

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORTHENDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northenden, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105434

Headteacher: Mr B P Treanor

Reporting inspector: C D Loizou  
18645

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 196651

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:	Bazley Road Northenden Manchester
Postcode:	M22 4FL
Telephone number:	(0161) 998 4825
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Parry
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> July 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a popular infant and junior school. The school has 238 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven years, which is average in size. Most pupils live close to the school and there is a strong demand for places from outside the area. There is a Nursery class of 30 full-time three-year-old children. The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then, there have been many staff changes, including the recent appointment of two assistant headteachers. The school was awarded Beacon School status for its special educational needs (SEN) provision, its leadership and management and the teaching of mathematics. Twenty-three per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Twenty-two per cent are on the SEN register, which is above average. Less than two per cent of the pupils have a Statement of SEN, which is low compared to most schools. Ten per cent of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. However, none is in the early stages of English language acquisition. Every September and January, the school admits four-year-olds into its Reception class and up to 30 children are admitted every year. Initial assessments of the children when entering the school vary from year to year, but show that their attainment is below the standards expected of children aged four.

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

The school provides a good standard of education. The pupils achieve well and the teaching is good. By the age of 11, standards are in line with those expected in English and science. Mathematics standards are above those expected by the time the pupils leave the school. Standards observed are rising in line with those nationally, although this was not reflected in the 2001 national test results for 11-year-olds, which were lower than in the previous year. Writing standards are in line with those expected by the age of 11, but they could be higher. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The teaching is well planned and is particularly effective in supporting those pupils identified with SEN. The pupils respond very well in lessons and at other times and the staff are particularly effective in improving the pupils' personal development. There are strong links with parents and the local community, who play an important part in the life and work of the school. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards in mathematics are above those expected by the age of 7 and 11.
- The pupils identified with special educational needs, including higher attaining, gifted and talented pupils, are making very good progress.
- The teaching is good and is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements, their attitudes to learning and behaviour.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors.
- The pupils are very well cared for and supported. Consequently, relationships between the pupils and staff are very good, resulting in a positive learning environment.
- Parents think highly of the school. There are very good links with parents and the community.

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

- Writing standards could be higher. There is a limited range of extended and independent writing in most subjects. There are also inconsistencies in the way writing is taught.

*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 July 1997 and has made good progress since then. The headteacher, staff and governors have addressed the issues raised, particularly in improving standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and the quality of the school's curriculum. Assessment

procedures are being used more effectively to monitor and track how well the pupils are doing and teachers' planning is more consistent. Standards in mathematics have improved and are now above average, while improvements in English have been more limited because of the quality and range of pupils' writing. More could be done to improve standards in writing. There is effective monitoring undertaken by the senior staff and governors, combined with strong leadership from the headteacher.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A	C	B
Mathematics	A	A	C	B
Science	C	A*	C	B

**Key**

well above average and in top 5% of schools A\*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

(The "similar" in the table above refers to the percentage of free school meals and not the size of the school.)

After attending the Nursery, the children start in the Reception year with a wide range of ability but standards overall are below those expected for their age. They make good progress because the Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and taught. Consequently, by the end of the Reception year, most of the children are likely to reach the early learning goals for this age group in all of the areas of learning. Test results last year for seven-year-olds show a dip in reading and writing standards, reflecting the low attainment on entry of that particular year group. Inspection evidence indicates that standards have improved. Currently, reading standards are broadly in line with those expected and mathematics standards are higher than expected by the age of seven. However, writing standards remain below expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils' writing is inconsistently formed and there is a general lack of extended and independent writing. There are signs of improvement, particularly in Year 2, as the school has begun to focus on raising writing standards.

By the age of 11, standards in the national tests last year were average compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. This is likely to improve this year with a higher proportion of Year 6 pupils exceeding the expected levels for their age in mathematics. English standards are currently in line with national expectations. Pupils have improved the quality of their writing, though it is still below the level they are capable of achieving. The pupils with SEN throughout the school make very good progress, because they receive very good support, especially from learning support staff who are timetabled to work alongside individuals and groups of pupils with specific learning needs. The school also has an effective policy for teaching higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics. This results in a higher than normal proportion of pupils in Year 6 being targeted as having the potential to reach Level 5 or above. Standards in ICT are above those expected by the age of 11 and this is directly a result of improvements to the ICT curriculum and the much improved resources and training that the staff have undertaken.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to learning, to school and to each other are very good. They try hard and enjoy learning. They apply themselves well, often co-operating with others in groups or with a partner.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standard of behaviour is very good. This is helping to create an orderly and positive learning environment. There have been no exclusions in the last few years.
Personal development and relationships	This is very good. The pupils are independent and show maturity. Relationships are very good across the school. Older pupils support younger ones and particularly enjoy being praised for their efforts.
Attendance	Attendance levels are average and rising in line with the national trend. There is very little unauthorised absence.

## 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 teaching is good overall and ranges between satisfactory to very good. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in all subjects, although more could be done to improve the range and variety of pupils' writing, especially extended writing across a range of subjects. In the Early Years Unit, teaching is particularly effective in developing early language and numeracy skills. In the rest of the school, teachers plan their lessons well. They take account of the progress made in previous lessons and build on the work already done. The teaching of numeracy is effective, enabling the large majority of pupils to achieve higher than expected standards for their age. Information and communication technology is well taught across the school and good use is made of the school's ICT resources. Pupils have regular access to the computer room. Teachers regularly assess how well the pupils are doing and this is informing their planning. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support in lessons and, as a result, make very good progress.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good overall. Teachers provide a good range of practical and relevant tasks, but more attention should be given to improving writing skills. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use ICT to support their learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils receive good support. The pupils with learning difficulties are identified early and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils identified with particular aptitudes in English and mathematics are provided with good and effective support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	A very small number of pupils speak an additional home language. Good assessments of their needs are made and they are supported well in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good and is supported by a broad range of activities in school and outside school times. These include music playing, singing, sport, dance and drama, which make a significant contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. The pupils are also developing a good understanding of life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a very good level of care provided for all the pupils. The school has very good procedures to assess how well the pupils are doing. However, teachers' marking does not always help to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

Parents believe that the school promotes good moral values and supports their children's personal, spiritual and social development well. Regular information about the curriculum and school events are welcomed by parents and the large majority are pleased with the range of work their children do.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. The two assistant headteachers work closely with the headteacher to monitor lessons and pupils' work. The management of the school is clearly focused on improving standards and supporting the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides very good and effective support. They work closely with the school and its staff and have a clear understanding of their role in supporting and improving the school further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good because the governors and staff have established clear priorities in the school's improvement and management plan. The plan is very well conceived through a thorough process, involving audits, monitoring and sharp evaluations of the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	This is good. There are clear targets which are matched to spending priorities. The school manages its finances well, ensuring best value for money when committing resources or spending school funds.

The school's accommodation has improved considerably, especially with the establishment of a dedicated room for ICT. Additional support staff, such as classroom learning assistants and SEN support staff, are being deployed very effectively and make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning

and their progress. The administrative staff are very efficient and always make themselves available to parents and visitors as well as supporting the smooth running of the school and its finances.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and the school provides the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• They are kept well informed and feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	

Parents think highly of the school and are particularly pleased with the way the headteacher and staff are approachable and supportive. They are kept well informed about the progress their children are making. Inspectors agree with all the views expressed by parents and there were no significant aspects of the school's work that parents have expressed concern about. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Relationships with parents and the local community are very good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Standards in mathematics are above those expected by the age of 7 and 11.**

1. Inspection findings indicate that standards are above those expected by the age of 7 and 11. In last year's National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds, standards were above the national average by the age of 7 and average by 11. Compared with similar schools, test results show that the pupils achieved well; standards were well above average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds. Standards are improving, though they vary from year to year reflecting the variations in attainment when the pupils first join the school. Initial assessments of the children when they first join the Reception class show that attainment in mathematics is below that expected of four-year-olds. From an early age, the children in the Nursery and Reception year are taught to recognise numbers on a number line. They learn to use appropriate language to solve simple number problems, for example, to find one or two more or one less than a number. The children make good progress so that by the time they start Year 1 they have achieved the early learning goals for mathematical development. In Year 1, the pupils can count on and back using numbers to 20, 50 and 100. They can find different ways to make ten and the teacher reinforces their understanding by teaching them clapping and rhyming songs. Year 1 pupils, for example, were observed keeping time during a clapping rhythm as they thought of pairs of numbers that add up to 10. In this way, the pupils are able to apply their thinking while trying to keep to the rhythm of the song and, at the same time, improve their knowledge of number facts to 10 because they have to think quickly.
2. In Year 2, the pupils begin to apply their good knowledge of number facts to more complex problems such as multiplication and division. The pupils make good progress, because the teaching is very well planned and detailed. They make good progress, because teachers' planning is very detailed and based on the thorough assessment they make of pupils' progress and achievement. For example, in the lesson observed, the teacher asked pertinent questions that challenged the pupils, enabling them to see the connection between addition and multiplication and between subtraction and division. The learning objectives were based on previous assessments so that there were three different activities planned to match different abilities across the class. The teacher and classroom assistant successfully prompted thought-provoking discussions which enabled the pupils to explain their calculations. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to use their good understanding of number facts to quickly work out multiples of 10 and apply these to work out multiplication problems to 100. Average and below average attaining pupils were being equally challenged as they worked out addition and subtraction facts. They were helped to see the connection between multiplication and division through simple exercises involving repeated addition and subtraction.
3. By Year 6, the pupils are more confident with problem solving and can apply appropriate and efficient methods to calculate and solve real life problems involving money, measures, shapes and data. Pupils were observed working out real life money problems, using multiplication grids and applying their good understanding of decimal fractions when converting pence into pounds. A higher attaining group of pupils were also converting pounds sterling into the new Euros, again using their knowledge of decimals. Throughout the junior classes the pupils have been taught good techniques to apply to number operations involving more than one calculation. Average attaining pupils and those identified with SEN are able to work out, for example, that the difference between £17.05 and £30 can be worked out in a simple series of steps which they can use to work out problems quickly. Year 6 pupils were observed working out problems using steps of 50 pence so that they were able to calculate mentally in stages to arrive at the answer. Other pupils used the same method to work backwards from a fixed amount and were able to use larger steps to reach the same answer quickly. All the pupils in the Year 6 class could quickly use a multiplication grid to help them separate the value of digits in large numbers. In this way they can quickly arrive at a solution to number facts involving large numbers up to 100,000 and also small numbers involving decimal fractions up to three decimal places. By the time the pupils leave the

school they have acquired a good understanding of numbers, shapes and measures and are able to apply this knowledge to a range of mathematical problems presented in different ways.

**The pupils identified with special educational needs, including higher attaining, gifted and talented pupils, are making very good progress.**

4. The school has good and effective systems to identify, assess, and monitor pupils with SEN from an early stage. There is an above average proportion of pupils on the SEN register and approximately half of those who have learning difficulties achieve the standards expected for their age by Year 6 in national tests. All the pupils make good progress, because the school monitors their progress closely and fully implements the requirements of the Code of Practice, ensuring that these pupils receive support in lessons and when withdrawn for additional work with learning support assistants. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The pupils' targets, progress and achievements are shared with parents in order to maximise their support and co-operation. The school also identifies those pupils who have a particular talent in an area or subject or are gifted.
5. Teachers keep very good records of pupils' progress, which help in their planning and monitoring of pupils' work. Learning support for pupils is well targeted in lessons and the school's support assistants are timetabled to work with individuals and groups of pupils who are identified as in need of additional support. This ensures effective support for SEN pupils in class and when they are withdrawn. Sometimes, additional staff sit with a group of pupils, ensuring that they all participate and contribute to the group. This is particularly effective in enabling those pupils identified with learning difficulties to participate in all parts of lessons and class discussions.
6. One of the assistant headteachers is specifically assigned to work alongside talented and gifted pupils and plans work which is particularly challenging for these pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons in junior classes. In one numeracy lesson observed in Year 6, for example, a group of pupils were working at the higher Level 5 and towards Level 6 as they used percentages to convert currencies and calculate multiplication involving decimal fractions to two places. As an extension activity, the pupils were provided with homework requiring them to design a currency conversion table. Homework is regularly provided for all the pupils and it helps them to build on the work they have covered in school as well as helping parents to see what their children are studying in school. For higher attaining, gifted and talented pupils, extension work and homework are provided to complement what has already been covered in lessons.
7. During literacy and numeracy lessons, individual pupils who have learning difficulties receive effective support from learning assistants. In the infant classes, the learning support assistants record how well the pupils respond during class discussions and then share this information with the class teachers. This enables teachers to provide specific work for individuals and groups in future lessons. Throughout the school, individual education plans are reviewed regularly by the SEN co-ordinator together with class teachers. The assistant headteacher responsible for higher attaining pupils also tracks and monitors the progress of these pupils to plan the most appropriate support and work to extend their learning further. In this way, the school regularly reviews its plans and adapts the teaching to meet the needs of all the pupils.

**The teaching is good and is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements, their attitudes to learning and behaviour.**

8. The teaching is good and ranges from satisfactory to very good. The teaching in most of the lessons seen (nearly four out of five) during the inspection were at least good, and, in about one in three lessons, it was very good. Teaching in one in five lessons observed was satisfactory and in no lesson was teaching unsatisfactory. The headteacher and staff ensure that teachers' planning takes account of the needs of pupils according to their age and abilities. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and say that the teachers do well to help them become mature and responsible in a supportive and positive learning environment. The curriculum is planned to match the needs of all year groups and teachers monitor and adapt their planning to take account of pupils' progress and abilities. In addition to the formal curriculum the school's ethos and

purposeful learning environment is helping the pupils to respond well to the teaching. All the teachers and support staff expect pupils to behave well, contribute to class discussions and respond to others with courtesy and respect. This expectation is consistent throughout the school and, as a result, pupils make good progress, show very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.

9. In the Early Years Unit, where the Nursery and Reception children are taught, teachers in both year groups start each lesson with the whole class and adapt their questions carefully to involve all the children. Each class is then divided up for group activities, which include role-play and a good mixture of tabletop or free-choice activities in which the children use large construction toys or creative materials such as clay, dough, paints and plasticine. Teachers make good use of the classroom assistants to support each group before coming together as a class for the plenary session. The children respond very well during class and group discussions. They wait their turn and put up their hands to answer questions. There is a busy and purposeful working environment which enables the children to improve and develop their skills and understanding in all areas of learning. In the Nursery for example, the children are encouraged to think about letter sounds and then, using good phonic techniques, the teacher improves their understanding of letters in an enjoyable and relaxed learning environment. In both the Reception class and Nursery, the children are making good progress in developing their language skills, because the teaching primarily focuses on stories, books and the use of language. In this way, the children learn to follow stories and begin to use narrative in role-play when acting parts of stories or nursery rhymes. They enjoy co-operating with others and are encouraged to support and share resources with partners or other children in their group.
  
10. In a very good physical education lesson, Year 5 pupils made very good progress in developing gymnastic sequences. The teacher was able to involve all the pupils, asking them to co-operate and support each other. She used excellent techniques to ensure that the pupils understood what was expected. Her high expectations, clear delivery and very good planning resulted in very well behaved and responsive pupils who tried hard to improve their individual performances. In a very good art and design lesson, Year 4 pupils thoroughly enjoyed looking at a professionally made sketchbook brought in by their teacher. This inspired them to produce a "textured board" for which they used a variety of materials to represent different landmarks from around the school. Pupils had photographed different locations which they used as a stimulus for their art and design topic. Pupils demonstrated a high degree of concentration and were inspired by the work of another artist. The high expectations and very good preparation work organised by their teacher resulted in some very good work and behaviour which was conducive to an effective learning experience for all the pupils. In the infant classes, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught to respect each other's work and to listen to other pupils as they explain their ideas or read out their work. In a good Year 1 English lesson, for example, the teacher used the pupils' writing well to illustrate good examples of narrative writing. The pupils responded with enthusiasm because they enjoyed drawing "speech bubbles" around their writing and watched as the teacher read out some good examples to demonstrate good spelling and sentence structure. In a good Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher demonstrated clearly the links between multiplication and division. Overall, her expectations are high and she regularly offers praise and encouragement to the pupils, which have the effect of motivating and encouraging them to work hard and do their best. Consequently, this particular group of Year 2 pupils have made considerable progress in their mathematics this year with the majority in one to reach or exceed the standards expected for their age.

**The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors.**

11. The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. He is an experienced headteacher who is highly valued by the parents, admired by his pupils and respected by his staff. This accounts for the popularity of the school and its good reputation in the community. The headteacher and governors have re-structured the senior management team since the recent appointment of two assistant headteachers to replace the previous deputy headteacher. This has led to improved and effective monitoring, helping the school to be clear about how well the pupils are doing and how well the teachers teach. This has also involved the staff who lead subjects of

the curriculum or aspects of the school. There is a good balance of expertise amongst the staff and their good subject knowledge enables them to review the impact each subject is having on the pupils' achievements and progress. The headteacher, staff and governors have undertaken a school-wide evaluation with the focus being on improvement. This has given a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Parents are pleased with the personal contribution the headteacher has made in establishing the school's good reputation for achievement and rising standards. All of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, pull together as a team and this is effective in developing a strong sense of purpose and self-worth amongst pupils and parents. The positive and supportive ethos which is encouraged and nurtured by the headteacher and staff is a characteristic of the school which the parents are very pleased with.

12. The issues raised from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. This has included a thorough review of the school's assessment systems and curriculum planning. As a result, standards in ICT, art and design, design and technology and religious education have improved. Pupil assessments are analysed and collated by the headteacher and senior staff and these help teachers plan lessons that are better matched to the pupils' needs and set accurate attainment targets.
13. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. They are provided with regular reports by the senior staff and headteacher. This helps the governors to monitor the work of the school along with the headteacher and subject leaders, giving them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making. The resources of the school are good overall. They are well used and easily accessible. In particular, the resources for ICT have been improved so that all the pupils have regular access to computers and new technologies, such as the Internet and electronic mailing facilities.
14. Subject leaders draw up action plans. They monitor and support staff well in their respective subjects and areas of responsibility. The assistant headteachers and subject leaders are very well supported by the headteacher and, together, they provide an effective curriculum supported by good quality professional development programmes for the staff. The deployment of classroom learning assistants has been successful in helping them to provide highly skilled intervention programmes for teaching individuals and groups of pupils.
15. Financial planning is good and the budget is used well. The school development and strategic improvement plan is very well set out, showing priorities for further improvement. These priorities have been arrived at through careful audits, reviews and monitoring, led by the headteacher and guided by local and national initiatives. The headteacher and governors, together with the senior staff set appropriate targets for improvement which are costed, with clear terms of reference for the governors and staff to be able to measure how well each area is progressing. In this way the school makes efficient use of its limited funds, ensuring that spending provides value for money. This is very much driven by the headteacher's determination to provide high quality resources for the pupils in an educational environment where second best will not do.

**The pupils are very well cared for and supported. Consequently, relationships between the pupils and staff are very good, resulting in a positive learning environment.**

16. The school successfully promotes the pupils' personal development and ensures that the pupils are well cared for, monitored and supported. Provision for this is very good. Relationships across the school are very good and there is a positive working environment throughout. The school has a strong social moral code that is respected by both pupils and staff and respected by parents and the community. Teachers and learning support assistants, with their sensitive and caring attitude towards the pupils, provide very good role models. The procedures for ensuring the welfare of pupils are very good and the school has been successful in maintaining this since the last inspection. All the pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum and teachers and support staff plan activities that involve and encourage their full participation. The staff are very successful in improving the confidence of those pupils who would not otherwise participate in class

discussions. Teachers are also effective in improving the pupils' self-esteem and developing good speaking and listening skills.

17. In assemblies, the pupils enjoy celebrating their achievements and participating in the weekly class assemblies. For instance, Year 4 presented their history topic to the school and parents in one assembly observed during the inspection. They are studying the Second World War and enjoyed sharing their work by reading out accounts of real life experiences, as recorded by local members of the community during the war. School assemblies have a strong moral theme which is helping the pupils to relate to familiar situations in their own lives and apply these in school. The pupils enjoy sharing their weekend sporting activities with others in the school. Health education and drugs awareness are well taught and dealt with sensitively. The school nurse is often invited to talk to pupils or prepare work for them as part of the school's health education programme.
18. Relationships are very good. Older pupils support younger ones during reading sessions or when using computers in the ICT room. The school uses a very good "buddy system", where older pupils help and support others during lunch times and break times. These pupils are called the "playground squad" and they are very good at supporting and helping pupils, particularly younger ones, so that no one is isolated or neglected when playing outside. Computers are well used to enable the pupils to e-mail other groups or pupils from different schools. Access to the Internet opens the wider world to all the pupils. Spiritual and cultural development is enhanced through educational visits, including residential visits where the pupils participate in team building and outdoor adventure activities.

**Parents think highly of the school. There are very good links with parents and the community.**

19. The school is successful in developing a positive and purposeful relationship with parents and its community. The school has gained a good reputation in the community for its high expectations and achievement. In this respect, it has become the focal point of the community. The partnership between the school and its parents is very good and the school enjoys good support from parents. The overall contribution by parents and the impact of parental involvement on the progress and achievements of the pupils are very good.
20. Parents find the staff helpful and approachable. The staff and governors are willing to listen to parents, often inviting their views and opinions and the school considers the issues they raise carefully, responding swiftly to their concerns. The school holds regular workshops for parents so they can share in the work of the school and are then able to contribute towards supporting their children's learning at home and in school. The staff and governors work very hard to develop the links with parents and this is helping to raise the profile of the school in its community.
21. Parents and volunteers from the local community feel welcome in the school. The school encourages parents to play an important part in supporting their children's work at home and this commitment has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The school communicates to parents what is being taught, so that they can help their children with homework. The school offers regular and effective communication with parents by way of newsletters and bulletins, keeping them informed of events in the school.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Writing standards could be higher. There is a limited range of extended and independent writing in most subjects. There are also inconsistencies in the way writing is taught.**

22. The national test results in 2001 for Year 2 indicate that standards in writing were well below the national average. Although the standards reached in the tests for 11-year-olds were average in English, they could be higher. The main reason for lower than expected English results is the

uncertainties in the way that the pupils are taught to write and the inconsistencies in the quality of writing across the school. On the whole, reading standards by the end of Year 6 are higher than in writing and this has been a consistent feature in English over the last few years. The school has rightly focused its attention on raising standards in writing, but, up to now, this has not been sufficient to have made a significant impact on the quality and consistency of writing in the school. Inspection findings reflect these concerns. The analysis of pupils' written work indicates that pupils' writing is in need of further improvement.

23. The inconsistencies in pupils' writing is largely related to the teaching, which is not sufficiently focused on handwriting and spelling. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils' handwriting is not usually joined and is irregular in size. Some of the pupils mix capital letters up with lower case. A substantial amount of pupils' written work across the school shows common spelling errors. For example, infant pupils have misspelt some simple words like "sea" instead of "see" and because they do not always recognise the roots of words or apply simple spelling rules. Some higher attaining pupils misspell words like "shiney" or write "wheit" instead of "with". Junior pupils make some common errors which have remained uncorrected or have not been re-visited. Consequently their spelling has not improved. For example, many pupils write "wolfs" instead of "wolves" and, like infant pupils, they do not always apply spelling rules to common words such as "closeing". Teachers do not always help pupils correct their spellings when they re-draft work and regular mistakes are left unchecked. Spelling rules are not being applied so that, as words like "chimney" are read aloud, they turn out as 'chimeny" in the pupils' writing. By the end of Year 6, writing has matured and handwriting has improved, with more being joined and regularly formed, but the unsatisfactory foundations laid earlier in the school mean that too many common errors remain.
24. Generally, the pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to write for a range of purposes and to use or experience different styles of writing. The lack of variety in pupils' writing results from this aspect of their work being neglected in their early years. The school has begun some remedial work by extending the timetable to allow for pupils to do a greater range of writing and spend time on re-drafting and improving their written work. In time, this should have an effect on the quality and range of writing so that the pupils will learn to write for different audiences as well as distinguish between drafting and properly formed writing. One of the principal weaknesses in the teaching of writing up to now has been the over-emphasis on the use of writing frames and work sheets. From an early age, the pupils have been used to using worksheets to fill in boxes, add letters to words or fill in missing words in text as part of what is termed cloze procedure. In science, history and geography topics for example, the pupils have either copied writing from the board or a workbook or have filled in missing spaces on a worksheet. They have had little opportunity to write their own accounts or to explain their ideas in the form of extended writing.
25. Note taking is rare and, even where this is done, the pupils are not always required to write up their notes or engage in demanding re-drafting. In history work, there is very little empathetic writing, where the pupils can engage with real characters from the past and write their own accounts of what it must have been like to share these characters' experiences. Teachers have begun to teach narrative writing, reflecting the recent initiative to raise standards across the school. However, there is still inconsistency in practice and teachers have varying expectations. Consequently, pupils do not write with confidence or engage in extended forms of writing, sufficiently. A general scrutiny of pupils' written work reveals a general lack of meaningful writing activities designed to improve the way the pupils plan and record stories and factual accounts, or experience poetry and play scripts.



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

**In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:**

### **Improve writing standards by:**

- using a consistent writing policy which makes it clear how writing is going to be taught from the Foundation Stage through to Year 6;
- providing more opportunities for the pupils to write independently on subjects, topics and stories that are interesting and important to them;
- broadening the range of writing in all subjects, so that the pupils experience and appreciate a variety of forms of writing designed to extend their thinking and help them derive pleasure from writing;
- teaching spelling rules more effectively throughout the school, so that pupils use the roots of words, spelling patterns and word shapes to improve their spelling;
- applying more rigorous attention to handwriting, spelling and punctuation when marking the pupils' work.

*(Paragraphs: 22-25)*

## **OTHER LESS SERIOUS AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Ensure that the pupils' annual progress and achievement reports to parents include specific reference to religious education as a discrete subject. There should also be particular reference to the progress and achievement of the individual pupil and not a general commentary on the progress of the pupils as a year group.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	9	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	32	47	21	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 five 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)	30	238
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	47

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	10	12	14
	Total	23	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (79)	83 (88)	97 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	26	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (83)	90 (79)	90 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	15	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	16
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	27	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (89)	76 (86)	94 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	16
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	24	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (63)	79 (71)	94 (79)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	18
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	189
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	30

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	14

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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)	1
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

### **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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	524,967
Total expenditure	512,638
Expenditure per pupil	2,118
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,066
Balance carried forward to next year	16,395

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	31

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	10	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	84	13	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	84	10	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	48	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	84	13	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	71	26	0	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	23	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65	32	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	90	10	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	87	13	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	52	10	0	3

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents have also commented on how much they respect the school and the staff. They have also indicated that the school has a good reputation in the area for standards and this is primarily the reason why they choose to send their children to the school.