

INSPECTION REPORT

HAM DINGLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103808

Headteacher: Mr Peter Harrington

Reporting inspector: Joan Walker
25461

Dates of inspection: 21st – 22nd January 2002

Inspection number: 196810

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: 5 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Old Ham Lane
Pedmore
Stourbridge
West Midlands

Postcode: DY9 0UN

Telephone number: 01384 818965

Fax number: 01384 818966

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Janet Pycraft

Date of previous inspection: 30th June – 3rd July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
25461	Joan Walker	Registered inspector
9770	John Baker	Lay inspector
118173	Catherine Stokes	Team inspector
30932	Rob Ratcliff	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Consultants
The Hucclecote Centre
Churchdown Lane
Hucclecote
Gloucester
GL3 3QN

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ham Dingle Primary School has 350 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11 years with 190 boys and 160 girls and is bigger than the average primary school. There is a big gender imbalance in Years 2, 4 and 6, where there are far more boys than girls. The school is located in a pleasant area of Pedmore on the outskirts of Stourbridge. The majority of pupils live close to the school, but some travel in from the surrounding areas of Lye and Wollescote. In the last three years classrooms have been modified to provide more teaching areas. The average class size is 27 pupils. The current circumstances of most families are above average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Currently three pupils have English as an additional language and there are 12 pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

At the time of the inspection, there were 50 children in the reception classes. The attainment of children at the start of school is above average according to the results of the baseline assessment scheme. Almost thirteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below the national average. There are five pupils with specific learning problems (dyslexia). Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is average with that found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, with a number of very good features. Standards in the 2001 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science and consistently high in mathematics and science over the past four years. The rate of improvement in standards is broadly similar with that found nationally i.e. an improving picture. In work seen during the inspection standards were above average in English and mathematics and at the national average in science for pupils of 11 years old. The school is well respected by parents and the community. The overall quality of teaching is good and in the reception classes all lessons observed were good or very good. The leadership and management by the headteacher, senior staff and the governing body are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in the 2001 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Currently, pupils are attaining standards above those found nationally in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and history in both key stages and above in science at Key Stage 1. Pupils achieved these good standards as a result of the good teaching.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully structured lessons that help children progress systematically and quickly through a series of small steps. They promote good behaviour so establishing a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school.
- Children concentrate well, work hard and are keen to contribute in lessons. The pupils have very good social skills and get on well with each other.
- There are well-planned opportunities for children to use their literacy skills across other subjects in the curriculum.
- The teaching of information and communication technology skills is good.

What could be improved

- Planning further opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about their learning and become more independent learners.
- The strategies used to identify priorities for future development of the school, and the impact of these initiatives on pupils' learning.
- To raise standards in scientific enquiry skills at the end of Key Stage 2.

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 June 1997. Since then, the school has made good improvement. The key issues in that inspection have been addressed effectively. The school has made good progress in raising the standards in information and communication technology (ICT). Staff have received further training in ICT and there is a new computer suite that can accommodate a whole class. The school now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for this subject. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now good and pupils' rate of progress is also good. The needs of the high attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 are being fully met. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of these pupils. There is now very good provision to increase the physical development of the children in the reception classes. The children have the opportunity to use a secure fenced off playground with large wheeled toys. The school has the capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table above shows that the school's results have been consistently well above average in mathematics and science compared both to the national average and similar schools. In English, results for the years 1999 and 2000 were average but in 2001 there was a significant improvement when results were well above the national average and in line with the results of similar schools. Although both boys and girls exceeded the expected national average in all three subjects, their performance was similar in English and science, but the boys' results were higher than girls in mathematics. The school has maintained consistently high standards for many years. Work seen during this inspection indicate that many of the current Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are above average in English, mathematics, history, and information and communication technology in both key stages and also in science at Key Stage 1. Pupils' scientific enquiry and investigative skills at upper Key Stage 2 could be better developed and their knowledge of mathematical tables when used in their investigations. In all other subjects, standards are at the expected level for pupils of a similar age including science at Key Stage 2.

Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Year 2 was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2001, reading results for pupils aged seven, were very high and placed the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally for this subject. However, in lessons observed during the inspection, standards attained were considerably lower, being only satisfactory in reading and writing, and did not reflect the very high standards obtained in 2001 test results.

The school's targets are suitably ambitious and have been met. Targets for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2002 are appropriately challenging (88 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 or above in English and mathematics). The work seen would indicate that the pupils in the current Year 6 are well on track to reach these targets, assuming that they achieve as well as they are at present. Across the school, pupils achieve well, including those pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are keen to succeed, interested in what they do and are proud of their achievement. They are eager to come to school and to be involved in all the school has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. The school has well developed strategies for managing pupils' behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Personal development is sound. However, the school should provide more opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their work.
Attendance	Very good.

The pupils' mature attitudes and relationships are strengths of the school. Around the school and in class, pupils are very helpful and responsive. They are confident in their manner and show a true feeling of appreciation for what the school does for them. The pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the very good attendance figures. The very effective School Council, in which representatives from Years 4, 5 and 6 discuss pupils' concerns and report back to their classmates, fosters the pupils' sense of responsibility, self esteem and helps their understanding of the democratic process and citizenship. From Easter onwards all Key Stage 2 year groups will have representatives on the School Council.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching across the school is good overall. Teaching was at least satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons observed during the inspection. Teaching was good or very good in eight out of every eleven lessons. In the two reception classes the teaching was good or better in every lesson. At Key Stage 1 teaching was good or better in five out eight lessons and is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2 teaching was good in seven out of ten lessons observed. The teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school is good overall. Teaching is also good in history and information and communication technology throughout the school and in science in Key Stage 1. Particular strengths of the teaching of pupils are the teaching of basic skills, effectiveness of the teachers' lesson planning and the management of pupils' behaviour. The school meets the needs of all pupils well, including those pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils with English as additional language. Skilled educational support staff work closely with the teachers and all pupils are given good support. The majority of pupils apply themselves to their work in lessons, are productive and work at a brisk pace. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their own line of enquiry and organise their own learning. Particular strengths in pupils' learning include their powers of concentration and enthusiasm to succeed. They respond well to the challenges that their teachers set them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and there are good links between subject areas. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; these pupils are well supported by both the teachers and the support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for social and moral development is good, and for spiritual, cultural and personal it is sound. The staff provide good role models. There are very clear codes of behaviour. The school helps the pupils to appreciate the richness of cultural diversity including opportunities to engage in activities, which support their understanding of life in Italy.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

There is a strong and effective partnership between the school and parents, which has a positive impact on the pupils' educational experiences. Pupils' annual reports to parents give greater information about the curriculum than about the child's progress. This is an area for further improvement. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership and management. The headteacher, staff and governors set a clear direction for the work of the school with an effective focus on raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body operates successfully and is effective in its strategic role. Governors are supportive but constructively critical; they have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well. Monitoring and evaluation of national tests, school tests and teacher assessments are used effectively and action is taken to improve pupils' learning. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document. However, the strategies for evaluating whether initiatives have led to improvements in teaching and learning and provide good value for money are not clear.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are very well targeted and directed towards improving the quality of education provided. The principles of best value are applied effectively.

The range of experience and expertise amongst the staff is appropriate to the school's needs. The accommodation in the classrooms is generally adequate. Classrooms in the main building have been extended to ensure the requirements of the literacy and numeracy lessons are met. Space in the Year 5 mobile classroom is extremely cramped for lessons in literacy, numeracy and for practical lessons in other subjects. There is no water connected to any of the mobiles thus creating difficulties for practical subjects. As resources allow, accommodation in these areas needs to be improved.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour is good.• The school helps children become mature and responsible.• Their children like school.• Their children make good progress.• The teaching is good.• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents have concerns over homework.• A small minority of parents feel they are not kept well informed about their child's progress.• The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. Inspectors judge that the homework set is appropriate and the homework policy is fully implemented. The range of activities provided by the school outside lessons is very good. However, the inspectors do support the parents' view that insufficient information is given about their child's progress in pupils' annual reports.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in the 2001 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Currently, pupils are attaining standards above those found nationally in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and history in both key stages and above in science at Key Stage 1. Pupils achieved these good standards as a result of the good teaching.

1. In the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, attainment in English, mathematics and science was well above the average of that found nationally. Compared with the results from schools having a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the 2001 results were very good in mathematics and science and in English were satisfactory.

2. The work seen during the inspection shows that standards, at both key stages, in English, mathematics, history, information and communication technology and, at Key Stage 1 in science are above those found nationally. However, in science at Key Stage 2 pupils attain standards that are similar to the national average for pupils of a similar age. At upper Key Stage 2, pupils did not have the opportunity to compare their plans for investigation, choose the best method to try or to use their knowledge to make reasoned predictions.

3. Currently, in both key stages, pupils attain standards above those found nationally in all aspects of English, except at Key Stage 1 in reading and writing, where they are sound. The school has recently focused on improving boys' writing and during some lesson observations particular attention was given to boys by teachers and support staff, for example, they were reminded of the learning objectives and often given timed targets to motivate and sustain their concentration. The medium term planning is good and incorporates the National Literacy Strategy. Children in the reception classes make a good start in their reading and writing skills. Many children can write their own names and know the letters and sounds of the alphabet. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 in their phonic work know blends and digraphs and can explain the differences between them. Pupils in Year 4 can construct their own similes, for example, 'Roses as red as blushing cheeks' and 'Mountains as high as the tallest towers'. In a Year 6 lesson pupils worked with enthusiasm and at a good pace when the teacher asked them produce a word web on their white boards for an 'Ugly Sister'. Pupils using thesauruses were able to identify more interesting words to use in their work, such as 'vile, foolish, cruel, wicked and grotesque'. This session very successfully increased the pupils' knowledge and use of more interesting adjectives.

4. In all aspects of mathematics pupils are currently attaining standards above those found nationally in both key stages. Pupils' mental agility and their knowledge of technical vocabulary are good. In Key Stage 1 classes pupils know and could use their knowledge of number bonds to solve investigative problems. More able pupils in a Year 2 lesson could subtract nine from any two-digit number by subtracting ten and adding one on. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson could multiply larger numbers than they know in their multiplication tables by using the grid method (breaking the numbers into smaller parts). However, pupils' knowledge of tables to support their investigations is less well developed.

5. In science in Key Stage 1, pupils have good levels of knowledge and understanding of how plants grow and change. They know that flowering plants produce seeds. They use correct scientific vocabulary with understanding, for instance, pollen, blossom and buds. Pupils attain standards above average compared with those found nationally. At Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards that are at the expected national level for pupils of a similar age. Pupils have sound knowledge of the different ways of seed dispersal. Many pupils can explain why a fair test is important in scientific investigations. However, pupils at upper Key Stage 2 need more opportunities to refine their plans for investigations and extend their scientific enquiry skills.

6. In both history lessons in Year 6 pupils gained good knowledge about how Greek architecture had influenced the buildings of today. There were very good links with literacy during these lessons for example, writing persuasive letters and outlining arguments why the 'Elgin Marbles' should either be sent back to Greece or stay in London.

7. Currently, pupils attain standards above those found nationally in information and communication technology (ICT) at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection when ICT did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. All staff have had further training and there is now a new computer suite, which is used regularly and supported by two very able support assistants. Teachers and support staff make good use of assessment to ensure that pupils' work gets progressively harder as they move through the school. In a very good information and communication technology lesson in a Year 1 class, pupils were improving their skills to write sentences using capital letters and full stops. Higher-attaining pupils were developing their ideas into sequencing of their sentences and were able to use upper and lower case letters well. All pupils were interested and enthusiastic and trying hard with their work. In a good Year 5 information and communication technology lesson, there were good links with art and mathematics. Pupils developed their skills in re-arranging and changing shapes – resizing, layering, rotating and changing the colour. The introduction to the lesson had been the shapes Matisse had used in his painting of 'The Snail'. All pupils were able to create a range of geometric shapes similar to those used in 'The Snail'.

Teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully structured lessons that help children progress systematically and quickly through a series of small steps. They promote good behaviour so establishing a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school.

8. The overall quality of teaching is good. In almost all lessons teaching is at least satisfactory and frequently better. In the reception classes teaching was good or very good in all lessons observed. In Key Stage 1 teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory with five out of eight lessons being good or better. Planning for the needs of high attaining pupils is good and they are set challenging tasks. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and high attaining pupils were insufficiently challenged. In Key Stage 2, in lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons.

9. In the reception classes and at both key stages teachers are confident and have good knowledge of the subjects being taught. They prepare and plan well. The lesson plans are carefully structured and this helps the pupils progress systematically and quickly through a series of small steps. For example, in a very good science lesson in a Year 2 class, the teacher

had planned a series of lessons on the subject of how living plants grow and change to ensure the pupils built on their learning from the previous lesson. In the most effective teaching, teachers' planning shows clearly what is to be taught and learnt. This ensures that pupils know what is expected of them in lessons and their learning is very focused. For example, in a very good lesson in a reception class, the teacher shared the learning objectives with the children and by using searching questions made sure they understood what it was they were supposed to know and understand by the end of the lesson. Pupils record the learning objectives in their books at the start of the lesson. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to make choices and decisions about their learning and become more independent learners. Teachers use a range of teaching methods including whole-class teaching, group and individual work involving practical, investigative and problem-solving activities. These teaching approaches motivate pupils and give them the chance to work co-operatively and collaboratively, thereby contributing to their personal development. For example, in a good history lesson in a Year 6 class, the teacher gave the pupils the opportunity to discuss their ideas and opinions and understand how different people may have a different perspective of the same event. Teachers use time and resources efficiently. The use of computers to support pupils' learning is good.

10. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. In almost all lessons teachers and support staff promote good behaviour and therefore there is a calm and orderly atmosphere in lessons and throughout the school. Teachers and support staff listen and value pupils' opinions and ideas and this was particularly so in the meetings of the School Council.

Children concentrate well, work hard and are keen to contribute in lessons. The pupils have very good social skills and get on well with each other.

11. Pupils are keen to succeed, interested in what they do and are proud of their achievements. Pupils have very good social skills and work well together. Year 6 pupils take care of younger pupils during lunchtime and help in the Key Stage 1 computer club.

12. In a lesson in one of the reception classes children concentrated very well when they were learning a new verse of the 'Incy Wincy Spider' rhyme as part of learning the initial sound of 's' in words. They listened carefully and joined in with the actions of the poem. In one of the group activities the children shared the equipment to paint their 's' snakes very well. They settled to this activity and other group activities quickly and quietly and sustained concentration throughout these sessions. The majority of the children helped to pack away the equipment in a sensible and mature way. These children had only been in school since the beginning of this term. In a lesson in the other reception class of older children, they sat quietly and listened attentively to the teacher telling the story of 'Snow at Blackberry Farm'. In the class discussion that followed the majority of children waited patiently for their turn to tell about their memories of snow. A few children had to be reminded to put their hands up and wait for their names to be called out. In another lesson in this class the children worked extremely well together and packed and tidied away equipment well. They helped one another to complete the task.

13. In an English lesson in Year 2, there were very good opportunities for physical action at the end of a word-level session that helped pupils maintain their concentration and good listening. The teacher played music quietly in the background and said 'By the time the

music stops you should have completed two sentences’. This meant their learning was very focused and the pupils set about the task with interest and concentration. They worked hard to complete the task before the music stopped. In a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher had made it clear that she expected the pupils to work hard, share the materials, concentrate and work together and the pupils succeeded very well in these aspects. In an information and communication technology lesson in Year 1, pupils listened attentively and could talk about what they had learned at the end of the lesson. They worked hard to improve their computer skills.

14. In a science lesson in Year 5, pupils shared their knowledge of seed germination. In pairs they discussed how to produce a fair test for a specific aspect of seed germination, for example, water. In the whole class discussion that followed, the pupils shared their ideas with the class. During this session the teacher used good searching questions to encourage the pupils to think carefully about their answers for example ‘Why use more than one seed?’ Pupils were encouraged to think for themselves by the teacher questioning their ideas for instance, ‘Where could we find a permanently cold place in the school?’ Pupils appeared to enjoy putting forward their ideas and opinions to the rest of the class. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the pupils worked well in pairs on an investigative task.

There are well-planned opportunities for children to use their literacy skills across other subjects.

15. In Key Stage 1 and 2 there are well-planned opportunities for children to use their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils extend their writing skills in science, religious education and history. Their knowledge of specific vocabulary is being extended in subjects such as science and mathematics. Speaking and listening skills are being developed in class and group discussions.

16. In a literacy lesson in a Year 2 class, there were good links with science. The pupils were using correct scientific vocabulary to record the life cycle of an apple tree. They knew about flow diagrams and their features, and put seasons correctly into the cycle. Pupils were confident about the clockwise and anti-clockwise order. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils used charts to present their ideas in ways that enhanced the development of their literacy skills. In a Year 1 information and communication technology lesson the pupils were improving their ability to write sentences with the focus on using capital letters and full stops. Higher-attaining pupils used their keyboard skills well.

17. In a religious education lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils were taking notes and recording answers to questions. The teacher helped the pupils by summarising the answers given. In a Year 6 lesson in history, pupils listened well to the teacher giving information about the ‘Elgin Marbles’. The pupils were given very good opportunities to link their literacy skills and write to the Prime Minister with reference to returning the ‘Elgin Marbles’ to Greece or writing as a Greek historian in reply to the Prime Minister. There was good use of writing frames that enabled all pupils to engage in historical activities.

18. Pupils use computers to research information in history, for example to obtain information for their project on Florence Nightingale. Small groups of pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from their guided literacy sessions in the classroom to

practise their literacy skills on the computer. During these sessions, the learning support assistants give good support to the pupils.

The teaching of information and communication technology skills is good.

19. The quality of teaching is good and is much improved since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff have received training since the last inspection and are now more confident to teach information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers and support staff make very good use of the new computer suite. A significant factor in the success of the teaching is the good technical support they receive from the two (ICT) support assistants.

20. Teachers and ICT support assistants make good use of ongoing assessment to ensure that pupils build satisfactorily on what they know. For example, in a Year 1 class teaching was very good because the teacher built well on previous learning of loading programs and provided differentiated opportunities for pupils to learn beyond expectations for their age. Pupils are interested, concentrate well and follow instructions promptly because of the good quality teaching. They show good motivation by the work they do and they are keen to experiment. This extends computing skills and builds up their confidence in the subject.

21. A computer club is held every day at lunchtime for different year groups. The ICT support assistants plan the activity to link with the work of the class. The daily clubs are well attended. The Friday Key Stage 1 club is very popular. Year 6 pupils take the responsibility for this together with the ICT support assistants. Year 6 pupils take this responsibility seriously and do it well and this contributes to their personal development and helps to create good relationships between Key Stage 1 and Year 6 pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Planning further opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about their learning and become more independent learners.

22. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to their work and life in the school. They respect the importance of learning, and apply themselves willingly to the tasks set for them. Their behaviour is very good in the classroom and around the school. Children concentrate well, work hard and are keen to contribute in group and class discussions. Teaching is effective in helping pupils to acquire basic skills. Given that these important foundations are in place, further opportunities are needed for pupils to take responsibility for organising their own learning and improving their investigative and independent learning skills. As a result, many pupils are over-dependent on teachers telling them what to do and do not have sufficient opportunities to make choices or decisions about their learning.

23. There was evidence of independent learning happening in some aspects of school life but further planned opportunities are needed to improve pupils' ability to become more independent learners. For example, the School Council, which was set up just over a year ago, could provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop these skills. The School Council has been very successful in bringing about changes that caused concerns for the pupils. For example, the pupils wanted year groups to sit together at lunchtime whether they were having dinners or sandwiches. At the most recent School Council meeting it was

reported that the dinner ladies had found it to be a very successful idea. At the moment the items discussed mostly come from the ideas and opinions of the pupils. The children chair the meeting and minutes are taken and decisions made taken back to all the pupils. There are further wider issues such as ‘What makes the school a good place to learn?’ and ‘What stops me from learning as well as I would like to?’ which could be discussed in the School Council, and therefore this good initiative could be linked more closely to the school’s self-evaluation.

24. Pupils are making rapid progress in their information and communication technology skills. However, more opportunities should be given for these good computer skills to be further used by the pupils; for example, to publish their own school magazine and open a school web site.

25. In lessons, some teachers do not plan sufficiently well enough to extend pupils’ skills in scientific and mathematical investigation. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson on the most effective filter for changing water, the teacher did not accept the pupils’ ideas of what could be used as a filter. The pupils were supposed to plan the investigation but this was mostly directed by the teacher and therefore the pupils had little opportunity to develop their own enquiry skills. Further opportunities should be made for pupils to set and monitor their own learning targets. At the end of lessons, in a few classes, pupils discussed what they found easy or hard. However, this approach was not consistently developed throughout the school and too frequently pupils’ views were not taken into account.

26. During the inspection, children in the reception classes had the opportunity to make choices in their very imaginative role play areas. However, there was little evidence that pupils in the Key Stage 1 classes had similar experiences. Drama is planned in Key Stage 2, although there were no lessons taking place during the inspection.

27. The school makes informal opportunities for pupils to become independent learners. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to make choices and decisions and become fully independent learners.

School self-evaluation; evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used to identify the priorities for future development and check the impact of initiatives in the school improvement plan.

28. The school has had an established programme of self-review for some time and through this has gained the ‘Investors in People’ award in 1999 and has identified self-evaluation as an area for further development. All staff have attended training courses to improve their evaluative skills and staff and governors have analysed data from the national and school tests. The subject co-ordinators sample written work and check pupils’ records so they have a good understanding of the results pupils attain.

29. In English, where the school has identified a need to improve standards in writing, especially boys’ writing, co-ordinators use a wide range of measures to evaluate teaching and learning including classroom observations, sampling work, scrutinising plans, and discussions with pupils. This good practice should be followed to identify strengths and weaknesses in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in a Key Stage 2 science lesson pupils enjoyed carrying out a science investigation were knowledgeable about soluble and insoluble materials, the processes of filtering, evaporation and condensation, and understood the

concept of fair testing. However, they were not asked to compare their plans for the investigation, choose the best method to try or to use their knowledge to make reasoned predictions. This weakness in developing scientific enquiry skills was also evident in the work samples for upper Key Stage 2 and should be addressed by the school's own monitoring systems.

30. Through the School Council, a homework and ICT survey for pupils, and a parents' annual questionnaire, the management team consult with pupils and parents about improvements. The school is now well-placed to develop this good work and evaluate more rigorously with the whole school community what needs to be done to further improve pupils' learning and set the priorities to be included in the school improvement plan.

31. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document covering target setting, action plans and the resources required. Some sections are clearly costed, such as the music, support/guidance and pupils' welfare and links with parents. However, some areas are less clearly costed. For example, where there were records of the amount of supply cover required, strategies for evaluating whether initiatives have led to improvements in teaching and learning and provide good value for money are not clear.

To raise standards in scientific enquiry skills at Key Stage 2.

32. In the 2001 national test results pupils achieved well above standards compared with those found nationally and also when compared with similar schools. Currently, pupils at Key Stage 2 are achieving standards that are at the expected level for pupils of a similar age.

33. An analysis of work undertaken in Year 6, shows that pupils are able to plot points on simple graphs and draw information from charts and graphs. However, there was limited evidence of pupils drawing conclusions from the information. For example, when investigating shadow length, pupils drew graphs and bar charts to show how the length of a shadow changes when the height of the light changes. They extracted and recorded information but gave no conclusions to their experiments. Pupils made predictions but gave no reasons for them. At times, marking was inconsistent and did not always give points for improvement. At times, work was not completed and low levels of recording accepted by the teacher. Presentation is inconsistent with some untidy work accepted. Pupils' recording of experiments was frequently at the National Curriculum Level 3.

34. In a lesson observed, the teacher directed the investigation and gave the pupils insufficient opportunities to consider and evaluate a range of ideas before selecting the best way to complete the investigation. The lesson lacked challenge and the teacher appeared to have low expectations of pupils' scientific enquiry skills. Planning was sound, but did not match what actually happened in the lesson. The pupils were given a very structured work sheet for recording the experiment and the teacher rehearsed the correct responses from multiple-choice answers. Pupils had very little opportunity to use their investigative and enquiry skills to record their experiments and conclusions.

35. While pupils' knowledge and understanding in science is usually good they need additional opportunities to use and extend their enquiry and investigative skills to further improve their standards of work and knowledge.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Plan further opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about their learning and become more independent learners by:

- (a) improving children's investigative and independent learning skills,
- (b) giving the School Council wider issues to discuss that are linked to the school's self-evaluation procedures,
- (c) using the good skills the pupils have in information and communication technology beyond the curriculum for a wider audience,
- (d) giving further opportunities for making choices and decisions in imaginative role-play and drama.

2. Improve the strategies used to identify priorities for future development of the school, and the impact of these initiatives on pupils' learning by:

- (a) costing all items clearly and therefore knowing the implications they have on the budget,
- (b) evaluating what impact the initiatives have on teaching and learning and ensure they provide good value for money.

3. To raise standards in scientific enquiry skills at Key Stage 2 by:

- (a) currently, raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve,
- (b) monitoring the quality of the presentation of pupils' recorded work,
- (c) ensuring that teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use and extend their investigative and enquiry skills in their work.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
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	0	4	12	5	1	0	0
Percentage	0	19	54	23	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	350
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	22	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	22
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	48	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (96)	98 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	22
	Girls	27	26	27
	Total	46	47	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (96)	96 (100)	100 (94)
	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	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	27	29
	Girls	17	18	20
	Total	43	45	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (83)	90 (88)	98 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A (75)	N/A (75)	N/A (96)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	6
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	338
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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)	14.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

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	3.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	662136
Total expenditure	663989
Expenditure per pupil	1887
Balance brought forward from previous year	10161
Balance carried forward to next year	8308

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	338
Number of questionnaires returned	126

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	58	39	2		1
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	54	2		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	53	8	2	
The teaching is good.	55	42	2		1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	51	10	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	6		1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	1	
The school works closely with parents.	37	52	10		1
The school is well led and managed.	63	34	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	38	2		
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	42	9	2	5

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

97% Their child likes school.

97% Parents believe their child is making good progress.

98% Behaviour is good.

91% The school gives the right amount of homework.

97% Believe teaching is good.

89% Believe they are kept well informed about the progress their child is making.

94% They are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.

97% Believes the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

89% Believes the school works closely with parents.

97% The school is well led and managed.

98% Feel that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.

84% Feel the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Other issues raised by parents

Many parents recorded their concerns over the mobile classrooms, which are old and parents felt needed to be replaced. One parent, who helps in one of the classrooms, said art lessons were particularly difficult not only because there was no water in any of them but also of the cramped conditions especially in the Year 5 classroom. The inspectors fully support the view of the parents on this issue. Some parents had concerns over the mixed age class but all agreed that the planning for these pupils is good and the teacher manages this class very well. Many parents made complimentary comments about the school, for example there is a great sense of pride in the school by pupils, parents and staff and they gave thanks to the governing body who do such a good job in managing the school.