

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **AB KETTLEBY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ab Kettleby, Nr Melton Mowbray

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119902

Headteacher: Mr P J Fisher

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pat Kime  
25350

Dates of inspection: 15 – 16 January 2002

Inspection number: 197457

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: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wartnaby Road  
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Nr Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE14 3JJ

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Corah

Date of previous inspection: 17 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ab Kettleby Community Primary School is much smaller than the average English primary school. It serves a mixed rural community. The school incorporates a community centre and this is reflected in its funding. There are 43 pupils in Years 1 to 6 (27 boys and 16 girls) and 8 girls in the Foundation Stage (the reception year) and several come from beyond the school's 'catchment area'. The pupils are divided into two classes but very generous staffing means that for several lessons they are taught in smaller groups. All the pupils are white and of UK heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. None of the pupils are currently in receipt of free school meals. When children start in reception their level of attainment varies greatly between children and from year to year. Taken overall, children's attainment on entry is a little below what is typical for their age. The school has identified 11 pupils (22 per cent) as having special educational needs. Only one of them has significant difficulties and none carry statements of special educational needs. The rate of pupil mobility varies but in some year groups, notably Year 6, there has been a lot of movement of pupils in and out during their primary education. For the last two years the school has had more children's names down for reception places than it can admit.

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

Ab Kettleby Community Primary School provides a caring family atmosphere in which pupils do well. It offers a broad curriculum, good pastoral care and good education for personal development. The teaching is good. Pupils achieve high standards in the national tests (SATs) and develop into well-rounded youngsters. Costs are high; there are no economies of scale and the school is very generously staffed. Nevertheless, the school's many strengths and the very good results in the SATs mean the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school gives the children a good start to their education.
- Pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science (core subjects). They do very well in the SATs.
- Pupils are taught well. They gain in learning at a very good rate in the reception year, and in English, mathematics and science at a very good rate in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 they build well on what they have previously achieved in these subjects. This is the result of good teaching in small classes.
- Pupils respond well to the good pastoral care and good provision for their personal development. The majority develop into thoughtful, responsible and trustworthy youngsters, who form positive relationships. They are keen on school and they want to learn.
- In Years 3 to 6 there are a good number of extras in the curriculum.
- The headteacher provides good leadership. He gets the best out of the staff and is well regarded by parents and governors.

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

- Standards in most of the other subjects, at the top of the school, are not as high as in English, mathematics and science.
- The planning of work and checking on pupils' learning in non-core subjects needs sharpening up.
- The standard of behaviour of a small number of pupils sometimes has a detrimental effect on the atmosphere for learning in their classes.
- Children in the reception class could have more opportunities to learn through play.

*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 September 1997. Since then it has improved at a good rate.

All the key issues from the last inspection report have been dealt with, for the most part well.

- The planning of work has improved satisfactorily, although the planning for several non-core subjects still needs to be developed further.
- The use of assessment to guide the planning of what to teach is a lot better.
- The staff undertake a good amount of additional training.

Additionally

- The quality of teaching is better.
- Tests results at the end of Year 6 have been well above average every year since the last inspection.

The many recent changes to the membership of the governing body mean that, despite good potential, lack of experience means that the contribution of governors is not currently as strong as at the time of the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

Pupils' results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, often known as SATs, are not given in detail because, at each key stage, fewer than ten pupils took the tests. The small numbers, occasionally as few as two pupils, mean the interpretation of test results requires caution.

- Year 6 pupils are tested in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. The nine pupils who took the Key Stage 2 tests in 2001 attained high standards in all three subjects.
- For the last five years the school's results in the Key Stage 2 SATs have consistently been much higher than the national average, quite often in the top five per cent nationally.
- Standards in the present Year 6 (6 pupils) are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Year 2 pupils are tested in reading, writing and mathematics and their teachers assess their attainment in science. The eight Year 2 pupils in 2001 did very well. They attained high standards in all the tests and teacher assessments. The school's results in the Key Stage 1 SATs have been much higher than the national average for the last four years and sometimes in the top five per cent nationally.
- Standards in the present Year 2 (8 pupils) are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The reception children are a better than average group for the school. Those who have been in school for a term are working confidently at the level expected for their age. They are on course to exceed the standards expected for their age, by the end of the year.
- In the other subjects standards at the top of the school are generally average. However, pupils attain above average standards in swimming, in aspects of music (playing the recorder and in unison singing), and in much of their work in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils make progress at a very good rate in English, mathematics and science. This represents very good achievement in these subjects. In the other National Curriculum subjects (design and technology, art and design, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education and religious education) pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. It is good in swimming and playing the recorder.
- Pupils with special educational needs make at least good progress in English, mathematics and science. Several of them reach average standards in the Key Stage 2 SATs.
- All the Years 5 and 6 pupils study French and they reach a very good standard for their age.
- The school sets appropriately high targets for pupils' attainment in the SATs. The targets are securely based on teachers' knowledge of how each individual is doing.





## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils enjoy school, they want to learn and they try hard at their work. They get involved in all the activities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory; most pupils are consistently well behaved in lessons and informal situations. A significant minority are fussy and rather noisy at times. A small number sometimes spoil lessons for their classmates, because they behave unacceptably.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils take responsibility sensibly and contribute to school life. Most of them are considerate and tolerant of others and have very good relationships with staff.
Attendance	Very good; attendance rates are well above the national average.

## 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.*

- Taken overall the quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- The combined effects of good teaching and small classes mean that:
  - a) pupils gain in their learning at a very good rate in English, mathematics and science;
  - b) work is well matched to pupils' learning needs in these subjects; and
  - c) children in the reception class make very good progress in most areas of their learning.
- There are several common strengths in the teaching.
  - a) Teaching of the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is effective. This results in high standards in English and mathematics and above average basic computing skills and confidence in the use of ICT.
  - b) Homework is used very well to reinforce and extend what pupils have learned in class.
  - c) The support staff are used very well and they make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
  - d) Staff establish very good relationships with the pupils whilst remaining very focused on the work in hand. They motivate the pupils who know how they are doing, want to achieve well, and for the most part work industriously and productively.
- In the most effective lessons teachers use questions skillfully, to extend pupils' thinking, to deepen their understanding, to get them to think for themselves, and to check what they have learned. They maintain good discipline in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere. Consequently lessons are orderly and pupils try hard.
- When teaching is less effective one or more of the following features are present. Firstly, teachers' strategies for maintaining good order are not robust enough to deal with a few pupils whose unacceptable behaviour has a 'ripple effect'. Secondly, work is not so carefully matched to pupils' differing needs. Thirdly, in the full class teaching part of some 'literacy and numeracy hours' the pace of learning slows as separate work is covered with each year group.
- The school meets all its pupils' learning needs well overall. Pupils with special educational needs get the help they need and expectations are generally set suitably high for the higher performing pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall; literacy and numeracy skills get good attention. All pupils have equal access to what the school offers. In Key Stage 2 the curriculum provides a lot of opportunities beyond what is required. All pupils benefit from swimming lessons. The reception children have limited opportunities to learn through play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; these pupils' needs are properly identified. The pupils get the help they need from teachers and well-briefed support staff. This means they are included in class lessons and they make good progress in the light of their learning difficulties.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good; the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is rooted in the school's ethos which promotes sound values, values individuals and encourages thoughtfulness and tolerance. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There is scope to develop multicultural education and to plan more systematically for all aspects of pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is good and all staff follow the headteacher's example of concern for each individual pupil. The school provides a safe learning environment. Staff keep a good check on where pupils are up to in English and mathematics and they use this information well.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well. He is committed to the school and to the pupils' wellbeing. He has a clear vision of the sort of school he wants Ab Kettleby to be, which is shared by staff, governors and parents. He has secured a high level of commitment from the staff who are keen to improve their work and who work well together with a strong sense of common purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily; governors know enough about how the school is doing and they are sufficiently involved in making decisions about its future. Difficulties recruiting and retaining governors mean that there is little experience of school governance. Several of the governors have a lot to offer the school and they are keen to learn and to develop their work. There is good potential for them to achieve this.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school keeps a good track of how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics. Staff check the SATs results carefully to see which aspects of teaching are most and least effective and take action to remedy any shortcomings. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching. Staff and governors have, for the most part, identified the right priorities for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school's income is high for the number of pupils but the available funds are spent wisely. Funds are used to keep a high level of support staff and to enrich the curriculum. The principles of best value are applied well, particularly in the very good consultation with parents about what the school provides.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The teaching is good. The staff expect their children to work hard and the children are making good progress and are developing maturity and responsibility.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• They find the staff approachable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

Thirty-two of the fifty inspection questionnaires were returned and ten parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. Parents have a very positive view of the school. The inspectors agree with parents' view of where the school's strengths lie. Although there is only one 'club', that for homework, the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for a school this size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **The school gives children a good start to their education.**

1. This good start is largely down to very generous staffing and skilled teaching in a small group.
2. Children start in the reception year in either September or January, depending on their date of birth. They join a class that consists of reception pupils and those in Years 1 and 2. Very good quality pastoral care and a high degree of liaison with parents help these young children to settle into school life quickly. Parents recognise and value this. They say their children quickly gain confidence.
3. The class is very generously staffed with a teacher and a full-time nursery nurse for the eight reception children and the thirteen pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is a key contributory factor to pupils' very good achievement from entering school to the end of Key Stage 1 because it permits small teaching groups. The teacher and nursery nurse work in a close and effective partnership, for example planning the work together. They make a very good team.
4. The nursery nurse makes a valuable contribution. Her skills have been recognised by the class teacher, who deploys her very well. She is trusted to take a lot of responsibility for the reception children's work. The teacher and nursery nurse plan the children's work together. The nursery nurse puts the flesh on the bones of these plans and, for many activities, she teaches the reception children separately from the rest of the class. For instance, she takes them for sessions on early reading, writing and mathematical work. This arrangement works well. It means that work is usually matched well to the children's learning needs and the children gain confidence in a small group.
5. The nursery nurse's teaching is very effective and the children make rapid progress in their learning. For example, the children who started in September already know the sounds made by a good number of letters and they form them correctly when they write. Their attempts at independent writing reveal a good ability to use what they know. For instance, a child's attempt at 'tummy' includes the letters 't' and 'm'. The children 'know their numbers'. They recognise numbers up to ten and match sets of objects to the correct numerals. They count beyond ten and have a good understanding of the ideas of addition and subtraction, for their age. The nursery nurse makes the most of practical activities, such as making egg sandwiches, to move children on in many aspects of learning (see below – 'teaching and learning in reception and Key Stage 1').
6. The decision to deploy staff to create small teaching groups at this stage represents good use of the available funds. Very firm foundations are laid that underpin pupils' future learning and achievement.

**Pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science (core subjects). They do very well in the SATs.**

### SATs results

7. There are no more than nine pupils in each year group so the number taking the national tests (SATs) is small, occasionally as few as two. Consequently caution is needed in interpreting the results or drawing conclusions about trends. Nevertheless, the consistently high results suggest that pupils are doing well. For the last five years the pupils' results in the Key Stage 2 SATs have been well above the national average in all the tests (English, mathematics and science). The 2000 and 2001 leavers' results were well above the average for similar schools\*.
8. Pupils' results in the Key Stage 1 SATs have fluctuated more but, taken overall and over the same periods, they have been well above the national average and the average for similar schools.

*\* Similar schools are those across the country where less than eight per cent of pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals.*

### Standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science

9. There has been quite a lot of mobility in the present Year 6. Pupils have come to the school during Key Stage 2, sometimes quite late on. The standards these pupils are attaining now are at least as much a reflection of the provision at their previous schools as that at Ab Kettleby. The standards in this year are not quite as high as those seen in the SATs tests over the last few years.

### English

#### Key Stage 1

10. Taken overall, the standard of the Year 2 pupils' work is above average for their age. Most of the pupils have already reached the level expected at the end of the year (National Curriculum Level 2) and the lower attaining pupils are on course to reach it. The higher attainers are set to attain Level 3. These standards represent very good achievement.
11. The pupils read appropriately demanding material aloud confidently and expressively in literacy hours and when they read their reading books. They correct themselves when they make mistakes, showing that they understand what they read.
12. In their independent writing they structure stories well. They write in sentences and mark them correctly with full stops and capital letters. They include a definite beginning, some action in the middle and a satisfying ending. Their handwriting is neat with well-formed letters but they do not yet join their letters. Standards of spelling are, for the most part, good for their age and the pupils' errors are usually plausible attempts to apply what they know about the sounds letters make. The higher attainers reach a particularly good standard in writing. For example, they quite often use inverted commas correctly to indicate speech and they choose words carefully for effect.

## Key Stage 2

13. Standards are equally high, in relation to the pupils' age, in Year 6 and they represent good achievement. The pupils read and understand 'meaty' books and they have a good sense of character. For example a lower attaining pupil explained clearly what led him to think one of the characters in his book was a baddie'. These pupils have preferences for particular authors. They all have appropriate reference skills. They know how to use a reference system to find books on a particular topic.
14. Standards of writing are securely above average. These pupils' writing is often imaginative. They all plan their written work and the higher attaining pupils have a very good command of story form. They adapt their written style well for different readers. For example, a higher attainer started the story of Red Riding Hood for streetwise kids with, 'There the old fogey was snoring away with a yucky book on her lap. "Yep that biddys asleep alright", Wolfie said'. The pupils set a context for a story and develop their ideas well. Several of the pupils are developing a feeling for the use of language as the following examples show.
  - When writing about Aladdin in work related to the Christmas pantomime, an average attainer wrote, 'The further he got the more gold he could see, it grew like a plant'.
  - In an imaginative story a higher attainer wrote, 'Well little baby car was very scared. He said, "I shot downstairs like a bullet from a gun".'
15. Standards of spelling vary considerably between pupils but, taken overall, they are good. Punctuation is generally quite good.

## Mathematics

### Key Stage 1

16. Standards are above average and this represents very good achievement. Most of the Year 2 pupils are set to achieve National Curriculum Level 2 and quite a few are on course to reach Level 3 in most aspects of the subject. Most of the pupils understand that the position of a digit in a number determines its value (place value). They know addition and subtraction facts up to 20 and they add two-digit numbers accurately. They have a sound understanding of early multiplication and count confidently in fives and tens. They understand the concept of fractions as parts of a whole and work with halves and quarters. Their knowledge and understanding of shapes is confident at the level expected by the end of the year and they understand and use standard measures, for instance they measure length accurately in centimetres.

### Key Stage 2

17. Most of the Year 6 pupils are set to attain the standard expected for their age, National Curriculum Level 4, by the end of the year, in most aspects of the subject, and some are on target to reach Level 5. This represents good achievement. The pupils have a good understanding of numbers up to 1,000. They use decimals confidently and understand place value to three decimal places. For example, they can nearly all add 0.75 and 0.75, and most of them divided 9.7 by 10 correctly. They understand the relationship between  $1.6 \times 3$  and  $16 \times 3$ . Their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures are good. For example, they draw angles accurately and know

the difference between acute and obtuse angles and they understand area and perimeter.

## Science

### Key Stage 1

18. It was only possible to see evidence of standards in one aspect of the subject, physical processes. Almost all the Year 2 pupils are already working at the level expected by the end of the year. They know that a battery is a source of electrical power. They have made simple circuits and they explain about using 'crocodile clips' and how to make a brighter light. They name many household items that are powered by electricity. When they watched a video about life in the past, they quickly identified wrongly placed items, such as a microwave oven and flashing neon lights, that could not have been from the period in question because they needed electricity. The higher attaining pupils understand how water can be harnessed to provide energy.

### Key Stage 2

19. The Year 6 pupils are working confidently at the level expected by the end of the year in all aspects of the subject in which work was seen (scientific enquiry, life processes and living things and physical processes). These standards represent good achievement. No work was seen on materials and their properties. All the Year 6 pupils have covered the same work but the higher attainers have greater knowledge and deeper understanding.
20. In their experimental work the pupils make informed predictions. For example, from their knowledge of habitats they predicted that they would find woodlice concentrated in places that offered damp, dark conditions. They produce good quality diagrams and they interpret charts and graphs accurately. Most of them draw appropriate conclusions from the results of their scientific experiments. Although they record their findings clearly and accurately they do not always use an appropriate format.
21. They have a good knowledge of living things and how they are classified and they create 'branching keys' to aid classification. For instance, the lower attaining pupils classify creatures as fish, amphibians or insects, and the others take this further, for example classifying woodlice as crustaceans.
22. They have good knowledge and understanding of physical processes. For example, they are knowledgeable about light. They understand how a twisted elastic band stores energy that can be used to power movement because they saw it in action when they made their 'coke can rollers'. An average attainer explained that 'when you are winding it up the rubber band twists and stores energy'.

**Pupils are taught well. They gain in learning at a very good rate in the reception year, and in English, mathematics and science at a very good rate in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 they build well on what they have previously achieved in these subjects. This is the result of good teaching in small classes.**

23. The school's very generous staffing means that the pupils are often taught in small groups. The eight reception children and the thirteen pupils in Years 1 and 2 cover a lot of their work in two separate groups. The 30 pupils in Years 3 to 6 are split into two groups for English, mathematics and science lessons.

24. The good teaching, combined with these small classes, enables the pupils to do well as staff match the demands of the work well to pupils' different learning needs, so that all the pupils are brought on well in these subjects. As a result, they achieve very well in the reception year. In English, mathematics and science they gain ground in their learning at a very good rate overall from Year 1 to Year 6.

#### The quality of teaching and learning in reception (Foundation Stage) and Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1)

25. Much work is taught very well in the reception year. The nursery nurse makes the most of every opportunity to move the children forward in their learning. In one lesson the children made egg sandwiches. They used hand lenses to look closely at raw eggs before they boiled eggs to make their sandwiches. This activity was very effective in helping the children to develop early scientific understanding and skills and descriptive language. They improved their observational skills and their understanding of how substances change when subjected to heat. The experience was greatly enriched for the children by the judicious use of simple, relevant reference books about poultry and other creatures that lay eggs. The nursery nurse used the opportunities afforded by these books to help the children develop early research skills and to introduce mathematical concepts, such as investigating the relationship between the sizes of different creatures and the sizes of their eggs. At every stage in this lesson the nursery nurse used questions very well to get the children thinking. For example, she did not simply show the children how to crack the egg shells when they were initially unsuccessful, but asked them 'how else could we break the egg shell?'. When looking at the books with the children she asked 'how do you think it got out of its shell?'. The children were very enthusiastic about making their sandwiches, and they tried very hard to produce good results. For instance, they made great efforts to master the new skill of using an egg slicer. They were interested in the reference books and pointed things out in them eagerly.
26. A mathematics lesson with Years 1 and 2 pupils showed many of the strengths in teaching in Key Stage 1. The teacher's good knowledge and understanding of the subject enabled her to move pupils on well in their understanding of how the number system works. For instance, she developed work on tens and units well to show how, for example,  $4 + 10$  relates to  $14 + 10$  and  $24 + 10$ . She has established very good, encouraging and supportive relationships with the pupils. This enhances their learning because they have the confidence to try hard work and to admit if they do not understand something. The teacher organised the group work phase of the numeracy hour well. She set the Year 1 pupils a worthwhile activity that gave them a good opportunity to practise new work independently. This freed her to teach more advanced work to the older pupils. She expected a lot of the pupils both academically and in their personal development.

#### The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2)

27. There is much good teaching in Key Stage 2. Well taught lessons were observed in English and mathematics and pupils' books show that, in science, expectations of what pupils can achieve are set high. The quality of teaching in the music and physical education lessons seen was good.
28. Many of the strengths in the good teaching in this key stage were evident in English and mathematics lessons with Year 5 and 6 pupils.



- The teacher picked up well on things the pupils did not fully understand from the last lesson and in the current lesson and adapted what was planned to give extra attention to these points. For example, in the mathematics lesson, a few pupils found 'rounding' to the nearest 10 or 100 confusing. The teacher went over this again and then checked that all the pupils understood it. This approach helps the pupils to know how they are doing and ensures that they have the confidence to admit it when they do not understand, because they know they will get the support and help they need to overcome any difficulties. This motivates them well so they are very keen to understand their work and they try really hard.
  - Teachers use carefully chosen resources well to help pupils understand the key points of the lesson. For instance, the Years 5 and 6 English lesson was about writing in different styles or 'genres' according to the needs of the intended reader. The teacher used several different versions of 'Little Red Riding Hood' to illustrate this point very effectively. The pupils produced work of a good standard when they wrote the story in a style appropriate for 'streetwise kids', showing that the lesson had enabled them to make good progress in this aspect of writing. Resources, including ICT, were also used well in a geography lesson for all the pupils in Key Stage 2. This meant that, although the pupils were at different stages in their learning, all made progress.
  - The teacher creates a very positive atmosphere for learning that is rooted in very good relationships and concern for each individual. He has a good rapport with the pupils and gets a high level of commitment to achievement from them. For instance, in the English lesson, pupils were drawn into thinking deeply about the different versions of the story and why the authors had written them in particular styles.
29. Teachers use homework very well in this key stage. The tasks they set for pupils to do at home are based on what has been done in class. They set worthwhile activities that consolidate and extend pupils' learning. For instance, in English, the Year 3 and 4 pupils were set different homework depending on the work they had done in the lesson. This meant that it was appropriate for all pupils. Homework makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

**Pupils respond well to the good pastoral care and good provision for their personal development. The majority develop into thoughtful, responsible and trustworthy youngsters, who form positive relationships. They are keen on school and they want to learn.**

#### Pupils' attitudes to school and learning

30. The pupils are keen on school. This is seen in their very good attendance and their willing participation in all aspects of school life. Indeed, parents say 'they can't keep them away!'. Pupils appreciate what the school offers and say that they enjoy their school work and, to quote one boy in Year 6, 'everything's nice'.
31. Pupils make good use of the opportunities they are offered. For instance, they come into school early to work on computers, a good number learn to play musical instruments, and a lot attend the homework club. From the moment they arrive each morning they are involved in learning. In lessons they get down to work well and contribute sensibly to discussions. They show a good degree of maturity in the way that they work well at times when there is a minimum amount of supervision.

### Pupils' personal development

32. Most of the pupils achieve good standards in their spiritual, moral and social development.
33. They understand what it means to be a contributing member of a community. For example, they contribute their views about school matters, such as the rules, timetable changes, and what games to play in physical education lessons. They take a good degree of responsibility in day-to-day school life and they all take a full part in school events like the Christmas pantomime and the Carol Concert.
34. Pupils use their initiative in everyday matters. For example, in assembly, one of the older pupils unobtrusively provided a chair and hymn book for a visitor and one of the younger ones organised the collection of hymn books as his class left the hall, again without any fuss.
35. They know the difference between right and wrong. They understand the school rules and, for the most part, accept the standards set for their behaviour. Most pupils have a good awareness of how their behaviour affects others but a small number find it hard to control their behaviour. The standard of pupils' behaviour is linked to teachers' ability to maintain good discipline. Pupils learn to respect people's different beliefs and they develop the confidence to explain their own.

### Relationships

36. Relationships between pupils are good and between staff and pupils they are generally very good. Pupils value these positive, friendly relationships; the way boys and girls get on harmoniously; the total absence of bullying; and the way the teachers treat them, helping them with their work and consulting them about school life. Most pupils show a good degree of consideration for others, they are tolerant of differences and they work together co-operatively in lessons and more informal situations. For instance, in lessons the older pupils listen to each other courteously.

### Pastoral care

37. Pupils benefit from this small school's caring, family atmosphere. Every one of them is known to the staff and valued as an individual. The headteacher sets a good example of concern for every pupil's wellbeing and all-round development. He recognises the importance of building self-esteem and confidence. The quality of care is underpinned by the very good relationships that staff establish with their pupils. Pupils have the confidence to admit when they do not fully understand their work. Consequently the staff are able to support pupils' learning well.
38. The staff keep a good track of how pupils are getting on in English and mathematics. They pick up quickly on any who are slipping behind or who have special educational needs and give them the help they need to do as well as they can. Equally, particularly able pupils are brought on well. Those with musical talent have good opportunities to develop their skills. The good range of opportunities to try different sports means that those with talents in this area of learning are identified and encouraged to pursue their interest.
39. Staff pay good attention to health and safety matters and the arrangements for child protection are entirely satisfactory.

### The provision for pupils' personal development

40. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well and provides satisfactorily for their cultural development. The strengths in this provision are embedded in the school's ethos.
41. The school promotes sound values and encourages and rewards good behaviour, and the staff set a good example by upholding the values the school stands for in all their dealings with pupils. There is a satisfactory behaviour policy and clear rules that have been established in consultation with the pupils. When issues arise in school they are discussed openly with the pupils. These features help pupils to know where they stand and to understand what is expected of them and why. Nevertheless more needs to be done to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to deal effectively with pupils whose special needs are behavioural.
42. Pupils have good opportunities to work co-operatively in lessons, to take responsibility, to contribute to the life of the school as a community, and to learn how to deal with difficulties in relationships. Staff are alert to the need to widen pupils' social contacts, particularly as they get towards the top of the school. They provide a good range of activities that bring them into contact with pupils from other schools, for instance a joint residential educational visit, musical workshops and sporting activities.
43. The school's ethos contributes positively to the provision for spiritual development. Pupils learn about the value of each individual because the staff value them. In lessons, teachers, for the most part, give equal attention to all pupils and they unfailingly respect pupils' contributions, their ideas and their views. There is scope for acts of collective worship to make a stronger contribution to the provision for spiritual development. At present, stories with a moral or spiritual message are read to pupils, hymns and religious songs are sung and prayers are said, but little is done to create a reflective and reverential atmosphere. Pupils are taught about world faiths in religious education and the school promotes tolerance and racial equality. Staff and governors have tackled racism sensitively but determinedly and effectively.

### **In Years 3 to 6 there are a good number of extras in the curriculum.**

44. In these years (Key Stage 2) pupils' regular lessons extend beyond the National Curriculum and they have opportunities to participate in a good range of activities outside lessons.

### Extras in lesson time

45. All the pupils in Key Stage 2 have weekly recorder lessons. Pupils work in different groups according to their level of attainment. They are taught by the class teachers and a music specialist. They do well and the higher attainers attain particularly well. These pupils perform at a good level maintaining a steady pulse and showing a good sense of rhythm. They understand musical terminology such as 'bar' and 'sharp' and they read music confidently. The average attainers also read music but recognise fewer notes.
46. The Years 5 and 6 pupils have weekly French lessons. They enjoy these lessons and they attain well above average standards for their age. The teacher's appropriate use of English and French in lessons gives pupils confidence and promotes understanding whilst increasing their exposure to the French language. The pupils are developing an

awareness of French culture and they understand a good number of French words. They say simple sentences, such as 'I like cake', quite confidently in French.

47. Pupils have swimming lessons throughout their time at the school. This is longer than in many primary schools. They attain above average standards by the time they leave. All attain at least the level expected for their age and many exceed it and go on to learn basic water survival skills.

#### Activities outside lessons

48. The range of extra-curricular activities offered is good for such a small school.
49. In music, instrumental tuition is available and the take-up rate is good. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a good range of sports after school and at weekends. There are opportunities for outdoor and adventurous physical activities that go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum for physical education. For example, in recent years pupils have been sailing, rock climbing and canoeing locally. There is also a biannual residential educational visit that provides opportunities for Years 5 and 6 pupils to participate in outdoor pursuits.
50. Pupils also have good opportunities for a range of activities at lunchtimes, including work on computers, chess, playing chime bars and 'short tennis'.
51. Furthermore, the school runs a twice-weekly homework club for pupils in Years 5 and 6. This is well attended.

#### **The headteacher provides good leadership. He gets the best out of staff and is well regarded by parents and governors.**

52. At the time of the last inspection two of the teachers were new to the school. Two part-time teachers have joined the school this year, one a music specialist and one working with pupils who have special educational needs. Under the headteacher's leadership the teachers have formed an effective and mutually supportive team, all of whom are strongly committed to providing a high quality education and doing the best for Ab Kettleby's pupils. They are thoughtful about their work and keen to continue improving their teaching skills in order to serve their pupils even better. The headteacher has created a very positive professional climate in which the staff follow his example of commitment to the pupils and work with a shared sense of common purpose.
53. Parents and governors recognise and appreciate what the headteacher does for the school and its pupils. For example, all the parents who returned the inspection questionnaire agreed that 'the school is well led and managed', an overwhelming majority expressed strong agreement with this statement.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

**Standards in the other subjects, at the top of the school, are not as high as in English, mathematics and science.**

54. The Year 6 pupils are working at an average level for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, and religious education. This reflects the less rigorous planning described below and the larger teaching groups for most of these subjects in Key Stage 2.
55. Most of the art and design work produced by the Year 6 pupils is of a satisfactory standard.
56. In design and technology these pupils undertake appropriate design and make projects. They produce step-by-step, labeled plans to guide the construction of products such as 'coke can rollers'. They evaluate how well their products work and make sensible suggestions about how they could be improved. Only the higher attainers draw conclusions from their evaluations, such as, 'if you increase the length of the stick it goes slower'. There was no evidence that pupils gather and use a range of information at the planning stage or that their products are designed to meet a clear specification which pupils can evaluate them against.
57. In geography the Year 6 pupils use maps at different scales with a reasonable degree of confidence, using the scale to calculate distance on the ground. They know what several of the symbols on Ordnance Survey maps represent but do not understand what contour lines show. They have a confident understanding of the eight points of the compass.
58. In history their work shows a satisfactory knowledge of the historical periods they have studied recently. They know about differences in everyday life in different periods and they have a reasonable degree of empathy with people from the past. For instance, they understand the hardship of a Roman slave's life. The work seen suggests that pupils are not challenged as much as they might be. For instance, there is little to suggest that they learn to compare features of different historical periods or to understand the reasons behind changes and significant historical events.
59. The pupils have good basic computing skills and they use what they have been taught confidently. This is the result of frequent use of computers; pupils say they use computers nearly every day. Furthermore, there is some good use of ICT to support work in other subjects. For instance pupils use a graphics program to produce maps in geography. The Year 6 pupils have good skills for using ICT to find things out and as a means of communication. They send e-mail and use the Internet independently for research. They use wordprocessing and simple desktop publishing programs to produce letters and cards and they use Powerpoint' for presentations. They have experience of using spreadsheets. Despite these strengths, the overall standard pupils attain in ICT is brought down because they have few opportunities to undertake work in the other aspects of the subject that are part of the National Curriculum. This is mainly because of a shortage of up-to-date resources.
60. In religious education, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of world faiths and an appropriate appreciation of the importance of faith to believers. However, there is little work in the pupils' books. This suggests that not enough time is devoted to religious education to enable pupils to achieve a higher level.

**The planning of work and checking on pupils' learning in non-core subjects needs sharpening up.**

61. The school's plans of work in these subjects are adequate to ensure that pupils cover all the content required by the National Curriculum and staff keep an adequate check on pupils' progress.
62. In most of these subjects the school makes use of nationally recommended whole-school plans of work but has not adapted these to meet the needs of its mixed-age classes. The school's plans do not make it clear how work will become progressively more demanding as pupils move up the school. This makes it harder than it need be for teachers to match work to pupils' learning needs and to ensure that as they acquire new knowledge they also develop the skills they need to use their knowledge at a level appropriate to their age. The effect of this is most evident in Key Stage 2 where all the pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught most of these subjects together. Staff make efforts to give the older pupils harder work. Nevertheless, the tasks they set do not always challenge the older pupils sufficiently to enable them to progress in their learning as well as they do in the subjects in which they take the national tests.
63. The lack of whole-school planning for progressive development in pupils' skills in these non-core subjects is paralleled by shortcomings in the checks on pupils' learning. Staff often check whether pupils have learned each unit of work. However, since all the Key Stage 2 pupils tackle the same unit of work, sometimes this will be one recommended for Years 3 and 4 pupils, the criteria are not always appropriate for all the pupils. Furthermore, the school's records in these subjects do not indicate which level of the National Curriculum each pupil has reached.

**The standard of behaviour of a small number of pupils sometimes has a detrimental effect on the atmosphere for learning in their classes.**

64. There is a small number of pupils, all boys, some of whom have joined the school late, who find it hard to behave acceptably and are unreasonably demanding of their teachers. They are inattentive, they call out in lessons, and sometimes deliberately annoy their classmates.
65. Their impact is out of proportion to their number for four reasons.
  - They disturb the flow of well-planned lessons as staff have to stop to deal with their unsatisfactory behaviour.
  - At times, they create an unsettled atmosphere.
  - They tend to monopolise the teacher's attention.
  - On occasions they have an adverse effect on some of the other pupils' behaviour.
66. In some lessons, when they are in a small class with a learning support assistant as well as the teacher, these pupils cause no disturbance and, taken overall, the behaviour of the class is good. This is because the two staff work well together, supporting each other in applying consistent disciplinary strategies. As a result pupils with behaviour difficulties are managed effectively and they get no chance to influence other pupils' behaviour.
67. However, when they are in a larger group they generally make more of a difference to the general standard of behaviour. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, some other pupils are easily led. They soon start to follow the few who initiate unacceptable

behaviour. Ripples of inattention and declining attitudes then spread, though not enough to slow pupils' overall rate of learning to an unsatisfactory level. Secondly, staff do not tackle misbehaviour as robustly as they need to with these pupils. For instance, they sometimes respond to pupils who call out instead of raising their hands and waiting their turn, effectively rewarding misbehaviour. Sometimes teachers proceed with lessons when pupils are not attending, sometimes talking among themselves. At times this means they ignore misbehaviour that the miscreants know they have seen. This reduces the effectiveness of the school's behaviour policy.

68. When the organisation of teaching groups leads to a concentration of these pupils and those who are easily influenced by them, even in a small group they do not behave acceptably.
69. The school has recognised the shortcomings in a few pupils' behaviour. It has sought advice about dealing with pupils who have behavioural difficulties and is beginning to implement this. Nevertheless, work remains to be done to ensure these few pupils cannot undermine others' learning.

**Children in the reception class could have more opportunities to learn through play.**

70. These children have adequate opportunities to play. For example, they dress up, play with characters in a table top 'house', use construction toys, and make models with 'playdough'. However, they have limited opportunities to learn through planned play activities or in play settings provided to further the staff's objectives for children's learning. Furthermore, the children have limited opportunities to learn out of doors. In these respects, the Foundation Stage curriculum falls short of what is now recommended nationally for reception children. However, the accommodation does not lend itself to facilitating such provision.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to raise standards further and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in those subjects where they are average at the top of the school.
- (2) Improve the planning of work and assessment of pupils' learning in the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum by:
  - developing the whole-school plans of work to incorporate guidance on how to ensure that work becomes progressively harder as pupils get older;
  - matching the assessment of pupils' learning to steps in learning identified in the whole-school plans and to the levels of the National Curriculum.
- (3) Improve the behaviour of the small number of pupils who sometimes spoil lessons for others by:
  - developing teachers' skills for managing pupils' behaviour, especially for those pupils whose special educational needs are behavioural.
- (4) Provide more opportunities for children in the reception year to learn through planned play.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	11
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	0	7	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	0	64	36	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than eight percentage points.

### 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)	51
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

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

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	46
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.3
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	186,130
Total expenditure	187,861
Expenditure per pupil	3,684
Balance brought forward from previous year	30
Balance carried forward to next year	-1,701

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	50
Number of questionnaires returned	32

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	25	3	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	63	34	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	56	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	9	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	41	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	34	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	38	25	0	16