

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HIGH HAM CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Langport

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123761

Headteacher: Mrs S Williams

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn  
15676

Dates of inspection: 12 - 14 November 2001

Inspection number: 194900

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: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Ham  
Nr Langport  
Somerset

Postcode: TA10 9BY

Telephone number: 01458 250735

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Jeff Jones

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

High Ham Primary School is situated near the centre of the village of High Ham in Somerset. The school is smaller than average with 153 boys and girls on the school roll; most of these live locally, or in other villages and towns in the immediate and wider area. The school is popular and is oversubscribed. This has resulted in an additional class being located in an area that previously served as a library and an information and communication technology (ICT) suite, as an interim measure. This is unsuitable as a permanent classroom as there are many distractions which have an adverse effect on pupils' learning. The school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average at 2.6 per cent. Sixteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is also below average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

There are currently 23 children who attend full time in reception. Most have some experience of pre-school education, many at the village playgroup which is situated in the school grounds. Most children are well prepared to begin school full time and attainment on entry is generally above that normally found.

The school has experienced problems with recruitment of teachers and there have been significant changes, particularly at Key Stage 1, where both teachers are new to the school since the last inspection. The reception teacher, who is also the Key Stage 1 coordinator, is also newly appointed.

The school was awarded Beacon status in September 2000 and an Excellence in Schools award earlier this year.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school which enjoys the confidence of its parents and its community. Pupils attain consistently high standards by the age of 11 in national tests, as the result of sound leadership, successful teaching, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the strong support of parents. Taking all factors into account it provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Key Stage 2 national test results are well above average in mathematics and science and very high in English.
- There is a high proportion of effective teaching, which makes a major contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- The headteacher and key stage coordinators provide effective leadership. Together with other members of staff they check pupils' progress regularly, by using a range of measures including statutory and non-statutory tests.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to learning which, together with very good behaviour and constructive relationships, make a significant contribution to the progress they make and the standards they attain.
- Parents regard the school highly. They are interested in their children's schooling and are keen for them to do well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are fully included in lessons and make good progress towards targets that have been set for them.
- The school uses visits and visitors, productively, to enhance the quality of pupils' education.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 are too low.
- Teachers expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are sometimes not high enough. The way in which teachers check pupils' learning is inconsistent throughout the school and so work is not always planned to fully meet the needs of the most able pupils.
- The length of the taught week at Key Stages 1 and 2 is less than the recommended minimum and ICT receives too little attention in the school's curriculum as a result.
- The monitoring of pupils' work and of teaching throughout the school is insufficiently regular, systematic or rigorous to be fully effective.
- There is no clearly communicated educational vision for school improvement to govern the strategic development of the school over a period longer than one year.
- The Year 1 classroom is unsuitable. It is too open and noisy to enable pupils to be taught comfortably without frequent distraction.

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

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then there has been steady improvement in national test results at Key Stage 2, but those at Key Stage 1 are not as good as they were. Good progress has been made on the key issues arising from the inspection. Curriculum planning is now continuous throughout the whole school. The school has been assisted in this by the adoption of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The range of pupils' writing has broadened, again with the help of the literacy strategy. Staff now have clear job descriptions and through the management of the performance of teachers, training is linked more closely to individual and school needs. Coordinators' roles have been developed and they play a more active part in monitoring the work of the school. As the designated person for child protection, the headteacher has raised the awareness of staff through the dissemination of training she has received. The health and safety issues identified in the report have been addressed.

The school development plan provides a number of useful targets, but it is still too short term to be effective.

## 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	A*	A	A	A
science	A*	A*	A	A

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

Pupils' performance in national tests has remained very high - in the top five per cent of all schools - or well above average in all three subjects over the past three years. In the most recent tests, pupils attained well above those in similar schools. There has been steady improvement but at a slower rate than the national trend.

Statutory targets for English and mathematics were insufficiently challenging and were achieved easily.

At the age of seven pupils' results were above the national average in reading in 2001 and in line with those for similar schools. In writing they were average but below those for similar schools. Pupils did least well in mathematics where results were well below the national average and below those in schools with similar characteristics. Results in science were also below average with too few pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Standards have declined in writing and most significantly in mathematics and science, since 1999, because pupils' learning has been disrupted by staff changes and lack of effective coordination.

Standards of the work of Year 6 pupils seen during the inspection were well above average in writing and above average in mathematics and science. At Key Stage 1 standards of work produced in the recent past broadly reflect test results, but current work indicates that standards are rising under the revised arrangement whereby pupils are taught in single aged classes.

Pupils learn effectively and most achieve well when work is clearly matched to their needs and abilities.

Children in reception respond positively to the consistently very good teaching they receive and make good progress in all areas of their learning. Consequently the majority are on target to achieve above average standards by the time they enter Year 1 and are fully prepared to begin the National Curriculum.

Special educational needs pupils are supported well and consequently make good progress towards targets identified for them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' very positive attitudes to school and to learning are a significant strength and contribute greatly to the progress that they make in their learning. Most concentrate very well in lessons and work with sustained application on the tasks they are set.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times is very good. Most respond very well to teachers' high expectations that they will behave appropriately. There have been four short-term exclusions over the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Development in these areas is very good. Pupils acquire a clear sense of what it means to be part of the school community. They relate very well to one another and to the adults with whom they work and take responsibility readily when given the opportunity to do so.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly similar to the national average. There are very few unauthorised absences but authorised absences have risen slightly this year.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	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 in the few lessons observed was never less than satisfactory and in most lessons it was at least good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when there was a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was best in reception, where it was consistently very good. Most of the teaching at Key Stage 2 was also very good. The high proportion of effective and very effective teaching has a significant impact on pupils' progress and on the standards that they attain in their work.

In all classes, the relationship between pupils and the adults who teach and support them are very good. All teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well, often with good humour and always with minimum effort. This enables them to concentrate their attention fully on the content and delivery of their lessons and pupils learn effectively as a result. In the best lessons, teachers plan well and use a wide range of effective teaching strategies to engage pupils' interest and to motivate them to give of their best. In several lessons and in past work, however, most able pupils are presented with work that does not challenge them enough and consequently they do not make the progress that might be expected. Teachers use time, resources and support staff well to ensure that pupils derive as much benefit as possible from their learning.

Literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school and occasionally very well at Key Stage 2. Teachers are clear about the teaching requirements of the national strategies and plan accordingly.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The range and quality of the curriculum are satisfactory overall. However, the length of the taught week is less than that found in most schools at Key Stages 1 and 2, and ICT receives too little attention as a statutory subject of the National Curriculum. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance and enrich pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. There are appropriate individual education programmes with clear targets for improvement which are shared with parents.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Arrangements for moral and social development are good and those for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. It provides a secure, safe and caring learning environment. Many staff know the pupils and their families well which enables them to cater for individual needs. Strategies for monitoring the progress of pupils through the analysis of performance data and assessment tests and tasks are strong features but there are weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating pupils' work.

Parents have very positive views of the school. The ways in which they support the school and take an interest in their children's learning make a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are sound overall but with some weaknesses. The headteacher together with key stage coordinators provides effective leadership. The roles of these coordinators are becoming increasingly better established. Together with other staff members, they give sound support to the headteacher in her efforts to provide the best education for all pupils regardless of background or ability.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily and supports the school well. In conjunction with the headteacher they decide how they would wish the school to develop in the short term. This is not extended into an agreed development plan, which indicates the school's priorities on a range of fronts beyond a year. Also the information provided in the most recent annual report to parents is inaccurate in terms of the school's results and in the most recent statutory national tests and attendance data is omitted from the prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates important aspects of its performance well. The headteacher and other senior staff analyse the results of national and non-statutory tests regularly which enables them to provide additional support where it is most needed. The monitoring of teaching, however, is insufficiently regular, rigorous or systematic to be fully effective.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its finances and resources with the exception of computers which are not used effectively to compensate for the fact that the school no longer has an ICT suite.

The school seeks to secure best value in major purchases and in support services provided by outside agencies.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The right amount of homework is provided.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The way in which the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> </ul>

There was a very good response to the parents' survey which reflected the interest that many parents have in their children's education and their strong support for the school.

Inspection findings support parents' positive views but do not endorse the areas which a small number wish to see improved. The two parents' evenings and the annual report on pupils' progress are similar to those found in many schools and is adequate. Staff are also approachable informally, to discuss parents' individual issues or concerns. The school works well with parents and involves them in their children's schooling in a variety of ways. There

are a good range of activities for pupils in addition to lessons, available at different times in the school year.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

#### **Key Stage 2 national test results are well above average in mathematics and science and very high in English.**

1. Pupils' National Curriculum tests results at Key Stage 2 have been consistently well above average or very high over a prolonged period. In the most recent tests, results in both mathematics and science were well above those found in the majority of schools across the country and also well above those for schools with a similar context. In English results were very high – in the top five per cent of all school's nationally – and, as for both mathematics and science, well above those in similar schools. Approximately twice as many pupils achieved the higher Level 5 than the average in all three subjects. Pupils did particularly well in science where all achieved the national average and two out of three pupils attained Level 5. Results in mathematics and science exceeded the school's expectations.
2. Evidence of work seen during inspection indicates that pupils attain well above average standards in writing and some attain very high standards. There has been a strong and successful emphasis on improving the range of pupils' writing since the last inspection when it arose as a key issue for improvement. Consequently pupils write for different purposes, in connection with other subjects and in various forms at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but it is at Key Stage 2 that progress has been greatest and where standards are higher in comparison with all schools due to consistently good and very good teaching. This is reflected in the fact that approximately one pupil in three attained the higher Level 5 in the most recent tests. Past work shows that the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 have chance to apply their writing skills widely. For example, they have written letters following a residential visit, poetry based on the work of well-known contemporary writers, factual leaflets related to Mount Snowdon and information on how to '*get healthy*'. Although there are longer narrative pieces, these are less represented than other forms. Pupils throughout the key stage use language imaginatively. In one literacy lesson, for example, pupils were quite adventurous in searching for descriptive words when writing acrostic poems on the theme of *Winter*. One Year 5 pupil wrote '*recreation is beginning again as the quilt melts.*' There is an appropriate balance between grammatical exercises and purposeful writing evident in past work, which allows pupils the opportunity to practise skills they have learnt. Handwriting is generally fluent and well formed. Grammar is good and the spelling of many words is accurate. Different punctuation marks are used correctly and many pupils are beginning to organise their work into paragraphs.
3. In mathematics, many pupils achieve above average standards by Year 6. Throughout the school they are adept at calculating quickly and accurately in the oral mental sessions at the beginning of lessons. Pupils in Year 3 work out halves and quarters of different numbers in their heads. Their abilities are built on well as they progress through the key stage. They become increasingly confident and competent in the rapid recall of multiplication and division facts and apply this learning effectively to identifying multiples and factors of given numbers. By Year 6 many pupils are proficient in longer, more intricate mental calculations involving three and four digit numbers. They use their skills well in solving complex number puzzles and amusing problems, which capture their interest and imagination. A strong feature of the mathematics work throughout the school is the thoughtful and clear way in which pupils explain their methods of working when given the opportunity to do so.

4. Year 6 pupils' past work indicates a range of mathematical topics covered over time and much to a high standard. There is however, similarity in certain tasks undertaken by pupils of different abilities.
5. Standards in science are above average. Although no science lessons were seen at Key Stage 2, evidence of work completed recently indicates that Year 6 pupils know how to plan a controlled test and understand that only one element must change whilst others remain constant. They predict outcomes, make accurate observations and record their findings. Since the beginning of the current term they have studied the interdependence of organisms such as caterpillars and plants and have completed good annotated diagrams. They know how different creatures are adapted to live in particular habitats, understand that there are properties common to all living things. They know about the different stages in human development and understand food chains in nature. As with mathematics however, there is similarity in the work expected of pupils with different abilities.

**There is a high proportion of effective and very effective teaching, which makes a major contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.**

6. The quality of teaching based on relatively few lessons seen is very good overall. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection when there was a fairly high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. In most lessons observed, teaching was at least good and in a significant proportion it was very good. This high proportion of effective practice is the strongest contributory factor to pupils' learning and to the standards they attain. Teaching was best in reception where it was consistently very good, and at Key Stage 2, where there was also a high proportion of very effective teaching.
7. Teachers at Key Stage 2 are very well established and work closely as a team. They plan together and in the two parallel classes of older pupils teachers use their particular skills effectively to teach from areas of particular strength or interest, which benefits the learning of the oldest pupils in the school particularly. Staffing at Key Stage 1 has been more turbulent with many changes over the past four years. All staff in Key Stage 1 and reception are new since the last inspection and two of the three have taught in the school for less than a year. However, they are already beginning to form themselves into an effective team under the recently appointed Key Stage 1 coordinator.
8. Noteworthy features of teaching which make the most difference to pupils' learning are the positive relationships between pupils and adults, the use of additional adults including support staff, the way in which teachers manage the behaviour of pupils and the purposeful and brisk pace to lessons.
9. Throughout the school relationships between pupils and teaching and support staff are very good. Pupils respect the adults with whom they work and they in their turn are respected. Some of the teachers are well established in the school and know the pupils and their families well. This enables them to respond appropriately to the needs of individual pupils.
10. All teachers use support staff and additional adults very well in the classroom to work with groups of pupils. This increases the amount of individual attention that each pupil receives and has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Whether supporting pupils who need additional help or assisting with practical activities as in science in Years 1 and 2, additional adults are fully aware of their roles. They know

what teachers expect of them and so are able to make a valuable contribution to lessons and to pupils' learning.

11. In all classes, teachers manage pupils very well, adopting a fair but firm approach based more on praise and encouragement than on censure. This was particularly noticeable in reception, where the class teacher's constant use of praise and reinforcement of correct behaviour for example, with comments such as '*Well done...*' and '*Thank you for helping to tidy away so well,*' increased children's self esteem. Pupils enjoy the gentle humour that teachers introduce into many lessons and respond well to this without taking advantage of the slightly relaxed situation.
12. In many lessons, teachers introduce a clear sense of purpose at the outset by sharing the objectives for the lessons with pupils. This encourages more purposeful learning as pupils have a clear understanding of the direction in which the lesson will proceed and of the intended outcomes. Thereafter, the most successful lessons continue at a good pace which instils a sense of realistic urgency and anticipation into pupils' learning. For example, in a design and technology lesson in Year 3 the class teacher constantly referred to the time remaining for different parts of the lesson: '*Five minutes for this before we go onto...*' Again, in a Year 4/5/6 lesson pupils responded well to the teacher's animated delivery and constant exhortations to '*..Be brisk!*'

**The headteacher and key stage coordinators provide effective leadership. Together with other members of staff they check pupils' progress regularly, by using a range of measures including statutory and non-statutory tests.**

13. The headteacher has worked towards revising management structures, which are appropriate for the needs of the school. Consequently, there is now no deputy headteacher but a senior management team comprising the headteacher and Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 coordinators. The headteacher is keen for all staff with coordinating responsibilities to make a positive contribution to the work of the school. From their involvement in formulating the school improvement plan, checking aspects of the school's performance and other initiatives it is clear that this is already happening.
14. The past teaching experiences of the two key stage co-coordinators are complementary and as such they are well placed to take the school forward under the direction of the headteacher. The Key Stage 2 coordinator has taught in the school for many years and knows pupils and parents well. On the other hand the Key Stage 1 coordinator has wider recent experience in different sized schools and so brings a broader perspective to the work of the senior management team and to pupils' learning. They meet regularly with the headteacher and although they are recently formed as a team, they are already beginning to make a difference to the work of the school.
15. The school has an assessment policy, which is reviewed regularly by key staff, and the headteacher makes good use of electronic assessment programs on the computer to check pupils' performance. Pupils' progress as they pass through the school is monitored through a wide range of strategies that include statutory National Curriculum tests and also tests that are non-statutory. The school analyses the results of baseline tests, for example, which are conducted shortly after children begin in reception. Through their analysis senior managers are able to identify those pupils, who might benefit from additional support at an early stage. As they pass through the school, pupils' progress continues to be watched closely by staff and optional tests results at Key Stage 2 alert the senior management team, for example,

to which pupils might need extra help in the important areas of literacy and numeracy. In addition the school has started to use the range of national performance data to compare its performance with that in all schools and in those with a similar context. The analysis of the most recent tests for Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, has provided the Key Stage 1 coordinator with important information on the underachievement of pupils in mathematics and science. She is already considering strategies that might be used effectively in the future to raise pupils' attainment overall and particularly that of boys.

**Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to learning which, together with very good behaviour and constructive relationships, make a significant contribution to the progress they make and the standards they attain.**

16. Pupils respond very positively to the good and often very good teaching they receive. They understand that they are expected to behave well and to do their best in lessons and most are eager to learn. As pupils' behaviour is consistently very good, teachers are able to concentrate fully on the content and delivery of their lessons rather than on maintaining order or wasting time dealing with petty infringements. Pupils work with good concentration, sometimes for extended periods and there is little incidental discussion or behaviour that is not related to the task in hand. Pupils enjoy lessons that are presented in a different or interesting way. In Year 1, for instance, pupils responded with evident surprise and delight at hearing their voices recorded during an ICT lesson. They are keen to answer teachers' questions in whole class sessions and often think carefully to provide well-chosen responses. This was clearly evident in many lessons such as where pupils were offering directions to move an adult across the classroom in an ICT lesson in Year 2. Also in a numeracy lesson in Year 5/6 many pupils were bursting with enthusiasm to provide an answer to a number problem. The teacher praised them well, which encouraged them to greater efforts with more complex calculations. In a design and technology lesson in Year 3/4, pupils were observant and perceptive when considering the relative merits and drawbacks of different types of picture frame.
17. Pupils listen attentively to each other and are encouraged in this by the example set by staff. Teachers and support staff listen carefully to pupils' answers and comments. This sends an important message to pupils and affects the way they behave towards one another. Consequently, pupils express themselves confidently, secure in the knowledge that they are valued, that they will be listened to and that their views are important.
18. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good and contribute strongly to the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils discuss tasks sensibly when working in groups and co-operate well when sharing equipment and taking turns as in an ICT lesson in Year 1 where pupils were exploring the effects of entering commands into different recording devices. Teachers provide very good role models. They treat pupils with respect and pupils are respectful in return, toward all adults and towards one another. The use of '*Please*' and '*Thank you*' often accompanied instructions to pupils in many lessons and were reciprocated by pupils.
19. Pupils' interest and good concentration in lessons and their very good relationships make a major contribution to the success of the school.

**Parents regard the school highly. They are interested in their children's schooling and are keen for them to do well.**

20. Sixty per cent of the questionnaires distributed were completed in response to the parental survey prior to the inspection. This is a good response and marks an increase of approximately 22 per cent on that at the time of the last inspection. Overall the responses were very positive. Parents have particular confidence in the important aspects of teaching, leadership and management, pupils' progress, behaviour, and the school's expectations that pupils will work hard. Those areas which parents would most like to see improved further - the information which they receive on their children's progress, the way that the school works with parents and the range of activities provided - were not found wanting by evidence available during inspection. Parents receive appropriate information on their children's progress and staff are approachable informally to answer particular queries. The school seeks to involve parents in a variety of ways. There are a good range of extra-curricular clubs and trips to supplement the curriculum, which vary throughout the year.
21. Parents are kept well informed about events and the curriculum and as a result are able to support their children with their school work. They are keen for their children to succeed and share the school's high expectations for pupils to do well.
22. Many parents take an active interest in the work their children are asked to do at home and some help in school regularly in a variety of ways. The school welcomes the help that they are able to provide in such aspects as reading, swimming and the organization of extra-curricular activities such as French and football. Through helping in these ways, parents not only provide invaluable assistance but also gain a useful insight into the workings of the school, which enables them to improve the support they give to their own children. Members of the school association – *Friends of High Ham School* - provide a range of events throughout the year. These are well supported and raise considerable amounts of money to support their children's education.

**Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are fully included in lessons and make good progress towards targets that have been set for them.**

23. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Most of these pupils make good progress throughout their time in school, as a result of the high quality support they receive. Consequently by the end of Key Stage 2 many achieve the expected standard for all pupils in National Curriculum tests. They are well supported in literacy and numeracy sessions particularly. They work in small groups within the classroom, with support assistants, on tasks adapted to their abilities by the class teacher. The assistance that pupils receive in these key areas enables them to access other subjects at an appropriate level and with confidence. Support staff are well briefed and most understand the particular needs of the individual pupils with whom they work. They ask good, open-ended questions that challenge pupils' thinking and encourage them to consider their responses carefully. Where there are very specific needs, as in the case of a pupil in Key Stage 1, teachers and support staff work closely together as an effective team to ensure that they are fully included in all activities and that the curriculum is suitably adapted to their needs.
24. The school has increased the number of support staff over the past three years, and has more than doubled the amount of support time overall. These highly valued and committed team members spend most of their time working with pupils with special

educational needs and this makes a major contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

25. The coordinator for special educational needs is an established member of staff. She is experienced and knows the pupils well, which enables her to make a significant input to provision. She teaches a class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils for most of each week but receives an appropriate amount of regular time with no class commitment, which she uses, productively for administrative tasks and in discussion with other members of staff about the needs of specific pupils.
26. The documentation related to special educational needs is sufficiently detailed and comprehensive and the results of the school's internal tests and optional national test results are kept for each pupil. These provide sufficient information for teachers and support staff to plan effectively for the pupils' different learning needs. Individual education plans are clear and manageable. Targets are unambiguous and attainable. These are shared with parents and, where appropriate, with pupils. This contributes to a coherent and well-focused approach to pupils' individual needs.

**The school uses visits and visitors, productively, to enhance the quality of pupils' education.**

27. The school has been enterprising and imaginative in the use of visitors to the school to make pupils' learning more meaningful and to supplement the activities provided by staff. This is in line with the school's aim to *'ensure pupils are given the chance to achieve their best in all aspects of school life'*. There are a range of extra-curricular activities which are largely of a sporting nature, as was the position at the time of the last inspection. This has been extended recently to include a French club which is run by a parent. A parent also provides football training for pupils at Key Stage 1 and a school governor has introduced indoor bowling. Although there is a school band and a recorder club, the school is aware that the arts are underrepresented and is considering how this deficiency might be addressed.
28. The coordinator for physical education has been resourceful in securing the expertise of county instructors to coach older Key Stage 2 pupils in rugby, cricket and tennis and also a member of the Olympic hockey team to provide two sessions of hockey. Pupils benefit from their particular skills and this generates an interest and confidence in sport, which is extended into competitions against other schools in sports such as netball and football. Good use is made of a member of the local authority music service to teach classes on a regular basis and to provide tuition in playing musical instruments as part of a small orchestra.
29. Visiting ministers of religion provide the act of collective worship regularly, which helps pupils appreciate different facets of Anglican faith. In addition, there have been visits from puppet theatres and musicians in the past year, the latter providing pupils with a 'music workshop' and the opportunity to play in an informal concert.
30. In addition, there are regular educational visits to places of interest within the immediate vicinity and further afield, to support topics undertaken in class. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, regularly attend a residential visit at an outdoor pursuit centre where they engage in adventurous activities such as climbing, abseiling and canoeing. This forms the basis for a geographical study and also provides important opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills associated with living together as a group, such as the capacity to co-operate with others, show tolerance and consideration and develop self-reliance.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

### Standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 are too low.

31. Results in national tests and teacher assessments have declined since 1997 in all subjects, but most markedly in mathematics and science. The school attributes this to the fact that there have been many staff changes which have disrupted pupils' education and also the work of these younger classes has not been sufficiently co-ordinated due to frequent changes of staff. There is evidence from the lessons observed that the new arrangements for teaching pupils in single aged groups are beginning to have a positive effect.
32. In the most recent tests - those for 2001 - the school achieved above average results in reading and average results in writing. In writing however, no pupils attained the higher Level 3. In mathematics, results were well below average overall, as again, too few pupils attained Level 3 compared to the national average. Similarly in science, although results were slightly above average, no pupils achieved Level 3, which was well below that found nationally.
33. Evidence of pupils' recent work in writing, mathematics and science confirm these standards. However, pupils' writing is improving. They are beginning to write in a variety of forms such as stories, poetry, instructions and letters. Pupils are forming their letters correctly and are starting to use interesting vocabulary such as '*...a star is like a silvery falling leaf*' when writing poems. They are beginning to use full stops and the spelling of simple words, if not accurate, is recognisable.
34. Although standards in the one numeracy lesson seen, were above those normally found these were not reflected in pupils' recent work. Too little mathematics was evident in pupils' exercise books and folders since the beginning of the current term and insufficient care has been taken with the way in which tasks are completed. Pupils use coins to calculate denominations, order numbers in sequence and calculate by partitioning numbers such as  $48 = 40 + 8$ . However, tasks are often the same for pupils of different abilities and demand too little of more able pupils. Although there were number puzzles and patterns, there is no evidence of simple problem solving or of applying mathematical knowledge practically.
35. Similarly, in science, there has been relatively little work recorded since the beginning of the current term and none of an investigative nature has been recorded. The youngest pupils in the key stage observe events closely and are beginning to record their findings simply on charts as they investigate which things move by pushing and which by pulling. The oldest pupils are enthusiastic and co-operate well, but their ability to make simple predictions and observe and record findings has not been developed sufficiently.

**Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are sometimes not high enough. The way in which teachers check pupils' learning is inconsistent throughout the school and so work is not always planned to meet fully, the needs of the most able pupils.**

36. In many lessons teachers have appropriate expectations of what pupils are able to achieve in their work. Where they check carefully how well pupils have understood the concepts and ideas taught, teachers plan subsequent work well matched to pupils' abilities. However, the ways in which teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons and

give written feedback to them on what they expect and how pupils might improve, are used inconsistently across the school.

37. Whereas pupils with special educational needs are well supported in small groups and are able to make good progress as a result, teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for the most able pupils that will occupy them for the duration of lessons. Such work is occasionally planned as extension tasks to be completed by pupils who finish class work quickly. This means that for most of the lesson, pupils capable of the very highest attainment are insufficiently extended and are working at too low a level. Pupils' past mathematics and science work at both key stages supports this. Many of the tasks set are similar for all pupils regardless of ability.
38. The way in which teachers assess pupils' learning varies considerably, even within lessons. Where it is effective, teachers know their pupils well and are able to direct questions to particular individuals. They note which pupils achieve the objectives of the lesson and which need more help. Where it is least effective, pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their thinking. The feedback provided for pupils in teachers' written comments in exercise books praise pupils for work completed but seldom suggest what they need to do to improve further. Comments such as *'You have worked hard on this...but next time don't forget full stops'* are more productive than simply *'Well done'* and gives the pupil something to which they might aspire. Where teachers' expectations are too low, they sometimes accept substandard work too readily. They praise poorly-presented work too generously and do not correct fundamental errors such as the reversal of numbers. On the other hand, where teachers' expectations are more realistic pupils are told when they have not completed sufficient work in the time available, or if the standard falls short of what is expected, with comments such as *'I'm disappointed in this ...it is not your best work!'*

**The length of the taught week at Key Stages 1 and 2 is less than the recommended minimum and ICT receives too little attention in the school's curriculum as a result.**

39. The school has worked hard, with the help of national initiatives, to improve its curriculum since this was criticised in the last inspection report. That for children in reception has improved greatly with the appointment of a new teacher and their curriculum is now very good. The curriculum now covers the entire school, rather than key stages separately and so pupils are more able to build on their skills and understanding progressively. However, the length of the taught week is shorter than that found in most schools and leaves too little time to improve standards in important subjects at Key Stage 1 and for teaching ICT particularly at Key Stage 2.
40. The school's curriculum for Key Stage 2 lacks ICT which is a statutory subject within the National Curriculum. The school has recently dismantled its ICT suite and relocated the library in order to accommodate more pupils, by establishing a new class. The school regards this to be an interim arrangement as it has requested additional accommodation from the local authority. The library continues to function in another location, but insufficient thought has been given to how ICT teaching is to be sustained at Key Stage 2. The subject only features in the school's planning until October this year and does not appear on teachers' weekly timetables. During the inspection, computers were switched on but were seldom used in any class.

**The monitoring of pupils' work and of teaching throughout the school is insufficiently regular, systematic or rigorous to be fully effective.**

41. The school analyses performance data from tests well and uses this to make decisions about which groups of pupils need additional support. However, this has been at the expense of checking the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
42. The headteacher and coordinators have started to evaluate pupils' work and teaching but this has been rather intermittent and has not been effective in keeping the headteacher appraised of standards throughout the school. The headteacher has involved the local authority and members of staff such as the science coordinator, who has monitored lessons during the spring term in four of the six classes. Her observations revealed that experimentation and investigational work were underemphasised. Although literacy and numeracy coordinators have also observed lessons, there has been very little monitoring recently. Overall the monitoring of teaching has been insufficiently systematic. For example, different formats and criteria have been used in lesson observations and the school has yet to decide which are best suited to its needs. However, all members of staff get verbal feedback on what went well and what might be improved in the lessons observed.
43. Monitoring of pupils' work has been insufficiently regular and rigorous in mathematics and science, for example, to reveal shortcomings in some teachers' expectations, evident in the amount of work completed since the beginning of term and in similar work planned for pupils of different abilities.

**There is no clearly communicated educational vision for school improvement to govern the strategic development of the school over a period longer than one year.**

44. The period of time covered by school development plan as a tool for school improvement was a key issue in the previous report. It remains an issue to be addressed.
45. The governors appointed the current headteacher four years ago to provide educational direction for the work of the school in keeping with her particular philosophy. The headteacher knows how she wishes the school to develop, but this is insufficiently clear to all staff, particularly her senior management team, for them to better support her in developing the school.
46. Although the governors' school development plan contains a number of initiatives with appropriate costings and the involvement of staff, these are not clearly prioritised and there are too many to be pursued over one year. Staff and governors have not agreed any initiatives beyond a year and have not taken the school's popularity and possible growth in pupil population sufficiently into account in a longer-term strategic view. There have been several external factors recently, such as an unprecedented rise in pupil numbers. This has taken the school by surprise, diverted it from what it sees as its main priorities and necessitated major changes in organisation. This in turn, has had implications for teaching arrangements for a new class and changes to teaching ICT as a major subject in the National Curriculum. Insufficient foresight has been given to how this subject is to be taught as an interim measure in the short term, however, or how the governors would wish to develop the school further over a longer period, in line with the headteacher's educational vision.

**The Year 1 classroom is unsuitable. It is too open and noisy to enable pupils to be taught comfortably without frequent distraction.**

47. The school has created a new classroom in an area that previously served as an ICT suite and a library. It is situated in an open area that is adjacent to a thoroughfare. The class teacher works very hard with her Year 1 class, to maintain pupils' interest and attention in difficult circumstances. Although other pupils and adults are considerate when passing through either individually, or in class groups, the frequent inadvertent interruptions distract pupils when they are listening to the class teacher and disrupt their learning. This is also stressful for the class teacher who constantly needs to speak in a loud voice to get the attention of pupils, particularly where they are working on practical activities such as in science and ICT.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

48. The governors, headteacher and staff should address the following:
- (1) Improve standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 by:
    - a) raising teachers' expectations of the oldest pupils in the key stage both in terms of standards and the amount of work produced;
    - b) seeking to build a strong and committed team with a coherent approach to improving standards;
    - c) providing more opportunities for investigative work in science and problem solving in mathematics;
    - d) working closely with the local authority to provide more suitable teaching accommodation for Year 1 pupils.  
(see paragraphs 7, 31-38 and 47)
  - (2) Improve the way in which teachers assess and mark pupils' work in order that they have higher expectations of the most able pupils and regularly provide them with suitably challenging work. (see paragraphs 36 - 38)
  - (3) Review the length of the taught week at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the light of the recommended minimum, in order that ICT is taught regularly at Key Stage 2 and that there is additional time to raise standards at Key Stage 1. (see paragraphs 31-35,39 and 40)
  - (4) Ensure that the impact of teaching upon pupils' learning is evaluated regularly, systematically and rigorously in order that shortcomings may be identified and remedied at an early stage. (see paragraphs 41-43)
  - (5) Incorporate the strategic development of the school into a longer-term plan based on a clearly expressed educational vision. (see paragraphs 43-46)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	8	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	47	47	6	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 six percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	153
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	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	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### 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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	NA	NA	NA
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (74)	90 ( 84)	84 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	NA	NA	NA
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (95)	94 ( 89 )	94 (95)
	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	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	22	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (95)	96 (95)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 ( 72 )	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	13	11	12
	Total	22	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 ( 89 )	88 ( 84)	92 (95)
	National	72 ( 70)	74 ( 72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	152
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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	25.7

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5
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)	1

*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	4	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	2001
	£
Total income	311,284
Total expenditure	286,817
Expenditure per pupil	1,952
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,212

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	153
Number of questionnaires returned	92

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	2	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	38	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	39	5	2	1
The teaching is good.	58	35	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	53	13	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	42	43	12	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	49	41	5	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	30	3	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	38	10	2	10