

INSPECTION REPORT

Penns Primary School

Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103356

Headteacher: Mrs M. Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen
17531

Dates of inspection: 27th – 28th February 2002

Inspection number: 194455

Full 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:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Berwood Road Sutton Coldfield Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. Matty
Date of previous inspection:	6 th May 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Penns Primary School is an average sized primary school in Sutton Coldfield. The school is popular and very significantly oversubscribed. Most of the pupils live in owner-occupied housing within the local area, although some come from the neighbouring communities. Virtually all the children have had experience of pre-school education. Of the 211 pupils on roll, there are a similar number of girls and boys, although in some year groups there is an imbalance. The pupils come from several ethnic backgrounds although the vast majority are of white ethnic origin. There are 12 children with English as an additional language, although none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are seven classes, one for each year group. At the time of the inspection, two of the classes were taken by temporary teachers covering for maternity leave. Twenty-five pupils are on the special educational needs register, this proportion being below the national average, with six pupils having Statements of Special Educational Need which is above the national average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Although it varies from year, attainment on entry is above what could be expected. The school has been through a period of relative instability with three different headteachers in two years. At the time of the inspection the new headteacher had been in post for two months.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school that provides a very good standard of education. Standards at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are very good and above national averages. The teaching is very good overall. The school's recently appointed headteacher is well organised and well focused with a clear picture of how to make this very effective school even better. She is well supported by a committed and enthusiastic staff. The school cares for and serves its children well and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ There is a pattern of very good standards in English and mathematics across the school.
- ◆ The teaching and learning, the curriculum and the standards in science are very good.
- ◆ The very good quality of teaching promotes very good learning.
- ◆ The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- ◆ The school's caring ethos is well supported by the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- ◆ The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils contribute very positively to the quality of education.

What could be improved

- ◆ Self-evaluation, including the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- ◆ The involvement of the governing body.

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 a good improvement since its previous inspection in May 1997. The issues from the report have been addressed. There is now a school policy for Early Years and the planning for the Reception children covers the appropriate areas of experience. Also, the provision for information and communication technology has been significantly improved, expanding control work and modelling for the older pupils. Since the previous inspection, the high standards have at least been maintained. The planning and organisation of the curriculum has improved and, most significantly, the standard of teaching has improved. There is a shared commitment to further improvement and a shared capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A*	A	A
Mathematics	C	A	A	A
Science	B	A*	A	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The vast majority of the youngest children are in line to meet most of the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage (Reception year), although a small number may not achieve the higher levels in communication, language and literacy. A significant minority are likely to exceed the goals. Standards at the end of Year 2 are very good in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 6 are very good in English, mathematics and science. The judgements reflect the very good results over recent years, when standards have been particularly creditable in science at both key stages. Standards in information and communication technology are sound and improving across the school. Across the school pupils achieve well relative to their abilities. The school is setting clear targets to maintain and improve upon these results.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes to school, with an enthusiasm for all the school has to offer. The pupils hold the school in high esteem.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good across the school, not only in the classrooms, but also at playtime and during lunchtime, including when pupils are dining. Sometimes behaviour is exemplary.

Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with all the adults in school. Pupils feel that their views are valued.
Attendance	Attendance is very good, being well above the national average.

The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development contribute very positively to the quality of education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching and learning observed was very good overall. It was excellent on occasions. Literacy and numeracy are very well taught, as is science. The teaching meets the needs of all the pupils, including those who are higher attainers and those with English as an additional language. The teaching provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. The very good quality and number of classroom support staff has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive, providing an interesting and imaginative range of experiences. Insufficient time is given for self-directed creative and practical activities for the Reception children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is very good and very well organised. The very good teaching and support leads to the very good progress these pupils make.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for these pupils is very good, enabling them to fit exceptionally well into the school's harmonious family atmosphere.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is one of the school's many strengths. The pupils respond very well in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is of a very high order. The education and support and guidance for pupils is very good, with every pupil being valued. There are good arrangements for the tracking and monitoring of attainment and progress.

The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The school is beginning to rebuild the confidence of parents following a period of instability, due to changes in leadership and staffing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very new headteacher has made a very positive start in identifying the appropriate steps to maintain and build upon the school's strengths. There is a clear commitment to very good relationships and equality of opportunity for all. The school is very well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is supportive of the school. The need is recognised to both raise the profile and develop the role of the governing body, so that it becomes more closely involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Although a very positive start has been made in self-evaluation, there is a need for further development, most significantly in the monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	There is good strategic use of resources. Money is prudently used.

There is an adequate level of teaching staff, well supported by the good number of classroom support staff. The accommodation, benefiting as it does from a spacious outdoor environment which the school intends to develop, is very clean and attractive and well maintained. The school is well resourced in all areas of the curriculum and especially in information and communication technology. The school gives good consideration to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The children behave well, are helped to become responsible and make good progress. ◆ The approachability of the school. ◆ The good teaching and the expectation that children will work hard and do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Some parents are unclear about the school's expectations on homework. ◆ Some parents feel that the reports are not sufficiently personalised and that they would value receiving them ahead of the summer consultation evening. ◆ Some parents feel strongly that the children's education was adversely affected by the frequent changes of supply teachers.

The inspectors and the new headteacher share the parents' concerns. The headteacher has firm plans to review the homework arrangements, including consultation with parents. There are plans to improve reports and ensure that parents receive them in sufficient time. The school has taken appropriate steps to ensure more stability in staffing. The vast majority of the views expressed were very supportive of the school. Parents view Penns Primary School as a very good school and inspectors endorse this view.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

There is a pattern of very good standards in English and mathematics across the school

1. Literacy and numeracy are given a strong focus in the Reception class. This enables children to attain very well in communication, language and literacy and in the mathematical area of learning. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are very good and above national averages. Standards are very good across the school. This reflects the school's consistently high results in the National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics over recent years. Evidence indicates an improving of standards since the previous inspection. Reading is given a high priority in the school, with a tradition of very good standards. Progress is monitored by making annual use of standardised tests, which lead to careful identification of the pupils to be targeted for extra help; these high standards in reading impact on attainment across most curricular areas. In the Key Stage 1 tests of 2001, when all the pupils reached at least the appropriate level 2, the overall results in reading and writing were well above national averages and also above those for similar schools. The results of the teacher assessments in speaking and listening and reading and writing replicated these very high standards.
2. Although cohorts of pupils can, and do, vary from year to year, national performance data over a period of three years gives a picture of consistently high attainment. Taking the three years from 1999 to 2001 together, figures show that the performance of pupils in reading and writing exceeded the national averages for their age group by a significant margin.
3. In the Key Stage 2 tests in 2001, the results in English and mathematics were similarly above the national averages and those for similar schools. Teacher assessments undertaken at the same time confirm this picture of high attainment. National performance data from Key Stage 2 indicates that, taking the five years from 1997 to 2001 together, the performance of pupils in English and mathematics exceeded the national averages for their age group. This was most significantly so in English, where in two of the last four years the school's results were amongst the top five per cent nationally. At both key stages, there have been no significant differences between the attainment of boys and the attainment of girls.
4. Although the results at both key stages are very creditable, the school is not complacent. As a consequence, results are analysed and targets set. At Key Stage 1, the writing aspect of English and the 'shape, space and measures' aspect of mathematics have been identified as targets for improvement, whilst at Key Stage 2, performance in mathematics is deemed an area for the further raising of standards.
5. During the inspection, a number of literacy and numeracy lessons were observed and a work scrutiny was undertaken which focused on English, mathematics and science, most notably at Year 2 and Year 6. The high quality of presentation and handwriting of most pupils reflects the aspirations to do well. The evidence collected indicates that the high standards are being maintained at both key stages and that the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are in line to continue the very creditable results which have been achieved. All pupils are enabled to achieve well relative to their abilities. A lot of very good and some excellent teaching was observed during the inspection and the quality of teaching has a

clear and positive impact on both the progress the pupils make and the standards achieved. There is a shared commitment and capacity on the part of the staff, to continue the process of raising standards in the core subjects.

The teaching and learning, the curriculum and the standards in science are very good

6. Across both key stages, the results in science over the past three years have been consistently well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels across both key stages indicates that science teaching is a strength of the school. In comparison with similar schools the number of pupils attaining the higher grade in national tests is well above average. At both key stages there have been a number of occasions in recent years when the standards have been in the top five per cent nationally. Inspection judgements are that the school is maintaining the high standards in teaching and learning with very good standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school provides a very good foundation for future scientific learning.

7. Progress is very good across both key stage for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. A range of assessments are used to carefully monitor pupils' progress and indicate the level each pupil will attain at the end of the year. This process of careful tracking makes a major contribution to the high standards the pupils achieve. It is mirrored in the effective way in which teachers match work to pupils' needs.

8. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to predict what might happen, conduct experiments and record their results in charts and graphs. Through testing how far different vehicles travelled down a ramp and on to different surfaces, pupils begin to understand about friction. Previous work indicates that pupils sort materials by their properties and most have an accurate understanding of reversible and irreversible changes. For example, one food technology lesson records the making of jam tarts and highlights the irreversible changes to the dough after cooking. When learning about physical processes, pupils correctly identify different forms of energy and show a clear understanding of electrical circuits. The emphasis placed on the development of investigative skills has a significant impact on the current high standards achieved.

9. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to make predictions based on their scientific understanding and conduct experiments, making systematic observations and measurements. Pupils then evaluate the outcomes of their experiments in light of predictions they made. There is much evidence of high expectations with challenging work set for higher attainers. The lower attaining pupils are well catered for by differentiation in work sheets and extra help from the classroom support assistants. Pupils have very good understanding of all aspects of the National Curriculum science. Greater depth is given to their study of topics in this key stage. For example, in their study of electricity as well as constructing electric circuits with batteries, switches, wires and bulbs, they add extra cells and motors thereby further developing their investigative skills and understanding.

10. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is very good at both key stages and that the pupils are well managed. Lessons are well planned and move with pace, with appropriate provision of work for pupils of all abilities. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and emphasise the importance of scientific vocabulary. In a very good lesson in Year 5, for example, the teacher ensured that the lesson built upon the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. One pupil thought fair testing was not necessary

in the investigation to prove whether there is gravity in water. With help from other pupils, the teacher proved to this pupil that certain guidelines needed to be followed for fairness in investigations, for example, ensuring the force meter is set on zero before the investigation begins. During the lesson the teacher intervened effectively, asking searching questions to challenge pupils' thinking.

11. The relationships between the pupils and teachers and amongst the pupils themselves are very good. Pupils display positive attitudes to their work and want to do well. All work is well presented with considerable care. Teachers mark pupils work effectively, supporting them in their achievements and indicating how they might improve their work. Classroom assistants give very good support to pupils, using initiative and questioning effectively to clarify the understanding of lower attaining pupils. Teachers evaluate their lessons and use this to inform their future planning.

12. A good feature of the school's work which helps the subject to be a strength is the emphasis that is placed on developing the skills of scientific enquiry. There is good provision across both key stages for pupils to develop skills of investigation through conducting experiments, obtaining and presenting their findings and drawing conclusions. The subject is very well managed by its co-ordinator.

The very good quality of teaching promotes the very good learning

13. In the relatively small number of observations it is possible to make during a short inspection, the quality of teaching observed was very good overall. It was excellent in a small number of lessons, very good in over a third, good in over a third and satisfactory in the small number of remaining lessons. Most of the teaching observed was in literacy and numeracy where the very good teaching is underpinned by teachers' very good knowledge and expertise; very effective use is made of the national strategies. Very good teaching was also observed in science and in music. This overall very high quality of teaching influences the quality of what pupils produce, how productive they are and the levels of progress they make. The teaching has a positive impact on the high standards being achieved at both key stages.

14. The very effective teaching was very carefully prepared, with pupils very well managed and organised, thus enabling all pupils to achieve well relative to their abilities. This was the case in an excellent numeracy session in Year 2 on using graphs to gain information. Independence was encouraged when pupils carried out a survey and recorded their results collaborating very productively. The five groups were very well supported by the three extra adults in the room; each group stayed on task, being very interested in the set activity. Information and communication technology was well used, enabling one group to use the software to turn the survey data into a graph to be interpreted. An excellent plenary session brought the whole lesson to a very good conclusion. The teaching and learning across the school is inclusive for all pupils, including those who are higher attainers, those who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment.

15. This very successful teaching involves very good pace, clear explanations and instruction, imaginative activities and a great deal of enthusiasm. This was the case in an excellent Year 3 literacy session observed on identifying and developing aspects of traditional stories. The enthusiasm of the teacher rubbed off on the children. 'Every single word does a job,' explained the teacher, making effective use of her voice so that the pupils listen, totally absorbed. The teacher inspires the pupils to undertake the tasks. 'Today we

are going to bake a fairy story. What are the ingredients?’ she asks. Subsequently the teacher works very productively with a group of pupils with special educational needs, whilst the other adults, including students, provide a very good level of support. This teaching promotes very good learning. The pupils are enthusiastic and on task, often supporting one another with a clear desire to do well. Learning becomes fun.

16. The very good quality and number of the classroom support staff has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Across the school the very good relationships, the close knowledge of individual pupils and their needs and the praise and encouragement all have an impact on the quality of learning. High teacher expectations are met so that pupils know they are expected to work hard and give of their best. The ethos of the classrooms encourages pupils to co-operate together and support one another and to work with care. Through encouragement and good quality marking pupils have clear insights into what they need to do to improve. The teaching promotes self-esteem amongst the pupils; ‘Well done’, ‘Fantastic’, ‘You’re a superstar’ and ‘You are so good at this’ are the sort of comments frequently made. The efforts and contributions of each individual pupil are valued.

17. Teaching is fundamental to the quality of education provided and is the most important influence of the school on the pupils’ attainment, progress and quality of learning. The effectiveness of the teaching observed impacts very clearly on the rate, breadth, depth and consolidation of pupils’ learning helping them to gain the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic and effective way. This is one of the school’s many strengths.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good

18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good progress. The school complies with statutory requirements for the care of the 25 pupils who are on the register of special educational needs, six of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils are supported through the provision of differentiated activities with appropriate individual education plans which are used very effectively. These plans, which contain clear and achievable targets to address pupils’ specific requirements, are regularly reviewed, and parents and teachers are involved in discussions about targets set.

19. Pupils receive a high level of support from teachers, classroom support assistants and from the school’s involvement with outside agencies, such as the Special Educational Needs Support Service and the Behaviour Support Service. A lead worker from the local education authority Framework for Intervention (Behaviour Strategy) and the Behaviour Support Service is currently providing a good level of support for pupils. The individual support provided for pupils is very effective in enabling them to make very good progress and in giving them full and equal access to the curriculum.

20. This support, combined with the practice of teaching pupils with specific needs in small groups, makes a very good contribution to improving their attainment and progress. Differentiation was evident in most lessons seen across the wide academic ability range. Some support is provided for pupils on stages of assessment by withdrawing them from their classes for short periods; most pupils with special educational needs work alongside other pupils, often with an adult to support them. All these pupils are well integrated in class and given similar work at an appropriate level. The school has developed close links with a local special school to provide an individual learning plan for a pupil who has shared provision between both schools.

21. The school is very aware of the entitlement of higher attaining pupils with a number of pupils being challenged and extended in their tasks to reach the higher level 6 in national attainment tests rarely achieved by pupils in primary schools. Resources have been purchased to provide for the needs of the potentially gifted pupils and this is a developing aspect of the special educational needs provision.

22. Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is very good. The school supports pupils who have moderate to profound hearing losses. Teaching and support is planned separately for each individual and this ensures that their specific needs are met and that they make very good progress. Pupils work mostly within the class on the programmes of study appropriate for their age in all subjects, with support from either a specialist teacher or a special educational needs assistant. The teaching of hearing impaired pupils is very good. All members of staff are very aware of the need to actively promote pupils' full involvement in all class activities and they make a point of inviting their contributions to whole class discussions. For example, in the Reception class a pupil with profound hearing impairment was following the story of 'Pig gets stuck' with the classroom support assistant, whilst the teacher was questioning the pupils about their feelings for the characters in the story. This pupil was fully involved in this activity enjoying the humour of the story along with his peers because of the very good support received. Hearing impaired pupils make particularly good progress in self-expression as well as in the development of their receptive language skills. The provision is significantly enhanced by having induction loop facilities established in some of the classrooms, which enables these pupils to fully access the teaching.

23. Each term the special educational needs co-ordinator is given designated time to write the individual education plans with the class teachers. This has enabled teachers to improve the quality of the plans and the co-ordinator opportunity to monitor the progress of pupils more closely. The policy has been redrafted by the co-ordinator to take account of the new arrangements for special educational needs provision. All practices for pupils with special educational needs meet the Code of Practice and appropriate systems support these pupils.

24. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are keen to improve. Their attitudes to work and behaviour in lessons are mainly very good. This has a positive effect on their learning and progress. They are usually well involved in their work and show respect for teachers and support staff. The very good attitudes and behaviour of these pupils make an important contribution to the quality of education the school provides, allowing teachers to teach and pupils to learn in a purposeful working environment.

The school's caring ethos is well supported by the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

25. The school provides a happy and secure environment. The staff know the pupils very well, provide very good supervision and act as appropriate role models. The school has suitable procedures and policies to ensure that pastoral care is of a high order and that such matters are given prompt attention. The previous report noted that the school had a very good ethos and that pupils were valued and respected; this continues to be true and is one of the school's many strengths.

26. Parents praised the school's values and many commented on the family atmosphere. During the inspection, one Year 6 girl typified the pupils' feelings when she

said that the school 'is like a small world, in which we all have an important part'. The warmth of staff care and guidance was evident in discussions during the inspection, not only on the part of the teachers but the classroom support staff, the mid-day supervisors, the secretary and the site supervisor.

27. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to explore and reflect on the world around them; for example, the term's focus for the Year 3 group at the time of the inspection posed the question 'Jesus, who is he?' Pupils listen to carefully chosen music and they participate in many activities and discussions, which promote individual thought. They learn to appreciate the wonders of the natural world. The school's ethos embodies clear values and enables the pupils to develop insight into the beliefs of others. The pupils learn about their own local heritage and of the diversity and richness of other cultures. They take part in celebrations of festivals from around the world, support charities and participate in school events, such as the Greek day. Recent visitors into the school have included fire officers, a group of Bhangra Dancers and actors providing a theatre workshop.

28. Very good provision is also made for the pupils' moral and social development. The school teaches the principles which distinguish right from wrong. It has a very good behaviour and discipline policy, which is consistently applied. 'Our peaceful playground' posters remind pupils of the six rules for outside play. The class rules, which have been devised through negotiation with the pupils, are displayed in each room. Staff are constantly reinforcing the importance of good behaviour; they use frequent praise to reward effort and celebrate achievement. Through very well planned assemblies and through personal, social and health education, the pupils learn the meaning of trust, honesty and respect; a Year 5 information and communication technology display in the hall gives meaning to such words. Celebration plays an important part of school life; there are many initiatives to reward pupils' efforts and achievements, such as the very successful merit assemblies.

29. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities; for example, the monitors who relay messages and the pupils who set out the hall for assemblies. The Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to ensure a friendly welcome and induction for the new Reception children. The School Council is democratically elected by ballots in each class. Council meetings are chaired and recorded by the older pupils; recent meetings have debated such issues as which charities should be supported and what activities or equipment could be provided for the playground.

30. There are excellent displays across the school, which serve to affirm the school's values. The ones in the communal areas of the entrance and main hall are of particular significance. The colourful 'Our Merit Tree' display welcomes visitors into the school and, alongside, 'Child of the Term' celebrates one pupil from each class, encouraging pupils to wear their badge with pride. The results of the poster competition are displayed, where pupils and their families designed a poster to illustrate the school's mission statement. In Penns Primary school the mission statement forms an important part of the school's daily life and is reflected in the everyday conduct of the pupils. The school's motto 'Endeavour' has been formed into an acronym of phrases from 'Everybody counts....' through to '....becoming Responsible people'; each of these is sensitively displayed in the main hall, accompanied by attractive montages of pupils' work.

31. The school works hard in order to successfully meet its aims. Educational and personal support and guidance are very good throughout the school. In particular, the very

good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development impacts significantly on the quality of education and helps to make the school the special place that it is.

The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils contribute very positively to the quality of education

32. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. Pupils said that they 'really like coming to school'. Their attitudes, observed in lessons, demonstrated that pupils are keen to learn, listening attentively to their teachers and responding with great enthusiasm to the tasks that are set for them. The pupils are able to sustain a high level of concentration. During a Year 4 lesson, for example, all pupils were observed reading their books in silence with great application. In a Year 5 English lesson, the pupils' interest in their work was illustrated by the many examples of information that had been procured by research at home and on the Internet, concerning the poetry of Walter de la Mare.

33. The behaviour of pupils, both in and out of the classroom, is very good; sometimes it is exemplary. No instances of misbehaviour were observed during the inspection and discussions with pupils confirmed that the school was virtually free of any aggressive or oppressive behaviour. There has been only one short exclusion during the five year period since the previous inspection. The pupils all know what is expected of them and they respond well to the very high expectations. Good orderly movement helps the school to function efficiently. Most parents praised the very high standard of behaviour.

34. Relationships are very good between pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves. Pupils of all ages and both genders mix well together. The excellent integration of those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is a particular strength of the school. The pupils show a great enthusiasm for all that the school has to offer and they hold the school in high esteem. They know that their views are listened to and that each of them is valued for their own individual contributions.

35. Pupils' personal development is very good. In accordance with the school's motto of 'Endeavour', the pupils learn 'to understand each other and to become responsible people'. The many educational visits, the very good extra-curricular activities, the community links and the charity work all make a significant contribution to their development. The pupils take responsibility for many tasks, such as the helpers in the dining hall. The pupils are courteous and trustworthy, showing suitable respect for property and for the views of others. They are extremely welcoming to visitors and show great pride when discussing their work and their achievements.

36. The harmonious atmosphere of the school creates a purposeful ethos, where the pupils benefit from a high level of care. The pupils are able to work with commitment and fulfil their potential. The pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, together with the very good personal development, make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided and help to enable all pupils to achieve well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Self-evaluation, including the monitoring of teaching and learning

37. The recently appointed headteacher, well supported by the local education authority, has made a very positive start in identifying the appropriate steps to maintain and build upon the school's strengths. Although a very positive start has been made, there is recognition in the school of the need for the further development of self-evaluation, most significantly in the monitoring of teaching and learning.

38. The school values the help it receives from its link adviser in supporting the monitoring processes, including those concerned with literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Systems of self-review are in place and these inform the priorities for the School Improvement Plan. For example, this has led to current targets in literacy, identified in the plan, to further develop individual writing targets and to improve the quality and range of writing opportunities.

39. The whole school approaches to planning, assessing and recording contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process. Prior to the appointment of the new headteacher, the school carried out an analysis of assessment and data, making use of baseline assessments, national performance data, the results of the optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics and the results of its own assessments. Good use is made of the data to monitor individual pupil performance, leading to both individual and year group targets, focusing mainly on reading, writing and numeracy.

40. The school additionally does some monitoring and evaluation of teachers' planning, work on display and Performance Management. Some evidence was seen during the inspection of recent monitoring through work scrutiny. The level of detail in the reporting varied and not all classes were covered. The main area for development, recognised by the school, is to more formally monitor teaching and learning. Whilst the teaching observed during the inspection was very creditable, being very good overall, there was some variation in the quality between that which was judged to be satisfactory and that which was judged to be excellent. The school aspires to benefit all its pupils with the best it can offer through consistently high quality teaching which promotes consistently high quality learning.

41. Some useful monitoring of teaching has been undertaken by the new headteacher, although the written records do not always identify clear targets. There is a need for more rigour. Targets for improvements are not set on a formal basis and this is an area for development. Focused monitoring of teaching and learning can provide targets for improvement, targets which are monitored and reviewed. This can enhance teacher performance and have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. This could help make the quality of education provided by this very effective school even better.

The involvement of the governing body

42. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It is benefiting from the enthusiasm and involvement of its chairman of two months. He has a very clear perception of the need to raise the profile of the governing body and to develop clearer governor links to school to enable the governors to get to know the staff and the dynamics of the school better.

43. There is a need, recognised in the school, to develop the role of the governing body so that it becomes more involved in monitoring the work of the school; for example, through more systematic opportunities to gain insights into the standards achieved, the curriculum and the teaching and learning. This can enable the governors to more effectively support the school in continuing to rebuild the confidence of parents following a period of instability due to changes in the leadership and staffing as well as in the governing body itself. There has been a relatively high turnover of governors in recent years so that, at the time of the inspection, excluding two vacancies, around half the members of the governing body had been governors for two years or less.

44. The recently appointed headteacher is appreciative of the support given by the governors and is pleased that the governing body is keen to become more closely involved in shaping and supporting the strategic management of the school. To this end, there are firm plans to provide relevant training to support the governors in their understanding and further development of their roles.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed.

In order to build on the school's many strengths and the quality of education provided and to further raise standards, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ Further develop systems of self-evaluation, including the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning through the introduction of a more formal system for monitoring which:
 - *involves structured lesson observation;*
 - *provides feedback and target setting;*
 - *enables the review of targets;*
 - *contributes more significantly to the professional development of the staff;*

- ◆ Further develop the role of the governing body by:
 - *raising the profile and involvement of governors;*
 - *providing training for governors on their role and responsibilities, for example, in relation to finance;*
 - *developing a more structured system for governors to monitor the day-to-day work of the school.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	8	8	3	0	0	0
Percentage	14	36	36	14	0	0	0

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

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)	210.6
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	30	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (97)	100 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	30	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (93)	100 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	27	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (100)	90 (100)	93 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	27	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (90)	93 (100)	94 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	9
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	188
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1 : 1
Average class size	30.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	496,477
Total expenditure	481,905
Expenditure per pupil	2,317
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,951
Balance carried forward to next year	*52,523

*At the time of the inspection most of the balance carried forward had been spent on the development of the multimedia library, information and communication technology resources and refurbishment including furniture and carpets.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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

Number of questionnaires sent out	211
Number of questionnaires returned	96

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	4	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	45	5	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	49	10	1	0
The teaching is good.	46	47	4	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	51	15	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	42	47	8	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	35	48	7	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	46	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	51	11	1	4