality training from the local education authority's support service and they play a full role in an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and supportive governing body. Governors visit school regularly to monitor what is being taught, for example, in literacy and numeracy. They feel that their views are valued and contribute to shaping the direction of the school's work. Governors have a very good understanding of school improvement priorities. They use this knowledge very effectively to work closely with the staff, especially the headteacher and her deputy, to ensure that the school finances are targeted efficiently on promoting improvement. For example, governors have used funds effectively and are using some of the current financial balance to implement further improvements, to enhance facilities within the school and its surrounding playground and field. These enable the school to overcome some of the difficulties caused by a shortage of space and provide a high quality environment.

The school has very good arrangements for educating pupils with special educational needs.

22. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff use assessment information very effectively to identify areas of weakness and plan activities to enable these pupils to be fully included in the range of curriculum activities. Each pupil with special educational needs has a detailed individual education plan with manageable and precise targets based on clear long-term objectives. These plans are used very successfully as working documents. Each class teacher works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator and senior learning support assistant to complete on-going reviews of the pupils' work and progress. They add comments and evaluations to the education plan, which allows them to monitor and record progress and amend the plan if needed. Pupils benefit in lessons from the skilled support of the special educational needs co-ordinator, together with enthusiastic, knowledgeable and well-trained learning support staff. The school uses very effective one-to-one support to meet specific individual learning weaknesses or uncertainties, for example, speech difficulties or the early stages of English language development. This enables these pupils to make very good progress. This is clearly reflected in the results they attain in national tests. For example, some pupils, with support from a reader as allowed in the tests, achieved average standards in mathematics and science. One pupil with special educational needs achieved an above average standard. The results of the early reading research assessments show that pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving reading ages in line with their chronological age.
23. The school has made every effort to develop activities that focus on pupils' specific needs. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator and support staff, assisted by parents and some older pupils, organise a 'Gym Trail' in the hall before the start of morning school. This is well organised and encourages pupils to enjoy a good range of exercises and to improve their motor co-ordination skills. The school is also trying to ensure that more able pupils are challenged enough to extend and apply their knowledge. The senior learning support assistant, supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator and a nominated governor, are currently developing a programme of enrichment sessions for more able pupils. This is contributing to the increasing proportion of pupils achieving above average standards, especially in literacy and numeracy.

The partnership between the school and parents is very good. This link contributes significantly towards the high standards achieved. The parent views are very positive. They value the efforts made by the school in caring for and educating their children.

24. The school has the overwhelming support of parents. This is confirmed through questionnaires, the parents' meeting and discussions during the inspection. Minor areas of concern from the previous report have been addressed fully. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher maintain a high profile around the school. They are easily accessible and this has developed into a good rapport with both children and parents. The staff have a very good knowledge of both the children and their families. For example, two members of staff immediately provided sympathy and comfort to a distressed child. Whilst doing so, the whole day was planned to ensure that support would be maintained. Parents feel trust and confidence in their dealings with the staff.
25. The school provides a good range of information for parents. Homework diaries are kept accurately and up-to-date. Staff provide feedback to parents on points raised. The school has provided workshops to explain to parents its teaching of literacy and numeracy. These have been well supported. The pupil's annual report provides parents or carers with a detailed picture of their child and sets clear targets for improvement.
26. A very supportive parent-teacher association provides another tier of communication between parents and school. Substantial sums of money are raised and much needed resources purchased. Parent helpers are used effectively in and around school. As a result of this support, the quality of education is enhanced significantly.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Teachers' expectations of literacy and mathematical development of children in the Foundation Stage.

27. Teachers in the Foundation Stage promote children's personal, social and emotional development successfully. They settle them quickly into the routines of school life and use praise and encouragement effectively to enable them to understand what is required of them. For example, the teacher in Reception used praise to illustrate how one particular pupil was behaving in an expected way; '*Look, he is standing beautifully and showing us all how to do it. Can we all try to stand like him?*' This encouraged all the children to copy his behaviour and try to please the teacher and meet her expectations. The Reception teacher plans in detail to cover the required areas of learning. She has very good relationships with the children and manages them successfully. She organises a range of activities to ensure that they all know what they can do. The teacher guides the children effectively to ensure that they are purposefully involved. For example, when a small group of boys wanted to play with toy vehicles, the teacher pointed to the symbols under the heading '*Now you may do...*'. She explained that that activity was not available today and that they must look at pictures and choose one from the list. She used the words underneath the pictures to reinforce the children's early reading skills successfully.
28. However, the range of learning activities, especially those promoting children's knowledge and skills in language, literacy and communication and mathematical development, is not broad enough to challenge more able children. For example, some children who already use writing as a way of communicating are not challenged enough to extend their writing skills. One girl wrote, 'I went to the sea' independently and used her developing knowledge of sounds to write them accurately then read them back. There was no suitable writing activity that allowed her to develop and apply these skills. Although assessment information shows a broad range of attainment on entry, there was little evidence of this being used to ensure that the learning activities contained more challenging activities for more able children. Teachers' planning and a scrutiny of some

work from the last school year confirm that activities are based on the children's term of entry rather than their range of ability. There were few opportunities for children to extend their independent writing skills. Too many of the number-based activities were the same for all children and simply required the colouring of a specific number of objects. The lack of consistent challenge to more able children does not ensure that they always achieve standards of which they are capable by the end of their Reception year.

The consistent use of assessment information by all teachers to identify pupils' specific weaknesses in their learning and to implement strategies consistently throughout the school to improve the weaknesses identified.

29. The school uses an increasing range of assessment information to identify what pupils do well and what they could improve. For example, the senior management team has recently analysed the 2001 national test results in detail, to illustrate any areas on which teachers need to focus this school year. They have used this information to modify curriculum and teaching plans and to identify key priorities for the school development plan. For example, weaknesses in pupils' extended writing have led to teachers focusing on aspects of the structure of written work, such as 'the introduction', 'the middle' and 'the end' in developing a story. The deputy headteacher, in her role of monitoring the curriculum, ensures that teachers identify specific assessments in their plans to give a focus to their monitoring of pupils' learning. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which assessment information is used to identify weaknesses and target their improvement. For example, teachers do not identify focused assessments consistently, which support school improvement priorities, such as boys' writing. This does not ensure that these weaknesses are consistently and frequently evaluated.
30. In many lessons, pupils regularly evaluate the standard of their own work and contribute to evaluating the achievements of others. Some teachers encourage pupils to identify specific targets for improving their own work. This enables them to look carefully at their work and seek to raise the standard. This is not done in all classes. There are many examples of good practice in the school, on evaluating the quality of work and in the analysis and use of assessment information. However, they are not used consistently or focused enough on improving pupils' weaknesses, to make a significant impact on raising standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. In the context of its many strengths and the high quality of education it already provides, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:
- (1) raise teachers' expectations of children's attainment in literacy and mathematical development in the Foundation Stage;
 - (2) use assessment information consistently to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning and implement strategies consistently throughout the school to improve these weaknesses.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

33

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

13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	14	9	9	0	0	0
Percentage	3	42	27	27	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.

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)	424
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	43
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	61
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
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 2)

2001 test results have not been included as the national average figures are not available.

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	30	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	26
	Girls	40	40	40
	Total	65	66	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (90)	92 96	92 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 83	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	26
	Girls	38	42	36
	Total	64	70	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (92)	97 (93)	86 (85)
	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 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	43	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	36	36	39
	Girls	21	19	22
	Total	58	55	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (75)	82 (90)	91 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	35	28
	Girls	20	20	15
	Total	51	55	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (85)	83 (90)	64 (95)
	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	3
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	381
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	353

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	808,769
Total expenditure	819,089
Expenditure per pupil	1,809
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,761
Balance carried forward to next year	34,441

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 33.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out	424
Number of questionnaires returned	143

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	37	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	2	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	53	10	1	2
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	42	10	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	24	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	43	48	6	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	44	9	3	14