

INSPECTION REPORT

MARTINS WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117285

Headteacher: Mr T Evans

Reporting inspector: Katharine Halifax
25439

Dates of inspection: 1 and 2 July 2002

Inspection number: 196794

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 years

Gender of pupils: mixed

School address: Mildmay Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Heraty

Date of previous inspection: 20 May 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area of diverse council, shared and private housing with a significant number of pupils coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school is sited on the edge of the ward, with many pupils from out of area. An increasing number are from social priority housing. With 393 pupils on roll, it is larger than most primary schools. There are more boys than girls. This is especially so in the reception classes and in Years 3 and 5. The nursery caters for 60 children part time. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin with ten percent of the school population being of black Caribbean, Pakistani or mixed heritage. Thirty of these pupils receive specialist support. Eight pupils speak English as an additional language, of these five are at the early stages. This is higher than most schools. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is broadly average. At 108, the number of pupils on the register for pupils with special educational needs is higher than average. Almost half have speech or communication needs. Of the others, over half have moderate learning needs, an increasing number have emotional and behavioural needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. This number is low. A significant number of pupils join during the school year, some as a result of new house building, others as transfers following disputes at previous schools. The school is experiencing a period of rapid growth. The number on role has increased by 25 percent since the last inspection and is set to increase further. Assessment on entry to the school shows that attainment is below that expected of children of this age, especially in literacy. On leaving the school, though pupils transfer to a number of schools, the majority choose Nobel School.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Very good teaching has resulted in improved standards. Achievement is good and improving rapidly in all age groups. Pupils are offered a wide range of learning opportunities with very good provision being made for their personal development. Parents think well of the school. Leadership is very strong; the headteacher has built a very effective team. Though costs for educating each pupil are high for a school of this type, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards have improved significantly over the last 18 months, particularly in mathematics, science and information and communication technology where they are above those expected of pupils of this age.
- The leadership and vision of the headteacher has brought about impressive change in a very short time.
- Teaching is very good and is reflected in the rate at which pupils learn.
- Pupils' have a very good attitude to school and behave very well. This creates a very good climate for learning.
- Very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development allows them to make very good progress in their personal growth.
- Pupils of all levels of attainment and backgrounds are valued and helped to achieve.

What could be improved

- Pupils' rates of attendance are not as high as they should be.
- The governing body needs to introduce ways to measure the effectiveness of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in May 1997. Rapid improvement has taken place over the last eighteen months under the leadership of the new headteacher. All the key issues have been fully addressed. Provision for children in the reception classes is now very good. Suitable programmes have been introduced in history, geography, design and technology and in information and communication technology. This has led to improved standards in these subjects. Results in national tests have shown very good improvement, especially by the end of

Year 2 and in mathematics. The role of subject managers has developed very well. Monitoring of the curriculum, classroom practice and resources has resulted in marked improvement in the quality of teaching which is reflected in pupils' achievements. Though the rate of unauthorised absence has been reduced and attendance rates are similar to the last inspection, pupils' attendance has not kept pace with the national trend. The appointment of the dynamic headteacher has led to outstanding improvement in the accommodation, in resources, in pupils' attitudes and behaviour and in staff morale. Staff now have a shared vision for the work of the school and the enthusiasm and skill to help the school continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Children in the foundation stage make very good progress. By the time they leave reception, the majority achieve the expected level in all areas of learning. This demonstrates especially good progress in language and communication because children start from a low base. Pupils of all levels of attainment in the other two age groups achieve well because they are set exacting targets each half term in English and mathematics which speed their rate of progress. Since the last inspection, results in national tests in writing and mathematics for Year 2 declined but are now showing significant improvement. Evidence gathered during the inspection suggests standards are now close to those expected in reading and writing and above those expected in mathematics. Results for pupils in Year 6 have followed the national trend in English and science. In mathematics, standards are improving at a far greater rate than the national trend in both age groups. The 2002 test results have once again shown marked improvement, with a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum levels. Despite the number of pupils entering the school during the course of the year, the challenging targets set for 2002 have been exceeded. Further demanding targets have been agreed for the next two years. Pupils' performance in information and communication technology and in music is above that expected in all age groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy attending school and take full advantage of all the activities on offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good overall. Most pupils are extremely well behaved in lessons, at break and lunchtimes and when on visits out of school. A small number need a lot of support from staff to help them behave appropriately.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Pupils demonstrate increased maturity in response to the trust placed in them.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Whilst there has been a decline in unauthorised absence, attendance rates are below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

An analysis of pupils' work, lessons observed in the inspection and a rapid improvement in standards demonstrate the quality of teaching is very good. Teaching was good or better in all but two lessons and very good or outstanding in over one half of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good. In addition, all teachers are very confident in teaching literacy and numeracy, providing very good opportunities for pupils to improve these skills in other subjects. As a result pupils make very good progress in these areas. Teachers plan their work meticulously, presenting work that motivates and challenges the full attainment range including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those who achieve highly. Pupils make very good gains in the knowledge and skills they acquire because of skilled teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Provision for children in the foundation stage is very good, as is the provision for music in all age groups. The curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is enriched by the teaching of French.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There is a clear commitment to include all pupils in all activities regardless of attainment. Individual education plans are of a good standard and contribute to pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. All staff make sure new vocabulary and instructions are carefully explained, so pupils understand what is expected of them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision enables pupils to make very good improvement in their social skills. Pupils are encouraged to have respect for the beliefs of others and are well prepared to take their place in a multi-racial society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff are very caring and supportive of pupils. They know pupils and their families well and treat them as individuals. Links with parents are good and contribute to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has inspired a commitment to learning and improvement by all who work at the school. He leads by example and has created a high performing team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school. However, many are new to the role, but nevertheless have the desire to improve. Following an audit of their skills, they recognise they need to do more in monitoring the effectiveness of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. Rigorous monitoring in classrooms by senior staff has resulted in notable improvement in the quality of teaching and improved standards. Though the head and senior teachers are very accurate in their analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development, the governors are not quite so clear.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Staff are deployed effectively. Changes to the accommodation have resulted in a quality learning environment that has contributed to improved standards, especially in information and communication technology. However, the nursery accommodation is cramped. The principles of best value are applied very well, especially through consultation with staff, parents and governors and in the challenge and commitment to achieve the highest standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards pupils achieve. • The sense of community within the school. • The attitudes and values the school promotes. • All pupils are valued regardless of ability or background. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of challenge for more able pupils. • The range of out of school activities. • The amount of work their child is expected to do at home.

The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by the parents. In response to their concerns, the amount of homework given is suitable for this age of pupils and supports work done in class. The work provided is challenging to pupils of all levels of attainment. Staff provide a good range of out of school activities including sport and music clubs, visits to places of educational interest and residential experiences, all of which enrich pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards have improved significantly over the last 18 months, particularly in mathematics, science and information and communication technology where they are above those expected of pupils of this age.

1. Provision for young children in the foundation stage is now of a high quality despite the limits of the accommodation. Very good improvement has been made in the reception class where children now receive the same quality of provision as those in the nursery class. Children make very good progress with the majority achieving the early learning goals. Staff are committed to activities which stimulate the imagination and creative play whilst covering the required areas of learning.
2. Achievement in English is good in all age groups. All aspects of English have been given high priority and this is beginning to pay dividends. The investment in staff training and resources has resulted in the National Literacy Strategy being adopted very well and improved standards. Teachers are skilled in all aspects of the subject and plan for pupils to use their knowledge in other subjects. Speaking and listening is promoted very effectively. From the youngest class, pupils are expected to work in pairs or as part of a group discussing their ideas and reasoning their answers. By Year 6 pupils debate issues of importance to them, including 'Do circuses still need animals in their acts?' In reading, pupils are introduced to a very wide range of texts and are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers. As a result, pupils enjoy reading, by Year 6 most are fluent readers who express their preference of authors and use the library effectively. Pupils improve their reading in other subjects, for example, reading work sheets and finding information from a range of sources in history. Teachers have improved pupils' confidence and enthusiasm for writing by providing exciting and relevant activities. They have helped those who are less confident structure their writing. Pupils are not afraid to write at length, even though their spelling is imaginative. Examples of a wide range of writing were seen, such as poems, reports, biographies and diaries. As pupils have become more confident in writing teachers are now concentrating on improving handwriting and spelling. The majority of pupils in Year 2 now reach the expected level. Results in the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, despite having taken 11 pupils during the last year, have exceeded the school's target with the number of pupils attaining the higher level 5 having increased significantly.
3. Standards in mathematics are well above those expected by the end of Year 6. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted very effectively, especially in mental and oral mathematics. Staff surround pupils with numeracy, even the floors are used for display. For example, the floor in Year 1 classrooms is covered with flowers with questions such as 'How many flowers have less than 8 petals?' Teachers expect pupils to use their skills in other subjects, for instance when producing scatter graphs in science. Standards in science are good. The good results of 2001 have been maintained in 2002 with almost a half of pupils attaining higher level 5.
4. Standards in information and communication technology have shown remarkable improvement turning from an area of weakness to a strength. The vision of the headteacher and the high investment in resources through the provision of a computer suite for use by a full class, and a small suite for group work have given pupils very good access to the machines. Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment are very confident in using new technology. They use computers in most subjects for

word processing and research, and to improve the appearance and add to the content of their work. Pupils become increasingly familiar using new technology as a method of control. Pupils in Year 6 were fascinated and amazed when they were able to use the technology to programme and control a traffic light sequence.

5. Provision in music has resulted in high standards in musical performance. Pupils of all ages perform to a high standard in school productions such as 'Joseph' and a musical version of Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', where pupils sing tunefully, with expression and with a good sense of rhythm and pitch. They join in at the appropriate time, harmonising well and taking account of others. In addition the main characters perform intricate dance routines. Many pupils have played at a concert hall in Stevenage, and the recorder ensemble has performed at Westminster Hall in London. Pupils have compiled a CD 'Jazz etc' which includes accomplished renditions by recorder groups, the band, the choir, clarinet, guitar, violin and drum soloists playing a very wide range of music from Ceremonial March, Gavotte, Ragtime and Eidelweiss. An appreciation of a very wide range of music is fostered through the planned programme and through music played on entry and egress to assembly.

The leadership and vision of the headteacher has brought about impressive change in a very short time.

6. The leadership provided by the charismatic headteacher is very effective. The headship has changed since the last inspection and impressive progress has been made in the time he has been in post. He has provided the school with clarity of vision, direction and purpose creating a thoroughly professional establishment. His ability to 'make things happen', to listen, communicate and support staff has led to much improved morale and the confidence to aspire to new heights. Striking changes to the fabric of the building, such as the new entrance hall, have resulted in improved pride and enthusiasm from staff and pupils alike. The recently adopted motto 'Inspiring an ambition to learn' has become a source of encouragement to all.
7. The headteacher has created a more open management structure and has made some very effective senior teacher appointments from within the school and from outside. Professional development is valued and encouraged and this has allowed internal appointments to rise to their responsibilities. Senior teachers are enlightened, knowledgeable practitioners who lead by example and who are contributing significantly to improved standards. The headteacher has high expectations yet believes in setting realistic but challenging targets so staff and pupils are not unduly stressed yet have a goal. He has successfully nurtured a feeling of worth and ambition for what can be achieved. Staff hold the headteacher in high esteem, reporting he 'inspires confidence', helps them to 'reach for the stars' and that he 'sees solutions not problems'.
8. Staff are now deployed effectively and the appointment of an additional teacher to provide management time for subject co-ordinators has resulted in significant improvement in the provision and in standards. In addition, on the rare occasions when staff are absent pupils are taught by a teacher who knows them well and who is able to inspire them to achieve to the best of their ability. The employment of a technician for information and communication technology half a day each week ensures the computers are always in working order and staff time is not wasted.
9. The headteacher investigates all possible sources of income and is imaginative in his use of the budget. He has had the courage and vision to spend large reserves to

provide a quality learning environment. The provision of two computer suites has led to rapidly improved standards in information and communication technology, turning what was a weakness into a strength of the school. The addition of the library is contributing to standards in reading, in pupils' research skills and in their personal development. Though exceptionally high levels of vandalism resulted in a deficit budget, the headteacher has skilfully turned this round with reserves planned by end of the financial year.

10. Much of the recent success of the school has been facilitated by the headteacher. The monitoring of classroom practice and self evaluation have resulted in marked improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and its influence on standards.

Teaching is very good and is reflected in the rate at which pupils learn.

11. The quality of teaching has shown very good improvement since the last inspection because of monitoring in classrooms, staff development and a number of staff changes. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this inspection in contrast to 12 percent at the time of the last inspection. In addition, a much higher percentage of good and very good teaching was observed. Teachers have a passion for their work, they want to improve, readily undertaking research and keeping abreast of educational developments. Teachers are now very confident in all the subjects they teach. This is especially evident in information and communication technology and in the foundation stage. Two members of staff are lead teachers for the local education authority, one in literacy and one in numeracy.
12. Planning is thorough. All plans are clear about the knowledge and skills pupils will be expected to gain during the course of the lesson. Teachers plan to a common format which clearly identifies how all abilities will be challenged and how achievement will be recorded, for example, 'nursery nurse to note children who count to 6 and those who recognise numbers to 6'. This information is then used when planning the next stage of pupils' learning. Topics are chosen to match and appeal to the age and interest of the class. This was seen when pupils in Year 1 compared the common theme of 'celebrations' in poetry, listening to poems reflecting the festivals of a number of cultures represented in their class.
13. Teachers have established good working practices so pupils are familiar with routines. This was seen in the nursery class when, on entering the room, children went immediately to a board displaying their name and photograph which they then placed in a special area to indicate which children are present. Careful thought has been given to the layout of classrooms to allow pupils to take responsibility for their equipment and to have resources close to hand so no time is lost. Dictionaries and thesaurus are readily available so pupils can check their spelling or look for imaginative words to make their writing more interesting.
14. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of the work they produce. Pupils are expected to give of their best at all times. Teachers challenge pupils to 'Put your thinking head on' and pupils chuckle, responding very well to the challenge. This was so in a Year 2 mathematics lesson when a pupil reasoned how she worked out the number of 8p pencils she could buy with four 10 pence coins, explaining articulately that she would give 2p change for each 10p coin. The resulting change would then be just right for her to buy her a further pencil. Teachers expect all pupils to take a full part in the lesson and plan activities to keep them involved. For example, in a lesson in the reception class, children maintained concentration during work on the 'un' sound by writing words ending in 'un' on their dry-wipe boards. All children

were totally immersed in the task, desperately trying to be the first to show their contribution of 'gun', 'bun' or 'sun' to their teacher.

15. All staff use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding and further their learning. Staff use 'open questions' such as 'why?' and 'how?' rather than those requiring one word responses so pupils have to think about their answer and improve their speech as they have to reason. This was seen in a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson when pupils had to explain their answers for controlling a traffic light sequence. Most lessons are conducted at a very good pace and with a sense of urgency to maintain pupils' interest. Activities such as quick oral work at the start of lessons, for example, counting in 5s by 'flashing hands' in mathematics have pupils fired up and keen to go. Some teachers use timers and 'time targeting' effectively. Pupils are thus motivated by having a set time to complete their work and work industriously to produce a good volume of work.
16. Teachers plan for pupils to use their basic skills in other subjects. As a result pupils apply their knowledge well and improve their rate of progress. Pupils improved their speaking and listening in a Year 5 science lesson when they worked in pairs planning an investigation to test the conditions required for a seed to germinate. Taking turns to speak, they listened to each other and made sensible contributions about the variables. Younger pupils applied their knowledge of mathematics when considering healthy eating. From a list of 120 items they considered how many different meals they could make if they were only allowed three items each day. Older pupils used their knowledge of spreadsheets and computer skills to help them calculate the amount of pocket money they would receive each month and in a year knowing the weekly amount. Pupils in Year 6 improved their writing and computer skills in the production of 'Evans Express', the newspaper reporting events in the life of the school. Using desk top publishing they write to a good standard, illustrating their work using art and image programs when, for example, deciding how to illustrate the amount raised selling cakes for Water Aid.
17. Staff are imaginative in the activities they provide and in their displays. Children in the foundation stage made outstanding gains in language and communication, numeracy, personal and social development, physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world as they followed a plan negotiating a maze to get to the 'lollipop shop'. They went through a tunnel, over a 'boulder' and between windbreaks before asking the 'shop assistant' for their choice of lollipop and handing over their money. Cloakrooms are sited in classrooms and can soon look untidy. To prevent this teachers have adopted a cloakroom theme such as 'the jungle' or 'journeys'. One particularly successful room is decked out as a space station with model rockets, high quality photographs and good examples of pupils' writing. Anxious to keep their 'space station' immaculate, pupils conscientiously hang up their 'space suits' and place their 'moon boots' in the shoe rack before starting lessons.
18. Parents responding to the questionnaire and attending the meeting expressed concern at the amount of homework pupils receive. Homework is used effectively to support work in class and to prepare new topics. This was seen clearly in Year 4 English lessons, where for homework, pupils had been asked to complete an alphabet of animals, giving as many examples as possible for each letter. The majority arrived armed with copious lists in preparation for a lesson on alliteration. Pupils used their homework well in their amusing poems contributing 'a greasy, grazing goat growling' and an 'energetic, educated elephant electing'.

Pupils' have a very good attitude to school and behave very well. This creates a very

good climate for learning.

19. There has been good improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection. Parents report their children are enthusiastic about school. This was born out during the inspection. They are happy and lively, wearing their uniforms with dignity and taking pride in belonging to the school community. Pupils are delighted with the new logo and were observed replicating this on their own books and equipment during their leisure time. They are staggered by the many changes to the fabric of the school over the past eighteen months, talking in reverent tones about opportunities to use the new library, computer suites and entrance hall. Pupils are keen to discuss their work with visitors, as was the case when they demonstrated to inspectors how they had compiled a CD-ROM during their residential experience, and worked with a poet to produce a CD-ROM with examples of their art and writing. Pupils of all ages and abilities have produced a very good volume of neatly presented and well-illustrated work during the past year.
20. In lessons, pupils are eager to demonstrate their knowledge by answering questions and contributing to discussions. Nevertheless, they take their turn, listening politely to others in the group and showing respect for the opinions of others. Pupils of all ages and abilities respond particularly well to the numerous opportunities to work in pairs or small groups. They work collaboratively making suggestions, supporting and showing regard for others as when discussing and writing about global warming in English lessons.
21. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and on the playground is very good. Good behaviour does not come naturally to some pupils. An increasing number transfer to the school because of difficulties at their previous schools. However, because of high expectations and a consistent approach by all teachers in using the reward system, pupils want to improve and are proud to receive a green card or have their name entered in the Gold Book. The presentation of bronze, silver and gold certificates in school assemblies is celebrated by all. In order to meet the needs of pupils who have a history of challenging behaviour, many of whom are transfers, a support assistant has been trained to work alongside such pupils to improve their behaviour and prevent exclusion. This has been extremely successful with almost all of those at risk improving their behaviour well. The three fixed term exclusions recorded in the inspection data led to the one permanent exclusion. Staff are skilled at anticipating problems. Through suitable praise and encouragement pupils who have previously been admonished improve their behaviour at a very good rate alongside their confidence and self-esteem.
22. Pupils care for each other. Pupils of different ages and ethnic backgrounds play readily together, racial harmony pervades. All ages enjoy taking responsibility, returning their library books using the electronic scanner, looking after equipment and making choices. Pupils who are members of the School Council undertake their duties conscientiously seeking the views of their classmates and reporting back.

Very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development allows them to make very good progress in their personal development.

23. Good improvement has been made to the provision since the last inspection when this aspect was judged to be good.
24. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Staff care about their pupils and staff have a determination to make the school the best it can be. They have been

successful in creating a purposeful environment where everyone is valued so pupils in turn respect others. Teachers extend the school motto 'inspiring an ambition to learn' by encouraging pupils to consider "Who inspires you?" making reference to inspirational people such as Stephen Hawkin and Tim Henman, then to reflect on places, books and music which make them feel uplifted. Staff create a sense of wonder through visits to special places such as Martin's Wood to experience the tranquillity and beauty of the bluebells. Teachers use their voices skilfully to create a sense of expectation. This was so in one assembly when pupils become enthralled as the teacher explained her admiration for work of Durer. She used hushed tones when talking about his work 'hands in prayer' causing pupils to lean forward to share in her pleasure. Assemblies and acts of worship contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual development. Staff give pupils time to consider feelings and emotions and how this might help others. This was demonstrated well as part of an act of worship when pupils were asked what they would give up to make someone happy. Pupils of all ages came up with a number of ideas including forfeiting the spare bottle of milk or giving the most comfortable seat to someone else. Pupils are helped to have an awareness of the beliefs of major faiths and those that affect them directly. For example, amongst other places of worship, pupils have visited Kingdom Hall in order to appreciate the beliefs of some members of the school. Each week, the headteacher holds a non-religious assembly which the Jehovah's Witnesses join, so all pupils come together as a community.

25. Pupils' moral development is promoted very successfully. Relationships with adults and between pupils are very good. There is mutual respect. Pupils have and staff have, together, drawn up an agreed Code of Conduct which is promoted consistently by all working at the school. Pupils who have difficulty controlling their behaviour are helped to do so by consistent use of the reward system. They are helped to consider the options open to them, recognising if they continue to behave inappropriately they will have to accept the consequence associated with yellow and red cards. If they choose to behave sensibly, then they have access to all activities. This has resulted in pupils responding in a very mature way and making marked improvement in their behaviour. Pupils are helped to recognise the need for rules particularly through sport. Teams represent the school in almost all local leagues and sporting competitions, learning to play fair and to be gracious in victory or defeat. Pupils are encouraged to consider conservation of the world's resources. In lessons, they consider issues such as repairing and recycling in order to protect the environment. Pupils are conscious of the needs of others, collecting for numerous charities such as the Red Cross, shoe-boxes for Romania, Marie Curie and have held a cake stall for Water Aid.
26. Provision for pupils' social development is equally good. Staff are successful in fostering a sense of community. This was particularly so in the production of a Jubilee Mosaic illustrating the many facets of school life. All pupils contributed their thoughts on the design and all inserted at least one tile. Pupils take delight in identifying their contribution to visitors. Pupils are encouraged to work together in pairs and in small groups and take account of the needs of others. As a result they recognise and respect differences in others. Pupils of all ages become aware of the democratic process through elections for members of the School Council. An awareness of the need to look after their bodies is fostered through health education where pupils consider the need to eat healthily and to be aware of substance misuse. Older pupils are taught basic first aid, with the first aid club having produced two teams in national finals. Residential experiences for older pupils provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn to live together and to improve their personal skills. Adventurous activities, such as abseiling and rock climbing, test pupils' courage and determination,

resulting in a strong sense of achievement. Pupils of all ages are given responsibilities around school such as taking registers to the office and helping give out equipment. Older pupils help in the nursery sorting out books to take home. In addition to giving pupils responsibility, this has been successful for older pupils who have experienced difficulties relating to others or with their reading. Pupils of all ages grow in confidence through the chance to perform on a public stage in the many concerts and shows produced by the school.

27. Pupils extend their cultural awareness very well. There has been very good improvement in opportunities to appreciate art, music and literature from beyond the Western world. This is aided by a link with Yunshan Primary School in China following a visit by two members of staff. In addition to an increased awareness of Chinese painting and musical instruments, pupils have an understanding of the daily routines of Chinese children of a similar age. An appreciation of the cultural heritage of the area is promoted through studies such as of the Old Town, where pupils compare the design and function of buildings to those of the new area. In art, music and literature, pupils begin to appreciate and work in the style of many artists, composers and musicians. Older pupils develop an awareness of life in France through their French lessons. A visit by Russian cosmonauts proved effective as pupils learned about living conditions in space. The diverse values and traditions of the rich cultural mix of the school are readily recognised and celebrated. In addition to Christian festivals, pupils are familiar with Diwali, Eid and Purim amongst others. This is reflected in their artwork where pupils have woven Islamic prayer mats. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge of other faiths well, for instance, when looking at the 'Blue Mosque' in art, when one pupil observed "Muslims believe Allah made all living things so Islamic art is geometric because it's wrong to try to copy the work of Allah". Children in the nursery have celebrated Rakhfa Bandhan, making Rakhi bead bracelets to give to family and friends.

Pupils of all levels of attainment and backgrounds are valued and helped to achieve.

28. Teachers know their pupils and families very well. They are aware of what is happening that could affect pupils learning. Lessons are planned meticulously, clearly identifying the support that may be needed because of physical, learning or behavioural needs. All pupils are fully included in all lessons.
29. Though the school has not been able to appoint a specialist from the local authority to support pupils who have English as an additional language, overview by the manager for special educational needs has allowed the provision for these pupils to be monitored. The role is to be developed further at the start of the new school year. All staff identify any new vocabulary in their planning and communicate this to pupils at the start of each lesson, taking care to explain what is meant, and where necessary, showing photographs or illustrations to aid understanding. Instructions are clear with staff checking their pupils understand. As a result, pupils are fully aware of what is expected of them and learn well.
30. Teachers are very aware of imbalance of boys and girls in some age groups and make sure that all are given equal chance to answer questions and take part in activities including sport, clubs and assemblies. This was clearly seen in an assembly led by the headteacher when, as part of his message, he invited pupils to 'model' his range of ties. The head made sure the models included boys and girls of different ages and that they represented the ethnic mix of the school.
31. Staff provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. All pupils

with special educational needs have individual learning plans. Targets within the plans are focused and easily measurable, covering numeracy, literacy and social development. Teachers are familiar with individual targets, making reference to them in their teaching reminding pupils of their targets such as 'recognising numbers to 10', or 'making one oral contribution in each lesson'. This contributes significantly to pupils' progress. Staff ensure those with physical needs are seated in the correct position, and have the correct equipment, for example, writing slopes so they are not distracted by being uncomfortable. Classroom support staff are used productively for individual and small group work to accelerate learning. All provide a good example of how to behave appropriately, modelling expected behaviours such as taking turns and sitting patiently. They give confidence, instructing pupils rather than doing the activity for them. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where pupils were working with spreadsheets using computers. When one pupil with special needs declared he was 'stuck', the assistant encouraged him to review what he knew and to consider what he thought he should do next. As a result, the pupil worked his way logically through the programme and hugged himself with glee as he achieved the desired result.

32. Higher attaining pupils are set additional challenging tasks as was the case in a Year 4 science lesson when pupils received a letter from a company asking how to make plants grow more quickly. Pupils rose to the challenge, drawing on their knowledge of germination to decide the plant needed to be kept in the light, near a radiator and fed and watered regularly. Pupils who are very high achievers, where appropriate, work alongside pupils in other year groups, for example, two children in reception take part in group reading with pupils in Year 1 because their reading is at a much higher level than that of their classmates.
33. Pupils who show a gift in music are encouraged and nurtured and given opportunities to perform at school, in the town and at concerts in London. Similarly in sport, staff alert parents if they have identified a particular talent or promise with the result that pupils have places in the town, borough and county sporting teams with one pupil having been selected for Arsenal Juniors

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' rates of attendance are not as high as they should be.

34. Though attendance levels are similar to those at the time of the last inspection, these have not kept pace with the national average. The headteacher will not condone days off school for activities such as buying new clothes or visiting relatives so this aspect of attendance has improved. However, too many families take their holidays in term time. Some pupils miss over two weeks each year, this reduces their progress.
35. Staff expect all pupils to bring a note on their return from absence. When this is not the case, class teachers use a standard letter to contact families, requesting an explanation for the absence. Where pupils are persistently absent, the secretary contacts the family on the first day of absence. In some cases attendance targets have been agreed.
36. Attendance data is collected manually, so it is not always easy to recognise patterns of intermittent attendance.

The governing body needs to introduce ways to measure the effectiveness of the school.

37. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school. The chair and deputy give generously of their time to help with activities in school. Many of the governors are new to post and recognise the need for training. Understandably, some are reluctant to question decisions and policies until they are fully aware of the implications of their role. Curriculum links have begun to be established with each governor working alongside a year group, with the intention of following that group through the school. Communication between the governor responsible for special educational needs and the special educational need co-ordinator is good and is contributing to the provision for these pupils. All governors visit the school regularly and recognise the school's many strengths. However, visits do not have a clear focus as to how the effectiveness of the school might be judged. Governors have a desire to be dynamic and of use to the school. They have undertaken an audit of their skills in order to identify areas for development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38. In order to maintain the many strengths of the school and improve standards further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

Further improve attendance by:

- recording attendance data electronically in order that concerns may be identified early;
- setting achievable short term targets for pupils whose attendance is a problem;
- continuing to work with parents outlining the effects of absence on progress.

Improve the management of the governing body in measuring the effectiveness of the school by:

- providing suitable training;
- agreeing a formal programme of visits, each with a specific focus;
- further building governors' confidence giving them the conviction to question decisions and policy;
- implementing systems whereby the impact of spending can be evaluated.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	10	2	0	0	0
Percentage	4	52	37	7	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)	27	366
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	107

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	44
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5

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	32	18	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	29
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	38	40	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (55)	80 (43)	92 (82)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	98 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	39	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (68)	86 (66)	86 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	23	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	28	28
	Girls	17	19	21
	Total	41	47	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (78)	90 (80)	94 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	29	29
	Girls	18	19	21
	Total	42	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (74)	92 (74)	96 (87)
	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	10
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	1
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	359
Any other minority ethnic group	12

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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	247

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	3	1
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	2001-02
	£
Total income	854,615
Total expenditure	879,407
Expenditure per pupil	2,278
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,905
Balance carried forward to next year	-15,888

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	393
Number of questionnaires returned	225

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	36	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	51	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	51	11	1	1
The teaching is good.	64	34	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	40	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	31	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	44	48	3	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	42	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	38	17	3	17