

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SPROUGHTON C OF E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124752

Headteacher: Mr Peter Gann

Reporting inspector: Mr Colin Henderson  
23742

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 195190

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

|                              |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Infant and junior                    |
| School category:             | Voluntary controlled                 |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 to 11                              |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                |
| School address:              | Church Lane<br>Sproughton<br>Ipswich |
| Postcode:                    | IP8 3BB                              |
| Telephone number:            | 01473 742182                         |
| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body                   |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Simon Curl                           |
| Date of previous inspection: | April 1997                           |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sproughton CE VC Primary School is situated in the village of Sproughton, just to the west of Ipswich. The school serves the local village, together with the nearby villages of Burstall and Flowton. It is very small compared with other primary schools. The school currently has 78 pupils on roll (33 boys and 45 girls). This is the same number as at the last inspection. The school is under-subscribed. Twenty-nine per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate area, mainly from the outskirts of Ipswich. Children come from a mixture of private and rented housing and a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. The pupils are mainly of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. Only 2 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups, which is below average. There are eight pupils (10 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs; most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. There are two pupils (2.6 per cent) with Statements of Special Educational Need, which is just above average. Just under 11 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly average. Assessment information shows that attainment on entry is varied, although above average overall.

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

Sproughton CE VC Primary is a good, caring and supportive school. Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes to their work. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Standards of attainment are above the national average, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good and often very good. The positive leadership of the headteacher has established a good team approach, involving all staff and governors, which is clearly focused on school improvement. The school makes good use of its resources and gives good value for money.

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

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are consistently above the national average at 7 and 11 years of age.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It is often very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have enthusiastic attitudes to school and are very keen to learn.
- Relationships between all pupils and between pupils and staff are very good.
- The good leadership of the headteacher is effective in developing a strong team approach. It enables all staff and governors to work successfully together and focus clearly on school improvement.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress.
- It provides a good range of additional resources to enhance learning opportunities for pupils.

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

- The proportion of pupils achieving standards in writing which are above the national average.
- The range of learning activities for children under five.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in April 1997. Standards of attainment have improved, especially in English and mathematics. Good progress has been made on all the key issues identified in the last report. Progress has been very good in improving the role and contribution of the governing body and in establishing policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Teaching has been maintained at the high level reported previously. Procedures to check on the quality of teaching and learning have been improved. The school plans to use them in more subjects. The provision for pupils' personal development remains good, although their understanding of multi-cultural traditions is still under-developed. The range and quality of resources have been improved, especially in information and communication technology, and these are promoting higher standards of attainment.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |   |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |   |
| English         | B             | A    | B    | B               | very high A*<br>well above average A<br>above average B<br>average C<br>below average D<br>well below average E |
| Mathematics     | A             | A*   | A*   | A*              |   |
| Science         | A             | A*   | B    | A               |   |

(Similar schools are those which have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.)

A\* indicates that the school's standards are in the highest 5 per cent nationally. Test results for 11-year-olds over the last three years show that standards overall have been consistently above the national average. They have been very high in mathematics. The 2000 test results showed that the school achieved its challenging target of 90 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above in English. It exceeded its target of 80 per cent in mathematics as all pupils achieved Level 4 or above. Forty per cent of pupils attained higher than average levels in mathematics, which is well above the national average. The results of the 2001 tests show that 85 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above in English and 77 per cent in mathematics. All pupils achieved Level 4 or above in science. The school maintained high standards. It exceeded its realistic target of 69 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics. Although a smaller proportion of pupils achieved above national average levels than in 2000, the small group of Year 6 pupils contained more with special educational needs than in previous years. Consistently good teaching, for example in the systematic development of pupils' number, spelling and grammatical skills, promotes high standards. However, too few pupils attain above average standards in written work. It does not contain sufficient detail and a range of interesting and imaginative ideas and words.

Inspection evidence confirms that standards at the age of 11 are above average in English and mathematics. They are well above average in science. The attainment at 7 years old reflects the pattern of recent national test results. Standards are above average overall. They are well above average in mathematics, with a high proportion of pupils achieving above nationally expected levels. Attainment in reading is above the national average. It broadly meets the national average in writing. Although most pupils achieve the nationally expected Level 2, very few achieve above average levels. Standards in science are above average. All children in the Foundation Stage achieve the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. A significant majority exceed the goals, particularly in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. Overall, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is broadly in line with expectations. It is above average in some aspects, for example word processing and handling data. The school has improved its range of resources. These are being used effectively to ensure that pupils have good opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge, for example in literacy and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils have very good attitudes. They are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy being at school. They are very keen to learn.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Behaviour is consistently good. Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. They play and work together very well.   |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships are very good and promote good personal development. Older pupils respond very enthusiastically to the sound range of opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
|            | opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility.   |
| Attendance | The 2000/01 attendance rate has fallen from the above average levels attained in previous years and is below the national average. This results mainly from the continued absence of a very small number of pupils. |

The high standards of behaviour and pupils' enthusiastic attitudes are strengths of the school and support pupils' learning. The very good relationships contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:     | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 17 lessons seen overall | good               | good           | good            |

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

Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. It was good in 53 per cent of lessons observed and very good in a further 29 per cent. It was never less than sound. The consistently good teaching is a significant factor in promoting high standards. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, and frequently very good. It enables pupils to develop and effectively use above average skills in literacy and numeracy, for example spelling and mental mathematical skills. Teachers manage their classes very effectively to ensure that pupils sustain their interest and concentration. They use a very good range of teaching methods and good subject knowledge. These enable pupils to achieve above average standards, although not consistently in their written work. Teachers work closely with support staff to ensure that the needs of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, are met effectively. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. It enables children to make a good start to their schooling. However, children do not always have enough chance to choose 'free choice' activities and this limits progress in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Although there is an increased focus on literacy and numeracy, the school has retained a sound, balanced programme. It is enhanced with increasing effectiveness by information and communication technology and a broad range of visits and visitors.                                   |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Very good. Individual pupils are given good support, especially in developing literacy skills. This enables them to be fully involved in learning activities and to make good progress.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. Very good social and moral provision promotes very good relationships and a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have a good understanding of their own cultural traditions, although their understanding of the contributions of other cultures is not fully developed. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Procedures for child protection are secure. First aid, health and safety are sound. Staff know their pupils well and show good concern for their welfare.  |

The good provision for pupils' personal development clearly supports the school's caring and friendly approach. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. It enables them to be fully involved in learning activities and to achieve well.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The good leadership of the headteacher provides a positive direction to the work of the school. He has been especially effective in creating a strong team approach, which encourages all staff to focus on, and contribute to, raising standards.  |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | A supportive governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and development priorities of the school. Governors fulfil their responsibilities successfully and work in close partnership with the headteacher to focus on improving the school.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Good. The headteacher uses a good range of attainment information to monitor pupil performance and target areas for improvement. The school has developed sound procedures for monitoring teaching and learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. It has planned to extend their use in other subjects.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. The school uses its finances efficiently to support development priorities. It checks its spending carefully and uses good financial planning to focus on improving the school. The school is particularly effective in bringing in additional resources to enhance pupils' learning, for example increasing computers and sporting facilities. |

The school has established an effective team approach. All staff work closely together to give good support and guidance in developing their teaching. The headteacher provides good leadership for the team, balanced successfully with his heavy teaching commitment. Resources are managed carefully and the school applies the principles of best value effectively to give good value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental responses from 54 questionnaires (72 per cent) and from the 14 parents who attended the meeting were very supportive of the school. There were few concerns.

| What pleases parents most  | What some parents would like to see improved   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• It helps their children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and enables their children to make good progress.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of work and behaviour.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Teachers are approachable and willing to see parents to discuss any concerns.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consistent use of homework and parents kept informed of when it is set.</li> <li>• A broader range of activities outside of lessons.</li> <li>• A closer working partnership between parents and the school.</li> </ul> |

Inspection evidence confirms the parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors found that the teachers use homework very effectively to promote standards, especially in literacy and numeracy. The range of extra-curricular activities is good for the size of the school and the ages of the pupils. The school continues to work in an effective partnership with parents. This contributes significantly to improving attainment standards.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are consistently above the national average.**

1. Attainment on entry to the school is broad, although above average overall, especially in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. Children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> settle happily into Class 3. Most adjust quickly and successfully to the pattern of focusing on literacy and numeracy in the mornings and being involved in a broader range of activities during the afternoons. They make good progress, resulting from consistently good quality teaching and a caring, supportive approach. Most children exceed their early learning goals<sup>2</sup> by the end of the reception year, especially in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. Some more-able children attain very high standards for their age, for example when working out addition, subtraction and multiplication problems accurately.
2. Pupils attain standards that are above the national average at the age of 7 years. They have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Inspection evidence confirms the results of the national tests for 7-year-olds over the last three years. Attainment in mathematics is well above the national average. In the 2001 national tests, 67 per cent of pupils achieved standards that were above those expected nationally. Pupils have very good numeracy skills and use them effectively to solve number problems. Most Year 2 pupils clearly show how they use their number knowledge and understanding to solve challenging addition and subtraction problems. For example, many showed a good understanding of number place value to work out  $29 + 19$  by showing  $20 + 10 = 30$ ;  $9 + 9 = 18$ ; then  $30 + 10 + 8 = 48$ . Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above the nationally expected levels. Pupils are confident and articulate when speaking to others in class and group activities. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 literacy lesson, pupils used a good range of vocabulary such as 'fascinating', 'predator', 'stalking' and 'amphibian' when talking about their work on frogs. Reading standards are above average. Most Year 2 pupils read fluently, accurately and with increasing expression when reading aloud in group reading activities. They show a good understanding of what they have read. Writing standards are broadly average. Teachers use regular handwriting practice to encourage pupils to develop a fluent, joined style. Pupils use spelling and punctuation skills with increasing accuracy in practice activities. However, these skills are not always applied successfully to enable pupils to produce consistently high standards of detailed, written work in English or in other subjects, for example science.
3. Attainment at 11 years of age is above the national average. It has improved considerably since the last inspection. Inspection evidence confirms the improving trend shown in the results of the national tests over the last three years. Standards in mathematics in Year 6 have been consistently well above the national average since 1998. The results of the 1999 and 2000 national tests were very high, especially in the proportion of pupils achieving above average levels. The results of the recent 2001 tests were not as high as previously, as the current small group of Year 6 pupils contains a higher number of pupils with special educational needs. However, the school exceeded its realistic target of 69 per

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of reception year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These refer mainly to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development; but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> Early learning goals – these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to children's achievements in the following six areas of learning; communication, language and literacy, mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

cent in both English and mathematics for the number of pupils who achieved Level 4<sup>3</sup> or above. The school achieved very well in science, with all pupils achieving Level 4 or above.

4. Pupils' above-average skills in speaking, listening and in reading at the age of 7 are built on effectively by the age of 11 years. Pupils continue to achieve high standards. They listen carefully to others and express their views clearly and confidently, for example when pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were required to discuss and agree group decisions when considering landscape features in geography. Most read with fluency and accuracy, and with increasing expression. More-able readers talk enthusiastically about books they have read, especially the *Harry Potter* stories and *The Hobbit*. They use their reading skills successfully to support standards in other subjects; for example, Year 3 pupils read detailed historical information as part of their study of the 'Tudor Cloth Trade'. Writing skills are soundly developed. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the key skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation. They use them consistently and accurately, especially in activities specifically aimed at applying these skills. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively. This is promoting improvement in pupils' understanding of key grammatical skills and concepts. Most pupils have a fluent, joined handwriting style. This is clearly evident in their handwriting books. However, these skills are not always accurately applied in extended and imaginative writing activities or to support work consistently in other subjects. Pupils do not achieve standards in their writing that are as high as those achieved in other aspects of English. These result mainly from:
  - inconsistencies in the way in which pupils present their written work;
  - some inaccuracies in spelling and punctuation;
  - a limited range of interesting ideas and vocabulary.
5. Teachers have made good use of the National Numeracy Strategy and this has made a significant contribution to raising standards in mathematics. Pupils' have above average number skills, especially in mental calculations. They use them successfully to work out and explain their answers to a good range of challenging problems. For example, most pupils in Years 5 and 6 quickly worked out fractions of whole numbers, such as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 24. They confidently explained how they used division and multiplication operations to work out their answers. More-able pupils explained how they extended this knowledge to calculate fraction and decimal equivalents, for example  $\frac{3}{4} = 0.75$ . High standards in mathematics are supported effectively by requiring pupils to apply and extend their mathematical skills and knowledge in a good range of other subjects; for example science and information and communication technology.
6. Standards in science are just above expectations for pupils aged 7 and well above average for 11-year-olds. Pupils have above average scientific investigative skills by 7 years of age. They are well above average by the age of 11 years. These are promoted very effectively by good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, which enable pupils to frequently apply and extend their skills and knowledge. Pupils have a very good knowledge of such concepts as 'fair testing' and 'predictions' and show good understanding when explaining the results of their investigations. This was clearly seen in an interesting investigation into testing the effectiveness of different materials to absorb sounds. Pupils were aware of the need to ensure a fair test, for example by maintaining the same size of material and the same distance from the sound. More-able Years 5 and 6 pupils predicted that the insulated 'bubble-wrap' material would be the most effective. They then tested their prediction and explained their results by applying their knowledge that sound cannot travel through a vacuum. Teachers extend pupils' understanding successfully by building directly on their prior learning. For example, Year 2 pupils' good knowledge of the main parts of a plant is enhanced very effectively in Years 4 to 6 by studying, in detail, such

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<sup>3</sup> Levels – by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to attain Level 4. Those who attain Level 5 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels at the age of [eleven](#)<sup>11</sup>.

processes as 'pollination' and 'germination'. They use their drawing skills successfully to produce detailed sketches of the main parts of the plants and accurately identify key features, such as the stigma and stamen.

**The quality of teaching is good. It is often very good.**

7. Seventeen lessons were observed. Teaching was good in nine lessons. It was very good in a further five lessons. It was never less than sound. Teaching has been maintained at the good standard reported in the last inspection. The proportion of very good teaching has improved. The consistently high-quality teaching is a significant factor in enabling pupils to achieve above average standards.
8. The teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout the school. Teachers successfully implement the different aspects of the literacy and numeracy strategies, for example in developing pupils' mental number skills. They use the subject guidance to develop pupils' knowledge and use of grammar effectively. Teachers share the learning objectives with pupils so that they know what they are trying to achieve. They systematically extend pupils' basic skills, for example in spelling, handwriting and multiplication tables. Teachers effectively challenge pupils to apply these skills, especially in follow-up activities, for example, to solve mathematical problems. This promotes high standards of attainment. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of writing, for example the correct technique to produce legible, joined handwriting and the accurate use of grammar and punctuation. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils use these aspects with consistent accuracy in presenting extended written work. This is having an effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
9. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes. They manage them very effectively to ensure that they retain pupils' interest and sustain their concentration. Teachers use a very good range of interesting teaching methods to encourage pupils to become enthusiastically involved in their learning. For example, in a geography lesson, the teacher used enlarged colour photographs of different coastal areas to focus pupils' attention. He supported them effectively with a broad range of activity sheets to enable all pupils to contribute to the group discussions and decisions. The teacher used very good subject knowledge to extend pupils' knowledge of such specific geographical terms as 'long-shore drift' and 'headland'. He then challenged pupils to work together and apply their knowledge to identify and explain key features on the photographs. The teacher gave a clear target time so that the pupils knew what they were expected to achieve in the time available. The pupils responded enthusiastically and worked together very successfully to complete their group task. This high-quality teaching resulted in high standards being achieved.
10. Teachers use questions very successfully to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a literacy activity the teacher used 'open' questions such as "Which words are most interesting?" to encourage pupils' involvement. The teacher then used follow-up questions to specific individuals to enable them to extend their initial answer. For example, a pupil was challenged to provide a different word to 'took'. This led to further discussion and a broader range of words being suggested, including 'stole' and 'kidnapped'. This enabled all pupils to contribute and extend their word knowledge and use. Teachers use homework effectively, particularly to promote pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. They use it consistently throughout the school to enable pupils to reinforce skills, for example in spelling and number work. This makes a positive contribution to supporting and enhancing the standards achieved.
11. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. It enables children to settle quickly and happily into school routines. Teachers are friendly and welcoming. They prepare in detail and

make good use of resources to develop children's understanding. For example, in a personal and social education activity the teacher made good use of a picture of 'Kesby Bear' to capture children's interest and encourage them to talk about their families. She then used questions effectively to encourage more-detailed answers and to clarify relationships between different members of the family. Teachers plan carefully to organise a good range of interesting activities to enable children to develop their skills in all required areas of learning. They include some teacher-directed and children's own-choice activities, although these are not always used fully to promote aspects of children's personal, social and emotional development.

12. Where teaching is less successful, although still sound, teachers organise and prepare in detail. They use their resources to focus pupils' attention. However, they do not consistently control pupils' enthusiasm. This leads to pupils calling out answers and limiting the chance for others to contribute their ideas to the lesson. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher prepared interesting resources to focus pupils' attention on the different parts of a plant. The teacher asked questions effectively to encourage pupils' involvement, although she did not control the pupils who were very keen to contribute their answers. This led to increased noise and did not encourage all pupils to participate effectively in the lesson. On occasions, teachers do not sustain an effective pace to lessons. This results in little time for a feedback activity at the end of the lesson. Pupils are not given the opportunity to share their knowledge or evaluate their achievement. This does not always enable them to identify ways in which they can improve the standard of their work.

**Pupils have very good attitudes to lessons and other activities. They are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy being at school. They are keen to learn and succeed. Behaviour is consistently good and promotes an orderly and hard working atmosphere.**

13. The school is very successful in promoting good behaviour and positive attitudes towards school and learning. Pupils are highly motivated and eager to learn. They respond enthusiastically in lessons, answering questions or volunteering their views and ideas. This was particularly evident in the introductory activities in literacy and numeracy sessions, for example when pupils in Years 5 and 6 responded rapidly to challenging questions about fractions and decimals. Pupils bring positive and conscientious attitudes to their work and carry out their tasks sensibly and thoughtfully. For instance, in an athletics lesson, small groups of Year 5 pupils were observed timing their run around the athletics track and measuring the distances jumped in the long-jump exercise with little supervision. A number of older pupils were voluntarily spending their lunch-time working on the computers in the library, creating certificates for the term's athletic programme.
14. Parents feel that their children's behaviour in the school is good and this was borne out by observations during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' standards of work and behaviour and make these clear. Pupils report that lessons are generally interesting and this helps them to produce good work. They have helped devise their classroom charters. They know what is expected of them and respond accordingly. Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. They are happy to talk about what they are doing and share their work with visitors. Behaviour in the dining-hall is excellent and provides an orderly atmosphere. Pupils sit in mixed-aged 'family type' groupings with the older pupils taking responsibility for their table. Occasional disruptions occur with the youngest children in Class 3 where they have not yet learnt the discipline of putting up their hands to answer a question. On a few occasions the enthusiasm of these pupils leads to them calling out the answers rather than taking turns and responding to the teacher's promptings.

**Relationships are very good, both between pupils and adults and amongst the pupils themselves. Pupils work and play together very well.**

15. Staff and pupils work productively together to maintain the pleasant and purposeful working environment. Relationships between them are warm and mutually respectful. Pupils feel that the teachers are very approachable and friendly and make lessons enjoyable. This promotes an enthusiastic approach, which encourages pupils to achieve high standards of attainment. Parents value this positive approach and recognise that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.
16. The school promotes partner and group activities to enable pupils to work together in different situations. This is particularly effective with the mixed-age classes with activities designed for both age and ability groupings. In a personal and social education lesson in Class 1, pupils were exploring the skills needed to operate as a team. This called upon careful planning and support for other members of the team to enable them to complete the task successfully.
17. Pupils of all ages are well integrated into the school. Pupils commented on the small friendly school and the fact that they knew all the other children. Year 6 pupils spoke fondly about their role in taking care of the younger pupils, 'the littlies', both in the playground or during 'wet' lunch-times. Older pupils were observed playing games with the younger pupils or surrounded by a gang of young admirers. The playground is very small with no separate areas for the youngest children. However, they all play happily and safely together.

**The good leadership of the headteacher is effective in developing a strong team approach. It enables all staff and governors to work successfully together and focus clearly on school improvement.**

18. The headteacher continues to provide effective, positive direction to the work of the school as reported in the last inspection. He has managed to maintain a heavy teaching commitment and establish a united team approach in which staff work very successfully together to focus on improvement. The good quality of his leadership is valued by parents. He has made considerable improvements in the way in which teaching and learning are checked. With the help of the local education authority's advisory service, he has devised ways in which teachers can evaluate the standards being achieved. These enable subject co-ordinators to check on whether the literacy and numeracy strategies are being effective in raising pupils' attainment. The school plans to extend these procedures in other subjects, particularly science, in the next school year. However, budget constraints restrict their frequent use, for example by limiting the use of supply teacher cover to release subject co-ordinators to complete their monitoring work. The headteacher makes effective use of a good range of assessment information to track pupils' progress and identify development areas, for example the number of pupils achieving above average standards in writing. Some subject co-ordinators are beginning to use pupil targets effectively to focus on improvement, for example in literacy. However, these are not used consistently throughout the school to contribute enough to raising standards, for example in pupils' written work.
19. The role and contribution of the governing body have improved substantially since the last inspection. Governors are very supportive and work closely with staff to focus on ways in which the school can grow and improve. They have developed good links with year groups and subject co-ordinators. Many visit school regularly to keep informed about developments within these areas. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have improved financial planning to focus on improvement priorities, for example information and communication technology. There is a strong sense of community and teamwork with staff, governors, parents and pupils contributing successfully to maintaining and extending high standards.

**The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress.**

20. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' needs and identifying the most suitable methods to ensure that all pupils join in fully with the rest of the class. Each class teacher, working closely with the headteacher in his role as special educational needs co-ordinator, is responsible for developing an individual education plan to meet the range of different educational needs. Teachers identify clear and specific learning targets for each pupil, especially for improving their literacy skills. Teaching and support staff use them very effectively to ensure that they plan learning activities to meet these targets. They make good use of opportunities for individual pupils to be given one-to-one support to focus on specific areas of weakness. Some of these take place before the start of morning school to ensure that pupils are as fully involved as possible in their class and group work. The school checks on pupils' progress regularly and keeps parents fully involved and informed. Teachers adjust targets carefully where progress means changes in pupils' needs.
21. Consistently good teaching enables frequent help and guidance to be given to all pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers benefit from the very good use of knowledgeable support staff, parental helpers and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 numeracy lesson on handling data, the teacher used the support assistant to work with one group on the computers and another adult helper to support another group on completing and analysing their block graphs. This enabled all pupils to achieve at least average standards, and many achieved higher levels of attainment. Teachers know their pupils very well and ensure that those with special educational needs make good progress in their work and achieve similar standards to other pupils in their class. For example, all Year 6 pupils achieved the nationally expected level or above in science.

**The school provides a good range of additional resources to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.**

22. The school makes good and efficient use of its financial resources. The headteacher and governors use the budget effectively to ensure that the number of teaching and support staff is enough to enable them to continue to know their pupils very well. This contributes significantly to the caring, supportive school community. However, the finances available to support developments are limited, but the school makes very good use of other sources to enhance the range of learning resources. The school benefits from a very active and supportive school association, which raises significant funds for improving resources and contributing to the school community. For example, funds from the school association are used to subsidise school educational trips to ensure that all pupils participate fully. The school encourages parents, governors and friends of the school to use their wide range of interests, talents and expertise to promote pupils' learning. These include:
- a parent governor helping with the school's musical productions;
  - a French club is organised by a group of parents and taught by a French national;
  - some parents have trained as cycling instructors and take part in the 'Safe Cycling' topic of the Year 5 personal and social education course;
  - a local craftsman teaches Year 6 pupils the skills of marquetry as part of their design and technology work. This resulted in some very high quality work being achieved;
  - a governor regularly takes groups of pupils to study the development of the wildlife area and identify the range of animal and plant life. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding.
23. The school organises a good range of after-school sporting activities, run by staff and visitors from the local council. It has used a national lottery grant to establish basketball

facilities on the hard-court area. These are used to run a basketball club and extend pupils' physical education skills. A local sports development officer runs a 'Top-Play' activity club for younger pupils. Other opportunities are organised to extend pupils' skills in football, netball, rounders and table-tennis. Other members of the governing body have improved learning facilities either through arranging some additional funds or contributing their own skills and expertise. The school's resources for information and communication technology have improved with the help of some sponsorship from a large international company. A governor with a specialist interest in wildlife and its preservation has worked with pupils to create a wildlife area in the corner of the school field. The school uses this good range of activities to enhance the learning opportunities offered to its pupils. This contributes significantly to high standards of attainment, for example in science and pupils' computer knowledge and skills.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Increase the proportion of pupils achieving standards in writing that are above the national average.**

24. The results of the national tests for 7-year-olds and 11-year-olds in 2000 and 2001 show that the number of pupils achieving above nationally expected levels in writing was well below average. This is confirmed by inspection evidence. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of grammatical aspects, punctuation and spelling. These are used successfully in completing specific exercises, for example on the use of speech-marks or the accurate use of adjectives and adverbs. For example, some Year 6 pupils used a good range of descriptive words such as 'torrential' and 'fierce'. Pupils' handwriting skills are developed soundly through regular practice and they achieve a fluent and legible joined-writing style in their handwriting books. These skills are not applied with consistent accuracy in extended writing. Pupils do not always take sufficient care when developing their draft ideas into a final presentation. Their extended writing, particularly the development of imaginative stories or descriptive sections, does not contain a broad enough range of interesting ideas, different settings or variety of words.
25. Teachers provide a good range of activities, which require pupils to write for different purposes. They write poetry, for example about 'the beach', they use persuasive writing when presenting their ideas for a discussion and they know how to write a formal letter, for example when writing a complaint to the local supermarket. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils evaluate regularly the quality of their written work and identify areas for improvement. This does not promote higher standards. Good teaching in the introduction to a literacy lesson enabled most Year 6 pupils to gain a good understanding of how a writer creates a 'dramatic' effect, for example the positioning of the noun 'shark' in a sentence to maximise its impact. During the lesson the teacher provided some guidance for pupils on the way in which they could improve their writing. For example, he used questions successfully to encourage pupils to use a personal pronoun such as 'they' to replace the frequent use of the noun 'toys'. However, he did not take the opportunity during or at the end of the lesson to ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, evaluated what they had written and identified how to use more 'dramatic' words. This resulted in only a limited range of ideas being developed and pupils not always using the knowledge that they had gained from earlier in the lesson.
26. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' writing as a priority in its development planning. The literacy co-ordinator has recently introduced target-setting with her class to encourage pupils to identify and focus on weaknesses in their literacy work. Some are linked to improving the quality of writing. However, this is not being implemented in all classes to promote higher standards. A strong whole-school focus on targeting ways in



which more-able pupils achieve above-average standards consistently in writing is not established.

### **Increase the range of learning activities for children under five.**

27. Teachers in the Foundation Stage plan carefully to develop children's skills and knowledge in all the required areas of learning. They develop children's early literacy and numeracy skills effectively. They are prepared well for the more formal activities of the school's literacy and numeracy strategies. Teachers plan afternoon activities carefully to link in closely with the curriculum topics being covered in Year 1. For example, children's physical development is promoted soundly through swimming, physical education and dance lessons. It is linked to the seaside topic by identifying activities such as 'jumping over waves' and 'ship and tug-boat movements'. Children are given more opportunities during the afternoons to make their own choice from the range of different activities, for example role-play in the 'class shop' and using construction toys. This promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development effectively. However, reception children do not have enough opportunities to make choices and develop independence by having equipment readily available and well organised. For example, children do not have enough outdoor activities to extend their physical, personal, social and emotional development sufficiently through regularly choosing to play with large outdoor equipment and bicycles or wheeled-toys.

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

- (1) Improve the proportion of pupils achieving standards in writing that are above the national average by:
  - a) enabling pupils to evaluate their written work regularly and identify ways in which it can be improved;
  - b) extending the use of pupils' improvement targets to link closely to the school's priority of improving pupils' writing.
- (2) Increase the range of learning activities to include more opportunities for children under five to make their own choices and extend their personal, social and emotional development.

In addition to these two issues, the headteacher, staff and governing body should consider improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 17 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 16 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 29        | 53   | 18           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>   | YR – Y6      |
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)             | 78           |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals        | 8            |
| <b>Special educational needs</b>   | YR – Y6      |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs                | 2            |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register          | 8            |
| <b>English as an additional language</b>                                     | No of pupils |
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language                      | 0            |
| <b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>                                | No of pupils |
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 4            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 1            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 6.9 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.3 |
| 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 |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 4    | 7     | 11    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading  | Writing  | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
|   | Total    | 10       | 10       | 10          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School   | 91 (100) | 91 (100) | 91 (100)    |
|   | National | 83 (82)  | 84 (83)  | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English  | Mathematics | Science  |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
|   | Total    | 10       | 10          | 10       |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School   | 91 (100) | 91 (100)    | 91 (100) |
|   | National | 84 (82)  | 88 (86)     | 88 (87)  |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. The separate number of boys and girls achieving Level 2 or above is not given as the number of boys and girls who took the tests was less than ten.

### 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 |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 6    | 4     | 10    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English  | Mathematics | Science   |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
|   | Total    | 9        | 10          | 10        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | School   | 90 (100) | 100 (100)   | 100 (100) |
|   | National | 75 (70)  | 72 (69)     | 85 (78)   |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English  | Mathematics | Science  |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
|   | Total    | 9        | 10          | 9        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | School   | 90 (100) | 100 (100)   | 90 (100) |
|   | National | 70 (68)  | 72 (69)     | 79 (75)  |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. The separate number of boys and girls achieving Level 4 or above is not given as the number of boys and girls who took the tests was less than ten.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 1            |
| White                           | 59           |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0            |

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 4.3  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 17.1 |
| Average class size                       | 25.3 |

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

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 52 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 3            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

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

### **Financial information**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year                             | 2000/2001 |
|  | £         |
| Total income                               | 220,097   |
| Total expenditure                          | 210,193   |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 3,047     |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 1,573     |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 11,477    |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 72%

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 76 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 55 |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 71             | 24            | 3                | 2                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 60             | 35            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 62             | 33            | 4                | 0                 | 1          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 31             | 49            | 17               | 3                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 58             | 37            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 39             | 51            | 8                | 2                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 64             | 32            | 4                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 55             | 44            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 32             | 55            | 13               | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 64             | 30            | 6                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 51             | 48            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 39             | 47            | 11               | 2                 | 1          |