

INSPECTION REPORT

OAKRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

STAFFORD

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124130

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M. Griffin

Reporting inspector: Mr. P. R. Sudworth - 2700

Dates of inspection: November 12th - 13th 2001

Inspection number: 195172

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Brian Aistrop
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oakridge Primary School is a one-form entry school on the southern outskirts of Stafford and serves an area of privately owned housing. A large proportion of the pupils, approaching one-half, comes from beyond the school's traditional catchment area. It is of average size with 227 boys and girls on roll in seven classes. In January an eighth class is created when pupils who have reached their fourth birthday begin part-time as pre-Reception children. They form the new Reception class the following September. Pupils' attainment is above average on entry. The school has a few bi-lingual pupils but all are fluent in English. Twenty-five pupils have special educational needs, a proportion below the national average. Of these, 23 pupils are at the early stages of assessment. Two pupils are on the later stages of assessment and of these one has a statement of special educational need. Almost all the pupils are of white United Kingdom origin but a few pupils are from other European or Asian backgrounds. Overall there is little movement of pupils into and out of the school during the year. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The school has been experiencing a period of difficulty, as the headteacher has been absent sick for a large part of the last three years. Four acting headteachers have been in charge of the school during this time. The school's aims include helping the children to develop their talents, to think creatively and to communicate their thoughts in speech and writing.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school in many respects. Standards obtained by pupils at ages seven and 11 are well above national averages in English, mathematics and science and pupils make good progress in these subjects throughout the school. The quality of instrumental work in music is well above average, although class compositional work and the work in religious education do not meet expected standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good. The temporary but prolonged arrangements during the absence of the headteacher have provided a sound level of leadership and management overall, though they have resulted in some weaknesses in strategic planning. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages is well above average in English, mathematics and science;
- The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs and those who have a talent in music;
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities;
- Teachers have maintained academic standards in English, mathematics and science during the past three years and remained loyal and committed during the difficulties of the past three years.
- The school's parent teacher association (OSCA) is very strong, raises much money for the school and plays a significant role in helping to create a sense of community.

What could be improved

- The use of literacy across the curriculum;
- The opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor standards and teaching across the school;
- The quality of planning for numeracy lessons;
- Standards in musical composition and religious education;
- The attention paid by the governing body to statutory requirements and aspects of health and safety.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. The school has experienced some difficult times since then due to the headteacher's long-term illness. Temporary arrangements have involved several different people as acting headteacher. These arrangements have not enabled the momentum of the school to keep going and have resulted in only satisfactory progress being made since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' moral development is better. The accommodation has been improved with the creation of the spacious pre-Reception class and a fully equipped information and communication technology suite. Standards in English and mathematics have improved in Key Stage 1 from above average to well above average. Standards are not as high in some of the other subjects due in large measure to the concentrated effort now being devoted to the literacy and numeracy hours, which has reduced the amount of time for other subjects. Lesson objectives are clearer and assessment is used better in most classes but there is still room for a greater consistency in these aspects. Schemes of work have been developed. Resources are considerably improved in science, literacy, design and technology, information and communication technology and history. Written reports to parents on their children's progress are of better quality but they could be improved further. Pupils' behaviour, whilst good, does not reach the excellent standard reported previously. Insufficient time is now devoted to religious education and still not enough attention is given to musical composition in most classes. Governing body does not now fulfil all its statutory obligations. The school's value for money is not as good as reported at the last inspection. Given the current situation, the school has sound potential for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds 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*	B
Science	A	A	A	C

Key

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

Children make good progress in the Reception class. They adjust quickly to school and their personal and social skills are mature for their age. They make a good start to their reading, writing and mathematical development. At ages seven and 11 pupils have attained consistently well in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in the past few years. The school's results at age 11 have been consistently in the top 5 per cent in the country in English and in two out of the last three years in mathematics. Against similar schools, those having similar proportions of free school meals, the school's most recent results were average in science, above average in mathematics and well above average in English. In 2001, whilst end of Year 2 results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics against all schools nationally, against similar schools they were average in mathematics and reading but well above average in writing. The school surpassed its locally agreed target for the percentage of pupils obtaining the expected level or above by three per cent in English but fell below it in mathematics by two per cent. Standards in instrumental music are well above average but in class music, pupils' attainment in musical composition is below expected standards because of insufficient opportunity and the quality of singing observed was disappointing. In other National Curriculum subjects, pupils meet expectations for their ages by ages seven and 11. In religious education pupils have limited knowledge of world faiths, including Christianity because the subject has been receiving insufficient attention and do not reach the expected standard. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science and achieve soundly in most other subjects, apart from music and religious education where achievement is unsatisfactory. Those with special educational needs make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, enjoy school and are interested in what they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour observed during the inspection was good, both in classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They relate well to one another. Some pupils take on particular responsibilities such as caring for younger pupils or looking after the environmental areas.
Attendance	Above average. Pupils are punctual for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 and 2	Years 3-6
Lessons seen overall	Good	Sound	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.

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and pupils settle into school quickly. The brief visits to literacy and numeracy lessons in this short inspection indicated that teaching is satisfactory in numeracy and good in literacy. The school gives good attention to supporting pupils with special educational needs through group work and withdrawal sessions. In some lessons not enough attention is given to matching work to pupils' prior attainment and capabilities, especially

for those who attain more highly. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. Teachers sometimes use too many worksheets, particularly in history, geography and religious education, which do not stretch the pupils enough. The worksheets do not enable the pupils to think enough for themselves and to create their own written accounts. Teachers use resources well to help pupils' understanding of lesson content.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It is sound in other parts of the school. In music pupils do well in instrumental tuition. Not enough importance is given to religious education and musical composition. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified quickly. Parents are involved at an early stage to help their children at home. Pupils make good progress because of the good teaching and support, sometimes in withdrawal groups. Individual education plans are of good quality.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All bi-lingual pupils speak English fluently and extra provision is not required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There are opportunities for pupils to take some responsibility, such as caring for environmental areas and carrying out other specific duties. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. It is very good for their moral development and good for their social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are good. Procedures for general safety arrangements on the site are unsatisfactory overall, although the current number of midday supervisors, considering the split playgrounds, is inadequate.

The school strives to have good links with parents. Communication with them is generally good and letters are written in a friendly tone. However, the school does not give the parents an outline about their children's termly studies and annual progress reports do not detail future targets for individual pupils. There is a very active and well organised parent teacher association (OSCA), which raises much money for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The temporary arrangements during the long-term absence of the headteacher are providing a sound level of leadership and management overall, though there are weaknesses in strategic planning and in following up points for action. Co-ordinators are not yet checking systematically on standards of teaching and the quality of work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. Statutory curriculum requirements are not met in music and religious education. Some statutory content is missing from the annual report to parents and in the prospectus. Improvement is needed in managing health and safety issues. The committee structure works well and assists in decision making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is beginning to analyse test results more effectively than it used to and to learn lessons from this exercise. Targets are set for individual pupils and their achievements are monitored.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans its finances ahead through school development planning. Staff are deployed effectively and resources are used well in lessons.

The school applies the principles of best value when purchasing equipment and resources. Overall the school gives good value for money.

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 are making good progress; • The teaching is good; • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns; • The school expects their children to work hard and to do their best; • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible; • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework; • They are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on; • The school does not work closely with parents; • The school is not well led and managed.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive comments made by parents. In some respects it agrees with the parents who have concerns. Homework arrangements are inconsistent in different year groups. Some pupils get very little homework, others much. The school makes good arrangements for parents to discuss their children's progress but parents are not informed about the studies they undertake each term. Reports are sent annually and these are of sound quality. The school has gone through a difficult time in the absence of stable leadership. Governors and acting headteachers in post at the time have done their best to keep parents informed in the difficult situation which has prevailed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages is well above average in English, mathematics and science;

1. Pupils' attainment has been well above average over the past five years in English, mathematics and science in national tests at ages seven and 11. In aspects of their work in some of these years, pupils' attainment has been very high, amongst the top five per cent of schools in the country. In writing for example at the end of Year 2 and in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment was very high in three of the last five years. When compared with similar schools, as defined by the percentage of free school meals, results have been at least satisfactory and often good. In the most recent tests, the school's performance at the end of Year 2 was average in mathematics and reading but well above average in writing. At the end of Year 6 the results were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. The good trend of results looks set to continue and pupils' attainment seen during the inspection indicated that large percentages of pupils in both key stages are on target to obtain the expected level and significant proportions to gain the higher levels.

2. Boys and girls throughout the school consistently outperform the national averages for boys and girls. Year 2 girls do particularly well, even outperforming the boys in mathematics against the national trend. Yet Year 2 boys have been doing better than the boys have nationally by an average of one term's progress. The school's 11 year-old pupils have outperformed their respective national gender counterparts substantially in each of the last five years in English, mathematics and science by an average of well over one year's progress. Whilst girls have done better than the school's boys in English, the difference is less than national differences. Year 6 boys have been doing better than the girls in mathematics and also in science.

3. The children make a good beginning in the Reception class and very good foundations are set which assist their future learning. The children adjust quickly to school, assisted by the part-time education they receive at age four. Reception children socialise well and are able to play alongside others or independently. The play opportunities enable them to develop their thinking and speaking skills as they 'repair the boiler' at the imaginary zoo. They talk about 'animals evolving' in small groups as they discuss the plastic animals they have brought to school to show to others and talk about together. They are taught from an early age about 'question words' and they learn to put these into practice in small groups in discussion with others. They demonstrate good skills in speaking in complete sentences and this assists their later progress in writing and their confidence in speech. By the end of the Reception year, the children have a very good facility with number dealing confidently with, and gaining a good understanding of, numbers beyond 20. Several children have made a good start to reading by then and are writing in decipherable words, independently writing sentences and some engaging in longer pieces of work.

4. By the end of Year 2 many pupils are writing well punctuated, long stories often in an attractive style; 'and that is how the trouble began' wrote one Year 2 pupil in her lively story. Work is well presented, neatly written and often incorporating complex sentences, with good attention to letter size. Spelling is often of a good quality. They have a good understanding of tens and units by age seven and of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They are knowledgeable about the world around them. For example Year 2 pupils demonstrated a good understanding of electricity as they brainstormed the theme. One boy was able to talk about volts and amps. They knew that it was dangerous to handle electrical equipment with wet hands and that lightning is a 'natural form of electricity'.

5. Most pupils have good reading skills. Pupils enjoy books. Year 2 pupils when reading aloud could observe the punctuation and read with expression. They know the purpose of a contents, index and glossary and know how to use them which gives them a very good start for their reading and research work in Key Stage 2. Some very good teaching was observed in upper Key Stage 2 literacy lessons, which contributes to the pupils' good progress. Teachers made good use of technical language which pupils gave back in their own contributions to the lessons. Pupils were challenged to read more deeply into the text. The Year 6 teacher stimulated discussion by getting the pupils to examine the apparent breaking of rules by the author putting a comma before an 'and'. They compared and contrasted texts in pairs emphasising difference in language use. By the end of Year 6, pupils indicate that they have a good understanding of metaphor and simile and use these effectively in their written work. They write for a range of purposes, including plays. Work is well presented with mature handwriting and correctly punctuated, including paragraphing and commas. Spelling is of a good standard. By the end of both key stages pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Year 3 pupils used complex sentences to relate their feelings about the dark. They contribute well in class to discussion and politely listen to the views of others.

6. In mathematics they appreciate the rules of divisibility, have a good understanding of fractions and percentages. They can place fractions in order from a list. They are competent in long multiplication. They present their work well to aid their level of accuracy and this is often good. They use mathematics well to analyse their results in science, for example, by working out the mean. In science they enjoy investigation and predict, explaining their reasons, the results of their experiments, for example when testing out the results of gauging the impact of one car on another when deliberately being crashed at the bottom of a ramp. In their written work about their experiments with parachute, they are able to state that 'the parachutes fell to the earth because of gravity pulling them to the earth. ...The bigger the canopy the greater the air resistance.' They were able to evaluate the setting up arrangements for their experiments and discuss the problems and reason why the experiment was not fair.

The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs and those who have a talent in music;

7. The school has an orchestra comprising 30 pupils and includes cello, violin, viola, recorder, clarinet and flute players. Several other pupils are learning instruments but have not yet achieved orchestral status. The keenness of pupils to learn an instrument is indicated by the fact that there is a waiting list for tuition. The success of this aspect of music is due in large measure to the enthusiasm of the music co-ordinator who has very good skills in the subject. The orchestra sometimes accompanies the singing in assemblies. The school receives very good support from the peripatetic teachers and they are very supportive of the school when it arranges concerts. They often write special parts for particular instruments. Their teaching of small groups of instrumentalists during the course of the week is a major contributory factor to

the skill which individual instrumentalists acquire. The peripatetic teachers also perform a live concert for the pupils each year, which encourages them further to learn an instrument. The school has good links with the music co-ordinator at the local high school and she works in the school for six weeks each year with the eleven-year-olds. Year 6 instrumentalists take part in a joint concert with pupils from other schools at the high school before transfer. In addition to the orchestra, there are two recorder groups, which include tenors, and these pupils take part in an annual recorder festival with other schools. Pupils have an opportunity to attend the ballet and Year 6 pupils usually attend a musical in the summer term.

8. In addition to the orchestra there are two choirs, one at each key stage, mainly girls, which are open to all pupils who enjoy singing. The choirs are active in local festivals and take part in the school concerts.

9. Whilst the work of instrumentalists is a strength of the school, the music curriculum is still developing and the compositional aspect is only given sufficient attention in upper Key Stage 2. The quality of singing observed during the inspection was unsatisfactory. Good opportunities are given for pupils to listen to music in assemblies and there is a music theme for the week. Good use is made of music in dance lessons. Pupils made good progress in using their arms expressively to music in a Year 5 dance lesson observed. They enjoyed the rhythm of the drum as they formed into a large circle from the individual group circles they were in and moved into this with a good sense of movement and a good response to the beat using their bodies sensitively.

10. Good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils are well catered for in their classes with well matched work in most lessons and careful attention to their needs. Pupils with the most serious learning problems engage in small group tuition with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The teaching in these sessions is particularly effective. Resources are well prepared. The pace is brisk and pupils are challenged. The teacher has a good rapport with the group. Lessons are typified by the use of a good range of appropriate equipment which keeps the pupils interested. The enthusiastic teaching helps the pupils feel comfortable and they develop confidence and make good progress in the sessions. Expressions such as 'You do come up with some wonderful ideas', and 'This is super; at one time you only knew the names of the letters' boost their confidence. They are given good strategies to help them when they are stuck with words. For example, they are asked to think of a word which they do know such as 'car' to remind them of the sound 'ar'.

11. The administration of work relating to pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and the school also obtains good support from the Local Education Authority. Pupils are given homework which relates to the sounds they are learning. Parents are usually very cooperative in ensuring this is done. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good relationship with the parents and they are involved in the termly reviews of progress. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

There is a very good range of extra-curricular provision;

12. Pupils have very good opportunities in both key stages to engage in a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided voluntarily by members of staff, helping to develop pupils' range of interests. Several of these relate to musical activities. Key Stage 1 choirs take place before and after school. Other extra-curricular musical provision includes recorder groups for different levels of competence in the instrument and a guitar club. Sporting activities encompass opportunities for both boys and girls. Pupils may join two netball clubs available for

lower and upper Key Stage 2 pupils respectively, a cross country group, a soccer club, short tennis, gymnastics and two football teams which have local sponsorship. In the summer months pupils can join orienteering and cricket activities. Other extra-curricular opportunities include art and chess clubs. In addition to these activities provided by the staff, pupils may buy into French tuition. Evening lettings include karate and guides/ brownies run by community volunteers and several of the school's pupils take part in these activities.

13. The school fares well in out-of-school sporting activities. During the inspection the school was awarded the Stafford Borough Council's shield for team of the year for its orienteering success. The school had won the Staffordshire Primary Schools shield the previous year. The school was also Borough cricket tournament and swimming gala winners in 2001 and won champion awards for 'Kwik cricket' in the previous two years. Girls take part in many friendly matches in football with other schools.

Teachers have maintained academic standards in English, mathematics and science during the past three years and remained loyal and committed during the difficulties of the past three years.

14. Despite the unfortunate interruptions to the stable management of the school in the past three years, the staff has done much to maintain pupils' interest in school. The large range of extra-curricular activities has continued and the range of activities has increased. Well above average standards have been maintained in English, mathematics and science. The staff has continued to work as a team and considerable improvement has been made in the provision for information and communication technology. A new suite has been developed which will accommodate a full class and it is equipped with a large number of computers. Further refinements to the suite are envisaged. The staff has implemented the new literacy and numeracy initiatives quite successfully, although further work is needed to develop numeracy teaching. Planning has been updated and a regular format has been agreed, although assessment criteria are not always clear and some improvement is required in upper Key Stage 1. Target setting has been set up and several whole school procedures are functioning well in relation to record keeping and tracking individual pupils' progress. Refinements are still necessary so that assessment is used to better effect in some lessons. An outside area has been created for pupils in the Foundation Stage. The early years curriculum and policy have developed effectively taking on board recent national guidance.

15. The school maintained its Beacon status but relinquished this voluntarily at the start of the current term because of the school's difficulties. As part of the Beacon status one teacher was involved in producing literacy resources for more able pupils as part of a Local Education Authority initiative. Evidence indicates that teachers have continued to improve schemes of work and taken responsibility for improving resources, particularly in science, literacy, design and technology, information and communication technology and history. Enrichment activities for pupils have continued to improve and there are now opportunities for residential visits in Years 5 and 6. Musical productions and activities related to orchestra and choir have continued.

16. In the absence of the headteacher, the newly appointed deputy head has had a significant impact on the ethos of the school. Pupils' attitudes have improved. Some Year 6 pupils have shared responsibility for aspects of the school, such as reclaiming the garden area in the quad and attending to the overgrown environmental area in the school grounds. The introduction of performance management has been overseen by the deputy headteacher and he has organised training courses based on needs arising from these professional discussions. He has ensured the school has kept up to date with new initiatives such as early literacy support. Throughout this difficult time the caretaker and administrative officer have maintained their roles effectively in the efficient running of the school.

The school's parent teacher association (OSCA) is very strong, raises much money for the school and plays a significant role in helping to create a whole school community.

17. The Parent Teachers' Association has a strong commitment to the school. It is very active and has good procedural arrangements. The committee of 12 is supported by two teacher representatives. In addition to the formal body there is another group of parents associated with the parents association who put in much effort to assist the school. Committee meetings are monthly and well attended. At such meetings the parents organise events which combine both social and fund-raising activities which help to bind the school into a community. Such events include fashion shows, promise auction, fayres at Christmas and in the summer, and a quiz evening. In the spring term the committee organises a grounds evening when parents come along to assist in the maintenance and tidying up of the grounds. A large amount of money is raised each year and this is used to further provision in the school. The school has profited as a result from the purchase of computers, sporting equipment and dress, playground and playtime toys and equipment in the past year.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The use of literacy across the curriculum could be improved;

18. Pupils' skills in English are well above average by the ages of seven and 11 but these strengths in literacy are not built on well enough in other subjects. Although some work, such as accounts of the pupils' visit to a Tudor mansion, is well written in their own words, teachers do not always challenge pupils enough. For example, several instances were observed of pupils having copied directly from the text and all pupils in the class had written exactly the same as a consequence. Pupils' skills in note taking and synthesising information from different sources are not developed well. Too many worksheets are being used which do not demand enough of pupils' own writing skills, particularly in the small amounts of religious education work seen, in geography and history. These worksheets often only expect pupils to fill in gaps or colour in pictures and the pupils are capable of much more. For example, in one Key Stage 2 class, pupils had coloured in a figure of a Roman in full costume. Pupils had not researched Roman dress and then designed their own figure but were presented with cyclostyled outlines. Pupils' presentation of loose-leaf work is not well ordered and sometimes not dated and it is difficult then to know where different pieces of work fit together.

Numeracy planning could be improved and numeracy lessons made more effective;

19. Planning for numeracy lessons is not yet sharp enough and on occasions is unsatisfactory. Objectives are not always clear, which makes it difficult for teachers to focus on assessment criteria. Not enough account is taken of pupils' prior attainment and sometimes work is not well matched to pupils' different needs. In a Year 2 lesson on time, the less able pupils were given a more difficult task than the pupils who had a more mathematical flair. As a result, the pupils of higher ability finished their work very early and spent almost half the lesson engaged in non-mathematical tasks. Not enough attention is being paid to retaining momentum and to keeping pupils on their toes. Throughout the school, mental mathematics sessions often lack a brisk enough pace. Some lessons do not include any mental arithmetic work. Not enough resources are used in the opening part of numeracy lessons to warm the pupils up, get them thinking and keep them alert.

Subject coordinators could be given more opportunities to monitor standards and teaching across the school;

20. There has been considerable improvement in curriculum planning, particularly in the recent past but subject co-ordinators have not been incisive enough in making improvements through observation of teaching and scrutinising planning and work samples. The planning of English lessons is often good but it is less good in numeracy. Assessment criteria to judge whether pupils have understood the content of lessons is not a regular part of planning. Planning for numeracy lessons requires improvement to take into account the different needs of pupils and pupils' previous knowledge in the subject. There are systems for subject co-ordinators to monitor planning for the subjects for which they are responsible but this form of evaluation of is not yet rigorous enough nor sufficiently systematic. Systems are not yet well enough developed for co-ordinators to know about the quality of teaching across the school and whether standards are high enough in different classes. The school does not have an able pupils' register to alert staff to pupils' specific strengths.

The governing body should be more alert to statutory requirements and aspects of health and safety.

21. In written submissions to the inspection team, some parents were critical of the governing body's management of recent difficulties and of the general information they had received. The inspection team appreciates that the governing body's hands were tied over the management issue, could not divulge confidential information and did its best to manage a difficult situation. Although the work of the governing body is sound overall and its committee structure works effectively, there are some things on which the governing body has not taken decisive enough action. The governors have not informed themselves sufficiently well about statutory requirements. The school prospectus has some inadequacies. Not enough detail is given about the curriculum. The section in the prospectus about sex education is rather vague and does not meet requirements because it does not inform the parents about their right to withdraw their children from such lessons if they so wish. The school does not have an agreed sex education policy. The governing body does not ensure that all pupils attend the act of worship unless legally withdrawn. Several pupils missed the act of worship during the inspection to take part in group reading activities, music tuition and additional literacy activities. Some pupils miss specific lessons on a regular basis to receive instrumental tuition. The school's aims are not very clear.

22. The school's teaching time is below minimum recommended teaching time at Key Stage 2. The minimum recommended time is 23½ hours whereas the school's teaching time is effectively 22 hours and 55 minutes, discounting extra time which is lost getting the pupils out and back in again at the afternoon break which interrupts the flow of their learning. Further to this the school's loud electric bell often rings at inopportune moments, for example during prayers in the act of worship or when pupils are reflecting on their work.

23. The governors' annual report to parents does not meet requirements on several issues. For example, no term dates are provided and it does not comment on staff training. There is no information on the policy for special educational needs nor on school security. There is no information on how the school's sporting aims have been met and on sporting achievement. It does not report on progress since the last inspection report.

24. There are some issues relating to health and safety which require attention. There have not been regular enough inspections by the health and safety representatives on the governing body. There had not been any official electrical checks of equipment or of the premises since 1993, although one is planned for portable electrical equipment in the next two weeks. A health and safety committee has just been instigated. There had been no fire drill log until the school was reminded during the inspection. There is a certain inadequacy in the number of midday supervisors given the nature of the premises and two new appointees had not received any training. The two new midday staff had not been trained in first-aid.

More attention should be given to musical composition, the quality of singing and religious education;

25. Some compositional work in music takes place in upper Key Stage 2 but it is under-represented in other classes in their general class music lessons. As a result, this aspect of music does not meet the expectations in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Consequently pupils' progress in this aspect of music is unsatisfactory overall. The quality of pupils' singing in assemblies and in the little observed in class lessons was lethargic. Pupils seemed to lack spirit and enthusiasm in this aspect of their work despite the good quality of accompaniment.

26. Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to learn about the major world faiths in religious education and the amount of attention given to the subject varies from class to class. As a result, pupils' attainment in the subject is below expected standards and progress unsatisfactory. Pupils from across the school who spoke with inspectors indicated that they had few opportunities in the subject and their knowledge of what they had done was hazy. The religious education curriculum does not meet locally agreed expectations.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

27. The school has obviously passed through a very difficult stage in its development but, despite this, staff have remained dedicated to their duties. As a result the school has maintained very good standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. In order to improve standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- **increase the development and practice of literacy skills across the curriculum by:**
 - a) reducing substantially the use of worksheets, particularly in religious education, history and geography;
 - b) giving pupils more opportunities to research their work and to write their own accounts;
(Para 18)

- **improve numeracy planning and make more effective use of time in numeracy lessons by;**
 - a) ensuring planning takes account of different pupils' prior attainment and work is matched to pupils' needs;
 - b) using mathematical resources to better effect;
 - c) sharpening up the mental sessions and using a greater range of techniques to encourage pupils' thinking;
(Para 19)

- **give subject coordinators more opportunities to monitor standards and teaching across the school by:**
 - a) observing other teachers in the school and commenting constructively and developmentally on their work;
 - b) scrutinising work periodically to get a view of standards and to ensure consistency in whole-school practice, such as marking and assessment arrangements.
(Para 20)

- **ensure that the governing body complies with all statutory requirements and aspects of health and safety by:**
 - a) checking statutory requirements for the contents of the prospectus and annual report to parents;
 - b) agreeing a whole-school sex education policy and ensuring the parents are informed in the prospectus of their right to withdraw their children from this aspect of the curriculum and also from religious education and worship should they so desire;
 - c) ensuring pupils attend the collective act of worship unless withdrawn by their parents;
 - d) improving the arrangements for ensuring the site is a safe and healthy place for work;
 - e) considering an increase the amount of teaching time at Key Stage 2.
(Paras 21-24)

- **give more attention to musical composition, the quality of singing and religious education and ensure all pupils receive their statutory entitlement in these subjects.**
(Paras 23, 24)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
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
	14	62	14	10	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		227
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		25

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01 (00)	14 [13]	15 [21]	29 [34]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13 [13]	13 [13]	14 [13]
	Girls	15 [20]	14 [20]	15 [21]
	Total	28 [33]	27 [33]	29 [34]
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	98 [97]	95 [97]	100 [100]
	National	84 [83]	85 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13 [13]	14 [13]	14 [13]
	Girls	15 [20]	15 [21]	15 [21]
	Total	28 [33]	29 [34]	29 [34]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 [97]	100 [100]	100 [100]
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01 [00]	18 [15]	16 [12]	34 [27]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17 [15]	16 [15]	18 [15]
	Girls	15 [11]	15 [11]	15 [11]
	Total	32 [26]	31 [26]	33 [26]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 [96]	91 [96]	97 [96]
	National	75 [75]	71 [72]	87 [85]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16 [13]	16 [14]	18 [15]
	Girls	14 [11]	14 [10]	15 [11]
	Total	30 [24]	30 [24]	33 [26]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 [89]	88 [89]	97 [96]
	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 [47]	0.5
Pakistani	0.5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	99
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	0	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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.4
Average class size	28.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Financial information

Financial year	00/ 01
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	£
Total income	464,400
Total expenditure	441,025
Expenditure per pupil	1,961
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,000
Balance carried forward to next year	35,375

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	227
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category [48]

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	41	8	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	24	68	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	54	14	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	50	22	2	8
The teaching is good.	32	59	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	51	24	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	6	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	57	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	19	44	24	5	8
The school is well led and managed.	10	51	21	13	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	64	3	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	49	2	0	2

Other issues raised by parents

The governing body has not kept the parents sufficiently well informed about the school's management difficulties;

There is inconsistency in homework provision;

There are good opportunities for speaking and listening;

Parents are not happy with handwriting standards; and they state spelling errors are not picked up on;

Concern was expressed about large class sizes in Key Stage 2;

The information and communication technology suite and front fencing stated to be good improvements;

There has been a gradual decline in behaviour and in dress sense.