

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bromley

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101601

Headteacher: Mrs Doreen Fellingham

Reporting inspector: John Messer
15477

Dates of inspection: 15 - 16 April 2002

Inspection number: 195294

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:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southborough Lane Bromley Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Powell
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community primary school has 418 pupils on roll and is larger than most other primary schools. There is an almost equal number of boys and girls. A larger than average proportion of pupils enter the school, and to a lesser extent leave, part-way through this stage of their education. Children's attainment on entry varies widely from year to year but generally it is average with the full range of ability represented. Nearly a third of pupils are entered on the school's register of special educational needs because they require extra help with their learning; this proportion is above the national average. Around five per cent of pupils have moderate to severe learning difficulties, several have emotional and behavioural difficulties while a few have physical disabilities. Around ten per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly of black Caribbean, black African heritage or from the Indian sub-continent. Nearly four per cent speak English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools, though nearly all have well developed English speaking skills. An eighth of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good standard of education for its pupils and has many strengths as well as several important areas for further development. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Overall the quality of teaching is good. The establishment of a School Council is a good initiative that promotes citizenship well. The leadership of the headteacher and the management by governors and senior staff are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- As a result of the good teaching in Years 3 to 6, pupils attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership, clear educational direction and is successfully developing systems to move the school forwards.
- The very well developed systems for motivating pupils' help to promote very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is particularly successful in meeting its aims.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive.

What could be improved

- The standards that pupils, especially boys, attain in writing and the quality of the way that they present their work.
- The school's systems to assess the effectiveness of teaching and how well it helps pupils to learn.
- The amount of time spent teaching the National Curriculum, timekeeping and the punctual start of lessons.
- Strategies to spread the high quality teaching more consistently across the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in June 1997 there have been many improvements. The school's performance as measured by national tests has improved significantly. A much greater proportion of pupils in Year 2 attain the nationally expected levels in reading and mathematics, although results in writing have not improved. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attain the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science has improved significantly but well over a half of boys in Year 6 did not attain the expected standard in writing in last year's tests. The school has just received a 'School Achievement Award' from the Department of Education and Skills in recognition of its improved performance in national tests. It has also gained the 'Investors In People Award' for the second time and the 'Quality Mark' from the Basic Skills Agency for improving pupils' basic skills. The quality of teaching has improved; in 1997 an eighth of teaching was unsatisfactory whereas now there is no unsatisfactory

teaching and there is a higher proportion of very good teaching. The key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been tackled successfully though there is still work to do in order further to improve assessment of learning and the monitoring and evaluation of learning by subject co-ordinators. Standards in design and technology have improved and there have been substantial advances in provision for information and communication technology where standards are continuing to rise. The grounds are being used more effectively as a learning resource with a well used field and an attractive environmental area, and the accommodation has improved. Overall the degree of improvement since the last inspection has been good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	C
mathematics	B	B	B	B
science	B	C	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children's achievement in the reception classes is sound and most are on course to attain the goals specified for each of the six areas of learning by the end of reception year. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and inspection findings indicate that most attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. These findings are at variance with the national test results for pupils in Year 2, which showed that last year standards in reading and writing were well below average. Standards have improved this year and the school's performance in the tests is likely to show an improvement.

Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 5, and especially well in Year 6 and as a result standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. These findings indicate that standards in English have improved since last year when national test results showed that pupils' performance was average. The trend in the school's performance over the past five years has, on average, been broadly in line with the improving trend nationally. In the national tests in 2001, the school exceeded its statutory targets in English and mathematics. This year's targets are higher and the school is likely to reach them. Standards in information and communications technology have improved and the school is well set to make further advances in this area of the curriculum. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress and achieve as well as their peers. There are significant variations in achievement between boys and girls in different year groups and often girls perform better than boys in writing. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and they make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school has, quite rightly, concentrated on improving standards in the core subjects of the National Curriculum, English, mathematics and science but this has resulted in less attention being given to the non-core subjects, although standards in these subjects are broadly in line with national expectations. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations described in the locally agreed syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to work; they enjoy attending school and are keen to learn.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' very good behaviour supports the achievement of a productive and orderly learning environment.
Personal development and relationships	Very good, friendly relationships are developed between pupils and adults. There are high levels of racial and social harmony.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are happy to come to school and attend regularly.

Pupils are courteous and sensitive to the feelings of others. They work and play happily together.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall teaching is good; during the inspection it was very good in over an eighth of lessons and occasionally excellent. A scrutiny of pupils' work, however, indicated inconsistencies in the quality of work that teachers expect pupils to produce. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. A particular strength of the teaching is the very good relationships that are promoted between teachers and pupils because this helps pupils to learn effectively in a supportive and friendly environment. Teachers' planning is generally good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, although opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in other subjects are not always developed as fully as they might be. The learning needs of the highest attaining pupils are met especially well in Year 6, although in other year groups teachers' expectations of their performance are not always high enough. Homework is not set consistently or with a commonly held understanding of how it can support learning. Pupils are willing to please and are eager to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. The teaching and learning policy is not sufficiently explicit about the criteria required for high quality teaching. This contributes to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes and year groups. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that there is an overuse of worksheets that restrict pupils' learning opportunities. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is mostly sound in lessons and generally good when pupils receive specialist help.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum ensures that sound foundations for future learning are laid in the reception classes. A satisfactory balance and range are achieved in the rest of the school but the time allocated to teaching the National Curriculum falls below the recommended minimum to promote complete coverage of each subject. As a result the depth of pupils' study is not always as full as it should be.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good support from classroom assistants and good individual education plans help these pupils to learn effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils' particular needs are identified and sound provision is made so that these pupils perform as well as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for personal development is also good; pupils have good

moral, social and cultural development	opportunities to be involved in the process of setting their targets for improvement.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures ensure the health and safety of pupils. Procedures for summing up pupils' attainment and progress are good.

The school has forged good links with parents, who support their children's learning well. The substantial majority of parents hold the school in high esteem. The school provides parents with a satisfactory amount of information about how their children are getting on. The school does its very best for all pupils, regardless of background, and succeeds in providing opportunities for all pupils to be involved in all curricular activities. The school has taken a lead in providing extra support for pupils' personal and social development by initiatives such as the 'listening ear' project which provides exceptionally good opportunities for pupils to access a trained specialist to support them in dealing with these areas. In addition to this initiative the school employs a professional counsellor to support and advise pupils who might require extra help in their social and emotional development. Through its sound teaching of multi-ethnic issues, the school prepares pupils satisfactorily for life in our diverse society.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides effective leadership and has a clear vision for future improvements. Senior staff give good support although the roles of curriculum leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are not yet fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body offers good support and fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors are closely associated with the school; many are involved in monitoring lessons to gain a good insight into how the school operates.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance carefully and takes appropriate action as a result. For example, its analysis of national test results revealed weaknesses in writing, especially among boys. As a consequence the school created a good action plan to improve writing.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to support teaching and learning.

Spending decisions are considered carefully to ensure that the principles of best value are maintained and that spending is used to improve the standards that pupils attain. Last year the school developed a relatively large financial surplus to pay for anticipated increases in staffing costs and the costs of improving resources to support teaching and learning in information and communication technology. This year the school will be left with a relatively small surplus at the end of the financial year.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards achieved and the progress their children make. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The quality of teaching. The way the school is led and managed. Pupils are helped to become mature, responsible individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consistency and quantity of homework. Information about how their children are getting on.

Inspection findings confirm parents' positive views. The inspection team found that information provided for parents about pupils' learning was satisfactory but that there are inconsistencies in the quantity of homework set.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

As a result of good teaching in Years 3 to 6, pupils attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science.

1. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and inspection findings show that most pupils are on course to attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average by the time they leave the school at end of Year 6. This is because teaching is mostly good in these year groups and it is particularly good in Year 6. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, however, that are reflected in the standards of work that pupils produce. Also, although standards on the whole in English are likely to be above average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, there are weaknesses within this overall picture. Weaknesses that the school itself has identified clearly are that standards of writing are not developed consistently throughout the school and that the standards attained by boys in writing are often not as high as those achieved by girls.
2. Reading is taught effectively and pupils read a wide range of children's literature as well as, in the classes for the oldest pupils, studying more advanced works, such as Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. When reading in groups they concentrate on specific aspects of the author's style, such as the use of similes to enliven writing and remember to use such techniques in their own written work. The school has analysed its previous performance well and writing was identified as a particular area for development. The school has succeeded in improving standards and many pupils, especially the girls, in Year 6 have highly developed writing skills though there is still scope for further improvement, especially in Years 1 to 5. Pupils' achievement in Year 6 is especially good and builds particularly well on the skills, knowledge and understanding that has been developed in previous years. Pupils in Year 6 know how to use interesting adjectives to add colour to their writing. They carefully consider whether to use concise verbs or powerful adverbs to add force to their writing. They have an exceptionally good technical vocabulary to describe aspects of language and talk with understanding about parts of speech. One pupil explained, 'Alliteration is a phrase where the words all begin with the same phoneme'. Pupils are good at planning stories in outline before creating a first draft which they then 'polish' to produce well crafted, finished pieces of work. As part of the process of developing their skills in literacy they have been well trained in the technique of being 'response partners', or critical friends as they help one another to improve their work. This system works very well and pupils tackle the task sensibly and sensitively. The highly skilled teaching in Year 6 has generated a great enthusiasm for writing. In one very good lesson pupils were absolutely riveted as they examined techniques that could be used to write effective short stories. They have a good understanding of when it is appropriate to write dialogue colloquially and are sensitive to different patterns of speech in narratives. They have a very serious approach to their work and express their keenness openly, 'I used to like maths best but now I really love writing'. In one lesson for pupils in Year 6, samples of writing were examined against National Curriculum criteria to determine whether they represented the Level 4 or Level 5 standard. This was a particularly effective strategy that helped pupils to be self-critical and understand how to judge the quality of their own writing.
3. Mathematics is taught well and pupils develop a wide range of numeracy skills. Teachers explain processes clearly and mathematics is taught through a step-by-step approach in a logical sequence. Pupils are good at performing numerical calculations. In one good lesson for higher attaining pupils in Year 6, pupils demonstrated sharp responses to multiplication questions. They showed a good grasp of long multiplication. First they estimated the answer and explained why they thought their estimate might be greater or less than the final answer. They then used the 'grid method' confidently to calculate their answers before checking their accuracy with a calculator. They thoroughly enjoyed wrapping the calculation up in words to pose problems that included a good deal of humour. In the middle set, for example, pupils calculated problems such as, 'How many shoes do 221 elephants need to go to the disco'. In a very good parallel lesson for a small group of the lowest attaining pupils learning was particularly effective. They too mastered the long multiplication process, although their progress was not as rapid as in the other sets. Here pupils explored several methods of calculating such as doubling and doubling again to multiply by 4. The teacher encouraged mental processes well, 'See if you can make it friendly in

your head', and gave good support. Very good relationships in all classes contribute to effective learning because pupils feel secure and comfortable with adults and are confident that they will be well supported.

4. Good links are made between different areas of the curriculum. In science pupils calculated their pulse rate by measuring it for fifteen seconds and then multiplying by four. One boy calculated that his pulse rate rose from 80 to 164 between resting and vigorous exercise. They have a particularly good understanding of human biology and make links between linguistic terms such as 'circulation' and the word circular and the concept of revolving. They looked at a pot containing 115 millilitres of red water and learned that this represents the amount of blood pumped at each heart beat. One boy calculated accurately that his heart pumped 9,200 millilitres of blood per minute whilst he was resting. They understand that arteries carry blood away from the heart and that veins carry blood back to the heart. They were a little unsure about the function of the lungs in the circulatory system but the teacher quickly recognised this and explained things more fully until a good level of understanding had been reached.

The headteacher provides strong leadership, clear educational direction and is successfully developing systems to move the school forwards.

5. The headteacher has a very clear vision for moving the school forwards. Under her good leadership many significant improvements have been made but there is no sense of complacency and a range of new initiatives are explored in a concerted effort to make further improvements. One especially good initiative has been the development of procedures to promote self-evaluation. The school's self-evaluation documentation has been collated carefully and presents a clear picture of the school's current strengths and areas for development. The areas for development are prioritised after due consultation and feature in the school improvement plan. This plan includes clear achievable goals and realistic time scales for the monitoring and reviewing the success of initiatives. The headteacher is supported well by her deputy and the senior management team who make a strong contribution to the school's good range of clear policies. There is scope for subject leaders to monitor and evaluate learning more closely in order to identify areas for development and to improve standards, especially in the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum. The school has recognised that the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum have not been the focus of attention during a period when considerable emphasis was placed on developing literacy and numeracy. In response it has designed a three-year rolling programme so that each non-core subject will in turn be monitored, evaluated and developed. There is a strong sense of teamwork in the school as everybody works together to enhance provision.

The very well developed systems for motivating pupils help to promote very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning.

6. The school has approached the issue of motivating pupils systematically. The school improvement plan includes a section on 'Ensuring that every child is a star'. This is a major initiative that is proving highly successful. It has many facets but essentially it is based on a carefully devised reward system. The system is clearly understood by pupils and their parents. Many parents welcome the 'star' system and comments from parents such as, 'The children feel that it really encourages them to behave well and work hard', were common. Parents enjoy attending the weekly awards assembly when badges and certificates are given out. The scheme has helped to develop pupils' self-esteem, their behaviour and attitudes to school. It encourages them to take pride in their achievements. They have high levels of self-discipline and are highly motivated to learn. The improvement plan also includes details of how parents, staff and pupils will be involved in a review of the scheme in order to evaluate its success and introduce any adjustments that may be revealed. This systematic approach has had a major impact on the positive learning ethos that has been generated.

The school is particularly successful in meeting its aims.

7. The school has a clear set of aims that are described in its curriculum statement. It is highly successful in meeting its aim of providing a welcoming, caring and safe atmosphere where

learning is an interesting and challenging experience. Well planned visits to the science museum and a 'Victorian' school are examples of activities that captured pupils' interest. Challenging experiences in English, mathematics and science have promoted good work and an enthusiasm for learning. Good initiatives have led to the successful resolution of its aim to encourage pupils to be independent members of the community who value and respect themselves and others. The establishment of a School Council is one example of how respect for the views of others has been developed. The way in which pupils are consulted about school initiatives is another. Teachers present good role models as when they address pupils respectfully as when discussing how to write powerful opening paragraphs to capture the reader's interest 'May I make a suggestion there, Roland?' The school has been very successful in its aim to help pupils, through positive encouragement, to acquire and develop the skills needed to become confident and self-disciplined. Pupils walk about the school confidently and talk about their work sensibly. They work well together in groups and when conducting individual research independently. Teachers and other adults offer measured praise and good encouragement. In many lessons high expectations of pupils' performance indicated that the school is increasingly successful in its teaching aims. The school provides a curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but it has been narrowed by the considerable emphasis placed on developing literacy and numeracy and is not as broad and balanced as the school would like. The school has plans to broaden the curriculum by focusing on each subject area in a three-year rolling programme of curricular development. Overall the school has worked hard towards meeting its aims and has achieved a very good measure of success.

Relationships throughout the school are very good.

8. Relationships between pupils are very good and very good levels of racial and social harmony are maintained. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for its pupils. All pupils are included in the life of the school, enabling them to benefit from the many learning and social opportunities provided. Boys and girls work co-operatively together and are given equal status. Pupils are friendly and supportive of each other. They are thoughtful and sensitive about the feelings of others. Relationships between adults and pupils are relaxed and comfortable. Pupils demonstrate great respect for their teachers and are eager to please. Good relationships among the adults in the school contribute well to the positive learning ethos. The very good relationships help pupils to feel confident and promote good social development. Pupils act as guides to show visitors around the school and use the headteacher's computer in her office at lunchtimes to design and make badges for others. In class pupils feel able to ask questions freely and are confident that nobody will mock them if they make mistakes. Teachers and classroom assistants are exceptionally sensitive to the feelings of pupils and take great care to encourage and support every individual. Behaviour is managed positively. Pupils are praised for what they do well rather than criticised for errors. Any lapses in behaviour, which are rare, are dealt with well. In one minor incident a boy was upset that he had transgressed and a quiet word from the teacher soon put things right. These very good relationships are a major factor in promoting effective learning.

Parents' views of the school are very positive.

9. Well over a half of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire to express their views about the school and the pre-inspection meeting for parents was well attended. It is clear that parents are pleased with the education provided by the school. Parents are almost unanimous in their view that the teaching is good. Parents feel confident that their children are happy, well cared for and are treated with respect. They are satisfied that their youngsters are learning suitable attitudes and values and that they behave well. Parents say that most pupils are encouraged to do their best and that the school is well organised and managed. They feel welcome and comfortable in school. The inspection team agrees with parents on these points. At the parents' meeting great appreciation was expressed for the school's efforts to forge links with parents and to inform parents of new initiatives, such as the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Although the questionnaires indicated that an eighth of parents do not feel well informed about how their children are getting on, parents at the meeting felt that it was easy to pop in and discuss children's progress if parents felt the need for more information.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The standards pupils, especially boys, attain in writing and the quality of the way that they present their work.

10. In the national tests in 2001, the performance of pupils in Year 2 in writing was well below the national average both when compared with all schools and when compared with schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds. In the tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's overall performance in English was broadly average but a closer analysis of results shows that most of the boys in Year 6 did not attain the nationally expected standard in writing. Very nearly 80 per cent of girls attained the nationally expected Level 4 in writing whereas only 40 per cent of boys attained this level. The school recognised this as area of weakness and improvement in writing, with an emphasis on boys' achievement, features strongly in the current school improvement plan. The quality of pupils' writing has improved but this is still an area for further development, particularly in Years 1 to 5.
11. In the reception classes great attention is paid to developing early reading and writing skills and sound foundations are laid for further learning. This is beginning to be reflected in the standards children attain. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through role-play, such as writing letters in the class travel agents or taking orders in the class pizza shop, but there is room for improvement in the quality and range of such experiences. On occasions the teachers provide so much support and guidance that children's opportunities to use their imagination and their own creative skills are limited. There are too few opportunities to develop writing skills through purposeful activities such as writing letters, labelling their work, making cards, and writing notices.
12. In the classes for pupils in Years 1 to 6 there is a renewed emphasis on improving standards in writing that includes the greater involvement of parents in supporting pupils' development. In several classes, however, there is an over-reliance on worksheets in much of the work that pupils produce and this restricts opportunities for writing. There are inconsistencies in the strategies used to encourage writing of quality. There is insufficient emphasis on encouraging pupils to write their own books, to write plays to perform to others or to create imaginative newsletters or anthologies. There are examples of purposeful writing, such as the dictionaries and encyclopaedia written by pupils in Year 2, though the extent of writing was very limited. Pupils wrote good accounts of their visit to a 'Victorian' school which clearly showed that writing flows more easily when the pupils' interest had been captured. Pupils in Year 3 wrote good accounts of their visit to the Science Museum and pupils in Year 4 wrote sensitively constructed pieces about loneliness in the playground that were well illustrated with images created with a digital camera. These are examples of good work but this is not consistent. All too often the teacher writes for pupils rather than encouraging pupils to write for themselves, as for example the individual targets in exercise books in Year 2. Opportunities to write extensively and with purpose in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education, are impeded by the overuse of worksheets that help to consolidate knowledge but do little to extend learning. Pupils' work in art and design is not used enough in meaningful contexts, such as illustrating pupils' creative writing in individual or collaboratively produced class books.
13. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have highly developed skills in writing and a good understanding of the technicalities and devices associated with creating different forms of written work. In the top set in Year 6, for example, pupils talk knowledgeably about 'adverbial clauses' and 'prepositional phrases' and have a good understanding of how to build suspense into their creative stories. It is in several classes in the preceding year groups that there are inconsistencies in developing writing systematically and, across the school, there is insufficient attention to the application of writing skills in meaningful situations. This is mainly because teachers give insufficient attention to the destination of the work pupils are required to produce. In several classes for example, pupils were required to write sentences on pieces of paper with no clear understanding of what was to happen to their work. This lack of a clearly planned purpose, shared with pupils, has limited meaningful learning. There are twice as many girls as boys in the top English set and it is likely that the imbalance in the performance of boys and girls will again be reflected in this year's national test results but the school has recently introduced good

initiatives, such as targeting focus groups for extra support, to encourage boys to achieve better results. There are indications that boys in Years 3 and 4 are likely to be at least on a par with the performance of the girls in these year groups.

14. The school has adopted a new handwriting scheme and pupils are developing a good, cursive joined hand. However, teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of work, the degree of accuracy and neatness, the layout and the visual impact of the finished product, vary widely. There are examples in exercise books, for example, of illustrations drawn on lined paper and untidy writing being readily accepted. There are inconsistencies in requiring pupils to date their work, to underline titles and to develop the quality of their presentational skills.

The school's systems to assess the effectiveness of teaching and how well it helps pupils to learn.

15. The school has developed good systems to monitor and assess pupils' attainment and progress. Careful records are kept that sum up the stages pupils have reached. There are good plans in place to use computerised systems to plot pupils' progress and to increase the clarity of such data. The school analyses assessment data well to identify broad areas for development. Assessment data from national test results, for example, revealed that writing, especially that of boys, was an area for development. The monitoring and evaluation of learning are, however, less secure. Teachers often teach a lesson to the whole class but do not have systems that help them to evaluate how effective learning has been in the lesson. This means that they do not always know how effective their teaching has been and whether all pupils, most pupils or some pupils have learned successfully. In consequence they cannot be sure which pupils have gaps in their learning or which have advanced beyond the stages planned to be taught in subsequent lessons. There are examples of good practice in the school. In Year 6, for example, the teachers rapidly realised that they had pitched a lesson on long multiplication at too high a level and changed their plans so that, on the next day, new plans were used that catered for pupils' learning needs more precisely. In another lesson in Year 2 on placing numbers in order, the teacher referred to her assessment records to confirm that the lesson was pitched at broadly the right level for all pupils.
16. Such good practice is not consistent across the school, however, and in several classes teachers do not have data that helps to ensure that their teaching is meeting the learning needs of all pupils. The school has developed good proforma to record pupils' progress in writing so that learning can proceed step-by-step and so that gaps in learning can be readily identified but these have not yet been implemented. In mathematics there are no consistently implemented systems for evaluating learning that ensures steady continuity of learning for all pupils. Agreed procedures for annotating teachers' lesson plans to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching are not used consistently and their effectiveness is uncertain. Teachers have agreed that learning objectives will be identified for each lesson, that these objectives will be displayed and shared with pupils and that key vocabulary to be developed in the lesson will also be displayed. However, in practice this system is not uniformly employed. Where there is no clear learning objective for each group of pupils in the class, it is not possible to determine whether or not the objectives have been met. Teachers' plans do not always indicate how the needs of pupils with special educational needs will be met. Generally these pupils are well supported in class but their learning needs are not always catered for precisely because they have not always been clearly identified. Assessment procedures are improving and in most lessons teachers begin with a review of previous lessons and end with a broad assessment of what has been learned, though in several lessons insufficient time was left for the final review and no notes were made of learning outcomes. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully but the results are not always used systematically to inform further lesson plans. The school is well aware that assessment to support learning is an area for development and the assessment co-ordinator is developing good plans to address the issue.

The amount of time spent teaching the National Curriculum and religious education, the pace of learning and the punctual start of lessons.

17. In many lessons pupils learn new skills, accumulate new knowledge and develop greater understanding at a reasonable pace. In several very good lessons, especially in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, pupils' learning was rapid and they learned a great deal in a

short time. In a significant number of lessons, that overall were satisfactory, pupils did not learn so effectively because the teachers' expectations of the pupils' performance were too low. Where lessons proceeded at a slow pace and where there was insufficient structure for all pupils, regardless of ability, to experience success, learning was restricted. This was noted in several lessons. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the pupils spent nearly half of a mathematics lesson sitting on the carpet rather than getting on with the planned group activities. In this lesson there was no brisk, 'quick fire' approach to challenge pupils' thinking in mental arithmetic and higher attaining pupils in particular began to lose interest. When working in groups the pace of learning was slow, partly because no time was set for finishing the activity and partly because the tasks were not designed to challenge and stretch pupils, especially those who were capable of learning rapidly. In a very good lesson for lower attaining pupils in Year 6, the lesson proceeded at a brisk pace. Here the teacher urged pupils to complete tasks quickly, 'Come on you've got thirty seconds to finish this one'. The pupils responded well and the brisk pace helped them to sustain a good focus on the task in hand; consequently learning was rapid.

18. A significant number of lessons do not start on time. For example, in two lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 4, scheduled to last for thirty minutes after break in the afternoon, a third of the teaching and learning time was lost due to the late starts. Nearly a fifth of the lessons seen failed to start on time. This would not be so critical if the school spent more than the recommended minimum amount of time for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education. The school's timetables indicate that less time is spent on teaching than national averages and less than the minimum time recommended for full coverage of the National Curriculum and religious education. In consequence the National Curriculum programmes of study are not always taught in sufficient depth and standards, especially in the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum, are not as high as they might otherwise be. Standards in the non-core subjects are satisfactory but coverage is often thin and work produced is not always of high quality.

Strategies to spread the high quality teaching more consistently across the school.

19. There are examples of exceptionally good teaching in the school. For example, during the inspection, in a quarter of the lessons seen in Year 6 teaching was very good and occasionally excellent. Exceptionally good teaching was seen in Year 6 in English, science and mathematics. Where teaching was very good learning was especially effective. However, such very good teaching is not consistent across the school. In well over a third of lessons the teaching and learning was satisfactory. In such lessons teachers taught routine tasks, such as teaching an understanding that the position of a digit affects its numerical value, successfully and pupils learned satisfactorily but there was a lack of imagination and pupils' interest was not captured. In consequence learning was not highly effective. Such lessons contrasted markedly with exciting lessons such as the one in Year 6 on long multiplication that provided great levels of motivation. In another lesson in Year 6 on the function of important buildings such as churches, there was a lack of visual stimulus and the lesson failed to generate much enthusiasm for learning. Also the use in many classes of undemanding worksheets to record work does little to generate interest or promote the production of high quality work. The very good teaching was based on exceptionally good subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of how to generate an enthusiasm for learning.
20. The school's teaching and learning policy is not explicit about the essential features of good teaching that teachers must employ consistently to produce highly effective learning. Consequently it is not easy to evaluate teaching and be precise about each teacher's particular areas for development. The headteacher and her deputy monitor and evaluate teaching regularly and areas for development are identified. There is, however, scope for improving the procedures to promote a greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

(1) Improve pupils' performance in writing by:

- developing imaginatively designed learning areas in the reception classes that encourage children to write purposefully;
- discouraging the use of undemanding worksheets in favour of writing in more meaningful situations;
- raising teachers' expectations of pupils' ability to produce written work that is neatly presented and is of high quality in order to encourage greater consistency in pupils' performance.*

(paragraphs 10,11,12,13,14)

(2) Refine assessment procedures so that teachers have a clearer understanding of what pupils know and can do so that they can target teaching activities more accurately in order to meet the learning needs of all pupils. (paragraphs 15,16)

(3) Make better use of time during the school day by:

- examining the amount of time spent teaching the National Curriculum with a view to increasing it;
- ensuring that lessons start punctually;
- developing a greater consistency in the pace and amount of learning in lessons.

(paragraphs 17,18)

(4) Develop greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:

- ensuring that all teachers and learning support assistants have a clear, shared understanding of the key factors that result in high quality teaching;
- making the key elements that identify high quality teaching explicit in the school's teaching and learning policy;
- monitoring the quality of teaching rigorously and evaluating it against the agreed criteria.*

(paragraphs 19,20)

*** The school has already identified these as areas for further improvement and they feature in the current school improvement plan.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	14	12	0	0	0
Percentage	3	13	45	39	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		418
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		137

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	42	24	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	31	41
	Girls	19	18	21
	Total	54	49	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (66)	74 (67)	94 (80)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	40	41
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	54	60	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (72)	91 (70)	92 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	30	31	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	27	30
	Girls	27	26	31
	Total	48	53	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (80)	87 (84)	100 (80)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	27	30
	Girls	28	26	31
	Total	49	53	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (80)	87 (84)	100 (90)
	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	14
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	2
White	325
Any other minority ethnic group	8

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)	17.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	188

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	837,031
Total expenditure	828,538
Expenditure per pupil	1,992
Balance brought forward from previous year	53,935
Balance carried forward to next year	62,428

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	418
Number of questionnaires returned	224

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	2	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	49	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	50	8	2	3
The teaching is good.	59	39	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	42	11	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	27	4	2	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	2	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	48	42	7	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	31	3	1	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	46	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	46	5	2	13

Other issues raised by parents

Parents give the school strong support and feel that there have been great improvements in literacy and numeracy.