

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bishop's Stortford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117380

Headteacher: Mr Steven Connors

Reporting inspector: Brian McCutcheon
2420

Dates of inspection: 12 - 13 November 2001

Inspection number: 195834

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Penningtons Bishop's Stortford Hertfordshire
Postcode:	CM23 4LE
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Deborah Mills
Date of previous inspection:	23/06/1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 478 pupils on roll, including 78 children who attend the school's nursery classes on a part-time basis. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is well below average as is the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. There are only a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups. Since the school opened in 1988, pupil numbers have continued to grow significantly creating two forms of entry. However, from September 1999, three forms have been admitted to nursery, reception and Year 1, on a temporary basis. On entry to the school, attainment is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. It benefits from an experienced and very able headteacher, a committed staff and an effective governing body. The quality of teaching is high and pupils make good, or better, progress as a result. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development and is a caring community. Overall, it provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics as a result of effective teaching.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and manages the school very well.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and good provision for their spiritual development.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent.
- Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is given a high priority.
- Strong links are established with parents, and they have a high regard for the school.

What could be improved

- The continuity of curriculum provision for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- The quantity and range of equipment for outside play for the youngest children.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the last OFSTED inspection, in 1997. The governors have ensured that all statutory requirements are now met; and the length of the school day has been increased to exceed the minimum recommended by the secretary of state. The school's homework policy is regularly reviewed and shared with parents; and all subjects are now audited on an annual basis so as to inform the school's development planning. Throughout the school, assessment information is used effectively to inform teachers' planning; and a helpful marking policy has been formulated. Marking in English and mathematics is at least satisfactory and there are examples of good practice. Following the introduction of Curriculum 2000, the school's provision has been reviewed. Sufficient time is allocated to each subject and careful planning ensures that a satisfactory balance is maintained within and between subjects. At this time of unprecedented growth in the numbers of younger children, the school is aware of the need to continue to strengthen curriculum continuity for those in the nursery and reception classes.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	A*	A	A	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A*	A	A*	A	
Science	A*	A	A*	A	

The table shows that the school's results in English at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001, were well above the national average and those achieved by similar schools. The school's performance in mathematics in 2001, was very high in comparison with the national average and well above that of similar schools. Over the last three years, the school's results for English and mathematics have consistently been either well above average, or very high, when compared with both the national average and the performance of similar schools. Inspection findings confirm that pupils achieve very well in both subjects, across the school, and show that most demonstrate standards which are higher than those expected nationally at age 11.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and pupils of all ages and abilities are very keen to learn. They demonstrate particularly good powers of concentration, and they take part enthusiastically in discussions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are exceptionally well behaved at all times. They are well mannered, helpful, friendly and considerate, in and out of classrooms, and move around the school in a very orderly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very constructive relationships with adults and with one another. They work together well on shared tasks and are very sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils of all ages undertake routine class duties and responsibilities willingly and reliably; while older pupils undertake wider responsibilities across the school in a very mature manner.
Attendance	Excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very 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 was never less than satisfactory and, in the vast majority of lessons, was good or very good. The teaching of children who are under five is at least satisfactory and mainly good, with some very good teaching in one nursery class in particular. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is mainly good and occasionally very good; while in Years 3 to 6 it is never less than good and, overall, is mainly very good. These judgements show a significant improvement in the overall quality of teaching since the last OFSTED inspection in 1997.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good or better progress in English and mathematics as a result of effective teaching. In Years 5 and 6, where pupils are organised in different 'sets' for these subjects, the teaching is particularly good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of the national strategies for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Their teaching is characterised by carefully planned lessons which motivate pupils well and build systematically on their previous experience. In English, teachers ensure that pupils achieve high standards of technical accuracy through routine practice and by requiring pupils to apply what they have been taught; and good attention is paid to the development of vocabulary and to language use in subjects other than English. The teaching of reading is a strength throughout the school, as is the teaching of mathematics. Lessons in mathematics begin at a brisk pace with teachers using skilful questioning to develop pupils' understanding. In the main part of the lesson, tasks are carefully explained; and good use is made of time at the end of lessons to check and summarise learning. Teachers manage their classes very well and ensure that, when appropriate, pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning in mathematics.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils in Years 1 to 6 benefit from a broad and well balanced curriculum which fully meets statutory requirements. Sufficient time is allocated for literacy and numeracy and good use is made of this time. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall. However, limitations in outdoor equipment sometimes restrict their learning opportunities; and the school recognises the need to continue to improve continuity in provision for these children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good.
Provision for pupils'	Very good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	development, and good provision is made for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community, and pupils' welfare has a high priority. Pupils develop good self-esteem and a pride in their school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school benefits from an experienced and very able headteacher who has excellent leadership skills. He provides the school with a clear sense of direction and promotes very high professional standards, which permeate through all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher is very well supported by the school's senior management team and, in particular, by the deputy headteacher who works in an effective partnership with him.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very committed and they have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school and, in collaboration with the headteacher, have successfully managed the recent significant increase in pupil numbers. Statutory requirements are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher, senior management team, subject co-ordinators and governors rigorously analyse the results of statutory testing; and the quality of teaching is checked through well-focused lesson observations. Termly work sampling is also undertaken; and the headteacher conducts an annual review of each pupils' targets, with all class teachers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have completed the OFSTED school self-evaluation course and are successfully applying the skills they have learned to an ongoing programme of school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is carefully linked to the priorities identified in a comprehensive and well organised school development plan. The school budget is analysed rigorously and expenditure is debated thoroughly in order to obtain value for money. The finance committee provides good support; and there has been prudent financial management during a time of considerable growth in pupil numbers. Overall, the school makes very effective use of its resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They believe the school is well led and managed.• They believe the school has high expectations for work and behaviour.• They believe the staff are easy to talk to.• They believe that the teaching is good; and that their children make good progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some would like a greater range of extra-curricular activities.• Some would like more information on the progress that their children are making.

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views about the school. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils in Years 3 to 6 although there is no provision for younger pupils. Throughout the school year, the school offers parents the usual range of opportunities to discuss with staff the progress that their children are making.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics as a result of effective teaching.

(a) English

1. In the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress in communication, language and literacy. As a consequence, most attain standards that are at least in line with, and often above, those expected for their age by the time they move into the Year 1 classes. Children show good concentration, listen attentively when required to do so and follow discussions well. For example in the nursery classes, groups of children talk about a collection of photographs and pictures related to the theme of 'night-time'. As a result of good demonstration and questioning by teachers and support staff, they extend their vocabulary, begin to express their ideas clearly and well and learn the conventions required when taking part in group speaking. All children enjoy sharing stories, poems and rhymes with their teachers. For example, those in one of the reception classes closely follow the events, as the plot unfolds, in the story of the 'Owl Babies'. They are aware of how books work and they look carefully at the illustrations, using them to discover more about the characters and their feelings. Across the Foundation Stage, children also develop a sound awareness of phonics and this enables them to read, with accuracy, a wider range of words by the end of the reception year. Writing areas are appropriately provided to encourage children to convey their own ideas and they respond well to the many opportunities they are given to develop their writing skills. Overall, children make good progress in letter formation and handwriting and in learning how to compose and write down simple statements and sequences of ideas.
2. The results of the national tests in reading and writing for pupils aged seven have been well above the national averages for the past three years; and the 2001 results are also well above those of similar schools.
3. The results of the national tests in English for pupils aged 11 have been well above the national average, or very high, for the last three years; and those for 2001 were well above the results of similar schools. In both age groups, the proportions of pupils who attained standards higher than those expected nationally of pupils of the same age have increased substantially over the past two years. Very few pupils aged seven or 11 fall below the standards set nationally for pupils of their ages.
4. Inspection findings confirm, overall, these very good standards in English. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, the high attaining pupils and the few for whom English is an additional language make good or better progress between the ages of five and 11 as a result of effective teaching.
5. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2, and is mainly very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are generally confident and knowledgeable about English as a subject and know exactly how to help pupils to do well. They are particularly well informed about the skills pupils need to develop, whether in speaking and listening, reading or writing. Most teachers are, therefore, able to intervene rigorously and consistently, in order to help pupils to develop these skills, whether or not they are a planned focus for specific lessons. Lessons are planned well and build systematically on pupils' previous experience. Through routine practice, and by

requiring pupils to apply what they have been taught, teachers make sure that pupils achieve high standards of technical accuracy, for example in spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Pupils are taught to appreciate the skills used by real authors and to apply these same skills in their own writing. They learn how to appreciate the language and the underlying structure of stories and of other kinds of texts and how to use these same structures when planning writing of their own. Similarly, they are taught to recognise the various strategies used by authors to engage their readers' interest, to employ these to achieve similar effects, and to study language itself. For example, pupils in Year 2 study the 'blurb' on the back cover of a number of story books. They consider the aspects covered in such writing and then produce their own 'blurb' for the story of 'Elmer' the elephant. In Year 6, pupils study extracts from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' by Shakespeare. They consider the key features that distinguish a playscript from other forms of writing, and they identify ways in which language has changed since Shakespeare's time. The teaching of reading is a real strength throughout the school. Younger pupils receive a thorough grounding in initial literacy skills, including a very secure knowledge of phonics, and, for the most part, acquire a genuine and long-lasting love of literature. Older pupils are introduced to a wide range of fiction and poetry which includes both classics and contemporary work of very good quality.

6. As a matter of course, all teachers plan work to meet the varying needs of different children in their classes. Often, pupils with special educational needs benefit from additional adult support and modified tasks at an appropriate level, while the higher attaining pupils are given suitably challenging work. In Years 5 and 6, where pupils are organised in different sets for English, the teaching is particularly effective: pupils of all abilities are challenged by the work they are given and make very good progress over time.
7. A further, significant strength of the teaching lies in the attention paid to the development of vocabulary and to language use in subjects other than English. By the time they are 11, pupils of all abilities are well able to undertake independent research and to produce project work of a very high standard. For example, pupils in Year 6 have studied both history and geography in connection with their work on the Isle of Wight. They use appropriate dates and terms, adapt the style and form of their writing to match its curricular purposes and its audience, and use their knowledge of typography, presentation and layout to good effect in their own 'books' about their visit.
8. Overall, therefore, pupils are taught the routine skills they need; are encouraged and helped to read widely and to understand what they read; and are shown how to write in appropriate styles and forms for a wide range of purposes in English and in other subjects. In their turn, almost all pupils enjoy talking about language and enjoy using it, whether imaginatively, as in stories and poems, or with the factual accuracy required in reports.

(b) Mathematics

9. In the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress through the 'stepping stones' of mathematical development as outlined in the national guidance for the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, most attain standards that are at least in line with, and often above, those expected for their age. Children are beginning to understand capacity and measures through exploring materials, such as sand and water; and make good progress in using mathematical language, such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' or 'lighter'. They also make good progress in understanding numbers through sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting

using either everyday objects, mathematical resources or appropriate computer programs. Teachers skilfully use daily activities to promote and consolidate children's mathematical understanding and vocabulary. For example, during registration, children in one nursery class were asked to count how many were present and then to work out whether there were more boys or more girls. Those engaged in cooking activities answered questions such as 'How many biscuits will you make?' or 'Are the moon biscuits smaller or larger than the stars?' In one of the reception classes, children used their knowledge of 'more than' and 'less than' when accurately comparing numbers and enthusiastically waved their 'teddy bear' digit cards to answer the teacher's well chosen questions. Across the Foundation Stage, children effectively consolidate their knowledge of numbers and counting skills through learning number rhymes and songs. For example in one of the nursery classes, small groups of children experimented with musical instruments and sang number songs when working with a volunteer parent, who is also a music teacher. All teachers have given careful consideration to the organisation of classrooms and have provided colourful and interesting displays designed to promote children's interest in mathematics and to consolidate their learning.

10. In Years 1 and 2, pupils benefit from good teaching in mathematics which enables them to make good progress from their starting points at the end of reception. As a consequence, overall standards are above average in Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching is maintained and pupils continue to make good progress. However, in Years 5 and 6, the overall quality of teaching is very good and all pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, make very effective progress in their mathematical learning. In Year 6, overall standards are well above those expected nationally. These standards are reflected in the recent statutory tests in mathematics in Year 6, which were well above the national average in 2000 and were in the top five per cent nationally in 1999. The 2001 results were also very high when compared to the national average and well above the average results of similar schools. Forty eight per cent of Year 6 pupils achieved one level above the standard normally expected, and five per cent achieved two levels above this standard.
11. In Year 2, (at the age of seven,) pupils demonstrate good mental skills in addition and subtraction. For example, in a lesson observed, pupils were asked to identify number facts about 89. They responded very quickly indeed with statements including: "It's an odd number"; "It can be made from adding 79 and 10"; "It has eight tens and nine units"; "It can be made by subtracting 11 from 100". Nearly all pupils are able to identify patterns in simple number sequences, like 2, 4, 6, 8 and 15, 20, 25, and the more advanced learners in Year 2 can readily extend sequences which begin 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 or 1, 4, 9, 16, 25. They have a secure grasp of mathematical vocabulary, and use terms like 'multiple' accurately and confidently. They make good progress in developing their understanding of multiplication as repeated addition. For example, they can readily convert pictorial representations of six sets of pairs of socks into $2+2+2+2+2+2$ and into $6 \times 2 = 12$.
12. In Year 6 (at the age of 11), most pupils can accurately multiply three digit numbers by two digit numbers, and the higher attaining set are able to divide three digit numbers by two digit numbers. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in Year 6 when learning to construct and interpret line graphs. For example, as a result of very effective teaching, the vast majority of pupils in the lowest attaining of the three mathematics sets in Year 6 are able to calculate the median temperature from graphs showing the temperatures in two different holiday resorts over a week, and the mean temperatures and hours of sunshine for each resort. They also understand and use mode and range when discussing data sets. Pupils in the highest attaining

mathematics set are able to calculate the sum of two mixed fractions accurately and are able to convert fractions into decimals. In the middle attaining set, pupils can use cancelling to reduce a fraction to its simplest form, and solve problems which involve ratio and direct proportion.

13. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and they are particularly well informed in Years 5 and 6. Mathematics lessons are carefully planned and individual lessons form part of coherent sequences which develop pupils' skills and understanding in key aspects of the subject. The learning objectives of lessons are clearly identified in the planning and teachers ensure that their classes are made fully aware, at the beginning of lessons, of what they are expected to learn. Good use is made of time at the end of lessons for pupils to discuss what they have learned, and for teachers to check their understanding and skills. All lessons begin at a brisk pace with teachers asking well judged questions to develop pupils' mental calculation skills. Teachers explain the tasks to be carried out in the main activity very clearly and, throughout their lessons, motivate pupils well. Pupils like their teachers and try very hard to meet the expectations which are set for them. They listen very attentively to their teachers and concentrate on their tasks. In the most successful lessons, pupils are working at the edge of their current capabilities, and the good support and guidance they receive enables them to make very significant gains in their learning. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6, where the school's setting arrangements are working very well. Teachers introduce and reinforce appropriate mathematical vocabulary, use pupils' mistakes as teaching points and ask skilful questions to probe pupils' understanding. They ensure that pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning in mathematics, and manage their classes very effectively. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is a strength in the school and is reflected in pupils' good achievement in the subject.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership and manages the school very well.

14. The school benefits from an experienced and very able headteacher, whose strong commitment, energy and clear thinking contribute very significantly to its success. He has excellent leadership skills and has fostered effective teamwork among staff. The headteacher is a strong presence in the school, provides a clear sense of direction and analyses its performance rigorously. He promotes very high professional standards, which permeate through all aspects of the school's work, and are most evident in the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. The headteacher also provides a good role model through his commitment to school improvement. For example, all teachers meet with him in the spring term to discuss the progress of individual pupils towards meeting the targets set for them. The headteacher ensures that teachers' planning is checked and that samples of pupils' work are scrutinised, particularly in English, mathematics and science, in order to identify strengths and to address any areas of weakness. Overall, his monitoring procedures provide him with a very good overview of the school's achievements, and he uses the information gathered to raise standards further. Questionnaire returns indicate that the vast majority of parents consider the school to be well led and managed.
15. In this large school, the headteacher also works very effectively with the senior management team who provide very good support for the school. They have appropriately monitored the quality of teaching through well focused observations of lessons; and a very thorough analysis of the results of statutory and other testing is undertaken by this group. Subject leaders are well supported by the senior management team. For example, the recently appointed science co-ordinator, with the help of the deputy headteacher, has quickly acquired a good overview of the

subject and is receiving appropriate training which will enable her to monitor the quality of teaching across the school. There is a strong partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who very ably supports him in the management of the school and also offers a very good role model in her own teaching.

The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and good provision for their spiritual development.

16. This is a school that nurtures pupils' personal development just as surely as it strives to raise their standards of attainment in academic subjects. Assemblies are very calm and peaceful and make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. They are used very naturally but skilfully, by the headteacher and by other staff who lead them, to promote a sense of awe and wonder about the world; and also to illustrate the significance of religion in the lives of Christians and those of other faiths. For example, the headteacher effectively uses the change to British winter time to help pupils to reflect on the wonders of the night sky and of creation; and also to explore and understand human feelings as he reads extracts from 'The Owl Who Was Afraid of The Dark'. Carefully selected hymns promote values such as love, loyalty, hope, trust, truth, forgiveness and sharing and are sung by pupils in an enthusiastic but reverential way. Their singing has a spiritual quality and there is a strong feeling of unison which embraces all pupils from the very youngest to those in Year 6. In subject lessons and in personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are encouraged to acknowledge and express their own feelings and thoughts, and to respond to the feelings of others. They are taught to reflect on the human condition, to consider mankind's aspirations and achievements, and to reflect on the deeper meanings of life. Whenever relevant, teachers also draw pupils' attention to the spiritual feelings inspired by the beauty of the world and the wonders of nature. For instance during residential visits, Year 4 pupils consider the spiritual impact of walking through a cornfield while those in Year 6 are inspired by the beauty of 'The Needles' in the Isle of Wight.
17. The school provides very strong moral guidance for its pupils. Staff set a good example by understanding and valuing pupils as individuals; and the values they promote firmly establish high expectations for moral behaviour and attitudes. Good behaviour, thoughtfulness and kindness are promoted consistently by all staff from the time children are admitted into the nursery classes. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, to value and respect others, and to consider, always, the impact of their actions on others. Teachers appropriately emphasise the importance of individual and collective responsibility, and good behaviour is promoted through positive means. Pupils are made fully aware of what is right and wrong, but are involved actively in promoting good behaviour, for example by devising, and upholding, the school's 'Golden Rules' as guidelines for behaviour across the school. Through their work, through community links and through fund raising activities, for example for the Meningitis Trust and the British Heart Foundation, they are shown how to care for others. The school's involvement in 'Operation Christmas Child,' which takes boxes of presents, provided by pupils, to needy children across the world, also raises pupils' knowledge and understanding of those less fortunate than themselves.
18. The promotion of pupils' social development is very good. They are made aware of the balance that needs to exist between rights and responsibilities; and the ethos of the school strongly promotes equality and citizenship. Pupils are encouraged to undertake responsibilities within class, and older pupils assume wider responsibilities within the school. For example, older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies, act as

door monitors or ensure that the music is played at the appropriate time; and keep the school libraries in good order. They are encouraged to be helpful towards younger children, for example, through shared reading activities, and in the playgrounds. Following elections held in tandem with the General Election, a school council was recently chosen by pupils and is chaired and run by them with help from some staff members. Pupils are given the responsibility for consulting their peers and for deliberating on changes which might benefit the school as a whole. Assembly themes are chosen with care to foster social values, inclusion and a sense of corporate identity; and the weekly 'sharing assembly' recognises not only personal effort and progress but also acts of kindness, politeness and helpfulness. The good range of visits and visitors, and the extra-curricular clubs for older pupils, provide good opportunities for social interaction in addition to those which pupils experience on a day-to-day basis within their own classrooms.

19. Pupils' cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum, through a wide range of educational visits and visitors, cultural events, and through extra-curricular activities. Visitors have included the authors Jeremy Strong and Val Biro; and the Cambridge Buskers and a Celtic Rock group have entertained the pupils. The local Theatre in Education Company, 'SNAP Theatre', work in the school and numerous sessions of 'Actors in Residence' have taken place. Literacy lessons acquaint pupils with the work of well-known children's authors and poets, and a love of reading is strongly promoted. School drama productions contribute to both social and cultural development, while assemblies serve to remind pupils of their religious and cultural heritage and about the beliefs and traditions of others. During the inspection, for example, one whole-school assembly focused on the celebration of Diwali and the use of 'Divas' by Hindus and Sikhs. These were compared with the importance of 'light' as a symbol for Christians and Jews. The school is aware that it is a predominately white European community within a much more culturally diverse society. Emphasis is therefore given to reflecting this diversity in as many ways as possible. The school's religious education programme appropriately explores the six major faiths; and cultural groups such as 'Mexicolor' and the 'Greenlight Trust' provide pupils with first hand experiences of other cultures. In addition, pupils visit the local African cultural centre where pupils are encouraged to take part and explore the culture of West Africa.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is excellent.

20. Pupils of all abilities are very keen to learn. They enjoy lessons, and they take pleasure in knowing that they are improving their skills and extending their knowledge. Consistently good teaching secures their interest and commitment to their studies. They are always eager and ready for lessons to begin, and teachers very seldom, if ever, have to call them to attention. The value accorded to each and every pupil by staff is reflected in pupils' respect for all those who teach them and who work with them. It is also reflected in pupils' confidence in their own capabilities as learners and in their willingness to take risks. Nowhere were such attitudes more evident during the inspection perhaps than in the Year 6 literacy set where pupils with special educational needs valiantly, very sensitively, and, above all else, very successfully, engaged with the language and sentiments of scenes from Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Whatever the subject, pupils of all ages apply themselves well. They demonstrate particularly good powers of concentration, and they take part enthusiastically in discussions. They are interested in what they learn, and they reflect thoughtfully before answering questions and before writing, always striving to recall and apply what they have learned on previous occasions, whether in terms of subject content or of skills. They do not call out answers impulsively, but

they listen very carefully to others, whether adults or children, and, almost without exception, they observe the expected conventions in regard to turn-taking. When required to work independently, for example during the literacy hour, they apply themselves conscientiously to the tasks they have been given. They make good use of any resources provided, and they take pains with their handwriting and with the presentation of their work, doing their best to meet their teachers' high expectations. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are keen participants in extra-curricular activities and clearly enjoy the full breadth of the opportunities the school offers them.

21. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved at all times. They are well mannered, helpful, friendly and considerate, whether in the classroom, in the playground or at lunch. They are guided by a strong moral code acquired in part from home and in part from their schooling. They understand very well what constitutes right and wrong behaviour, both within and beyond the school environment. Indeed, it is not at all unusual for pupils to draw on their own moral values and to express well founded arguments of a highly moral nature when answering questions during discussions. Many pupils are adept at perceiving differing viewpoints. Whether discussing characters in a story or writing about events in history, for example, they are quick to justify the right to be different as long as moral principles are upheld. With extremely rare exceptions, pupils' actions are fully consistent with the values promoted by the school: they are kind to one another, work together well to achieve shared goals, for example in group work, and are quick to respond to others' needs. They support one another quietly and unobtrusively as they work, move around the school in a very orderly manner, and automatically offer to help others, for example by fetching a chair, opening doors or making way to let someone pass.
22. Relationships are very good indeed at all levels. Boys and girls co-operate happily on joint tasks, and younger and older pupils chat companionably over lunch. Incidents of bullying are virtually unknown, and acts of unkindness of any sort are rare.
23. Pupils of all ages undertake routine duties and responsibilities willingly and reliably within their classes, while older pupils assume responsibilities within the wider school, for example as librarians or as organisers who set up the hall ready for assemblies. Members of the school council are drawn from all classes except reception. They are earnest in their desire to represent other pupils fairly and to improve, still further, a school where they find very little at all to criticise. Older pupils who are elected to leadership roles, for example as chairperson and secretary, adopt a very mature, non-aggressive and 'democratic' approach to their own roles. They make it quite clear that they are there to represent others, not simply to advance their own views. When challenged to use their own initiative, pupils rise well to the occasion. For example, in the year 2000, pupils worked very hard, devising many activities to raise the additional £2000 they needed to fund a visit to the Millennium Dome. Their ongoing support for local adults with learning difficulties and their fund-raising efforts on behalf of various national charities testify to their developing sense of social and moral responsibility for others.

Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.

24. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Indeed, by the time they are 11 years old, most pupils with special educational needs are able to achieve the average standard for their age in the national tests in English, mathematics and science.

25. Support for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and is particularly effective in enabling them to sustain good progress in the development of literacy skills and in mathematics at all stages in the school. The support provided by the support teacher, by qualified special educational needs support staff and by classroom assistants is effective. In Years 5 and 6, the 'setting' of pupils enables those with special educational needs to make very good progress overall in English and in mathematics. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the support teacher and the deputy headteacher make a very good contribution to pupils' attainment and progress in these year groups. Elsewhere in the school, the expertise of class teachers, the SENCO, support staff and classroom assistants all combine to make sure that pupils with special educational needs follow programmes of work which are matched to their individual needs as well as to National Curriculum requirements. In lessons, teachers often plan work specially designed to address pupils' individual educational needs as identified in the targets in their individual education plans. At the same time, great care is also taken to ensure that these pupils are not denied access to the full range of opportunities identified in the National Curriculum. Parents, too, play their part willingly, often using time at home to reinforce and extend the work pupils do in school.
26. All staff involved in the support of pupils with special educational needs are well trained for their roles and are very well briefed about what pupils are intended to learn and to achieve in specific lessons. They frequently produce written assessments of pupils' progress, and this information is used to good advantage by class teachers who plan future work for them in the light of their achievements. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are drawn up by their class teachers, sometimes with the advice and support of outside specialists and of the SENCO. The targets are well defined and achievable, with short term objectives which are reviewed on a very regular basis. Every attempt is made, at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that parents are informed about their children's needs and about the provision planned for them.
27. In its efforts to meet the needs of all its pupils with special educational needs, the school is fortunate to benefit from a variety of sources of expertise outside the school. These include, amongst others, the educational psychology service, the staff of the area base for pupils with specific learning difficulties, speech therapists and various members of the Local Education Authority Special Needs Advisory Service. With the SENCO, the headteacher and the staff of the school, these various services and individuals work effectively together to serve the best interests of pupils with a number of medical, academic, behavioural and pastoral needs.
28. A strong feature of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is the involvement of all staff. For example, midday supervisors as well as teaching and support staff have been involved very constructively in the provision made for one pupil with communication difficulties and have had a marked impact on that pupil's progress.
29. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision are very good. The SENCO monitors teachers' planning, organises special educational needs in-service training for colleagues, gives advice and support according to need, and closely monitors each child's progress. Liaison with parents, with outside agencies and with schools to which pupils transfer are constructive and work to serve the best interests of pupils. All statutory requirements in regard to special educational needs are fully met. The special educational needs governor is new to her role this term but is making every effort to undertake relevant training and to familiarise herself with

special educational needs provision within the school. Resources to support special educational needs provision are good, and staff are well deployed. 'Ear-marked' funding is used efficiently, and the school makes a significant contribution from its own budget to make sure that pupils with special educational needs receive the support they need to make best progress. The accommodation is accessible to those adults or pupils who need wheelchair access, and there are two toilets suitable for the use of the disabled.

The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is given a high priority.

30. The school is a caring community and well established procedures ensure the safety and well being of all pupils. Good policies have been formulated, and these are effectively implemented to ensure that this large community is organised with the pupils' safety and well-being at its core. All staff have had recent training in child protection awareness and there are clear guidelines regarding the promotion of health and safety in lessons. Sensitive support is given to pupils with medical, behavioural or emotional needs; and parents value the help and advice that is available from the school nurse. At the beginning of each academic year, teachers are well briefed about the pupils who will be in their class so that they quickly become aware of their academic and personal needs and can plan to meet them. This makes pupils feel valued and inspires confidence in parents that any changes in performance or behaviour will be identified and addressed. The school is particularly successful in promoting high standards of behaviour and a community spirit. This results in all pupils developing high self-esteem, a pride in their school and a genuine enthusiasm for all the opportunities that the school has to offer.

There is a strong and effective partnership with parents.

31. Parents have very positive views about the school and demonstrate this through the support they give to the school and their children's learning. They welcome the consideration given to the pastoral needs of pupils as well as to their academic needs. The school works hard to build links with parents; this starts in the nursery classes when they are invited in several times a week, at the end of the session, to share a quiet time with their children. These opportunities enable parents to understand what is expected of their children and allows for informal contact with staff to talk over any concerns. These links are sustained throughout the school, with parents finding it easy to talk to class teachers. The regular presence of the headteacher and deputy headteacher in the playground before and after school, and their good knowledge of each child in the school, gives parents additional opportunities to address any worries and makes for an open and trusting partnership. Parents are well informed about the curriculum offered to children, school activities and how to help their children's learning at home. This gives them the guidance they need and the encouragement to provide support for their child's education. Parents have the usual range of opportunities through the year to discuss their children's progress with teachers and the informative annual reports give clear indications of targets for improvement. Parents feel valued by the school and many volunteer their skills to help in classes and to support the fundraising activities organised by the School Association.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The continuity of curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage.

(The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all the early learning opportunities for children aged three to five in the nursery and reception classes)

32. Since the last OFSTED inspection, accommodation for children in the early years has been greatly enhanced through the provision of an attractive purpose built nursery. This houses two classes of children who attend for either the morning or afternoon session; while a new mobile classroom provides temporary nursery accommodation for a third group who attend each morning. There are currently two reception classes which are located in the main school building but, as numbers grow during the school year, a third reception class will be established in a mobile unit from January 2002. Children in the reception classes attend full time.
33. The school has been admitting three forms of entry into both nursery and reception since September 1999 because of a very significant growth in pupil numbers. During this time of rapid change, the school has appropriately established a Foundation Stage team of nursery and reception class teachers and support staff; and appointed a co-ordinator to lead this early year's team. The school has also recognised the importance of the Foundation Stage by including the co-ordinator in the senior management team.
34. A sound Foundation Stage policy has been formulated and the curriculum for both nursery and reception children is appropriately organised into the six areas of learning defined in the national guidance for children under five. Staff have worked hard to create attractive and stimulating classroom environments in order to promote first hand experience, exploration and play; and planning is conscientiously undertaken and evaluated. However, the school recognises the need to continue to develop the links between nursery and reception and inspection evidence suggests that this is particularly necessary to secure children's continuous steady progress. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed in the reception classes was good and provision for these children is satisfactory, overall. However, it does not always effectively build on the very good practice which is promoted and delivered by the co-ordinator who works with two of the nursery classes. For example, the introduction of whole-class lessons, group work for particular children and elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies needs to be reviewed to take full account of the different levels of young children's needs. Similarly, the good interventions into children's play activities which are made by the co-ordinator and her nursery nurse, in order to help children to make progress in their learning, are currently not as well established in the reception classes.
35. Recent changes in local authority admission procedures have resulted in both nursery and reception classes admitting younger children than previously and this adds emphasis to the need to address this area for improvement. The school's policy for the Foundation Stage indicates that consideration is to be given to the possibility of staff moving between settings and this would assist the dissemination of good practice.

The quantity and range of equipment for outside play in the nursery and reception classes.

36. In the last OFSTED report, provision for children's physical development was described as limited. Since that time a new nursery has been built and the increase in pupil numbers has enabled the school to enhance its facilities considerably for outside play. These now include three secure outdoor hard play areas and one soft play area. Children in the nursery, and those in the reception classes, have direct access to hard play areas; while those housed in the nursery mobile are required to use a small flight of steps. Teachers' planning for the Foundation Stage appropriately includes that for pupils' physical development and indicates that regular opportunities are provided for children to make use of the outdoor space. All Foundation Stage classes were observed engaging in outside play activities on the second day of the inspection when there was an improvement in the weather.
37. The amount of outdoor play equipment has been improved since the last OFSTED inspection and storage facilities are satisfactory. However, the quantity and range of equipment available to teachers when planning outdoor play have not been sufficiently increased to keep pace with the rise in pupil numbers. There are currently 78 nursery children attending on a part-time basis and a further 38 children in the reception classes. The number of reception children will increase in January 2002 as a new cohort arrives. Foundation Stage teachers make good use of the equipment which is available to them and plan carefully to share its use amongst all classes. However, there is insufficient equipment to give children the best opportunities for effective physical development; and that which is designed to promote large scale movements such as climbing 'over', 'under', 'through', 'around' and 'between' is particularly limited. The current sharing of equipment also imposes restrictions on managing the spontaneous movement of children between indoor and outdoor environments. The school is aware that appropriate provision for outdoor play will need to be made for those reception children who are to be housed in a mobile classroom from January 2002.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38. In order to improve planning and provision for children in the Foundation Stage, the school should address the following issues in its post-inspection plan:
- ensure that work planned for children in the reception classes builds more gradually and effectively on the curriculum offered in the nursery classes, is well matched to their needs and fully reflects the national guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum;
 - improve the quantity and range of equipment for outdoor play which is available to children in the nursery and reception classes.

(paragraphs 34, 35 and 37)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
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	0	12	13	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	46	50	4	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)	39	439
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	26	34	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	32	33	30
	Total	56	57	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	95 (97)	90 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	25
	Girls	32	30	33
	Total	56	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (97)	90 (98)	97 (100)
	National	85 (84)	98 (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	37	27	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	34	35
	Girls	26	25	26
	Total	61	59	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (97)	92 (97)	95 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	35	36
	Girls	26	26	27
	Total	58	61	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (95)	95 (95)	98 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	390
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6.9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	184

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	836,865
Total expenditure	815,911
Expenditure per pupil	1,751
Balance brought forward from previous year	84,315
Balance carried forward to next year	105,269

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

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	478
Number of questionnaires returned	185

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	50	10	1	2
The teaching is good.	58	36	2	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	50	14	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	39	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	44	41	11	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	62	34	2	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	3	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	43	12	5	15