

INSPECTION REPORT

SUTTON-ON-SEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mablethorpe

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120479

Headteacher: Mr C J Flanagan

Reporting inspector: John Messer
15477

Dates of inspection: 24-25 June 2002

Inspection number: 195011

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
Sutton-on-Sea
Mablethorpe
Lincolnshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Robert Watson

Date of previous inspection: 2 June 1997

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community primary school became a 'Beacon School' in September 2001 because it has exceptional strengths that it is willing to share with other schools. It has 269 boys and girls on roll and is about the same size as most other primary schools. Nearly a quarter of pupils come from outside the immediate area as a result of parental choice. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below the standards normally expected of four-year-olds. Before starting school around a third of children have some form of pre-school playgroup experience but there is no such provision on site. Around a fifth of pupils are entered on the school's register of special educational needs because they need extra help in their learning; this proportion is broadly in line with the national average. The parents of well over a quarter of pupils are entitled to free school meals for their children, which is broadly in line with the national average, but as the local authority abandoned its school meals service over twenty years ago, the proportion who are entitled may well be higher. The school serves an area where there are high levels of social deprivation. Nearly all pupils are from white English speaking backgrounds, a small number are from ethnic minority families and a few speak English as an additional language. An exceptionally large proportion of pupils, over a quarter each year, enter or leave the school part way through this, the primary phase of their schooling.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a very effective education for its pupils and has significant strengths. As soon as they start school children make rapid gains in their learning in the Reception classes. Pupils achieve well and by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, most pupils attain standards that are at least average in English and mathematics and a high proportion attain standards that are above average. Standards in information and communication technology are well above average. Pupils' personal development is particularly good; they work well independently and are sensible, courteous and caring. All the teaching is at least satisfactory and much of it is very good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is supported well by teachers, ancillary staff, parents and governors. The school provides a rich curriculum. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Information and communication technology is a strength of the school and computers are used well to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and many attain high standards.
- There is a high proportion of very good teaching and teachers are hard working, caring and committed.
- The school is successful in meeting the needs of all pupils; provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are newly arrived in the school is particularly good.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and develop very good attitudes to learning.

What could be improved

- Most pupils achieve well in mathematics but the materials used to support teaching and to record pupils' work are not always appropriate and this results in uneven achievement across the school.
- The outside area for the youngest children is not well developed as a learning resource.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory mainly because parents take their children out of school during term time.

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 developed well and there has been good improvement since the last inspection in June 1997. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained and in information and communication technology standards have improved substantially. The key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been tackled successfully. Teaching is monitored systematically, assessment of pupils' work has improved, and the management of each subject by subject co-ordinators has improved. Standards have improved in physical education and in design and technology. There are now more planned opportunities for spiritual development and pupils have a greater awareness of the diversity

of cultures in our society. The quality of teaching has improved significantly; there is now a high proportion of very good teaching and no unsatisfactory teaching. On average the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 over the past three years have improved and the Department for Education and Skills has presented the school with a 'School Achievement Award' in recognition of this improvement.

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	B	C	C	B
mathematics	C	C	C	A
science	C	C	B	A

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

Children achieve well in the Reception classes and by the end of the school year many are on course to attain most of the Early Learning Goals specified in national guidance.

Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2 most attain standards that are at least average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This indicates an improvement since last year when the results of the national tests indicated that the school's performance was below average in reading and writing when compared with all schools and well below in mathematics. When compared with schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds, however, the school's performance was above average in reading and average in writing, although below average in mathematics. The comparison with 'similar' schools should be treated with great caution as it is based solely on the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and in this county there is no school meals service. Also it takes no account of the exceptionally high proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school during the course of each school year.

Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 but this good achievement is not always reflected in the results pupils attain. This is because a particularly high proportion of pupils in these year groups enter and leave the school during the school year. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are broadly average in English and above average in mathematics. Exceptionally high standards were seen in mental arithmetic in Year 6. In the national tests in 2001 the school exceeded its statutory targets in English and mathematics. It is unlikely to reach its targets this year of 85 per cent of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 because they were set an unrealistically ambitious level given the characteristics of the group of pupils taking the tests this year. The targets for 2003 are challenging but more realistic and the school is likely to attain them. Over the past five years, the trend in the school's results has been broadly in line with the improving trend nationally. When compared with 'similar' schools the school's results in the national tests last year were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science.

Across the school particularly good work was seen in information and communication technology and in art and design. In the lessons seen in physical education, most of which were outside due to the fine weather, pupils attained standards that were in line with national expectations but it is clear that the lack of an adequate school hall impedes achievement and restricts attainment in gymnastics and dance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Pupils are enthusiastic and willing to learn. They have very good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are friendly and courteous and support each other well. Their behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are confident and work well together even when not directly supervised.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory because a large number of pupils are taken out of school for family holidays during term time.

A considerable amount of school time is lost when parents take their children on holiday during term time and this adversely affects pupils' achievement. Pupils are very willing to help with jobs around the school. The older ones are considerate and help the younger ones sensibly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and much of the teaching is very good or occasionally excellent. The teaching of English ranges from excellent to good and pupils' achievements in reading and writing are good. Literacy skills are taught well. The teaching of mathematics ranges from excellent to satisfactory; it is mostly good but there are inconsistencies; in several classes there is an over-reliance on undemanding worksheets and insufficient emphasis on using mathematical skills in purposeful ways. Numeracy skills are taught well and most pupils achieve well. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This was especially evident in the exceptionally good teaching seen in several lessons that involved the use of computers. Where teaching is less effective it is mainly because the activities provided lack purpose and fail to capture pupils' imagination. Teachers are aware of the widely differing learning needs of pupils and lesson plans indicate clearly how the needs of all will be met. The needs of all are met particularly well where learning support assistants are available to help specific groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a rich curriculum that is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are quickly identified and teaching is modified appropriately to meet their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The small number of pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral and social development is very good. It is good for spiritual development and satisfactory for cultural development.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good levels of care are evident throughout the school.
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The school offers a broad and well-balanced curriculum. Teaching and learning are supported exceptionally well by the use of computers and teachers' computerised whiteboards. The school hall is inadequate and does not allow the full range of the statutory curriculum in physical education to be covered in depth. Teaching time is wasted, especially in wet weather, when pupils have to walk to the hall. The school is especially good at meeting the varying learning needs of all pupils. Many arrive in the school at various times during the year and they are quickly assimilated into the school. They are rapidly assessed and those with particular learning needs are catered for well. The friendly relationships and positive attitudes to learning help new pupils to settle in quickly. The school works closely with parents and has established an exceptionally good web site that is packed with useful information. There is a strong Parent-Teacher Association that raises substantial sums of money to supplement the school's resources. Parents hold the school in high esteem.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and his deputy work closely together to provide strong, purposeful leadership. They are very well supported by key staff, who help to manage the curriculum effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are closely associated with the school, take a keen interest in developments and check that the school complies with statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school analyses its performance closely and identifies appropriate areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Computers are used especially well to support teaching and learning.

The governing body ensures that resources are at least adequate to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. A slightly higher than usual sum of money remained unspent at the end of the last financial year because the school is waiting to commence refurbishment of the hall and computer suite. As at the time of the last inspection provision for physical education is inadequate; the hall is at some distance from classrooms and is too small. There is no swimming pool close to the school and much time is used transporting pupils to a pool which is 12 miles away from the school. Staffing levels are satisfactory. The governing body is very aware of the principles of best value and applies them well. There is no complacency in the school and all associated with it have a strong commitment to improving standards further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard and behave well. • The school works closely with parents and they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework children receive. • Information about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Indoor facilities for physical education.

Inspection findings confirm parents' positive views. The inspection team found that the amount of homework set for pupils is appropriate and that parents receive a good amount of information from the school about their children's progress. The range of activities outside lessons is good. Facilities for physical education indoors are poor.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Information and communication technology is a strength of the school and computers are used well to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

1. The headteacher co-ordinates information and communication technology and he has an exceptionally good knowledge of the subject and its application in schools. Teachers are also skilled in using computers and have developed a good understanding of the subject. Teachers' professional development has been fostered well by the school and there has also been a limited amount of development as a result of the national training initiative for teachers.
2. Resources to support teaching and learning are very good. Each teacher has a laptop computer and these are used well to prepare lessons. The school has a number of interactive whiteboards and these are also used well to create interesting presentations. The whiteboards are shared as there are too few to allow one per class. The school has a small computer suite and additionally each class has a bank of computers. The school's digital camera, 'photoshop' programs and scanners are used well to produce images that support work in many subjects. Particularly good work was seen in art and design where pupils' drawings were combined imaginatively with computer generated images. A particularly good series of pictures has been produced by pupils in Year 3 and 5 that illustrated the arrival of mythical creatures as they emerged into the locality around the school. Pupils in Year 5 also created surreal portraits by pasting parts of digital photographs of the school into their own drawings. They scanned line patterns from photographs of walls, for example, onto their self-portraits to achieve remarkable effects. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 produced pictures of high quality when they drew lines with the mouse before colouring in each section. Much of this work showed exceptionally sensitive use of colour. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 used computers well to create a good multimedia presentation that incorporated their commentaries and photographs of their visit to Holland.
3. Children in the Reception classes showed great confidence when using computers to create party invitations. They placed the text carefully on the page and adjusted the border to fit, demonstrating good skills in enlarging and reducing the size of images. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4 pupils needed no reminding about how to add images from a bank of pictures to the text they had written advertising a new chocolate bar. They selected appropriate pictures, font styles, colours and sizes. In a geography lesson for pupils in Year 5, pupils used a laptop computer loaded with a disk that they explored to answer questions about different countries. These pupils have a remarkably broad factual knowledge of continents, countries, capital cities and national flags. They also used CD-ROMs to research into the life and times of Queen Victoria in history lessons. In this class e-mails are used well to share correspondence with pupils in a Canadian school. Computers are used well to support work in music, especially composing, and pupils are adept at integrating clips of their musical compositions into presentations.
4. Pupils use programmable robots called 'Roamers' well. Children used the 'Roamers' effectively in a good lesson in the Reception class which demonstrated that the youngest children have a good understanding of how to input specific commands to program and control robotic devices. Good links are made with art and design, as when pupils in Year 6 designed and made hats to fit over these robots. Pupils are good at programming the robots to follow a prescribed course. This helps to consolidate and extend work in mathematics. Computers are also used well to illustrate data that pupils collect from surveys, such as the information they collected on the most and least popular soft drinks and on pupils' favourite subjects.
5. Teachers use computers well to produce lesson plans and material that is designed to provide information and tasks for pupils. Much of the pupils' work is posted on the school's exceptionally good web site. This web site contains a wealth of information for parents and governors. Parents can access advice on a wide range of matters including, for example, how mathematics is taught or how to help children with their reading.

6. Pupils achieve remarkably well in information and communication technology and most attain standards that far exceed national expectations.
Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and many attain high standards.
7. From their earliest days in school children's communication, language and literacy skills are promoted well. In one very good lesson in the Reception class a group of children acted a play they had devised entitled 'Billy the Bothersome Bully'. Each held a stick that carried a picture of the characters they were portraying and they had a good understanding of the role of the narrator. They prepared and acted out their simple play well. This activity helped to develop communication and language skills effectively. The youngest children are also introduced to a good system that helps them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the sounds made by each letter in the alphabet. They achieve well as they use this knowledge in the development of their early reading and writing skills. They enjoy singing their own versions of nursery rhymes and have a good understanding of rhyme. They love listening to stories and sharing books with adults. They also achieve well in the development of basic understanding of mathematics. Again they have favourite songs, such as the centipede song, which involves counting in tens to 100. This extends their understanding of number well.
8. The good foundations that are laid in the Reception classes are built on well in Years 1 and 2 where pupils' achievements in literacy and in numeracy are good. Pupils' literacy skills were developed very well in an excellent lesson in Year 2 where the nature of different types of questions was explored. Pupils learned how to pose questions and to record them in writing. The higher-attaining pupils were suitably challenged and they developed a good understanding of the difference between closed and open-ended questions and the relative value of both types. In this class pupils' knowledge of literature is extended well as they study the works of different children's authors each week. They compare the comfortable, homely stories written by Shirley Hughes with the broader social spectrum in the writings of Allan Ahlberg. They look at the illustrations of Tony Ross and compare them with those of Janet Ahlberg. This helps to generate an enthusiasm for reading and contributes to the high reading standards attained by many pupils. Writing skills are used well in many areas of the curriculum. As part of a series of lessons designed to promote personal development, pupils in Year 2 wrote sensitively about themselves and how unique and special they are. They described their personalities, their looks, their families and interests clearly. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are introduced to books with a multicultural dimension and here the pupils empathised with a grandmother who originally lived in Pakistan and craves for a taste of mangoes.
9. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and complete a good amount of work in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 most attain standards that are at least average and a large proportion of pupils attain standards that are above average. They have a good understanding of money and in one very good lesson in Year 2 they successfully worked out how to make the most of a limited amount of money to replenish their play tubs with quoits, bats and balls. They create good graphs of the time it takes them to get changed for physical education each week and they collect data to illustrate their exercise diaries about the amount and different types of exercise they have had each week. They have a good understanding of the two, five and ten times tables and are becoming increasingly skilled at adding up and taking away in their heads.
10. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, though achievement in the classes for the older pupils is better than that in the classes for the youngest pupils in this part of the school. By the time they are in Year 6 most pupils have developed reading skills that are at least average and many read widely. Several particularly avid readers in the class grabbed brief opportunities to read a few sentences from their reading books as they finished each of a series of tasks in a mathematics lesson. The works of Michael Morpungo, J. K. Rowling, J. R. Tolkein and Jacqueline Wilson are popular and several pupils enjoy the diaries of Adrian Mole. Many enjoy the non-fiction 'Horrible History' series and 'Horrible Science'. Pupils write well and after a visit from a poet were inspired to write poems entitled 'Without You', which included sensitively crafted stanzas such as:

'Without you I'm like
Cornflakes without a bowl,
A rainbow without its gold,
A person without their soul.'

11. Pupils in Year 6 are exceptionally skilled at mental arithmetic. The teacher asks very involved questions such as: 'Add the square root of thirty six to the number of vertices in an octagon and multiply the number you arrive at by the number of lines of symmetry in a square divided by the square root of 64, double it, divide by 100 and give the answer as a vulgar fraction in its lowest terms'. In a flash, as soon as the question is finished, most pupils offer the correct answer. Each day they practise number skills and most get 40 questions, such as 343×3 , correct within the allotted two minutes. They understand formulae, such as that for calculating the area of a circle, and have a good understanding of reflective symmetry, rotations and translations of shapes. Most attain standards in mathematics that are above average and in mental arithmetic they are well above national expectations.

There is a high proportion of very good teaching and teachers are hard working, caring and committed.

12. The quality of teaching in all the lessons seen was at least satisfactory; in well over a third of lessons it was good and in nearly a half it was very good or occasionally excellent. Teaching for the children in the Reception classes and for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good and it is very good for pupils in Year 1 and 2. Teachers plan and prepare lessons thoroughly. Plans are detailed and teachers give a great deal of time and thought to lesson preparation. Details include how work will be modified to meet the needs of pupils who are at varying stages of development within each class. Alternative plans are devised for lessons in physical education according to weather conditions: an outside plan for a lesson on the field coupled with a plan for a lesson in the hall in the event of rain. The teachers use their laptop computers well to prepare lesson plans and to prepare presentations for use with the interactive whiteboards. In one good lesson for pupils in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class the pupils themselves wrote words on the interactive whiteboard. Teachers have well-developed skills in information and communication technology. They also have a thorough understanding of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies and generally a good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
13. In one excellent lesson for pupils in Year 2, good links were made between science and literacy as pupils explored medical terms. They examined the meanings of words such as 'specialist', 'genes', 'infection', 'medicine' and 'drugs'. Pupils gasped with surprise at the thought of drugs being used in hospitals and the teacher grasped the opportunity to explain that drugs could be beneficial as well as harmful. Here the teacher maintained high expectations of pupils' ability to understand and used excellent questioning strategies to consolidate understanding and extend learning. In this lesson tasks were tailored precisely to the varying stages of development and different learning needs of all groups. As a result all made good progress in their learning and all experienced success. In this class the marking of pupils' work was particularly helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work; for example, 'The beginning of your story shows attention to detail but the ending looks a little rushed'. The teacher's comments in the reading diaries were also particularly helpful for pupils and parents, such as 'She is working on developing more expression in her reading', and 'He is recalling the main events in a chapter'.
14. In one excellent mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 5, where the subject of the studies was the twenty-four hour clock and how to read timetables, the teacher used an excellent board game that he had devised to develop enthusiasm. This was being used by a group of higher-attaining pupils but it could be played at different levels to suit pupils' particular learning needs. The pupils were appropriately challenged by the game and their learning was extended well. In this lesson the teacher was working closely with a group of lower-attaining pupils, many of whom had arrived in the school recently, and again the degree of challenge was appropriate so that pupils learnt effectively. By the end of the lesson they could read and create clock faces with conventional and Roman numerals, with rectangular or round faces, in digital or analogue formats. The rest of the class gained a good understanding of how to read timetables. In this lesson the interactive whiteboard was used well together with board markers to illustrate information.
15. Throughout the school, pupils are very well behaved in lessons. This is partly because very good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils and partly because the pupils enjoyed

rising to the challenges that are set. In several lessons where the degree of challenge was inappropriate, pupils were not so closely involved nor so interested in their learning. Teachers are sensitive to the feelings of pupils and offer a great deal of praise and encouragement. The good relationships help pupils to develop confidence and most contribute well in question and answer sessions. Good opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills were provided in most lessons. Time is used well, as demonstrated in most registration sessions where pupils used the time to practise handwriting, learn spellings or read quietly. Teachers are aware of health and safety issues, as demonstrated in a lesson in physical education, for example, where the teacher ensured that all earrings were taped and all jewellery and watches removed for safe keeping before the lesson began. In classrooms a quiet, orderly working atmosphere is generated. Teaching is particularly effective where teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' performance and the amount of work that they will produce. This was particularly evident in Years 5 and 6 and especially in expectations of pupils' ability to memorise factual information and calculate complex problems mentally. These mental processes were developed in a cumulative, step-by-step training programme that bore exceptional results. Teachers also expect work to be presented neatly and carefully and handwriting is taught systematically throughout the school. As a result pupils' work is neat and tidy with good attention to detail. Teaching in several lessons was particularly purposeful because the teachers identified exactly what pupils were expected to learn during the course of the lesson and shared these intentions with the pupils. During a short review session towards the end of these lessons the intentions were reviewed and the question was asked 'Did we in fact learn all that we hoped?' Gentle humour is used well and teachers grasp opportunities to make sure that pupils have fun and enjoy their learning.

The school is successful in meeting the needs of all pupils; provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are newly arrived in the school is particularly good.

16. The school provides a warm welcome for the many pupils who are new arrivals during the course of each year. This warmth helps them to settle quickly into school routines and it was evident that those who had been in school for only a few weeks were already well integrated and well supported. A significant proportion of the newcomers have special educational needs. They are carefully assessed on arrival and good plans are drawn up to meet their particular learning needs. The very few pupils who are slightly troubled and present behavioural problems are dealt with sensitively and positively. The school experiences a good degree of success with such pupils because it is prepared to make appropriate provision. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support and their progress is monitored closely.
17. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs manages provision well. Detailed Individual Education Plans with clear, crisp targets for improvement are devised for pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. The co-ordinator takes great care to ensure that when they are withdrawn from class for extra learning support they are following activities that are parallel to those that are going on in the classroom. This ensures that they do not miss important parts of the curriculum when they are taken out of class. She also adjusts her timetable each half-term to accommodate class arrangements and new pupils who have been identified as needing extra support.
18. Good provision is made for higher-attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented. Teachers include details in their planning of how the needs of higher-attaining pupils will be met and modify tasks accordingly so that these pupils are provided with challenging activities. The school's success in meeting the needs of all pupils is demonstrated by the way in which pupils work and play happily together. The school maintains high levels of inclusion and pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum.

Pupils are very enthusiastic and develop very good attitudes to learning.

19. Pupils expect to work hard and to enjoy themselves in lessons. They are receptive to the demands made by teachers and willingly rise to the challenges set. The harder the challenges,

then the more determined were the pupils to achieve success. This was particularly evident in pupils' approach to the use of computers. Here, a great deal is expected of pupils but they soon learn to use the machines confidently and go from strength to strength in their learning. The challenges presented by teachers generated great enthusiasm among pupils. Even where lessons were not especially interesting, pupils settled readily to the tasks set and worked hard and with good concentration.

20. Pupils are good at working independently. If they need information they will invariably endeavour to find it out for themselves without reference to the teacher. They access the Internet as a matter of course for research purposes and are adept at finding the information they need. When given the opportunity to use computers to develop their own presentations they do so sensibly. They work well in collaboration one with another and support each other well. The older pupils are particularly willing to accept responsibilities, such as helping to supervise and support the younger ones at lunchtime. Pupils' positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their learning and achievement.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Most pupils achieve well in mathematics but the materials used to support teaching and to record pupils' work are not always appropriate and this result in uneven achievement across the school.

21. Most pupils achieve well in mathematics but their achievement is uneven across the school. This is because in several classes there is too great a reliance on providing pupils with published photo-copiable worksheets that offer little challenge and are often undemanding. The younger pupils, for example, spend a considerable amount of time colouring in pictures that help them to identify numbers and consolidate counting skills. This type of activity does not make the best use of the time available in lessons. Pupils are good at working independently and enjoy challenges. Most are capable of learning new skills rapidly as is evidenced by the speedy development of their ability to use computers. The material contained in many of the worksheets does little to extend their thinking and often restricts learning opportunities.
22. In a lesson in Year 3 pupils were all given worksheets involving written problems, such as 'How many sweets each weighing 50 grams would there be in a bag of sweets weighing 300 grams in total?' Many pupils struggled with these problems and failed to answer them because they needed materials that encouraged practical methods of arriving at the solutions, such as actual sweets and bags. The oldest pupils have a clear understanding of how to read measuring instruments, such as thermometers, spring balances and weighing scales, but opportunities to use these in practical situations are limited. Again, in several classes much work is recorded on undemanding worksheets. This lack of challenge restricts pupils' opportunities to extend their knowledge and to use their creative skills in presenting work imaginatively.

The outside area for the youngest children is not well developed as a learning resource.

23. The youngest pupils have a good-sized grassy area outside their classrooms. In fine weather they use this area well when working with water and sand, for example. It is, however, not well developed as a learning resource. There are no roadways for pupils to use wheeled vehicles when visiting shops or garages, for example. There is no climbing apparatus to help physical development and to form the basis for constructions that encourage the imagination and creative development. One of the Reception teachers is creating good designs for the development of this area. The school is intending to use these designs as a basis for extending the learning opportunities for the youngest children in the near future.

Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory mainly because parents take their children out of school during term time.

24. Despite the school's best efforts, the rate of attendance in the last school year was well below the national average. The school has created a good action plan to tackle the issue. The school's initiatives are beginning to have an impact and the rate of unauthorised absence has fallen, but attendance rates are still too low. The school carefully monitors attendance and analyses days lost for different reasons. Certificates are awarded to classes and to individuals for good attendance. The importance of regular attendance is emphasised in the school's prospectus. Parents are urged not to take pupils out of school during term time. However, a significant number still believe that they have a right to remove pupils from school for family holidays. Consequently, pupils' achievement is adversely affected.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

25. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

(1) Improve the consistency of teaching in mathematics by:

- providing practical apparatus, especially for younger and lower attaining pupils, that is designed to help them to grasp a clearer understanding of how to solve problems;
- encouraging the greater use of numeracy skills to solve problems and resolve investigations;
- encouraging a move away from using published worksheets and instead providing pupils with more opportunities to develop and present their work creatively.

(paragraphs 21,22.)

(2) Develop the outdoor area as a learning resource for the youngest children so that it helps to fire their imaginations. (paragraphs 23.) *

(3) Encourage all parents to appreciate the link between good achievement and good attendance. (paragraph 24.) *

* These areas for improvement have already been identified by the school and feature in its development plans.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	10	5	0	0	0
Percentage	7	37	37	19	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		269
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		73

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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	15	23	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	30	35
	Girls	19	21	23
	Total	31	51	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (83)	87 (83)	82 (87)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	11
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	30	32	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (87)	84 (87)	76 (80)
	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	20	21	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	20
	Girls	17	16	18
	Total	31	31	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (84)	76 (77)	93 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	18	17	16
	Total	30	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (70)	76 (81)	73 (81)
	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	2
White	226
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.96
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	231

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	598 155
Total expenditure	586 970
Expenditure per pupil	2 240
Balance brought forward from previous year	34 720
Balance carried forward to next year	45 905

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	268
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	29	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	28	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	42	1	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	28	10	2	1
The teaching is good.	74	23	3	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	31	9	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	18	2	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	15	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	63	29	4	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	75	22	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	27	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	43	6	6	2

Other issues raised by parents

Parents give strong support. One issue that was a cause for common concern was the inadequacy of the school hall. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting parents expressed concern at the lack of an adequate car park and that cars drive close to the playground.