

INSPECTION REPORT

HUMSHAUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY AIDED) FIRST SCHOOL

Humshaugh, Northumberland

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122295

Headteacher: Mrs Irene Tomkinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lesley Traves
24039

Dates of inspection: 25th - 27th February 2002

Inspection number: 197739

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Humshaugh Hexham Northumberland
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Magowan
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Humshaugh Church of England First School is situated in the rural village of Humshaugh, near Hexham in Northumberland. It is much smaller than most primary schools, with 61 pupils aged 4 to 9 years. The school currently has three classes. Reception and Year 1 pupils are taught together, as are Year 3 and 4 pupils. Most pupils live in the village or in the countryside nearby, and their social circumstances vary. All pupils are white and there are no pupils from ethnic minority groups. There are fewer pupils entitled to free school meals (6.1 per cent) than in most schools. There are also fewer pupils with special educational needs, (14.3 per cent). Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. The school was awarded Beacon Status in 2000 for its achievements, including its links with parents and the community and information and communication technology (ICT).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Humshaugh is a good school with significant strengths. As a result of very good teaching, all pupils learn very well and the majority achieve above average standards in most subjects. They achieve very well in information and communication technology. The very strong links made with the local community and the very good use made of the local area greatly enrich pupils' learning. Standards in writing, however, are not as high as those in reading. The headteacher, new since the last inspection, is a very strong, effective leader and manages the school well. Along with the staff and governors, she is steering the school firmly towards further improvement. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed; the leadership of the headteacher is very strong and effective;
- The teaching is very good;
- The learning opportunities provided for the pupils are enriched by the excellent links with the local community and the use of the local area;
- Pupils achieve very well in information and communication technology (ICT).

What could be improved

- Aspects of writing throughout the school.
- The provision for outdoor play for pupils in the reception class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Humshaugh was last inspected in September 1997, when it was judged to be an effective school with many strengths. The school has maintained its high standards in many areas and has made good improvements in others. The key issue identified regarding physical development in the reception class has been largely addressed. Indoor apparatus, such as a climbing frame and balancing equipment has been purchased. Appropriate time is now given to gymnastics, dance and games for these children. However, outdoor play has not yet been developed sufficiently well to ensure the requirements for children of this age are fully met. Teaching is now even stronger, with a much higher number of lessons being judged to be very good. The curriculum has been developed in most subjects to ensure that pupils can build more firmly on their skills from year to year. Links with the local community have been further enhanced to enrich pupils' experiences. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT has been greatly improved, through staff training and through the purchase of high quality resources; it is now a strength of the school. Procedures for checking on children's progress have also been strengthened to enable work to be set at the right level of challenge for all pupils in mathematics, science and most aspects of English. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has also improved. They are now very well supported.

STANDARDS

The table of standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on the average point scores in National Curriculum tests is omitted as there were less than 10 pupils in the year group.

Taking the three years from 1999 together, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been above average in the national tests for 7-year-olds. The number of Year 2 pupils in the school varies widely, year on year. This has a significant bearing on results. In 2001, for example, there were only 4 pupils in the year group. Of these, three had joined the school mid-year. All pupils attained good standards in relation to their abilities. Inspection findings indicate that the standards for the current Year 2 pupils are above average in English, mathematics and science. They are also above average for pupils in Year 4. Throughout the school, standards in reading are better than those in writing. Children do not achieve as well as they could with their writing and fewer pupils achieve the higher level in the writing test than they do in reading. This is partly because they are not given enough opportunities to write in other subjects, such as history, geography and science. Often, worksheets are used, when children could more profitably write themselves. Also, standards of handwriting are only just average by Year 2. Not enough is expected of pupils in this area.

Children get off to a good start in the reception class and by the end of the year, most pupils have met the goals outlined for children at this age and some will have exceeded these. They achieve well in almost all areas of learning. An exception to this is the area of physical development, where children do not achieve as much as they could because of limited provision for outdoor play.

Pupils' attainment in ICT is well above average at Year 2 and above average at Year 4. The current Year 2 pupils are on course to achieve higher standards by the time they leave the school than the current Year 4 are achieving. This is because of the significant improvement, in the last two years, in teachers' expertise and in the opportunities provided for pupils. Children are achieving well in all areas of the subject. Throughout the school, standards in history, geography, some aspects of art and design and singing are better than seen in most primary schools. From a broadly average starting point, all children achieve well over time in most subjects. No physical education lessons were seen during the inspection and few examples of design and technology.

Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and they consequently achieve well, and sometimes very well, in all classes. Higher attaining pupils also achieve well because they are given work that stretches them. Boys and girls achieve equally well in all subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Children really enjoy school and are keen to learn and become involved with all the activities on offer. They are eager to talk about their learning to adults.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons, at playtimes and around the school. They work together co-operatively on their tasks.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development. Children are courteous and polite. They accept responsibility well. They have very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above average.

Pupils enjoy taking part in all aspects of school life. However, on occasions the poor listening skills of a few pupils detracts from their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 and 4
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.

Teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection, with a much higher percentage (60 per cent) of very good and excellent lessons seen. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. As a result, children make very good progress in the majority of lessons and achieve well over time, as they move through the school. Both literacy and numeracy are taught very well and there is some very high quality teaching of ICT.

A strength of the teaching is the level of consistency found between classes and across subjects in teachers' planning and delivery. For example, all teachers share the objectives of the lesson with the children and this helps them focus on what they are doing and why they are doing it. Teachers are very well organised. This ensures that lessons proceed smoothly and no time is wasted. The pace of lessons is sharp and as a result, children are kept on their toes and learn quickly. Teachers are very good at identifying the ways in which different groups of pupils learn best and providing tasks and activities that match their needs. They are also very skilled at asking questions that probe children's understanding and encourage them to think at a deeper level and build on their previous knowledge. They ensure that questions are matched to children's abilities which stretches the higher attainers, but also ensures that less able pupils make good progress. In almost all lessons, activities are practical and fun! As a result, children are keen to learn. They know that they can 'have a go' without fear of failure and that they will be encouraged in their efforts.

Highly effective teaching assistants support pupils very well in lessons and in small groups. This is of particular benefit to those pupils with special educational needs. All staff have a thorough knowledge of the needs of these pupils and understand the best ways to help them learn. This ensures that they achieve well in relation to their abilities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good for pupils in Years 1 to 4. Good in the reception class. The school provides a very good range of learning experiences for all pupils, with the exception of outdoor play provision for under fives.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are supported very well in relation to their individual needs. They are fully included in all the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Social and moral development are very strong. Children have plenty of opportunities to work with others and make a contribution to the community and the school. Spiritual and cultural development are both good, overall. Pupils are taught to reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others. Very good relationships are evident throughout the school. Pupils have more opportunities to learn about their own culture than the culture of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection are very secure and staff know their pupils very well. The school keeps a good check on pupils' progress and personal development.

ICT is used very well in other subjects. Excellent use is made of the Internet for research. 'Catch up' programmes are used very well to support those pupils having difficulties with literacy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is a very strong and effective leader. She has a very clear vision of how the school should be and leads by example. All staff work together as a team to move the school forward for the benefit of the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a clear understanding of the work of the school. They undertake their roles and responsibilities well and are committed to providing the best for the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear idea of what the school does well. They know what needs to be improved and have good plans in place to bring about improvements in key areas.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial planning is very thorough. Funds are used very effectively to raise standards, for example in ICT. There are not enough resources for outdoor play in the reception class. The school works hard to get good value from the money it spends, for example, through comparing its performance with others.

The headteacher teaches for 80 per cent of the week and undertakes many of her duties outside school time. All staff are highly committed to the school and give their time unstintingly. The caretaker and secretary undertake their roles and responsibilities very effectively and make a very strong contribution to the life of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is well led and managed They feel comfortable approaching the school Their children like school The teaching is good The school expects their children to work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities outside school The information they receive

The inspection team fully agrees with parents' positive views. Inspection findings show that the school provides good quality information for parents and children are provided with a good range of activities outside school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is well led and managed; the headteacher is a very strong, effective leader.

1. The leadership and management of the headteacher, staff and governors are good. The headteacher leads the school very well in the drive for continued improvement.
2. The headteacher has developed a very clear direction for the work of the school, which is shared by staff and governors. All staff work as an effective team, under her guidance, showing high levels of commitment to raising standards. Relationships are very good both within the school and with the local community. This results in a climate for learning, which enables pupils to achieve well in their work and in their personal, social and moral development. As a class teacher and subject leader, the head leads by example. She sets and achieves high standards in her work and this inspires and motivates others. A major success is the way the headteacher has led the school in a bid for Beacon status, which was achieved in 2000. This national award has led to extra funds being made available for the school in order to develop its work in key areas and to share its good practice with others. These funds are used very well for their intended purpose. As part of this initiative, the head works with energy and commitment. Written evaluations show that she has very successfully provided training in the use of ICT for a wide range of other schools in the area. She has also successfully overseen the implementation of national initiatives, such as performance management for teachers. Very good use is made of the system to link staff development to the school's priorities for raising standards.
3. The headteacher, staff and governors have a thorough understanding of what the school does well and are clear about key areas for improvement. For example, as a result of tracking pupils' progress closely from the time they enter school, they have identified the need to provide extra support for some pupils, particularly in the area of literacy. National 'catch up' programmes have been implemented to address this issue. The school development plan clearly sets out the main priorities, such as the need to improve standards in writing. The necessary action to be taken to secure improvement and how the effectiveness of this will be judged are also set out in detail.
4. All teachers, including the head, act as subject leaders for several areas of the curriculum. They carry out their roles efficiently and effectively. For example, they evaluate pupils' work to check on standards. This helps them to have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. They also check planning to ensure consistency of approach and appropriate provision for all pupils. Subject leaders also update their knowledge regularly, for example through attending training courses. This enables them to give good guidance and support to their colleagues, as well as to improve their own practice. One member of staff has used her government teacher bursary to enable her to visit a school in another local education authority renowned for its outstanding practice and provision in the nursery and reception classes. She is currently examining her own practice in the light of this. In this way, teachers are playing an active part in raising standards. The special educational needs coordinator has been particularly effective in improving provision in this area since the last inspection. She has successfully linked with another local Beacon School to share good practice and further develop school systems for identification and monitoring of progress. The headteacher has supported this

undertaking by providing time for the coordinator to check on pupils' progress, and the provision made for them, on a regular basis. As a result, these pupils are better supported in their learning.

5. The governors are strongly committed to providing high quality education for the children of the village and its surrounding area. They are clear about what they want the school to offer because they are actively involved in planning the way forward. They have a good working knowledge of the school and its particular issues because of the high quality information provided for them by the head and staff and also because they are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of its work. As a result, they are able to contribute to key decisions, which have a strong impact on pupils' learning. For example, they have employed extra support staff to give high quality support to younger pupils and those with special educational needs.

The teaching is very good.

6. The quality of teaching was judged to be very good during the last inspection. These high standards have been built on and teaching is now even stronger, with a much higher percentage of very good teaching being seen. A key feature of the teaching was the consistency between classes and subjects, which is a result of good procedures for checking on classroom practice. It is also a direct result of the teamwork that exists within the school and the commitment of all staff to continuous improvement.
7. All teachers plan very thoroughly and in detail for all subjects. Literacy and numeracy are particularly well planned. This results in teachers being very clear about what it is they want children to learn, how they will learn it, how their previous knowledge will be built on and how learning will be followed up. Lessons are very well structured and organised because they are so well planned and this enables learning time to be maximised. Teachers share their objectives for the lesson with the children in language they can understand and also give them very clear instructions about what they expect them to achieve. As a result, children understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. This helps them focus sharply on the tasks in hand and learn at a fast rate. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 3/4 science lesson about light and shadow. Children were very clear about the requirement of their task to devise a fair test to work out how shadows were affected by the distance of an object from the light source. Consequently, they were able to complete the task efficiently and effectively.
8. Teachers use questions very skilfully to build on children's previous learning, to develop their understanding and to challenge them to think deeply. They use open-ended questions, such as 'What do you think would happen if...?' and 'What can you remember about....?' This approach worked very well in a reception/Year 1 class art lesson, as children were learning about weaving. The teacher's challenging questions encouraged the children to remember key facts about what they had learned in the previous lesson. As a result, they remembered the words 'warp' and 'weft' and could explain them well. Questions are often targeted specifically to groups or individuals, which ensures they are stretched to the limits of their understanding. This is often the case in the shared parts of the daily numeracy lessons.
9. Almost all of the lessons seen during the inspection involved practical, 'hands on' activities. This makes learning enjoyable for pupils and they respond with keenness and enthusiasm for the tasks. For example, Year 2 pupils played a maths game with dice to help them understand patterns on a number square. Their understanding

developed quickly because they were applying their skills practically and they concentrated really well because they were having fun. Teachers choose their resources well for these lessons, ensuring that the right tools are on hand in sufficient quantities to do the job. Children's interest is also engaged through the work being related to their own lives and experiences. For example, reception and Year 1 children were learning about places in the local area used for leisure activities. They developed a very good understanding of the concept through discussing how and where they spent their own leisure time.

10. All groups of children within the school are taught equally well. This is because all staff have a very good understanding of individual needs, through the systems used to track pupils' progress. Good examples were seen in all lessons of work being set at a higher level of challenge for the higher attainers. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, these pupils were expected to write more sentences for the opening of their retelling of the 'Puss in Boots' story. The criteria for achieving success were also more challenging for this group. Sometimes, in guided writing sessions, the teachers work closely with the higher attaining pupils, in order to push them on at a faster rate. Similarly, children with special educational needs are also taught well. Each has a detailed plan, which clearly identifies the small steps they need to take to achieve their targets. Teachers carefully structure activities so that these children are supported in doing the same work as others in the class. For example, in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson, less able pupils were given a sheet with some sentences already prepared by the teacher, in order to help them write a paragraph from the notes they had made. As a result, they achieved well and were confident in their learning. Seating arrangements are often changed so that children can support each other, or work at a higher level of challenge together.
11. Support assistants make a very valuable contribution to children's learning, supporting children in class lessons and in small groups. For example, during the shared sessions of the daily literacy lessons, they ensure that children with difficulties remain focused on the teacher and encourage them to take part by answering questions. Some pupils work on 'catch up' programmes in small groups, with a support assistant. The teaching in these sessions is very focused and specific. As a result, the children move on at a good rate, building their confidence and self-esteem.

The learning opportunities provided for the pupils are enriched by the excellent links with the local community and the use of the local area.

12. The headteacher, staff and governors are very committed to ensuring that the school and the local community are strongly linked. They view the school as having a central role in the life of the village. Many links have been sustained and developed since the last inspection. These enrich pupils' learning in significant ways and give them a sense of their own place in the community. Every Friday afternoon, the school holds an 'Activity Session' at which children are able to experience a wide range of artistic, cultural, sporting and leisure activities. Local people, well known to the school, share their time and talents, working alongside staff to provide an exciting and ever-changing range of experiences for pupils. These have recently included cookery, sewing, puppet making, aerobics, mat making, stencilling, dance, gardening, clay-work and football. These activities develop children's personal and social skills, as well as helping them learn new skills.
13. In the Year 2000, the community was closely involved in designing and making a 'Millennium Garden' for the school. A local landscape gardener, who is also a parent, worked with children on the garden design and the choice of suitable plants for the

location. Local volunteers helped with the construction and the finished garden was dedicated by the Bishop in a special ceremony. Other volunteers come into school to assist with reading and a local pianist, who is a retired teacher, regularly plays the piano for singing lessons and concerts. The local Women's Institute is currently working on a project to design and make 'Story Sacks' to support children's reading.

14. The school also gives much to the community, inviting people in to share in assemblies, for example, for Harvest and Mother's Day. Children also take an active part in community events, such as the Shrove Tuesday Festival at which children help to provide the entertainment for the village.
15. The local area offers a wealth of opportunities to support children's learning, particularly in history and geography and the school makes very good use of this. For example, the Roman Sites of Hadrian's Wall, such as Chesters Roman Fort and Brunton Turret, are studied and children are very knowledgeable about the Roman heritage of the area. The village itself and its proximity to the River Tyne are also used as a resource. For example, children study how the village has changed over time and which aspects have stayed the same. They examine old buildings such as the almshouses and compare them with houses that have been built more recently. They also study the ways in which their village has adapted to trends. For example, the reasons why the Post Office has combined with the village store and the original building has reverted to a private dwelling. Such opportunities give very good first-hand experiences to children and as a result, their knowledge and understanding of the history and geography of the area are well developed.
16. The school seeks out opportunities for pupils to experience life beyond their own immediate area and prepare them for transfer to the next stage of their education. It has 'clustered' with a number of other local schools to enable classes to undertake a regular programme of events together. For example, Year 4 pupils spend an activity week with pupils from other local schools who they will transfer to middle school with. In the last school year, this centred on the environment and children worked in groups studying different aspects of trees. Joint sporting events and music festivals are attended, and these enable pupils to work with and compete against others of a similar age. As part of its Beacon activity, the school has made links with an inner-city school in Newcastle. This is providing children with the opportunity to study first-hand an area that is very different to their own, although relatively close by.

Pupils achieve very well in ICT.

17. Standards in ICT are well above those found in most schools at the end of the reception class and at age 7. Standards for the current Year 4 pupils are above average, rather than well above, because they have not had the benefit of the high quality resources and staff expertise now available from the earliest stages. All children are achieving very well throughout the school. This is because of the very clear strategy the school has to ensure that ICT skills are not only taught systematically, but are developed through their integration into other areas of the curriculum. As a result, all strands of the subject are equally strong and the use of technology is an integral part of learning for each child.
18. The standards are also high as a direct result of very good teaching. Recent training has ensured that teachers are confident with the technology and have a very good knowledge of how skills should be taught. They also use the high quality resources available in the computer suite and in classrooms to best advantage to support learning. Staff know their pupils very well and as a result, are aware of those who are

able to develop their computer skills at home. They sensitively maximise computer time for those who do not have such opportunities and build well on the skills others bring with them. Children's achievements in ICT are celebrated through their work being displayed around the school in ways which provide information for others and in 'publications' such as class books of poems. In this way, pupils' understanding of some of the key purposes of ICT in daily life is reinforced.

19. Computer skills are taught systematically throughout the school from the reception class, using a commercially produced scheme of work, in conjunction with nationally recommended guidelines. This gives all staff very good guidance and enables pupils to build on their skills from lesson to lesson and year on year. The activities provided are fun and interesting and give good 'hands-on' practice. As a result, Year 1 pupils, for example, can load a programme and select from an alphabetically arranged menu to bring up a picture. They add text to this, using features such as 'caps lock', 'shift' and 'back space'. They can then choose another application to ask the computer to read their work to them. More able pupils have explored independently and have learned to rotate the pictures, which causes much delight and amusement! They are very adept with the mouse and know their way around the keyboard well. All pupils are keen and eager to learn and are very confident in explaining what they are doing. Staff are very good at giving just the right amount of support, whilst not 'taking over' from the children. This means that they learn by trying things out. Staff are also sensitive about the way they group children for these sessions, ensuring that children can support each other.
20. Very good use is made of the Internet to develop pupils' research and communication skills. This is of particular benefit, as the library is also used as a classroom and cannot always be easily accessed. Work in history and geography, in particular, are enhanced by opportunities to use computers in this way. For example, Year 2 pupils were studying the Great Fire of London and the Plague. They accessed a history web site especially for schools, used menus to select the topic and searched the information to find answers to their questions, using the scroll bar very competently. They also made really good use of their reading skills in this lesson as they skimmed and scanned the text, using features such as sub-headings and key words to guide them. Older pupils have used the Internet to e-mail children at a partner school in Newcastle, a contrasting area, and are eagerly awaiting a reply.
21. The regular use by pupils throughout the school of the digital camera to enhance their learning illustrates how at ease they are with new technology. For example, all pupils have made a book to celebrate Mothers' Day. Each child has taken a photograph of his or her mum. The children have then transferred the pictures to the computer and, with support, have inserted these into a 'Word' document and written captions for them. Other pupils in the school have taken pictures of events such as the opening and dedication of the school's 'Millennium Garden' last year and of the Year 2 visit to a neighbouring school for an environmental day. These have been used as part of interesting and informative displays in the school hall. In geography, pupils have taken the camera on a walk around their village, photographing key features. These have been made into a large map, showing routes from one place to another.
22. Good opportunities are provided for children to use the computer to control events. For example, Year 2 pupils write their own programmes to enable a floor robot to follow their instructions. In the particular lesson seen, very good links were made with the work they were undertaking in mathematics on shape and angles. The task pupils were given was to programme the floor robot to 'draw' a square on the hall floor. Groups worked together diligently, applying their knowledge of the properties of shape

and right angles to write and test out their programmes. The strongest feature of the lesson was the learning that took place through 'trial and error' as the children refined their programmes in the light of the tests they carried out. Older pupils extend this work, for example through programming a screen object to plot a pathway through the gardens they have designed. The recently purchased computer linked microscope has enabled small groups of pupils to study and make short video clips of insects.

23. Teachers use computer programmes very well to reinforce basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Reception pupils, for example, listen to 'talking books' from their reading scheme and create word banks with pictures to help them write their stories. Pupils with reading difficulties use a programme that develops their reading strategies as they choose the right word from a 'drop-down' menu to fit in to the text. Mathematics programmes are used regularly in each class to support learning, for example, of money and place-value. In other subjects, such as art and science, computers are used for example, to create abstract pictures in the style of Jackson Pollock and to produce graphs and charts from data that has been collected.
24. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher. She uses her expertise and skill very well to set a very clear direction for the subject and to support staff and pupils. As part of the Beacon Initiative, the school provides training and support for other schools. This is proving very successful in sharing good practice. The school is currently adding to the resources in the computer suite, in order to extend its use to the local community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Aspects of writing could be improved

25. Analysis of children's work shows that children achieve more in reading than they do in writing. Whilst overall standards could be higher, some aspects of writing are strong. For example, pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are very accurate. Pupils also achieve well in their creative writing and, in particular, their writing of poetry. These aspects are taught very well within the daily literacy lessons.
26. There are two areas that are not as strong. Children have insufficient opportunities to apply the skills learned in literacy sessions to their work in other subjects. Opportunities are missed, for example in history, for children to take on the role of Samuel Pepys and write their own diaries describing the Great Fire of London. In science, children are often provided with a framework to work with, to help them write up their experiments. On occasions, they would benefit from being allowed to choose their own formats for recording. In history, geography and science, worksheets are very often used, which further limits the opportunities for writing in these subjects. These lost opportunities prevent pupils from refining, extending and further consolidating their skills as writers.
27. Standards in handwriting are only just average. Attention is paid to teaching the appropriate skills in handwriting lessons and a particular style has been adopted throughout the school. However, the skills learned in these lessons are not transferred to children's work in other areas. Teachers do not give sufficient guidance to children as to how their work should be set out. Neither do they give enough guidance, through marking, as to how children could improve. As a result, many children form their letters incorrectly and try to develop their own style before they are ready to do so.

The outdoor play provision for reception children

28. At the last inspection, the provision for children's physical development in the reception class was judged to be a key issue for action. The school responded to this issue by ensuring that large apparatus for indoor use was purchased and more regular opportunities for different types of physical development were provided. However, aspects of this issue remain, partly because there is now a new curriculum for pupils of this age, which has higher expectations. Whilst reception children have satisfactory opportunities for indoor activities such as gymnastics and dance and develop these skills appropriately, there are insufficient planned opportunities for outdoor play. The school does not have any wheeled vehicles, toys or climbing apparatus for outdoor use. The overall quality of outdoor play provision is not as good as it could be and as a result of this, children are not achieving as well as they could do in some aspects of their physical development. For example, they are not given enough opportunities to develop increasing control of their bodies in large, outdoor spaces, through climbing, sliding and rolling. There are also no opportunities provided for children to learn to use space, change speed and avoid obstacles through pedalling bikes or pushing prams.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. In order to improve further the school should:

a) Raise achievement in writing by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subject areas;
- reducing the amount of worksheets used in science, history and geography;
- having higher expectations of handwriting standards.

b) Enable children in the reception class to achieve more in the area of physical development by:

- providing more planned opportunities and resources to support outdoor play and the development of physical skills.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	5	1	0	0	0
Percentage	7	53	33	7	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	61
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	9

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1

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	61
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	44

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	155959
Total expenditure	151259
Expenditure per pupil	3182
Balance brought forward from previous year	3136
Balance carried forward to next year	7836

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	60
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	37	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	44	2	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	62	8	0	8
The teaching is good.	65	27	2	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	48	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	44	4	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	62	33	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	40	4	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	54	13	2	6

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are strongly supportive of the school. They feel, in particular, that the school is very approachable, it expects their children to work hard and that the teaching and leadership are good. Fewer parents feel that an interesting range of activities is provided for children outside lessons and a small number would also like to have more information.