

INSPECTION REPORT

MYATT GARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brockley, London

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100713

Headteacher: Mrs G Ingham

Reporting inspector: Eileen Chadwick
19115

Dates of inspection: 12th –13th February 2002

Inspection number: 196931

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rokeby Road Brockley London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Myatt Garden Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Mo Henwood
Date of previous inspection:	30/06/1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large school with 452 pupils aged between three and eleven. It is oversubscribed and has a large Foundation Stage, with 137 children, including 76 who attend the Nursery on a part time basis. It serves an inner city area between Deptford and New Cross and a very diverse community with features of social and economic advantage as well as disadvantage. Most of the pupils' families live in permanent homes that are rented from the local council or privately owned, although a small minority lives in temporary accommodation. The proportion speaking English as an additional language, one quarter, is high although only fifteen are at an early stage of learning English. Twenty-six different languages are spoken. The largest groups of pupils have family backgrounds from the United Kingdom, Africa and the Caribbean. One third are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average but lower than in 2000 when it was a half. The school's reputation has led to an increase in the number of pupils from professional families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 23 per cent, is average although eleven pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above average. Pupils' needs include physical handicap, speech and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Mobility is high with 68 pupils leaving and 31 pupils entering at times other than the normal ones. The school has gained "Beacon" status, and provides support for other schools in areas such as writing, special educational needs, information and communication technology and art. The pupils' overall attainment on entry is below average. However, this includes significant minorities that are either well above or well below average, including some who enter with challenging behaviour. Evidence shows that pupils' overall attainment on entry has risen recently.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an outstanding school that is very successful in providing for the diverse community that it serves. The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff result in a very clear vision for continuous improvement and excellent systems to make this happen. The school's climate for learning is very good and provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff ensure that all pupils, whatever their starting point, benefit from their education. The overall quality of teaching is very good and some is excellent. This stimulates pupils to want to learn, work hard and attain high standards. The school prepares pupils very well for their secondary education, including the significant minority who begin school at an educational disadvantage. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching in English and art is excellent and this leads to well above average standards in reading and writing and excellent standards in art by the age of eleven.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics and information communication technology is very good and this leads to above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in information and communication technology by the age of eleven.
- The quality of teaching in the Nursery is excellent and this gives the children a flying start and encourages their love of learning.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, in partnership with her deputy headteacher, inspires teachers and pupils do their best and seek constant improvement.
- The school provides a very high quality curriculum that often crosses subject barriers. Pupils' ideas are valued and teachers successfully encourage pupils' creativity as well as the rigorous development of their knowledge.
- Pupils behave very well and racial harmony is excellent. This results from very good provision for pupils' personal development and very good relationships that are built on mutual respect and trust.

What could be improved

- The systematic provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- Attendance and punctuality. A few pupils attend irregularly and are late for school which slows down their progress.

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 a very good improvement in addressing its key issues since its last inspection in June 1997 and shows a similar capacity to continue to improve in the future. It has made excellent progress in improving writing, very good progress in improving music and sound progress in improving investigative science and religious education. There are now very robust assessment systems for monitoring pupils' progress and these are used very effectively to raise standards from year to year. Statutory requirements for collective worship, checking the performance of teachers and information for parents are now met. The overall quality of teaching has greatly improved and is now very good whereas it was only satisfactory when last inspected. The quality of teaching is now much better in Years 3 to 6 as, at the time of the previous inspection, it had some weaknesses. It is now consistently at least good, and often very good. Children in the Nursery now make excellent progress as a result of excellent teaching and this is accelerating their learning. Standards are far higher in English, art and information and communication technology and higher in mathematics.

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	D	A	A*
Mathematics	A	B	C	A
Science	A	D	C	A

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

This table shows that, in 2001, compared with all schools, standards were well above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, these standards were very high in English, in the top five per cent, and well above average in mathematics and science. The school was particularly effective in ensuring high proportions reached Level 4, the standards expected nationally of this age, in all three subjects. However, performance at the higher Level 5 was more variable. Compared with similar schools, it was excellent in English, good in science but below average in mathematics. Since 1998, the school's results have shown an improving trend that is overall in line with the national rate of improvement although improvement was rapid in English in 2001. This is because of the impact of improved literacy teaching through the school. The school exceeded its targets for the number of pupils expected to achieve Level 4 in English and mathematics and has set challenging targets for 2002 for Level 4 and 5. The findings of the inspection are that, compared with all schools, standards are well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Standards are higher in mathematics because of the effects of consistently very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the rigorous implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and assessment procedures.

In 2001 national tests, compared with all schools, seven year olds achieved average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Whilst the findings of the inspection are similar in mathematics, they are above average in reading and writing reflecting excellent implementation of the literacy hour and a high proportion of excellent literacy teaching. Standards are average in science also indicating improvements compared with the national assessments made by teachers in 2001, which were well below the national average. The school successfully analysed the reasons for its weak 2001 science results and has addressed imbalances in curriculum planning as not enough attention was paid to physical processes in Year 2. An important factor in all the improvements seen has been the school's ability to accurately evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and take effective action.

In Reception, children achieve average standards in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematical development. Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage after making excellent progress in the Nursery and good progress in Reception.

By the time the pupils leave the school their achievement is excellent. It is excellent in English, information technology and art, very good in mathematics and good in science. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress overall. However, the progress of the very able is inconsistent, especially in mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils take a pride in their work and in their school. Their enjoyment in learning and their attentiveness help them to make the most of their time in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good and contributes greatly to the school's standards, happy atmosphere and purposeful climate for learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships provide a secure base for pupils and have a significant impact on their learning. Pupils from a variety of different cultures mix well together and respect different values and beliefs. They take responsibilities given to them seriously.
Attendance	Attendance is well below average and is, therefore, poor. This is mainly because a minority of pupils have a high rate of unauthorised absence. A few pupils are regularly late.

The school's harmonious and calm atmosphere enables pupils to concentrate, feel secure and learn. The procedures for improving attendance and punctuality have been improved and are given high priority.

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.

The overall quality of teaching is very good and a high proportion of lessons, two thirds, are at least very good. The quality of teaching and learning in English is excellent from Nursery to Year 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Lessons are meaningful, interesting and challenging for all pupils and build excellently on oral work. Teaching and learning in reading, writing, phonics and spelling are excellent. Throughout, assessment is used very well to fine tune work to match pupils' needs enabling all to learn successfully. The excellent support by teachers and assistants for pupils with English as an additional language or special educational needs completes this very favourable picture. High quality teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, enables pupils to learn very well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and lessons develop pupils' mental skills at a brisk pace. Teaching and learning in art are excellent and very good in information and communication technology. The substantial amount of specialist teaching in these subjects is raising standards as knowledge and skills are rigorously taught in exciting contexts. Teachers manage their pupils, plan their work and meet most of their needs very well although there is not always enough challenge for very able pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is rich, relevant and excellently planned in Years 1 to 6. In Reception, curriculum planning is good whilst it is excellent in the Nursery. There are very good links between subjects. Links with the community and outside visits greatly enhance the curriculum. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are applied very well to other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. Provision is very thorough. Pupils' targets are very clear and the monitoring of their progress is excellent. This results in excellent support and progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent. Because of the excellent support provided, they quickly gain confidence and competence in speaking, reading and writing English. This enables them to often attain standards that match or surpass those of their peers by the time they leave.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Spiritual development is good overall. Its promotion through assemblies is satisfactory whilst it is very well promoted within subjects, especially in English, art, history and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Very thorough assessment and tracking procedures ensure that most pupils' progress is excellent. However, systems for monitoring the progress of gifted and talented pupils are not thoroughly in place.

Very good links with parents help to raise standards. Parents support the school's work well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She has a very clear vision for improving the school, including teaching and learning. The outstanding leadership and teamwork of the headteacher and senior staff, always working together to provide the right systems, enables the school to move forward. The staff are committed, hardworking and work as an effective team for the success of the school as a result of the leadership provided.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is well organised and very effectively led by the Chair and Vice Chair. Governors recognise the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are keen to ensure that it continues to improve and to maintain its high standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. An important factor in all the improvements since the previous inspection has been the school's ability to thoroughly evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and take effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The school has taken wise decisions based on careful financial planning to enable pupils to benefit. Teachers' subject expertise is very well developed and is used excellently for the benefit of the whole school. The administration of the school's budget and the procedures for judging how well money is spent are very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children settle quickly and are happy at the school. • Lessons are interesting and this encourages their children to love learning. • The progress their children make. • The way the school encourages the children to behave well. • The way the school is led and managed by the headteacher. • The way the school is constantly improving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier access to secondary schools of their choice. • Secondary education that provides a “Senior Myatt Garden”.
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The inspection team’s findings fully support the views of parents who have great confidence in the school. The inspection team cannot comment on the provision for secondary education in the area whilst acknowledging the importance of ensuring pupils continue to thrive and make such good progress. Parents raised a few other individual concerns, although these were often minor. The inspection team investigated these concerns and found no unsatisfactory provision or practice.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The quality of teaching in English and art is excellent and this leads to well above average standards in reading and writing and excellent standards in art by the age of eleven

1. The teachers' subject knowledge in English and art is exceptionally good. This enables them to teach the subjects to a consistently high standard throughout the age range. Teachers understand these subjects very well and know how to provide very well matched work that engages pupils' interests and builds carefully on their attainment. Teachers' own presentations, choices of literature and resources provide excellent examples of high standards to pupils. Lessons are exciting and arouse the pupils' will to learn and interest in literature, the English language and the visual and dramatic arts.

2. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, where pupils' studied the work of the author Malorie Blackman, the teacher chose a video to show an extract from "The Raiders of the lost Ark". The excellent dramatisation of the literature led to a very stimulating discussion and pupils' rapid learning. The teacher skilfully drew the pupils' attention to how connectives could be used for different purposes, how connectives can signal time, shift the action or build suspense whilst providing visual and oral examples. Teachers often relate lessons to pupils' own experiences and provide practical, visual and other sensory examples. For example, when encouraging the pupils to imagine what happens to people's faces when they run in the jungle the teacher encouraged pupils to describe how their own faces feel after playing sport. This led to some very imaginative and relevant vocabulary.

3. The excellent teaching in English throughout the school is giving the pupils a very firm foundation in learning to read and write. Lessons steadily build pupils' phonics competence in very meaningful situations. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, there was a very good balance between reading whole words and sentences from a shared text and the systematic learning of sounds. Pupils' shared reading, about five senses, stemmed very well from their practical experiences gained through science. This meant that pupils had a very good understanding of the meaning of the shared text. The teacher provided an excellent balance between developing the pupils' ability to speak, read and write sounds. The pupils learn to "attack" spellings by working out sounds for themselves and develop confidence in their own ability to spell. A very strong feature is how pupils learn to join handwriting from an early age and this is used very well to reinforce patterns of sounds, for example, "oa" words. A further key feature is how higher order reading and writing skills are taught early, for example, prediction and paragraphing, to enable pupils to attain high standards.

4. Thorough curriculum planning also enables teachers to put their very high expectations into practice. The work is excellently based on the National Literacy Strategy but adapted to the school's needs. For example, the teaching of poetry is an important feature of the school's literacy curriculum and is blocked over several weeks. This enables pupils to develop thoroughly their knowledge and appreciation of different poets' work as well as their own technique and creativity in poetry writing. By Year 6 there are many examples of outstandingly creative work with excellent use of alliteration, metaphor and visual and other sensory imagery. In an early draft of an "Ode to an element" after sustained readings and studies of odes written by famous poets, one pupil wrote:

*O burning flames of light
Your heat gives me warmth when I am asleep at night*

*O tower of flames
And your blazing saffron sparks,
So suddenly your temper can change
Your smoke smells like roasting brimstone.*

5. Another wrote on the same theme:

O blazing fire of light

*Red hot like the sun
Also keeps warm at night*

*You're scarlet, amber and rust
Your beautiful colours
Burn out, into dust*

*Smoke rushing out
Gone
And tear blushing all about.*

6. A large proportion of pupils attain such high standards because pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are provided with regular excellent additional support within lessons. The assessment of these pupils' needs is very strong and is used very accurately to plan well-matched work. Tasks are broken down into small achievable steps and encourage the pupils to feel, and be, successful. There is a very high emphasis upon meaning and pupils' understanding and application of patterns in their work. The support provided by the special educational needs and English as an additional language co-ordinators, as well as class teachers and learning support assistants, is excellent.

7. The same consistently very high quality curriculum planning and teaching is also evident in art and made possible, once again, by the depth of the teachers' own subject knowledge. The school has strategically developed all teachers' subject knowledge by employing an art specialist who systematically works alongside each teacher for blocks of time each year. This is an excellent practical way of training teachers, showing them the very high standards that are possible through exemplary teaching.

8. An excellent Year 6 lesson, pupils' painting of a rain forest in the style of Henri Rousseau, built very well on previous work. The pupils had been given rich, practical, visual and sensory experiences through visits to the Winter Gardens and London Zoo. Pupils' ability to use imagery to express their ideas in their drawing and painting was outstanding. They have excellent knowledge of artists' work by this time and can explain fully their different styles, techniques and suitability for their purposes. All pupils' rain forest pictures were of a high quality, making overall standards very high because of the proportion achieving Level 5 in the National Curriculum. Pupils used acrylic paints with skill and sensitivity to paint colours with vibrant or pale shades and tones to convey their own particular purpose. Pupils' ability to evaluate their own and the work of others is outstanding by Year 6 and they use this knowledge to improve the quality of their own work.

9. High quality work is evident in all classes and Year 5 is no exception. A strong feature is that pupils develop their skills through using a wide range of media. After studying the work of William Morris, the pupils designed and made clay tiles incorporating repeating patterns in the style of William Morris' work. The high quality of the experiences and skills teaching provided by the teacher, including her sensitive displays of examples of his work, enabled the pupils to express skilfully their own ideas and produce some original designs based on the style of William Morris. Their use of colour was particularly effective.

10. Pupils' artistic talents are nurtured from their first days in school and infant pupils also produce high standards of work. In Year 1, pupils had developed their knowledge of the self-portraits of famous artists including Van Gogh and Pablo Picasso. The steady build up of pupils' skills and knowledge through high quality visual examples and skills' training was, once again, a mark of the school's success. The self-portraits were outstanding in the way pupils blended layers of colour to

produce different skin tones they observed in their daily lives. The pupils then went on to produce clay heads that were of an outstanding quality in finish as well as the expression of ideas.

11. In a joint art, design and technology and science project in Year 2, pupils produced some excellent models of mini beasts using textiles. The pupils produced joyful and colourful models with excellent use of drawing when they used fabric paints to paint their designs on textiles. They carefully selected trimmings, for example, small sequins or pom poms, to show their ideas. Their stitching skills were equally impressive.

12. Since the previous inspection, there have been excellent improvements in the quality of teaching in English and in standards in writing by the age of eleven, as standards were previously unsatisfactory. Improvements in standards of reading have been very good. The school's progress in improving art has been very good. In both subjects, the consistency of high quality teaching throughout the school has led to impressive improvements.

The quality of teaching in mathematics and information communication technology is very good and this leads to above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in information and communication technology by the age of eleven

13. Teachers successfully implement the National Numeracy Strategy and this is leading to improving standards. A very good balance of approaches is used to maintain pupils' interest and involve them in their learning. In an excellent lesson in a Year 5 top mathematics set, pupils used known number facts, for example $6 \times 7 = 42$, to solve harder problems by using halving, doubling, adding or subtracting. The teacher provided pupils with a very clear purpose, excellent instruction and questioning as well as plenty of opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking. The brisk pace of the mental session, combined with a very good time balance between whole class and timed individual work, encouraged pupils to think quickly as well as flexibly and resulted in high quality thinking by all. Teachers are expert at matching pupils' work; this results from the excellent assessment systems and the way that assessment is used to plan work.

14. A key factor in the school's success is that expectations for each pupil are often high, regardless of pupils' individual starting point and the school seeks every opportunity to provide high quality experiences so these expectations can be met and standards can be raised. This was observed in the very good lessons observed in Year 6, one in the higher set and the other for the lower set. Pupils in the lower set attained standards that were average overall. In this lesson, the teacher ensured that the pupils could see why they were using a particular approach. The lesson purpose of solving problems, which required different strategies yet systematic careful working" was made very clear to pupils. The pupils applied the teachers' criteria for success and settled to problem solving very quickly. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good throughout. Excellent features of the lesson included how the teacher skilfully stopped the class and reviewed progress and the systems pupils were using. The teacher expertly used this ongoing assessment to teach individuals who needed more clarification or extension. The lesson for the Year 6 higher set was equally effective and set at faster pace and involved harder work. However, a small group of pupils were a low average for the set and they were given high quality extra help by a learning support assistant so they would not be left behind.

15. The fact that the majority of pupils are attaining within Level 4 is of great significance considering the starting point of a significant number of pupils. The school is, however, addressing the weaknesses found at Level 5 in 2001 tests by providing booster sessions for potentially higher attaining pupils in order to meet its targets of one third reaching Level 5. This is appropriate as booster sessions were provided for Level 5 English in 2001 with much success.

16. Standards are high in information and communication technology and the application of computer skills to the rest of the curriculum is very good, with some outstanding applications in art and English. In a very good information and communication technology lesson in Year 5, pupils used graphics expertly to produce repeat wallpaper designs from original designs by William Morris. The teacher's very good subject knowledge for both art and information and communication technology enabled her to realise her high expectations of what pupils can achieve in both subjects. This teacher was the co-ordinator for both subjects and worked alongside the class teacher. Once again, the use of a specialist working alongside teachers in their classrooms, provided high quality subject training for teachers. The teacher made very effective use of the white board in the computer suite to demonstrate new skills with very good explanations of how to use the pencil, magnification and how to rotate images so that pupils could achieve their purpose. The lesson built very well from previous work when pupils had scanned their chosen designs and stored these for a later lesson. The inclusive nature of the lesson, where all pupils were supported, enabled all to learn very well including lower attaining pupils.

17. Examination of pupils' previous work indicates standards in information and communication technology by Year 2 are above average and well above average by Year 6. This results from the regular and steady teaching of skills and the use of these to enhance other subjects. By Year 2, pupils decorate their pictures and add text to create front covers for "Me and the iron man". They use different software such as Dazzle and Publisher to produce illustrated songs for assembly or a poster about school rules. In Reception and Year 1, there is also much good computer work, especially in data handling and when they programme Roamer, the school's programmable toy. In one very good project, Roamer had been dressed up as the wolf in the story of "Three Little Pigs", and the pupils had planned routes and programmed it to follow a route so it could knock down the pigs' house. By Year 6, pupils expertly use Logo to write procedures to create geometric shapes. They have also learned how to write programs for controlling traffic lights in pelican crossings. Pupils use word processing with ease as a natural way of recording their English work. By Year 4, pupils have combined text and graphics when they design newspapers "The Greek Times" to illustrate what life was like in Ancient Greek times, already showing high attainment for their age.

18. Since the previous inspection, there have been good improvements in standards in mathematics by the age of eleven. Improvement by the age of seven is satisfactory. Improvements in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 have been good whilst they have been satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

The quality of teaching in the Nursery is excellent and this gives the children a flying start and encourages their love of learning

19. Children enter the Nursery in the term in which they are three. Not all who enter the Nursery are guaranteed a place in Reception because of local admission policies and the school's over subscription. Only about a half of all the children who enter Reception have been to the school Nursery. Analysis shows that, when they enter both Nursery and Reception, children's attainment is below average despite the excellent progress now being made in Nursery. Pupils' attainment on entry, in both cases, spans the whole ability range with substantial proportions who are either well above or well below average in their speaking and listening skills and their personal and social development.

20. Since September, there have been important changes to the Foundation Stage, especially to the Nursery. The new co-ordinator, who is also a teacher in the Nursery, provides excellent leadership. Her own teaching inspires other teachers. The teachers, Nursery nurses and class assistants form a very effective Nursery team. They consistently provide very high quality learning experiences that are multi sensory and practical. Throughout the Nursery, the organisation of the children's learning and management of their behaviour is excellent. This, along with the very supportive relationships between

all, promotes a very happy, caring and purposeful learning environment in which children thrive and love learning. Planning for all the areas of learning is excellent.

21. Teaching and learning are excellent and adults provide many exciting activities that give opportunities for the children to learn through talk and practical enquiry. There is much emphasis upon developing the children's language and their personal and social skills. From their early days in the Nursery, they develop a strong sense of belonging to the school community. This is especially important in this school as, in the Nursery, the school has high numbers of children from different ethnic backgrounds and a significant proportion with English as an additional language. The practice of including everyone, promoting a good self-image and sense of worth in all children, is strong throughout. From the start in Nursery, children are encouraged and assisted to be independent. Children learn the skills of self-evaluation through discussing their work with their teachers and examining what they have done. Children develop good knowledge of school routines in the Nursery through the excellent balance between structured whole class and group learning and independent choice.

22. From the moment the children enter the Nursery or Reception, their world each day is filled with language and no area of English is taught in isolation. Many are quite fluent in English by the time they leave Nursery and the majority speak at least in simple sentences and have enough vocabulary to let others know what they want to say, although pronunciation is not always yet accurate. Whilst a significant minority is very articulate and has a good vocabulary, a small minority still has a limited range of vocabulary and grammar. Children listen attentively, often with sound comprehension. They enjoy stories, rhymes and jingles. They learn to recognise their names and initial sounds and the teachers use every opportunity to enable this to happen, for example milk cartons are carefully labelled with their names and the children quickly learn to pick out their own carton. Children learn how to handle books carefully and, from the earliest Nursery days, develop a love of books.

23. A very stimulating Nursery environment which encourages the children to learn is provided. There are rich language opportunities, especially linked with scientific and technological learning. For example, the children have been growing their own grass for their large model garden and have been delighted each day to watch this grow, understanding fully the conditions needed for growth. In one excellent group activity the teacher aroused the children's sense of wonder when they looked at the buds of "pussy willow" and marvelled about the differences between hyacinth and amaryllis buds. The teacher's high quality questioning and explanations greatly extended the children's speaking, listening and thinking skills. Opportunities for the pupils to learn about their physical world are just as good.

24. The design of play settings is excellent. Sand trays and ramps are used to help the children to observe physical differences in their world, for example, when they run their toy cars up and down ramps with or without sand or change the slope of the ramp. Some excellent group learning was seen when, in a dark room, the children investigated the effects of light shining on a glitter ball and twisting and turning shapes. The development of mathematical skills receives just as much emphasis and every opportunity is provided to enable the children to count for a real purpose, through actions as well as words. For example, a Nursery nurse worked with children as they poured jugs of water into a large container and counted with them. Children also learn to use the computer confidently and competently and this is a popular activity for many children.

25. Since the previous inspection, there have been very good improvements in provision in the Nursery.

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, in partnership with her deputy headteacher, encourages teachers and pupils to do their best and to seek constant improvement

26. The school's main aim is to provide a high quality learning environment, which meets the diverse needs of the community it serves. All staff have a strong commitment to achieving equal opportunities and ensuring all, including those who enter at a disadvantage, develop their talents fully. The school's success stems from the headteacher's vision and quest for developing a broad and rigorous curriculum in a relaxed, friendly primary school atmosphere. Pupils and teachers thrive in this happy and challenging environment. Parents are very appreciative of the way pupils develop and leave the school as confident and well educated eleven-year olds.

27. The headteacher has successfully inspired and motivated a dedicated staff that continually strives to achieve the highest standards possible. In order to do this, she works in partnership with her very capable deputy who shares her vision for teaching and learning. The school improvement planning process is shared with staff and governors, and, once agreed, the purposes for improvement form the basis for determined future action. The school rigorously analyses its assessment data and, on the basis of this information, evaluates its teaching methods. The headteacher, deputy and subject co-ordinators rigorously monitor teaching and, as a result of this, individual targets are set.

28. The school has improved dramatically since the headteacher took over six years ago. Whereas, then, it did not have a good reputation in the community, numbers had fallen, and parents' comments indicate there was some very disruptive behaviour. It is now a school where pupils behave and achieve very well. There are now three applicants for every one place and the school is a Beacon School, which is used to train teachers in other schools. This title is very well deserved.

29. The headteacher, from the first, recognised the key to improvement lay in transforming the quality of teaching and learning. Staff have responded very well to this challenge and many gain promotion in other schools after working at Myatt Garden Primary School. Senior staff have responsibilities for different roles and the appointment of an overall curriculum co-ordinator has enabled the school to manage and teach an excellently co-ordinated and well-planned curriculum. Subject co-ordinators' roles are developed very well and this influences positively the standards achieved.

30. The school has a very effective approach to staff development. It has provided some very strong role models of teachers who have excellent subject expertise and classroom practice. This has been particularly effective in English, art and information and communication technology. For example, the deputy headteacher was a literacy consultant employed by the local authority. The art teacher is an art specialist. The school's policy for supporting teachers by providing specialists to work alongside them, as well as monitoring their teaching, is having an excellent impact on raising standards.

31. An important factor in all the improvements since the previous inspection has been the school's ability to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses thoroughly and accurately and to take effective action. The school often uses hard evidence to enable it to do this. For example, there are rigorous assessment and tracking procedures to measure the progress that each pupil is making. The policy for performance management is now in place and all teaching staff have been appraised. Targets have been set in order to raise standards of attainment throughout the school. The governing body has also completed the appraisal of the headteacher and set targets. Staff appraisal was a weakness previously although it is now a strength.

32. The close links between the school and parents foster the excellent progress that pupils now make. The majority of parents say that they are very pleased that such a high quality education is available in Brockley. The school is outward looking and constantly seeks to improve. The governors are closely involved with the school and work effectively with the headteacher in determining the direction the school takes. Governors are well trained and are very well led by the Chair and Vice Chair of governors. They monitor the work of the school carefully and provide valuable support. Funds are managed prudently and very efficiently. The school carried forward a considerable sum of money during the last academic year. This was prudent management as the school had saved for some building work in order to improve the learning environment. It had also retained money for the development of information and communication technology in order to fulfil the training programme in the school development plan. The school is at the heart of the community it serves and meets its diverse needs very well by very effective management and the quality of education it provides.

33. Since the previous inspection, there have been further improvements to the leadership and management of the school. The previous report described the headteacher's leadership as strong and caring and the close teamwork between staff and governors was enabling the school to move forward. The further strengthening of this effective team, systems for improvement and staff development have transformed this school to an excellent school

The school provides a very high quality curriculum that often crosses subject barriers. Pupils' ideas are valued and teachers successfully encourage pupils' creativity as well as the rigorous development of their knowledge.

34. Curriculum planning is excellent. A striking feature is the way teachers often make pupils' learning relevant and make very effective use of time by providing real problems which cross subject barriers. There are some excellent subject links between history, art and design and technology. In a very good project in Year 6, which combined art and design and technology, pupils achieved excellent standards when they designed and made life size chairs in the shape of animals using paper and paste techniques and combined them with construction materials. The quality of the designing and making process was very good whilst the quality of finish was excellent. After visiting the British Museum, Year 3 pupils designed and made model Egyptian jewellery producing high quality work in both art and design and technology. Throughout the school, the teachers use practical work to bring history to life and there are many excellent examples of such work.

35. An excellent project occurred when Year 4 pupils designed and made Roman sandals. In this project, science, design and technology, art and mathematics were linked with history. The pupils attained very high standards because the knowledge and skills in each subject were addressed rigorously. In science, the pupils investigated which papers would be strong enough for shoes' soles and successfully applied both scientific enquiry skills and knowledge when designing and making. The quality of finish was excellent as a result of the way that pupils applied art so skilfully.

36. Teachers successfully use a range of teaching styles so that pupils are as at ease when learning facts, developing and practising skills as when expressing ideas and developing their creativity. This is evident throughout the curriculum and is very strong in English, art, design and technology, music and in graphic design in computer work. The depth and breadth of teachers' subject knowledge and skills enables them to use confidently a range of styles, teach subjects rigorously and to enable the pupils to develop flexible learning styles.

37. In a very good music lesson in Year 5, there was very good teaching of the interrelated skills of listening and appraising, composing and performing. The pupils, after listening to "March to the Scaffold", worked in small groups to create their own compositions. Pupils' good subject knowledge

enabled them to use symbols and names of notes to record their compositions. Their compositions were of a high quality and pupils skilfully used drums, flutes, guitars, xylophones and a small keyboard as well as small percussion instruments when presenting their music.

38. The school emphasises the performing arts and has currently been awarded a sum of money by Lewisham Local Education Authority to develop a project “Acting out Stories” for younger pupils. A very good lesson on acting out stories was seen in Year 1. The pupils were encouraged to act out stories they had written, whilst the storywriter was the main character, other pupils entered into the drama by producing sound effects, for example, making the sound of a fire engine. This was a highly effective way of encouraging the pupils to listen carefully and understand meaning. It also showed the pupils models of story writing and capitalised on their ability to learn through watching and identifying with their peers. The lesson very strongly developed pupils’ confidence in their own ability to generate ideas and know their ideas are valued.

39. There are often excellent links between art and design, drama and English and one such link was seen when the pupils wrote their poetic odes to the elements of fire, water, earth or air. Prior to writing their odes, the pupils had been given very high quality first hand experience. They worked with an art and drama charity L’Overture and made two-dimensional images. This led to the pupils creating exciting theatrical costumes and sculptures, depicting the elements of fire, water, earth and air. This gave the pupils an excellent understanding, inspiration and interest in creating imagery to represent the elements. Their outstanding poetry would not have been possible without such rich first hand experience and the ability to visualise words.

40. Since the previous inspection, the school has made excellent improvements to its curriculum planning and all statutory requirements for religious education, music and science are met.

Pupils behave very well and racial harmony is excellent. This results from very good provision for pupils’ personal development and very good relationships that are built on mutual respect and trust.

41. Warm caring relationships permeate all school life. The headteacher and staff know their pupils very well and show much concern for their personal as well as their academic development. Pupils feel valued, comfortable and secure which is a cornerstone for their learning. Relationships are very good and the pupils are encouraged to celebrate their own and other pupils’ successes as well as expressing any concerns. The school nurtures all its pupils and makes every effort to ensure that they can adapt to school life and learn successfully.

42. Teachers manage their pupils very well. They expect and encourage good behaviour by establishing classroom routines and rules so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Nevertheless a significant proportion of pupils enter school with challenging behaviour. Since the last inspection, some very good work has been done to include the few who have, at times, found it harder to sustain positive relationships. The school has run anger management sessions to enable pupils to understand and control their own behaviour more successfully. The school is very successful in promoting co-operative attitudes and very good relationships amongst all pupils, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or special educational need. Pupils thrive in an atmosphere which engenders positive attitudes. As a result of an exciting curriculum, and the support they receive to help them to learn, pupils are enthusiastic, interested and fully involved in their tasks. Very few examples of pupils losing concentration or employing time wasting tactics were evident during the course of the inspection. The school is a caring well-ordered community that develops the will to succeed in all pupils.

43. During the inspection the pupils' behaviour was nearly always at least good, often very good and occasionally excellent. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate to each other and to adults and are well mannered. They make a strong contribution to the life of the community and movement around school is usually very orderly. Playtime behaviour is very good. Pupils play well together and the degree of racial harmony is very high. Pupils' personal development is well supported by a programme of personal, social and health education and many take part in the wide range of extra curricular activities. Residential visits and a wide range of high quality relevant outside visits support pupils' personal development. During the inspection many opportunities for pupils to work together in small teams were observed where pupils used their initiative and made joint decisions. For example, in science, when Year 6 pupils solved the problem of creating a parachute which would drop as slowly as possible, pupils worked together and shared ideas, often allocating tasks and working successfully as a team so the job was done efficiently.

44. Pupils' behaviour has improved since the last inspection, when it was good. This is reflected in fewer school exclusions. In the last academic year, one pupil was excluded on a fixed term and a permanent exclusion. This is considerably lower than the above average rate of exclusion found at the time of the last inspection, when it was necessary to exclude pupils more regularly in order to maintain a high standard of behaviour and an orderly school community.

45. Since the previous inspection, the school has made very good improvements to provision for pupils' personal development. Spiritual development is now good whilst moral, social and cultural development are very good. At the time of the last inspection, spiritual development was unsatisfactory, cultural development was only satisfactory and provision for moral and social development was good.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The systematic provision for gifted and talented pupils

46. The school has a small proportion of pupils who are very able and talented. The school is keen to provide for these pupils and to recognise a broad range of talents. It has already identified this as an area in need of further development and has already started to identify these pupils. Whilst pupils are sometimes provided for in individual lessons, especially in subjects such as English and art where standards of teaching and teachers' subject knowledge are often very good or excellent, this is not systematic. Nor is it the case in all subjects. The school, this year, is hoping to enter several pupils for Level 6 national tests in English, mathematics and science. The headteacher is a member of a working party, consisting of several headteachers from the Lewisham area, who are examining how these pupils' talents might be fully met in primary schools. The school is also taking part in a computer robotics course that is aimed at providing for talented pupils.

47. However, there are no formal monitoring procedures for gifted and talented pupils. During the inspection, the provision for gifted and talented pupils was found to be sometimes lacking in mathematics and science. For example, in Year 2 and Year 6 science lessons observed, the teaching of scientific enquiry and knowledge often did not progress beyond average levels, mainly because of the limitations of teachers' own skills in the subject.

Attendance and punctuality. A few pupils attend irregularly and are late for school which slows down their progress

48. Attendance improved in the 2001 Autumn term and the attendance rate was 94 per cent. This was because of an improvement in the high rate of unauthorised absence that was found in the 2000/2001 academic year, which caused the school's attendance rate to be well below average. The improvement was achieved through the help of the education welfare officer targeting a few families who were causing the school's unsatisfactory attendance figures. The school has correct procedures in place to ensure good attendance and punctuality and is working hard to improve both. A few pupils are regularly late and this is an area the school is also addressing with the help of the education welfare officer.

49. Since the previous inspection, attendance has declined. Punctuality has not improved as a few pupils are still late.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

*** (1) Ensure the provision for gifted and talented pupils is more systematic so they are consistently challenged and achieve their best by:** (paragraphs 46-47)

- providing consistent opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to achieve their best including in mathematics, science and technology as well as in the arts;
- reflecting carefully on the best ways to provide for these pupils and link with other agencies where appropriate;
- ensuring teachers are trained to teach subjects at a rigorous enough level where necessary;
- monitoring the progress of the gifted and talented pupils and the school's strategies for teaching them.

***(2) Improve attendance and punctuality because a few pupils attend irregularly and are late for school by:** (paragraphs 48-49)

- continuing to work with the education welfare officer to ensure unauthorised absence decreases;
- monitoring and evaluating the approaches to improving attendance in order to ensure they are consistently rigorous and attendance is always good enough;
- raising expectations of parents, in the minority of cases where it is needed, to ensure their children arrive on time for the beginning of the day and continuing to monitor reasons for lateness rigorously.

* Already identified as an area for improvement by the school

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

33

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	12	10	9	2	0	0	0
Percentage	36	31	27	6	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 three, percentage points.. Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.

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)	76	456
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	120

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	98

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	101

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	68

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.6

School data	1.9
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	29	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	27
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	49	50	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84(84)	86(84)	91(93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	24
	Girls	26	25	25
	Total	48	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(81)	84(86)	84(91)
	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	27	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	25	26
	Girls	27	26	28
	Total	50	51	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89(75)	91(90)	96(90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	24	26
	Girls	24	26	27
	Total	44	50	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(n/a)	89(n/a)	95(n/a)
	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	54
Black – African heritage	18
Black – other	78
Indian	1
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	45

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)	17.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	302.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.5
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

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	1
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	2000/1
	£
Total income	1,221,838
Total expenditure	1,154,793
Expenditure per pupil	2589
Balance brought forward from previous year	9397
Balance carried forward to next year	76,442

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	456
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	25	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	37	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	70	27	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	38	7	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	22	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	55	37	3	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	74	24	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	30	7	1	11

Other issues raised by parents

Most parents are very pleased with all the school has to offer and the progress their children make. A few parents would like to see improvements in sports. The school has recently appointed a new co-ordinator and the inspection team found sporting opportunities for the pupils to be good.