

INSPECTION REPORT

COSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Greenford, Middlesex

LEA area: London Borough of Ealing

Unique reference number: 101879

Headteacher: Ms D Hope

Reporting inspector: Mr B. G. Bowen
21066

Dates of inspection: 4 - 5 February 2002

Inspection number: 195611

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oldfield Lane South, Greenford, Middlesex.
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C. Evans
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Coston Primary is a very large primary school situated in the Greenford district of Ealing, West London. The area is one of mixed housing with generally below average social and economic circumstances. It has 392 pupils on its roll, 210 boys and 182 girls, together with a nursery which can cater for up to 50 children on a part-time basis. The school has 14 further classes, and a Primary Support Base (PSB) for pupils aged four to seven who find it difficult to cope with normal classes. Currently, eight pupils are in this unit, and three of them attend on a part-time basis. The school buildings are old and converted in part from the classrooms of a former secondary school. A playing field is situated at some distance from the school. This inhibits its general use.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (33 per cent) is higher than the national average, as is the number of pupils who are entered on the register of special educational needs (30 per cent). Most of these pupils have either moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural problems. Nineteen pupils have formally established statements of special education need and this is higher than average, although pupils attending the PSB are included in this number. Almost one third of the pupils come from homes where English is not the main language and, of these, half are in the early stages of acquiring familiarity with English. Two thirds of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, including six Traveller pupils. The majority are of Black and Asian heritage. There are a significant number of refugee and asylum-seeking pupils, but it is difficult to give exact numbers of these. The attainments of children on entry into the nursery are well below the expectations for their age, especially as an increasing number have restricted language and social skills. The school has a very high rate of teacher and pupil mobility. New teachers often have to be recruited from employment agencies on a short-term basis. This is a situation found in many schools in the London area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a committed and effective school. By the time pupils leave at the age of 11, they have reached standards that are in line with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress in class. The PSB is well organised and fully involved with the life of the school. A spirit of inclusion and care for the individual is found in all school activities. This is seen in the attention given to developing the linguistic abilities of pupils with English as an additional language within normal classroom activities. As a result they have access to the full range of school studies. By the age of 11, most of these pupils have developed a sufficient grasp of the language to cope with all aspects of their studies. Teaching is predominantly good. New teachers are well supported by year group leaders, and quickly settle into providing appropriate learning experiences for their pupils. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership, placing an appropriate priority on improving standards of work. Members of the governing body are playing an increasingly effective role in monitoring the school's successes and setting the agenda for improvements. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the time they are 11 years old, pupils reach very high standards of work, when compared to similar schools.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in class have been maintained at high standards.
- Teaching across the school is generally good and some lessons for the oldest pupils are excellent.
- The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been well implemented.
- The school has established good systems of management, with the headteacher and other key staff putting an appropriate emphasis on improving standards of pupils' work.
- Pupils in the PSB are very well taught, and they make good progress towards developing the skills that are necessary for integration into mainstream classes.

What could be improved

- Pupils carry out too little individual research, including working on computers and in the library, and as a result do not cover all aspects of the curriculum in sufficient depth.
- The end of year reports do not give sufficient information about pupils' future learning needs.
- The school improvement plan lacks a focus on clear year-on-year development.
- The school buildings are showing signs of age, some classrooms are too small, and toilet facilities are inadequate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997. From the issues identified for action at that time, there has been good improvement in monitoring the quality of teaching, especially in literacy and numeracy, in developing plans for the way each subject is to be taught, and in increasing the effectiveness of the governing body. Good improvement has also been made in identifying how well pupils are progressing in English, mathematics and some other subjects. Long-term plans for moving the school forward have been developed satisfactorily. Overall progress 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	D	E	C	A
mathematics	D	D	C	B
science	E	D	C	A

Key

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

This table shows that standards are improving. Over the past three years, the trend has been greater than that found in schools nationally. By the age of 11, pupils are leaving the school with attainments that match the national average, and are well above those found in similar schools in English and science. In mathematics, fewer pupils are reaching the higher levels identified in the national tests, but general standards are above the average found in similar schools.

By the time that they are five years old, the majority of pupils have achieved most of the learning goals for their age, but many still have difficulty with spoken language. In the national tests for pupils aged seven, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been well below the national average, and has not reached that found in similar schools. These lower results reflect the numbers of pupils who are still at the early stages of acquiring skills in English. The school is successful in bringing these pupils on so that most are fluent in the language by the time that they leave the school. As a result, high standards in English for older pupils were identified by inspectors during the inspection. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for future years, based on the knowledge that has been gained on pupils' present attainments. There are no significant differences in the attainments of boys and girls. Overall, pupils achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; most pupils come to school wanting to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; in class, pupils are attentive and well-mannered. There are occasions of over-excitability behaviour on the playground. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils respond well to lessons about learning to live together and they develop a strong sense of right and wrong.
Attendance	Satisfactory; the school makes good and successful efforts to ensure that pupils are encouraged to attend.

Attendance has been well below the national average, but it is improving since new systems of monitoring have been implemented. Several pupils have been kept on the school roll after they have left because there has been no notification of their new school and this has distorted the figures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science, especially for the oldest pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge of most subjects, although some lack confidence in ensuring that pupils use their skills in information and communication technology across the curriculum. Teaching in the PSB is particularly effective, with pupils making good progress towards developing the skills that they need to manage in mainstream classes. Most teachers manage pupils well, resulting in good levels of attention and behaviour in class. Teachers new to the school are well supported, mainly resulting from the effective management provided by year group leaders.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; the national literacy and numeracy strategies have been well implemented, but some subjects are not covered in enough depth to suit the range of abilities in the class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; teachers plan good support materials for these pupils, and generally well-composed individual educational plans ensure that lessons contain sufficiently challenging activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; pupils are well-supported, especially by well-trained and effective classroom support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory; pupils are given the opportunity to learn about religious belief, and there is good provision for them to consider their rights and responsibilities within a strong moral code. There are a number of activities designed to widen knowledge of musical and artistic skills.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school assesses pupils' attainments well, and exercises a high level of care. The school welfare staff are efficient and very committed. There are good procedures for helping new pupils to settle into school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher has brought a calm, but determined leadership to the school. She knows her pupils well. A management structure has been set up which gives appropriate delegation of responsibilities to senior staff and subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governors are becoming increasingly involved in all aspects of school life. They act as a good 'sounding board' for new initiatives.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory; the school is developing systems that give information about how well pupils are progressing. Planning for further improvements needs to be tighter, with success criteria more closely measurable and related to the raising of standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school's financial administration is closely related to educational priorities, and ensures the best value for expenditure. School resources are adequate in most subject areas.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • Pupils behave well in school and work hard. • The school helps children to become more mature and they make good progress. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school if their children have concerns or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision for homework. • The range of activities outside of lessons. • More information about how their children are progressing.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. They consider that, although the school generally provides the right level of homework, on some occasions the system is inconsistently applied and, as a result, parents are not secure in knowing how to help their children with work at home. The school has worked hard to improve the range of activities offered to pupils outside of lessons, but parents have not shown themselves eager to have their children take up the provision when it incurs a cost to them. The school organises some voluntary clubs and these are well attended. However, considering the size of the school, they are not extensive in number. The school provides many opportunities, both informally and on more formal parent/teacher interviews for parents to get to know about their children's progress, but some end-of-year reports do not identify targets for future learning. They do not tell parents clearly enough what their children need to do to achieve their next levels of attainment. With regard to other areas of concern raised by a few parents, inspectors consider that the school exercises the proper level of supervision of pupils throughout the school day. Although the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall, occasionally activities organised for withdrawal groups are not sufficiently linked to similar work as the rest of the class.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the time they are 11 years old, pupils reach very high standards of work, when compared to similar schools.

- 1 In the national tests for pupils aged 11 in 2001, pupils reached levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science that matched the performance seen nationally. When compared to the standards achieved by pupils in similar schools, they were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. These achievements are largely the result of good teaching, especially in the oldest classes.
- 2 Over the past four years, the trend of rising standards seen in these tests has been higher than the improvement seen nationally. Pupils enter the school with well below average skills, especially in the English language. Their learning needs are well identified, and, through careful planning and good structure in literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils progress well by the age of seven to reach generally average standards, although some of them remain with restricted language abilities. This inhibits their progress to higher levels, especially with regard to individual studies such as problem solving in mathematics. However, pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by often highly skilled, sensitive classroom assistants, and the building blocks of language are becoming established. By the time that they reach the age of 11, these pupils are in the main sufficiently fluent in the language to cope with the demands of the curriculum.
- 3 The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that the school is on course to reach at least similar levels of attainment with the pupils now in school. Teachers generally have high expectations and this was particularly evident in the lessons on writing skills and science for Year 6 pupils. For example, when pupils successfully learned to name and understand the functions of different parts of a flower, the teacher provided suitably active learning experiences in an inspirational, yet controlled manner that captured the pupils' full attention. Similarly, a lesson on writing styles was extremely successful in giving pupils both an awareness of the importance of the intended audience, and the insight that writing can be persuasive in hidden ways. In mathematics, pupils aged 11 have developed a good understanding of the structure of numbers; they know their tables well, and use this knowledge to good effect in working out how to round up or down with numbers involving two decimal places.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in class have been maintained at high standards.

- 4 At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that the majority of pupils had positive attitudes to learning, although there were some unnecessary interruptions in class by pupils with emotionally disturbed backgrounds. Behaviour in and around the school was generally good, with relationships between pupils and with adults in school being positive. These strengths have been maintained. In the lessons observed during the current inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were found to be at least good in 18 out of 25 lessons. Pupils were generally open and eager to establish good relationships with members of the inspection team. They knew that they were supposed to be on their best behaviour and tried to be so in a very natural manner. Most remembered to hold doors open for visitors, and to greet them politely. In discussion, they were very supportive of the school and their teachers.

- 5 In class, pupils generally respond to the high expectations of their teachers and pay full attention. They wait to be invited to speak and they listen with respect to the contributions of others. They are keen to learn and know that they will do so only by adhering to the rules of the school. Pupils are asked by teachers to have their say in the formulation of class and school rules, and these display a sense of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, based on a respect for all, regardless of race or gender. The school's population has a wide mix of ethnic backgrounds, and the pupils regard this as a benefit to their social friendships.
- 6 In many classes, there is a minority of pupils who come to school with emotionally and socially disturbed backgrounds. They have a potential for disruption, which in most classes is managed well by sensitive and capable teachers, and is not a threat to order in the classroom. In a Year 3 design and technology lesson, however, the teacher asked pupils to engage in a group planning session which was beyond their level of maturity. As a result, some pupils abused this responsibility to engage in anti-social behaviour, such as pencil throwing and snatching papers from one another. It is a mark of the success of the school in managing these pupils that this was an isolated incident. In the overwhelming majority of lessons, incidents of restless or inappropriate behaviour are overcome by strategies that give most praise to those pupils who are responding well, rather than criticise the poorer behaving pupils. The teacher's high expectations of behaviour and good training in management strategies establish a classroom environment in which misbehaviour is seen as unwelcome and inappropriate by the pupils themselves. School assemblies are used to celebrate those pupils who give the greatest effort, regardless of their standard of work.
- 7 The school has begun a formal programme of lessons for all pupils in personal, social and health education. These are used to heighten their awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all persons within today's community. Pupils respond well by developing a mature response to the incidents of arguments that naturally occur on the playground at playtimes and lunchtime. The teachers and ancillary supervisors deal with these in a sensitive and caring manner, and although some pupils remain aggrieved, they do not normally lead to long-drawn-out or aggressive disputes. In discussion with pupils, the view was generally expressed that some examples of domination, for example, by football-playing boys and name-calling do exist, but when reported to staff, they would be effectively dealt with. The school has begun a 'buddy' system by which pupils will know that there will always be one of their number to whom they can turn when a problem of relationships occurs. One of these older pupils described his role in these words 'I would tell the child to report it to the teacher, or, if he wouldn't, I would tell the teacher myself for him, or perhaps I might try to remediate it myself.' This response is clear evidence of the success of the school's provision for pupils to develop as socially aware and capable members of the school society.
- 8 The principle of inclusion underpins every aspect of the life of the school. It successfully promotes tolerance and acceptance of all members of the school community, irrespective of race, gender or social background. This is evident in the provision made in teachers' planning for activities to suit the full range of abilities, especially in the literacy and numeracy lessons. The school welcomes new pupils, even if they bring with them emotional or social problems. An example of this is the successful integration, with a high level of classroom support, of a pupil who has recently left a special school.
- 9 On the playground, pupils mix together well. There are no groups separated by race. Although it is the boys who tend to be more active, girls report that they could join in with the football games if they wished. Lessons in personal, social and health

education are used to allow pupils to consider issues of tolerance, and racial harmony, and in discussion pupils often refer to the matters that affect their everyday lives, such as raising monies for various charities. School clubs and trips are open to all pupils.

- 10 At the parents' meeting, concern was expressed about the level of supervision on the playground at dinnertimes. During the two days of the inspection, the midday supervisors were seen to be closely involved in managing the pupils' behaviour well, and ensuring that lining up to go into the dining hall was carried out in an orderly and risk-free manner.

Teaching across the school is generally good, and some lessons for the oldest pupils are excellent.

- 11 During the inspection, 25 lessons were observed, and 17 of these were judged to have been taught to a good standard or better. Examples of good teaching were predominant in nursery, infant and junior classes. Strengths in teaching were identified as;
- knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the curriculum;
 - planning activities that suit the different levels of attainment within the class;
 - the teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy;
 - good use of question and answer sessions to involve all groups of pupils in the class;
 - effective management of pupils' behaviour and attention to their tasks.
- 12 In the nursery and reception classes, children are taught well to socialise, and much emphasis is placed on the development of linguistic ability. The best examples of this are seen when the teacher has identified the learning goals for each child, and when the children engage in structured role play. An increasing proportion of the children in the nursery are at the early stages of acquiring English, and the teachers cater for this very well, especially in planning the work of classroom support staff.
- 13 In the classes for pupils aged up to seven, good or very good teaching was seen in literacy, science and art lessons. In science, through careful prompting, pupils were able to suggest a number of ways in which materials could be heated, including warming in the hands, and using a magnifying glass to focus the sun's rays. The pupils learn how to use simple punctuation, such as commas, being inspired by the interesting and dynamic approach of the teacher. In art, pupils are shown the techniques of rolling and cutting clay to make decorative wall tiles with clear line drawings of recognisable objects, such as the school crest.
- 14 In the older classes of the school, examples of good teaching were observed in all year groups. In Year 3, pupils were clearly taught how different lettering, such as the use of italics, could be used to emphasise aspects of character in writing stories. The computer suite was also well used to learn how to input data to make up individual record cards. This was also a successful feature of Year 4 work when pupils learned well how to use the 'WordArt' and 'ClipArt' functions to create a list of questions to ask about various animals. A particularly good feature of this lesson was the teacher's technique of posing questions as prompts for the pupils to follow, using their own initiative. When the pupils faced difficulty, the teacher prompted them again with suggestions, rather than simply demonstrating the technique. This led to more successful learning of how changes could be made and success achieved. In Year 5, a good lesson on art was observed when the teacher used demonstrations of the pupils' own work to show success in the techniques of shading and colour blending using pastels and crayons. For the same year group, the

teacher effectively used questions pitched at different levels of difficulty that were appropriate to the varying attainments of the pupils. This demonstrated how well the teacher knew the pupils, and again showed how the teachers strive to include all pupils in the learning experiences of lessons.

- 15 Teaching in Year 6 is never less than very good, and half of the lessons seen were judged to be excellent. The teachers' enthusiasm readily conveys itself to the pupils. Even in a relatively formal lesson on rounding numbers up or down in mathematics, the pupils were totally absorbed in the activity with instinctive cries of 'yes' when they achieved success. The teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects of the curriculum, especially in English, where high standards of work were observed. An excellent lesson on writing styles showed pupils how to establish character through creating a 'mind map' of the person. The pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations of behaviour, and this led to the teacher being sufficiently confident in allowing them to act out improvised situations through which the characters could show their personalities. Their use of persuasive language techniques in this improvised format showed that the teaching points of the lesson had been very well understood. One of the Year 6 teachers was working temporarily in the school covering sickness; the standard of teaching reflected the very good prior preparation of the lessons, and the close co-operation by teachers working in the same year group.
- 16 Teachers new to the school are well supported, and settle quickly into the school routine. The school's practice of teachers working in year groups to plan lessons on a day-to-day basis is a major factor in this, as is the support given to new teachers by the headteacher and school administrative staff. Teachers coming to the school on short term contracts from Commonwealth countries share a common perspective on teaching and classroom management. They are confident in organising whole class and group work, and have a friendly manner with their pupils. The staff handbook, however, is a large, rather daunting manual covering all school policy documents. New teachers, especially those on short-term supply, would benefit from a shortened version of this handbook which provides in a more welcoming form instant information about everyday routines and who to turn to for further information.
- 17 Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. It is successful in the whole class setting when the teacher plans a range of activities which provides extra support for the pupils who might otherwise struggle. Learning support assistants are normally very well tasked to work alongside the pupils, giving one-to-one help and keeping the pupil's concentration going. The special needs co-ordinator provides good administrative support. Pupils are given regular assessments of their levels of attainment. When appropriate, individual educational plans are drawn up which give detailed information and plans for pupils' specific needs. These are well used by the class teacher. Provision for the pupils is less successful in small group or individual sessions where pupils are withdrawn from their normal class work. On occasions, these contain work which does not help the pupils to gain access to the general class curriculum. This was evident in a handwriting task for a Year 6 pupil when the letter formation used was different from the style laid down in the school policy.

The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been well implemented.

- 18 In Years 1-6, teachers have worked well to implement the changes in teaching styles in response to these national initiatives. Each class has a full literacy and numeracy lesson each day. In literacy, classes work as a whole to study the use of words and written texts. They work in groups at a variety of reading, writing or spoken activities to suit their level of attainment. In numeracy lessons, teachers use a variety of interesting strategies to develop the pupils' mental knowledge of and agility with numbers. For example, Year 2 pupils work with cards which have the answer to one question written down, with another question to ask. Each pupil has to listen out for the question that fits the answer on their card, and then read out the next question. This ensures that pupils develop close attention skills, and from week to week, they improve their speed of response. Published materials are then well used to provide activities for group tasks on developing written work, often based on practical investigations. Both literacy and numeracy lessons are rounded up with whole class discussions at which pupils share what they have learned with the rest of the class.
- 19 The teachers, including those new to the country, have been well trained in the structure and content of these strategies. They are committed to ensuring their continuing success. As a consequence, pupils have responded by becoming enthusiastic learners. In discussion, a number of them identified literacy lessons as their favourite subject in school. The teachers have also recognised that some pupils need to have extra tuition to avoid becoming left behind. Accordingly, the school has organised a number of 'booster' sessions for these pupils, most of which are taken on a voluntary basis outside of normal class times.

The school has established good systems of management, with the headteacher and other key staff being especially effective in driving standards higher.

- 20 The present headteacher has been in post for only a very short time, although she knows the school and its pupils well. Working with the governing body, she has set up a management structure for the school which is logical and ensures that responsibilities for day-to-day management and long-term development are clearly set down and understood. The senior management team meets regularly with the headteacher to monitor curriculum and other initiatives and to identify areas for further consideration. Members of this group have responsibility for co-ordinating activities within the infant and junior classes and provision for special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language. They have become skilled and experienced in monitoring the quality of teaching across all classes of the school. This is leading to the co-ordinated approach to classroom management and curriculum planning that is evident in the work of all teachers. A middle management team consists of managers of the subjects of mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Their role is to monitor the quality of learning for their subjects, to report on the developing standards in their subjects and to act as consultants for other members of staff who have co-ordinating roles.
- 21 The curriculum committee of the governing body regularly receives reports on developments within subject areas and it uses this information to propose targets for further improvements in standards. Job descriptions have been drawn up for the senior management team members, but have not yet been established for the middle management team and this is leading to some lack of clarity about their roles and that of other subject managers. However, the basis of a management structure has been established that is appropriate for a large primary school with a significant turnover of personnel. As a result the school is in a position to provide continuity of management based on the monitoring of teaching and learning across all areas of the school.

Pupils in the PSB are well taught, and they make good progress towards developing the skills that are necessary for integration into mainstream classes.

- 22 Pupils in the PSB receive very good teaching. The teacher is very knowledgeable about their individual learning needs, and organises tasks which are relevant to the pupils' needs in a practical manner. In their classroom, they are given small group or individual tuition by their teacher and learning support assistants. In these lessons, there are very high expectations of behaviour and attention, and all staff have specialist expertise, especially in developing language and co-operative working. They have a very caring, patient manner to which the pupils readily respond. For example, a lesson on using the ruler to count and measure gave pupils a wide experience of measuring objects and distances. The teacher's use of questions about this then gave pupils the opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills as they described their choice of equipment. The teamwork that is evident when pupils from the PSB join in lessons with their age group peers, as a means towards their eventual integration into the mainstream classes, is a further factor in the good provision that the pupils receive. Here, they remain supported by the accompanying staff. They receive appropriately close attention while being given the opportunity for short periods to work alongside other pupils and learn the skills of developing relationships and co-operative working. The welcome that they receive by both pupils and staff is indicative of the inclusive nature of the school as a whole.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils carry out too little individual research, including working on computers and in the library, and as a result do not cover all aspects of the curriculum in sufficient depth.

- 23 The school has worked well to bring pupils to higher standards of work. However, it is clear from the scrutiny of pupils' work in the subjects of art and design, design and technology, history, geography and religious education that much of the work is closely directed by the teachers and pupils have too little opportunity for taking responsibility for carrying out independent work for themselves. In these subjects, much of the work that is planned is the same for all members of the class, and the higher attaining pupils are not provided with sufficiently challenging activities. When talking to pupils, they were unable to recall periods when they used the library to find out information for their studies. Most of the older pupils know about contents pages and indexes and some can explain what a glossary is, and that it can normally be found in non-fiction books. However, they could not recall a time when they were asked to use this knowledge in research. Similarly, in computer studies pupils use the computers to access the internet and to learn about creating spreadsheets. However, the use of these skills is not apparent in general classwork, or in allowing pupils to set up, follow and create their own lines of enquiry. Classroom computers are not in use most of the time, and when they are it is often for practice and reinforcement of basic skills, such as spelling.
- 24 The school has, rightly, placed a great emphasis in recent years on developing the pupils' linguistic and mathematical skills. To this end, most mornings are completely taken up with assemblies and the literacy and numeracy hour lessons. During the afternoons, most classes, especially for Years 1 and 2, have a period of quiet reading, and there is often a weekly lesson on developing extended writing skills as this is an area perceived to be difficult to cover within the structure of the literacy hour. Also, each class is timetabled for at least a weekly lesson in the computer suite, where the pupils learn the skills of using the personal computer and the

internet. These activities, however, limit the time that is available for the subjects listed above. The challenge facing the school is to plan to use work in these subjects to further develop pupils' writing, numerical and computer skills. Some positive examples of this exist, for example in history, where Year 6 pupils wrote about what their feelings would be if they lived as Egyptian slaves, and in computer work where pupils use the 'Dazzle' program to explore painting techniques. However, this is not developed as a consistent strategy; for example, there is no cohesive plan for using number and graphical skills in science and design and technology, or word processing skills in the written aspects of other subjects.

The end of year reports do not give sufficient information about pupils' future learning needs.

- 25 At the pre-inspection meeting for parents, a number of comments were raised about the quality of communication given to parents about their children's progress. This was also a significant area of concern in the questionnaires completed by parents. The inspection team have looked at a sample of pupils' end of year reports and other letters sent out by the school to parents.
- 26 The school gives parents ample opportunity to find out about the work of the school and about how well their child is progressing. Letters sent home clearly convey the message that this is an important aspect of the school's work. A number of open-day activities are organised, for example, the recent 'science' and 'international' days, to which parents were welcome. On three occasions per year, parents are invited in to school to look at the work of their child and to discuss their progress with the class teacher.
- 27 However, the end-of-year reports that are sent home do not give a clear enough picture of the level of the work that has been achieved by the child. They do not identify whether the level achieved is below or above the expectations for the child's age, nor are future learning needs identified in a way that sets out what new learning or skills will be needed for the child to progress to the next levels of attainment. Many do contain details of areas covered and skills achieved, especially in English and mathematics, but some do not contain any references to future learning needs, and many that do are too vague, for example; 'now needs to learn his tables'. Some of the reports are difficult to read; those that are word processed are better as more information can be put into the available space.

The school improvement plan lacks a focus on year-on-year improvement.

- 28 At the time of the last inspection, long-term planning was identified as a key area for development. Since then a three year plan has been drawn up, following advice from the Local Education Authority. This has been used to provide a sound structure around which to formulate action to develop curriculum policies and improvements to school resources. However, the improvement plan covers the years 2000 to 2002, and at present there is no indication that on-going initiatives will be supported beyond the end of the current school year. The plan does not set out clearly enough what will be covered in each year. For example, curriculum policies for all school subjects are due to be reviewed within that period without it being clearly stated which subjects will be covered in what order. The plan does identify dates for completion of reviews and other action, and it specifies that these should be monitored and evaluated, but there is no time scale by which these aspects of the process should be complete. In a number of cases, the governing body is identified as being responsible for aspects of evaluation, but there is no indication that individual members are identified to carry them out. As a result of this lack of clarity, the school's senior management team spends a great deal of its time checking up on the

school's initiatives. The main role of the governing body tends to be that of receiving reports on progress, and subjects other than the main areas of literacy and numeracy tend to lose significance as a result.

The school buildings are showing signs of age, some classrooms are too small, and toilet facilities are inadequate.

29 The last report also identified that the school buildings were showing signs of considerable wear and tear, and that some rooms for infant pupils were too small. Since that time, the school has been visited on a number of occasions by local authority surveyors in order that assessments can be made of the state of the building. However, apart from improvements to the security system and to the school entrance, there has been little action as the personnel involved have been subject to constant change. In the intervening period, the school has worked valiantly to try to improve what it is in its power to do. A wild area for environmental study purposes is in the course of development. Quiet seated areas have been established on the infant playground for pupils who want to avoid active, running games. The classroom and corridor walls have been covered with attractive displays that are relevant to the pupils' studies. However, in many rooms and corridors, there is evidence of the poor state of plasterwork. The school is beneath a major flightpath into Heathrow Airport, but none of the rooms have double glazing and lessons are often disrupted by noise from the aeroplanes. At their meeting, parents expressed concern about the state of the junior pupils' toilet facilities. The inspection team shares these concerns. Pupils in the main building have to cross an open yard to gain access to the toilets. They are not sufficiently extensive for the number of pupils using them. In the morning, there is a discernible odour coming from the toilet area; by the end of the day, the floors are wet, paper is strewn around the floor and the smell is extremely unpleasant. Although the staff have tried hard to improve the building and make the best of a bad job, the fact remains that there are many aspects of the physical environment that are unacceptable.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 30 In order to further improve the quality of education offered to pupils, the headteacher, governors and teaching staff should;
- make increased provision for pupils to develop as independent learners and study all aspects of the curriculum in sufficient depth, using library and computer facilities more fully in order to do so;
 - improve the end-of-year reports to give clearer information to parents about what their children need to do to make progress;
 - implement a school improvement plan that shows clearly what is to be achieved each year, and identify in more detail who is responsible for monitoring and reporting on its success;
 - improve the toilet facilities available for pupils and draw up plans for the long-term improvement of the school buildings.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	5	10	7	1	0	0
Percentage	8	20	40	28	4	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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	392
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	131

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	19
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	112

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	123

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	69

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	36	24	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	30
	Girls	20	21	23
	Total	46	48	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (72)	80 (79)	88 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	30	32
	Girls	20	24	21
	Total	47	54	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (72)	90 (87)	88 (90)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	26	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	22	25
	Girls	24	20	26
	Total	47	42	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (70)	76 (70)	93 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	24
	Girls	20	20	26
	Total	42	41	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(51)	77 (80)	94 (70)
	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	37
Black – African heritage	39
Black – other	0
Indian	24
Pakistani	26
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	129
Any other minority ethnic group	80

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.1
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	279

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	1,047,830
Total expenditure	1,043,691
Expenditure per pupil	2,388
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,006
Balance carried forward to next year	12,145

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	15
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	15

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
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	392
Number of questionnaires returned	165

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	45	10	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	48	5	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	39	17	9	5
The teaching is good.	43	45	5	4	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	38	18	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	35	5	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	39	6	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	37	41	13	5	4
The school is well led and managed.	38	42	8	5	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	46	8	4	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	33	19	9	16

Other issues raised by parents

The meeting for parents was attended by nine parents. Most parents considered that the school provided a satisfactory or better quality of education, but with areas that needed improvement. Concerns were expressed about the quality of the information provided for parents about their children's progress, the provision for information and communication technology and about supervision on the playground. The state of the toilet facilities was also a considerable cause for concern.

A small number of letters were addressed to the registered inspector. Of these, roughly half supported the school and headteacher. Areas of concern were the level of supervision of pupils at dinnertime and at the end of the school day, and the provision for special educational needs.