

INSPECTION REPORT

NOAK BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Noak Bridge, Basildon

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 124067

Headteacher: Mrs Shirley Scammell

Reporting inspector: Mr Douglas Hayward
21234

Dates of inspection: 4th – 5th July 2000

Inspection number: 225282

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Coppice Lane
Noak Bridge
Basildon
Essex

Postcode: SS15 4JS

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ray Page

Date of previous inspection: January 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Noak Bridge is a small primary school situated in the village of Noak Bridge near Basildon in Essex. The school was built 19 years ago and is semi-open plan in design. Many new houses have been built in the immediate area and the number of pupils on roll has grown over the last three years. The school has now reached its capacity.

Currently there are 168 pupils on roll. They are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five years old. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups or speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (29 per cent) is above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs (29 per cent) and those with statements of special educational needs (one per cent) are above the national averages. The attainment of many pupils on entry to the school is below that expected nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Noak Bridge Primary is clearly a school that makes a difference. The school has achieved considerable success by improving pupils' results in national tests at the ages of seven and eleven. It places great importance not only on how well pupils do in the '3 Rs', but also on how they work and play together and how they treat each other. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- It helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make very good progress from the time they enter school until they leave at eleven years of age.
- Teaching is very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and work very well as a team. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are particularly skilled at achieving good behaviour in lessons.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has a clear idea of how the school can become even better. The deputy headteacher, governors and all staff provide very good support.
- The school has an excellent ethos. It emphasises the importance of caring for each other. It helps pupils to become very good learners, to believe in their own ability, to be proud of what they can achieve and to develop responsibility. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
- The school makes very good links with parents. It values the support that they provide.

What could be improved

- Systems for setting targets and monitoring pupils' work to make teaching and learning even better.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997 when it was judged to provide sound value for money. Standards attained by most pupils then were below or in line with those expected for their age and very few pupils attained above average standards. The school has successfully addressed all the key issues identified in the previous report. Standards have steadily improved since then, especially considering the below average knowledge of many pupils when they start school. The targets that the school has set for eleven year old pupils to achieve in English, mathematics and science have already been exceeded. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and their personal development have all improved since the previous inspection. Their listening skills and concentration in lessons are much better than before. Strengths identified in that inspection such as the way the school looks after its pupils, the responsibility it gives them to become more mature and the school's links with parents have all been maintained. The quality of leadership was previously judged to be good and it is now excellent. There is far greater challenge in the work now for more able pupils. Standards in information technology have improved. Teachers still show commitment and enthusiasm and the quality of teaching has improved considerably. In the previous inspection less than 10 per cent of teaching was very good or better. In this short inspection over half the teaching was very good and occasionally excellent.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E*	E	E	E	well above average A
Mathematics	E	D	B	A	above average B
Science	E*	E	A	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E
					very low E
					*

The school's results in national tests for pupils at 11 years of age have improved steadily since 1997. In 1999 the improvement in mathematics and science was quite spectacular. In fact, data shows that pupils at Noak Bridge made the fourth best progress of all the schools in Essex based on their attainment when they enter school. In English in 1999 pupils' results were very similar compared with the previous year. The reason why the school's results in English were below the national average and in comparison with those in similar schools is because few pupils attained Level 4 and no pupils attained the higher Level 5. In the current tests for 11 year olds the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 has increased in all three subjects. This year almost 30 per cent of pupils attained Level 5 in English tests. The targets that the school set for pupils in English, mathematics and science have all been exceeded.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their work, join in well in lessons and assemblies and listen carefully to what teachers say. They are proud of Noak Bridge and think it is a good school that has got better in the last few years.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. Almost all parents think that the behaviour of pupils is good in school and when they go on trips and visits. A small number of pupils do not always meet the school's expectations of good behaviour and this is especially so during lunchtimes. The steps taken by the school to ensure good behaviour are largely effective.
Personal development and relationships	A strength of the school. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to take responsibility. The school council is very effective. It is well organised, has enthusiastic and hardworking members and plays an important part in school life. The relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. They are an important reason why the school has been successful.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

During the inspection no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In fact, 90 per cent of lessons were at least good and just over half the lessons were very good or excellent. This is very high quality teaching that is found throughout the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently very good and has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils of all abilities. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and do their best to make lessons interesting and challenging. The way in which they manage pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent and is a particular strength of their teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school quite rightly stresses the importance of subjects such as English, mathematics and science. However, it also provides a wide range of other subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. Computers are being used more and more to help pupils learn. Good links are made between the school and the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Their work is carefully planned and they receive very good support in lessons and in small groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school clearly teaches pupils the difference between right and wrong and gives them many opportunities to take responsibility and to mature. All staff set excellent examples to the pupils about how to behave. The school provides pupils with a good understanding of the life of people in different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	It makes good provision. It is a safe school and adults know pupils and their families very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has a clear idea of why the school is so successful and what needs to be done to ensure that pupils continue to do well. The deputy head supports her very well and his teaching provides an excellent example for others. The headteacher and deputy headteacher encourage all staff to play a positive part in the running of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are keen to support the school in introducing new ideas that will improve pupils' education.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has improved its work in many areas since the last inspection. It is very aware of what it does well and welcomes change and new ideas that lead to further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of staff, equipment and a very small building to provide a very good education for its pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They believe that teaching is good and that the school has high expectations.• They feel the school is well managed and led and works closely with parents.• They feel the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents feel that the amount of homework is not suitable.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The few parents did not make it clear whether they wanted more or less homework. In the inspection team's opinion there is sufficient homework set and it generally supports the work that pupils do in school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

It helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make very good progress from the time they enter school until they leave at eleven years of age

1. Almost all parents in their questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting feel that pupils make good progress at school. Parents feel that there has been a big improvement in reading, writing and mathematics and that the school makes pupils aware of what they have to do to improve. They feel that pupils with learning difficulties are well supported in school by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and classroom assistants. Parents say that *'the school recognises that children are good at different things and it gives them opportunities to make progress and succeed in many areas'*.
2. Children enter school at the beginning of the term in which they are five years of age. They are tested within a few weeks to find out how much they know about reading, writing, numbers and social skills. The tests show that they know a lot less than many children in other Essex schools at that age. That is, many children starting at Noak Bridge have a limited experience of the meaning of words and books; they are not used to using numbers and counting; they have little experience of working and playing together and sharing toys and equipment. The tests at this school show, for example, that at least three-quarters of the children who start school each term have lower attainment than expected at that age.
3. The school has worked very hard to improve children's experience in areas such as language, number and social skills. It makes very good provision for young children and gives them an excellent start to their schooling. The results of the tests are used very well to plan work that takes all abilities into account. Activities are exciting and the emphasis is on good quality experiences in children's learning. By the time they are five pupils have made good progress in many areas, for example, in English they have started to read simple words and stories. They enjoy listening to poems and they understand how to make up their own rhymes such as *'Two, three, I saw a bee, four, five, I want to dive, six, seven, I saw Mrs Bevan'*. They begin to understand the reasons for things around them happening in particular ways, for example, in science they make *'boats'* out of foil to see if they float or sink. They correctly describe *'predicting'* as *'saying what you think will happen'*. They learn the importance of working together on their experiments and independence in choosing an activity without any fuss that they can follow after a task is completed. That is, their social skills develop well.
4. The good progress that is made in the reception class is continued through the key stage. By the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils are seven years of age their attainment is measured in national tests and assessments. The pupils' results at Noak Bridge have steadily improved over the last four years in reading and mathematics and in writing in the last two years. For example, in the tests at the end of Key Stage 1 this year the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above¹ in reading is 15 per cent higher than in 1999. In writing there is a 13 per cent improvement, in mathematics a six per cent increase and in science a 12 per cent increase. This follows the pattern of improvement over the last few years; for example, there was a 26 per cent improvement in reading from 1998 to 1999 and a 24 per cent improvement in writing in the same period. It comes as a result of better and more focused teaching, the success of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the school's good work in targeting learning more accurately to pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are now identified much earlier

¹ Levels – by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Those who achieve Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

than before. Their work is more carefully planned in smaller steps, their parents are closely involved with their learning and they receive very good levels of support from teachers and classroom assistants in school.

5. The progress that pupils make in Key Stage 1 continues at Key Stage 2. The school has successfully begun to use the pupils' results in tests and assessments as they move through the key stage to target particular aspects of subjects that are difficult to understand and particular pupils who might need additional support. This information enables the school to set targets for a whole year group regarding how well they will do in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 and to organise extra support for those pupils who might require it. For example, additional classes were organised in English and science for pupils in Year 6 based on their results in 'mock' tests earlier in the year.
6. The success of the school's strategies can be seen in the continually improving results in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. The trend of improvement at Noak Bridge in all three subjects since 1996 has been above the national trend. In fact, statistics produced by the local education authority show that in 1999 eleven year old pupils at Noak Bridge made the fourth highest improvement in mathematics and science out of 365 schools in Essex. In English the progress pupils made at Noak Bridge was exceeded by only 30 other schools in the county. In this year's tests at the end of Key Stage 2 the trend of improvement has continued. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in English has increased by five per cent, in mathematics there has been a three per cent improvement and in science a nine per cent improvement. In fact, the school's targets for 2000 in English and mathematics have already been exceeded by nine per cent and eleven per cent respectively. In comparison with those in similar schools the results at Noak Bridge in 1999 were well above average in mathematics and science, but below average in English.
7. The lower attainment in English compared with mathematics and science is due to two factors. The impact of the national literacy strategy at Key Stage 2 has already had a marked effect, but is taking longer to raise standards with older pupils. Additionally, the school finds itself in exactly the same position as many other primary schools in England that has been identified by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. That is, the writing element of pupils' work is weaker than reading and comprehension because there are fewer opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing. Nevertheless, pupils' results at Noak Bridge in English have improved and continue to do so. Considering their low attainment in language and literacy when they enter school they make very good progress.
8. The school has also worked very hard to extend more able pupils. In the previous inspection attainment in most subjects was in line with or below the national average. There was no area in which attainment was above average. At the end of both key stages the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 and Level 5 has steadily increased. For example, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 in reading has increased by 10 per cent this year. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 in English has also increased from no pupils in 1999 to 30 per cent in 2000.
9. There is also clear evidence of the success of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. For example, in this year's tests in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Levels 2B and 2A rose by 18 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. The school has worked hard to introduce new systems to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. Almost two years ago the school allocated extra funding to appoint a co-ordinator for special educational needs. Her appointment has had a considerable impact. Her work to date has mainly been on raising attainment in reading and this has been extremely successful.

The early identification of pupils with potential learning problems, together with the purchase of new reading books and games, has enabled the school to reappraise its methods of teaching pupils within classes and in small groups. The pupils' needs are very carefully listed in excellent individual education plans. They are very well targeted, reviewed regularly by parents and pupils and most importantly are closely followed in class and in small withdrawal groups.

Teaching is very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and work very well as a team. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are particularly skilled at achieving good behaviour in lessons

10. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In fact, in over 90 per cent of lessons teaching was at least good and in over half the lessons it was very good and occasionally excellent. Although the quality of teaching in this inspection is based on a smaller sample of lessons, it is much better than in the previous inspection. In that inspection less than eight per cent of lessons were very good or better and almost 10 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Almost all parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires think that teaching is good. Parents consider that teachers are hard working, enthusiastic and give freely of their time. Several factors common to good and very good teaching are apparent in lessons. Teachers' planning is very thorough and they make sure that pupils' work builds on what has already been learned and becomes progressively more challenging as they move through the school. A genuine feeling of care and of teachers wanting to do their very best for pupils is very apparent in lessons.
11. Another reason why teaching is so successful is the school's system of making clear to pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Teachers explain, usually in no more than one or two sentences, what the purpose of the lesson is and what they expect pupils to learn. This is often written on a board and helps to focus the lesson so that no time is wasted. In the best lessons teachers refer to the '*intended learning outcome*' at the end of the lesson. It helps the teachers to establish whether or not it has been achieved and what pupils have learned so that the next lesson can be planned accordingly. For example, in an excellent science lesson the teacher had altered her original lesson plan after assessing the pupils' work from the previous lesson. The adapted plan then built on their successful learning and the way they had carried out experiments. At the end of an excellent mathematics lesson the teacher discussed with the pupils whether they felt they had achieved the '*intended learning outcomes*' of a problem solving activity to explain patterns and relationships. Some felt they had not done so, not because they couldn't understand the work but because they were annoyed with themselves that they had not fully exploited the possibilities of the activity and there were ways of working they had not tried.
12. It is clear that the pupils' attainment on entry to the school and the pupils' social backgrounds do not deter teachers from having high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The way in which the school has consistently improved its results at the end of both key stages emphasises teachers' expectations of what can be achieved rather than looking for reasons why pupils cannot do well. Teachers have high and clear expectations of what their pupils can achieve in a given time and set work for them that is achievable yet challenging. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities. More able pupils are able to extend their range of work and pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in small groups within their classes and when they are withdrawn to work separately. Teachers use their time extremely well. Lessons start promptly and maintain a good pace that keeps pupils interested and involved. Teachers often set clear deadlines for completion of a task within the lesson. This adds to the urgency of the work and concentrates pupils' minds. They use classroom support staff very well to make written assessments of pupils' behaviour and contribution to discussion in lesson

introductions and to work with groups of pupils during the lesson.

13. Perhaps the most valuable skill these teachers possess is their ability to work very successfully with pupils, many of whom are very demanding and expect frequent attention from adults and some of whom pose challenging behaviour on a regular basis. Many are *'hard work'* to teach and it is the teachers' success at achieving good behaviour in their classrooms that has had such a marked impact on pupils' willingness to learn and to conform to the school's expectations of good behaviour. Teachers have a very good understanding of how pupils learn best. They try hard to ensure that the learning tasks are appealing, that they will capture the pupils' imagination and that learning is pleasurable and enjoyable. They have very good, supportive relationships with their pupils. They are good at getting pupils to respond. They listen carefully to what pupils have to say and respect their opinions and ideas. Teachers are quick to praise and reward good behaviour. They have high expectations that pupils will behave well and enjoy a firm but fair relationship in which humour is an important part. On the occasions when some pupils are not inclined to co-operate potentially difficult situations are usually quickly defused. While teachers' expectations of good behaviour are made clear, they do not force pupils into situations from which there is no solution other than confrontation or aggression. There were no raised voices during lessons. There is a general air of calm throughout all lessons.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has a clear idea of how the school can become even better. The deputy headteacher, governors and all staff provide very good support

14. In their pre-inspection questionnaires almost all parents agree that the school is well led and managed. The quality of leadership and management the headteacher provides has improved since the last inspection. She gives clear educational direction for the work of the school. Her determination to improve the quality of education that the pupils at Noak Bridge receive and to raise the profile of the school in the community has paid off. She has led the way in raising the standards that pupils achieve in national tests but at the same time has not lost sight of the need to offer a wide range of subjects as well as the *'traditional 3Rs'*. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy the range of subjects, including information technology, history and art and believe that *'work is balanced perfectly!'* Pupils in Year 6 are firmly of the opinion that the school has improved in recent years. They feel that they cover lots of interesting topics that friends in other schools do not experience. The headteacher's emphasis on improving pupils' standards of work has been matched by an acceptance that pupils' behaviour had to improve in order to make teaching effective. Parents and pupils are firmly of the opinion that this is the case and that pupils' attitudes throughout the school have improved. The headteacher has shrewdly appointed staff who are good quality teachers and who also believe that pupils' social backgrounds and attainment on entry to school need pose no barrier to high achievement.
15. Since the previous inspection the school has successfully tackled all the key issues. As in all successful schools ideas are constantly being put forward to meet new challenges and to raise standards whenever possible. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a very effective partnership, initially identifying priorities and making policy decisions. The deputy headteacher's newly created role in managing the curriculum has had a major impact on planning and assessment and improving levels of achievement. He sets an outstanding example of classroom practice that other staff respect and appreciate.
16. Governors and parents talk about the quality of leadership that the headteacher provides. They are aware that good leadership inspires good teamwork and provide committed support to the headteacher. Recent initiatives that the school has introduced include more detailed monitoring of teaching and a considerable improvement in assessment

procedures. Subject co-ordinators have started to play an increasingly important part in monitoring the quality of their subjects. Governors too have begun to play a significant part in shaping the direction of the school through *'focused visits'* to monitor the quality of teaching and through their involvement in budget monitoring and constructing the school development plan.

The school has an excellent ethos. It emphasises the importance of caring for each other. It helps pupils to become very good learners, to believe in their own ability, to be proud of what they can achieve and to develop responsibility. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils

17. In their pre-inspection questionnaires all parents agreed that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. There is a very strong ethos within the school that is reflected in the care and support that every individual, whether child or adult, provides for each other. In the previous report it was noted that *'The messages conveyed to pupils are that each pupil is valued and respected; learning is important and is an entitlement for all; irrespective of ability all pupils can achieve'*. One parent expressed the view that *'Developing pupils' attitudes and values is a key part of the ethos of the school, it's not just words on the wall'*. The excellent relationships between adults and children are a major strength of the school. Noak Bridge has high expectations in terms of academic achievement and social responsibility. Parents, governors, staff and pupils show tremendous support for and commitment to the success of the school.
18. There is a clear work ethic in school which implies that pupils will do their best in lessons and pupils of all abilities respond very well. Pupils in Year 6 are very aware of the improvements they have achieved in their work and how much more they can do to improve. Adults view pupils' efforts very positively and teachers are very positive in their use of praise. *'Well done!'* *'Excellent work'* and *'That's a really good idea'* are often heard in lessons and pupils' work is rewarded with certificates and stickers. Lunchtime helpers award *'courtesy badges'* and the site manager is responsible for distributing *'tidy classroom certificates'*. The school is very good at drawing everyone into the process of raising pupils' self-esteem and pupils' social and academic successes are shared and enjoyed by all in assemblies.
19. The school is extremely good at including pupils in decisions it makes and in its general running. It takes notice of what pupils have to say and pupils feel their contribution is important and valued. The school's annual survey of pupils' seeks their confidential responses to questions such as *'I usually feel safe at break and lunchtimes'* or *'Adults in the school usually treat pupils fairly'* to *The headteacher talks to me or says hello to me personally'*. Adults then analyse the pupils' responses to decide how change can be brought about if a significant number of questionnaires indicate an area of concern. The school council is elected by other pupils and forms an important link in the school's lines of communication. School council members are very well organised, efficient and responsible. They minute all their discussions, take pupils' ideas through a *'suggestion box'* and meet formally with the headteacher and class representatives on a regular basis, as well as organising fund raising activities for other pupils

The school makes very good links with parents. It values the support that they provide

20. The school has worked hard to form very strong links with parents and to keep them well informed about their children's progress. The school views the parents' contribution as a very positive feature of the school. All parents say that they are happy to approach the school with any problems or questions and 96 per cent agree that they are well informed about their children's progress. The school's links with parents were recognised as a strength in the previous report.

21. The school provides lots of good quality information to parents. It sends out regular news and curriculum letters and informative annual reports. It is so keen to involve parents in the life and work of the school that it sends out a confidential questionnaire towards the end of each school year, similar to the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, asking for their views about the school. It acts promptly on matters of concern and informs parents of the results and what it intends to do to address concerns. It makes very good arrangements to include parents of pupils with special educational needs in the process of reviewing their children's individual education plans. Parents' comments and suggestions are carefully noted for inclusion in any discussion of future arrangements. Parents say they value the school's *'open door'* policy, that they get 'honest' answers to questions at parent-teacher consultations and that the school is very good at making parents aware of what they are doing.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Systems for setting targets and monitoring pupils' work to make teaching and learning even better

22. The school has already improved its curriculum assessment procedures to set targets for what pupils should achieve and to ensure they make consistent progress as they move through the school. It is in the very early stages of setting individual pupils' targets in English and mathematics to focus short-term learning more clearly and to make pupils' more aware of teachers' expectations about their learning priorities. Monitoring of teaching and planning takes place, but currently there are several elements of this process that are not yet fully developed to help improve attainment still further.
23. One of these elements is a regular scrutiny of work by the headteacher and deputy headteacher to help identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, the rate of progress they make through the school and to ensure that teachers comply with agreed policies such as those for marking and presentation of work.
24. For example, the school is aware that its results in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are not as good as those in mathematics and science. A scrutiny of work reveals that the quality and range of pupils' writing is not consistently strong throughout the school and that pupils' skills in writing are not as good as in their reading. The school has quite rightly given a great deal of attention and invested human and material resources to improve pupils' reading in the last two years. It has achieved a great deal of success and is an indication of how the school has become much more skilled at identifying areas of weakness that can then be addressed. This is now an urgent need in pupils' writing that has not been identified by the school in its current development plan for 2000 – 2001.
25. A second element is in the quality of teachers' marking. The best examples of marking are very good. Teachers' comments are supportive and perceptive, reveal a clear understanding of their pupils and provide clear advice about how their pupils can improve. For example, in response to a pupil's story about starting a story a teacher wrote, *'Well done! The beginning of your story is very tense and sets the scene very well'*. Not all teachers' marking, however, matches this quality. Sometimes it is brief and gives pupils no clear idea if what is right or wrong or how to improve. The newly introduced individual pupil targets in English and mathematics offer a real opportunity to review the quality and purpose of teachers' marking and link it more purposefully with the target setting process.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- (i) ensure that the scrutiny of pupils' books is carried out on a regular basis to form part of the school's monitoring procedures;
- (ii) review the quality of teachers' marking to ensure it offers advice about how work can be improved and links closely with pupils' individual targets.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

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

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
18	37	36	9	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)	168
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	49
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	50
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	12	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	8	10	9
	Total	25	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (77)	80 (81)	80 (84)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	20	19
	Girls	7	10	8
	Total	22	30	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (71)	86 (85)	77 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	5	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	15
	Girls	2	2	3
	Total	13	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (65)	68 (59)	82 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	13	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (40)	73 (46)	73 (46)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (69)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	166
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)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR-- Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998 / 1999
	£
Total income	351,322
Total expenditure	339,911
Expenditure per pupil	2,125
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,022
Balance carried forward to next year	14,433

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 21%

Number of questionnaires sent out	119
Number of questionnaires returned	25

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	48	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	32	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	52	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	56	12	4	0
The teaching is good.	68	28	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	44	0	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	32	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	56	32	4	0	8
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	42	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	40	0	0	4