

INSPECTION REPORT

OWLSMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Berkshire

LEA area: Bracknell Forest

Unique reference number: 109870

Headteacher: Mr D J Lees

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Canham
1353

Dates of inspection: 12 – 13 March 2002

Inspection number: 198053

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cambridge Road Owlsmoor Sandhurst Berkshire
Postcode:	GU47 0TA
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ray Rawlings
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Owlsmoor Primary School is much larger than most other schools of the same type, although the number on roll has steadily decreased over recent years due to changes in the population of the local community. The nursery has places for a maximum of 26 children. Currently, there are 485 pupils on the school roll aged from four to 11 years, with the numbers of boys and girls roughly equal. A very small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few pupils come from homes where a language other than English is spoken. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils (14 per cent) with some form of special educational need is below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils with statements is above that found nationally. A significant number of pupils leave or join the school during Years 1 and 2 due to the closure of local businesses. In recent years, there has been a shift in the social backgrounds of the families from which the school draws its pupils, and when the pupils enter reception the attainment levels are below average. Almost 50 per cent of the staff have either left or joined the school during the past two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is successfully overcoming the effects of an unsettled period in which there were substantial changes to staffing and to the leadership and management. It is an effective school because, in comparison with all schools, the standards attained by 11 year olds are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The good quality of pupils' work in other subjects reflects these standards. The commitment of the headteacher and staff, supported by the governors, helps to provide pupils with a well-structured and rich learning environment. Good quality teaching contributes to very good levels of achievement and to the effective provision for pupils' pastoral care. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The good teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils achieve very well. When standards gained by pupils aged 11 are compared to those found nationally, they are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The same is true of several of the foundation subjects.
- Effective leadership and management set a clear direction for the school's work, and focus upon raising achievement in a well-balanced and rich curriculum.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Consequently, pupils have very good attitudes to their work, behave well and want to achieve. They enjoy very good relationships with one another, and develop into mature individuals by the time they leave school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in writing, and opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum, in Years 1 and 2.
- The achievement levels of higher attaining pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made considerable progress since its last inspection in October 1997. The standards in national tests for pupils aged 11 have been maintained or improved upon. In addition, the proportions of pupils gaining standards exceeding those expected in English and mathematics are above the national average. However, standards in reading writing have declined for pupils aged seven. The quality of teaching has improved. Pupils benefit significantly from teachers' detailed planning and the much improved assessment procedures. Parents expressed views even more favourable than those reported in the previous inspection. The school has a strong commitment to high standards, and the capacity for improvement is very good.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

These are good results for English and mathematics when compared to national figures and to those for similar schools. The results represent good progress overall when judged against the pupils' corresponding Year 2 results in 1997. Over time, there has been an improving trend in the three core subjects, which reflects the national trend. The drop in standards recorded in science was due to the absence of two higher attaining pupils from the tests. Examples of good work were seen in all subjects during the inspection. The results gained by the 11 year old pupils were substantially better than those attained by pupils aged seven, when compared with their respective national averages.

Standards attained by seven-year-olds in reading and writing, particularly those gained by girls, have declined in recent years. They are average when compared to schools nationally but below average when compared to those of similar schools. This picture is due largely to the significant proportion (33 per cent) of pupils in Years 1 and 2 who leave and join the school other than at the usual time of entry. Care should be taken when comparing the school's results to those gained by pupils in similar schools because of changes to the social backgrounds from which the school now draws its pupils. The category of schools with which the school's results are compared does not closely reflect the pupils' family circumstances.

Evidence from this inspection shows that pupils rise to the challenges set by the school and that they achieve well. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2002, and the most recent results indicate that the school is well on its way to achieving them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes. These contribute considerably to the progress made in lessons. The pupils willingly take responsibility and share in the day-to-day running of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils clearly understand what is expected of them. Two pupils have been permanently excluded during the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities for them to take responsibility. Very good relationships are a distinctive feature of the school community.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance was below the national average during the last reporting year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspection evidence gathered from lessons and from a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils benefit significantly from a committed team of adults with whom they have very good relationships. These relationships are used to underpin teachers' high expectations of behaviour and levels of achievement. Pupils are managed particularly well, and with sensitivity, which helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The consistently good teaching in Years 3 to 6, has a significant impact on the pupils' thirst for learning and is the main reason why they are achieving so well. The strengths of the good teaching are in the detail of the planning, which meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the high quality of the teachers' explanations, and incisive questioning which encourages pupils to think carefully about their work. Teachers' planning places a strong focus on the systematic development of skills in literacy and numeracy. Examples of good teaching and learning were seen in all subjects, including literacy, numeracy, and science. The progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs, is carefully monitored and the information used to help with planning. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the pace, well-structured lessons, which capture their attention. Pupils benefit substantially from being taught in groups of similar attainment. Some teaching in Years 1 and 2 does not provide enough opportunities for extended writing and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The well-planned curriculum ensures that pupils benefit substantially from a balanced range of experiences, which add depth and a richness to their learning. The strong emphasis placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy balances the good quality provision for other subjects. These include creative and performing arts, which encourage pupils to express themselves and develop their confidence. The good range of extra-curricular activities gives pupils further opportunities to develop their skills and interests.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is well managed and the detailed individual education plans are used effectively to help with assessments.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The initial support given by teachers matches pupils' needs. These pupils make similar progress to other pupils with similar levels of attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, teaching them to tell right from wrong. The provision for moral and social development is very good. It helps pupils to develop trust and mutual respect.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures to ensure that pupils are well cared for. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well and take great care of them in a safe and supportive environment. Good Child Protection procedures ensure that staff are sensitive to the needs of the pupils. Effective systems are used to monitor attendance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and management. He has a clear vision for the work of the school, focusing on raising levels of achievement. He delegates well and gives his colleagues structured and sensitive support. The headteacher is ably supported by key staff, and several subjects are well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. Members are supportive, reflective, and well informed about the work of the school. They use their professional expertise and knowledge of the community to promote and improve the school and its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are helping staff to develop and improve professionally. Information from assessment and test data is analysed for trends of achievement. The school is developing strategies to identify the value added to its work.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's budget is well managed, and spending decisions are carefully considered. The school effectively applies the principles of best value. Good financial planning focuses funding upon the school's priorities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Children are encouraged to work hard, and they make good progress.• Children are helped to become mature and responsible, and they behave well.• The good teaching.• The school is well led and managed.• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework which is consistently set.• Extra-curricular activities.

Parents' views of the school are favourable. There has been a shift in the strength of feeling about the school since the previous inspection. Evidence from the inspection endorses parents' positive views. In contrast to the views of a significant number of parents, inspectors found that the homework supported pupils' learning and that the school provides pupils with a good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The good teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils achieve very well. In comparison to all schools, the standards at the age of 11 are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The same is true of several of the foundation subjects.

1. Very good levels of interest and concentration, and a willingness to work, were features of pupils' learning in lessons. Pupils concentrate well and build on existing knowledge to acquire new knowledge and skills. This effective learning is promoted by good, and often very good, teaching. Pupils respond well to the consistently high expectations. In consequence, for several years, standards in the national tests for pupils aged 11 have remained well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science.

2. When the test results for 2001 for pupils aged 11 are compared with those of similar schools, standards were above average in English and mathematics although they were below average in science. The proportions of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age were above average in English and mathematics, and close to the average in science. Overall, these results represent good levels of achievement when judged against the standards reached by the same pupils in their Key Stage 1 tests taken in 1997. Over time, there has been an improvement in the three core subjects, which reflects the national trend. Results indicate that boys achieve at a slightly higher level than the girls, although this picture was not evident during the current inspection. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2002, and the most recent results indicate that the school is well on its way to achieving them.

3. The quality of teaching and learning was judged to be good or very good in all the lessons seen and from the scrutiny of pupils' work. Teaching was good in 66 per cent of the lessons, and very good in a further 33 per cent. Pupils benefit substantially from being taught in groups of similar attainment. Well-focused tasks matched pupils' learning in almost all lessons, including those seen in English, mathematics and science. Teachers are particularly effective at sharing learning intentions with pupils. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects, and pupils benefit significantly from a committed team of adults with whom they have very good relationships. These relationships are used to underpin teachers' high expectations of behaviour and standards. For example, during a briskly paced and well-focused lesson in mathematics, a group of lower attaining pupils in Year 6 were expected to explain the methods they were using when giving their answers. They rose to the challenging tasks by applying known methods in calculating areas of triangles, although they had difficulty in explaining their methods with the use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In an English lesson, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 were able to confidently explain their answers when challenged with incisive questioning which extended their understanding of informal and formal language.

4. Pupils are managed particularly well, and with sensitivity, which helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. For example, pupils in Year 5 contributed particularly well during a whole-class discussion on smoking and its impact on health. Pupils trusted that the teacher and their peers would value their comments, some of which related to their family circumstances. Similarly, during assemblies, pupils were encouraged to make a strong contribution through musical performances, helping with role-play, answering questions, and managing the movement of pupils to and from class.

5. Detailed planning enables the teachers to provide well-structured lessons. These include clear learning intentions and well-paced tasks, which motivate pupils and capture their interest. For example, pupils in Year 4 responded particularly well to a dynamic and stimulating history session which focused on the Aztecs. Pupils became engrossed in a series of activities which gave them rich opportunities to understand the life style of the Aztecs and the influence their traditions have on the people of Mexico today. There was also good reference to the evolution of language and how words used today are derived from those used by Aztecs in the distant past. In Year 3, a very good review of previous work in mathematics, supported by an imaginative use of resources, enabled the lower attaining pupils to reinforce their understanding of fractions. The brisk pace of learning continued through the lesson, and this led to very good levels of progress in understanding fractions, with the help of differentiated activities. In a well-planned lesson for the average attainers in English, the willingness of pupils in Year 3 to spot examples of alliteration was stirred by the challenge in the creative use of rhymes.

6. High quality explanations, underpinned with incisive questioning, featured in very good teaching. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 made very good progress in their calculation of areas of triangles, because precise explanations were followed up with challenging questions, which encouraged pupils to think about their initial responses. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the close attention of committed adults, who include specialist support staff. These members of staff are experienced and are well deployed. As a result, they have a measurable impact on pupils' learning. Shared planning and good levels of communication between adults provide a cohesive and well-structured approach. This is reflected in the detailed individual education plans and the good progress made by pupils in lessons and over time. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language also benefit from close support that matches their needs. These pupils settle well are fully integrated into the school, and have equal access to the curriculum.

7. Evidence of the school's focus on the development of reading, writing, and numeracy was seen in the high quality writing not only in English, but also in science, history, geography, and information and communication technology. A major boost to standards in writing and numeracy is given by the well-planned opportunities across all subjects to write in a range of forms for real purposes. These include letters, reports, results, and brochures. For example, an imaginative assignment in history required a pupil in Year 6 to write an application to become an Egyptologist. Opportunities for very good levels of presentation and free writing are sharpened by the use of project books for substantial pieces of work in science, geography, history and religious education. However, marking is not followed up routinely by corrections or further work to remedy weaknesses.

8. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils presently in Year 6 is well above average in reading, speaking, listening and writing. As a result of systematic and detailed assessment procedures, pupils have a good understanding of the National Curriculum Levels. Pupils' reading skills are developed by progressively graded reading materials and careful monitoring of their progress. By Year 6, most pupils read long texts silently with good concentration. They read aloud fluently and accurately, with good understanding. Higher attaining pupils have a good range of vocabulary and are able to read, with accuracy, unfamiliar words. Their knowledge of how to use the library and their research skills are good. Pupils have good opportunities to develop research skills by using information books for independent study in several subjects. Pupils readily join in discussions of the shared text, not only in English but also in other subjects, and teachers give good encouragement by listening carefully and appreciating the quality of pupils' answers. As a result, pupils become progressively more confident in speaking to a range of audiences in a variety of contexts. By Year 6, pupils are confident in speaking and show a willingness to contribute to class discussions and assemblies by answering questions and sharing their ideas. Other subjects make a good contribution to developing speaking and

listening skills. For example, there were good levels of discussion in mathematics and science, and pupils were encouraged to contribute orally and participate in market scene during a history session on the Aztecs. Standards of handwriting and presentation are high in everyday work in all subjects. Pupils with higher attainment make good use of a variety of sentence structures for dramatic effect. Pieces of work intended for display are improved through the process of planning, drafting and proof reading. As a result, there are many pieces of excellent work in the classrooms and in communal areas. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to improve the accuracy and quality of some pieces. By Year 6, many pupils write very good stories, using a range of effects to hold the reader's attention. The best poetry shows imagination in creating pictures in words. Factual reports are expressed clearly and well structured. Standards of accuracy in spelling and punctuation are very good.

9. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of numeracy skills and on devising strategies to solve mathematical problems. Pupils benefit from regular practice and from opportunities to discuss different strategies. This approach has a high impact on the very good levels of achievement and the well above average standards in Year 6. Pupils develop a confident understanding of the number system and become increasingly proficient in mental computation as they move through the school. For example, lower attaining pupils in Year 3 discussed their work on fractions with some confidence. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils were able to work with confidence on areas of triangles and persevere in finding solutions to problems. Pupils have a good breadth of understanding of science. They benefit from the emphasis on practical investigations and have a good understanding of the concept of a fair test. They apply their scientific knowledge well in their activities. Work on display shows that pupils benefit from a broad and rich curriculum, which gives them good opportunities to develop performing and creative skills.

Effective leadership and management set a clear direction for the school's work, and focus on raising achievement in a well-balanced and rich curriculum.

10. Leadership and management were in state of flux prior to the current headteacher's appointment under a year ago. The current headteacher provides the school with a clear vision in which pupils and their achievements are central. Since his appointment, and with close support from the senior management team and governors, he has updated the school's aims and introduced a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, and to assessing pupils' levels of achievement. The senior management team seek to create an inclusive school in which all staff and pupils are supported and where standards are high. This is being achieved through some effective leadership strategies and sensitivity to the school's stage of development. In recognition of the very good relationships and the quality of its self-review procedures, the school has gained the Investors in People Award. It is a friendly, supportive and purposeful community; pupils are confident and respectful of one another, and expectations are high. Parents value the school's high expectations with regard to academic standards and behaviour, and the strong focus on their children's personal development. Parents' views of the school are more favourable than they were reported to be in the previous inspection.

11. During the past two years, almost 50 per cent of the staff, including members of the senior management team, have left for promotion or been appointed to the school. However, the school has appointed a team of committed staff who value the clear roles and responsibilities given to them. In recognition of the school's stage of development, two co-ordinators manage each subject. In the main, these co-ordinators work cohesively and help shape the direction of the school through their own evaluation procedures and action plans. The school is now in a strong position to draw up a detailed development plan that includes

clear, measurable targets for improvement, and criteria for judging the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

12. For pupils aged 11, the school has continued to maintain well above average standards in many subjects. This positive picture is not reflected in Year 2, where standards have declined in recent years although they match national averages. The drop in standards is largely due to the school now drawing its pupils from a more socially diverse community and to the substantial number of pupils joining and leaving the school in Years 1 and 2. The provision for special educational needs is well managed and the details in very good individual education plans are used effectively to help with assessments. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage with the bulk of the specialist support given in Years 3 to 6. The school recognises the need to refocus on supporting the work in Years 1 and 2, particularly since most staff changes also took place in these year groups.

13. The school gives pupils a rich learning experience through a well-balanced curriculum matched to their needs. For example, pupils find pleasure in books, and they are given a wide range of opportunities to use language in Years 3 to 6. Pupils deal with mathematical and scientific concepts with understanding. The school makes good use of pupils' work in displays to reflect the richness of the curriculum and celebrate achievement and motivate the pupils. For example, book reviews by pupils in Year 5 used rich descriptive language and there was evidence of carefully structured teaching. Poetry by pupils in Year 6 showed a strong personal response linked to historical facts. The poetry included imagery which created vivid word pictures. Other displays celebrated pupils' good work in physical education, art, science, and design and technology.

14. Members of the governing body are very much involved in shaping the direction of the school. Key governors are active, conscientious, reflective, well informed, and highly supportive of the headteacher and the work of the school. Their strategic overview is a particular strength and they have put into practice a set of contingencies to deal with the reduction in the budget. The principle of a close scrutiny of spending decisions has been fully established. Governors use their professional expertise and knowledge of the community to promote and improve the school and its work.

Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Consequently, pupils have very good attitudes to their work, behave well and want to achieve. They enjoy very good relationships with one another, and develop into mature individuals by the time they leave school.

15. The very good relationships between pupils leads directly from the example set by the teachers and other adults who work in the school. The school successfully meets its aim of creating a caring environment that celebrates pupils' achievement. This is evident in the calm, harmonious, and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to their learning. A high proportion of parents (97 per cent) indicated in their response to the questionnaire that their children like coming to school. Pupils are happy to be in school and to play a full part in their lessons, in which they are motivated to achieve well.

16. Teachers and other adults are very good at using a consistent approach in dealing with social and moral issues. The school is a moral community and parents appreciate the strong lead in teaching pupils the difference between right and wrong. Values such as honesty and respect form an intrinsic part of school life. Teachers use their very good relationships to help pupils understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils are encouraged to gain an insight into the values of others. They are given good opportunities to reflect on their experiences during assemblies and in lessons on personal and social education. Pupils are stimulated by thought-provoking and well-focused tasks, which

capture their interest and encourage them to think for themselves. As a result, they made good gains in their learning.

17. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other's views; this quality was evident in many lessons where pupils listened and valued the opinions of others in the group. Good attitudes are fostered by the example set by the teachers and by positive behaviour management which is based on respect and understanding. Pupils benefit from a behaviour policy which is consistently applied by teachers and other adults who are supportive and sensitive to their needs. Pupils are keen to carry out tasks and, when given the opportunity, they behave sensibly and take their responsibility seriously. Moral education is also fostered by very conscious attempts to promote inclusion and equal opportunities, such as the support given to pupils with special needs and the recognition in assembly of the achievements pupils have made.

18. The curriculum offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and co-operatively, particularly in subjects such as English, science, information and communication technology, and physical education. For example, the use of writing partners in English helps pupils to sharpen their awareness of possible errors and develop skills in critical appreciation. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 thrive on the opportunities to take initiative, and work independently without adult support. In assemblies, pupils are expected to collaborate well and work harmoniously with each other during musical performances.

19. Older pupils help with the organisation of the school day by taking some responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school. The after-school activities add to these opportunities, enabling pupils to share resources, work in groups, and evaluate each other's successes. By the time pupils leave school, they work with maturity and are self-assured.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing and opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

20. The results for the 2001 national tests show that standards in writing in Year 2 were similar to the national average but below the average found in similar schools. There is a much greater proportion of pupils, particularly girls, attaining standards at the lower end of the expected Level 2 than that found nationally, although more girls than boys gain the higher levels. However, the proportion of pupils overall reaching the higher Level (3) is lower than the national average. The results gained by pupils, particularly the girls, have declined during the past two years. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards in writing that are below the expected level. During the inspection, there was no difference in the quality of work produced by girls and boys.

21. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their basic skills given their below average attainment on entry. Independent writing skills in English and other subjects are not being extended due largely to the overuse of worksheets in some classes. Because handwriting is not well developed, work is often untidy and sometimes illegible. Only the higher attainers show evidence of joined-up writing and write independently at length. Middle attainers produce very little written work, with limited vocabulary, while lower attainers have weak letter formation and do not write in sentences.

22. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory, with examples of good practice in pupil management and in motivating and stimulating pupils during whole class sessions. There have been significant changes in teaching staff, but the school has yet to develop a systematic approach to marking which focuses rigorously on weaknesses in spelling.

Currently, corrections are not systematically followed up. The early literacy strategy, a government initiative which helps teachers to focus sharply on the teaching of skills in writing and reading, has yet to be introduced. The bulk of support for pupils with special educational needs is given in Years 3 to 6 and not at an early stage. The school recognises the need to provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities for independent writing, particularly the higher attainers, and reduce the over dependence on worksheets because of the constraints built into the tasks.

The achievement levels of higher attaining pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.

23. Results gained in mathematics by pupils aged seven matched the national average, although they were below average when the most recent results are compared to those gained by pupils in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level (3) was below average. A larger proportion of girls than boys gained the higher level. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards in numeracy, data handling and shape, space, and measure that are in line with those expected for their age. However, they are less secure in explaining methodology or in presenting their written work in an organised manner. Although the teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was good overall, significant changes in teaching staff, as well as a high number of pupils joining the school other than the normal time of entry, has meant that these important skills have not been progressively developed. The school is successfully seeking ways of raising attainment in Years 1 and 2. However, there is an over dependence on the use of worksheets which results in time-filling exercises. This deprives pupils of the opportunities to try different approaches, to organise their work, or to check it as it develops. The over use of worksheets also means that pupils cannot see the progress they are making or for teachers' marking to be effective in showing pupils how they might improve.

24. During whole-class sessions, there is scope for incisive questioning which challenges the pupils' answers and asks them to explain the mental strategies they use. In some classes, teachers fail to probe pupils' understanding or to challenge them at appropriate levels as they work on individual or group tasks. Assessment information is not used rigorously enough to ensure that pupils reach levels above those expected for their age.

Attendance

25. Attendance was unsatisfactory in the school year ending July 2001, and the number of unauthorised absences was just above the national average for similar schools. Attendance has improved during the autumn term 2001, and the number of unauthorised absences has reduced. If these trends are maintained, the school may attain or exceed national averages by the end of summer term. All but a few pupils arrive in good time for morning school, but a small number of pupils are persistently brought late by their parents. Late arrival in class causes stress to these pupils, who miss important instructions at the start of the school day.

26. The school has introduced good monitoring procedures, and an educational welfare officer works closely with some families. The school has developed good relationships with parents but some have yet to understand fully their responsibility in supporting their children's learning and improving their attendance.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

27. To improve standards of work and pupils' learning, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- improve pupils' writing skills in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - * increasing the opportunities for them to write independently in English and across the curriculum, and strengthen marking procedures in all subjects:
 - * reducing the over dependence on worksheets and giving pupils more opportunities to develop their writing;
- raise the achievement levels of the higher attaining pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by reducing the over dependence on worksheets and giving pupils more opportunities to develop ideas and discuss their work;
- build on the good relationships with parents to ensure that they understand fully their responsibility in supporting their children's learning and improving attendance.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	14	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	24	56	20	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 almost four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	460
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		69

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	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	34	25	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	31	33	33
	Girls	19	19	21
	Total	50	52	54
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (87)	88 (85)	92 (84)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	31	33	34
	Girls	19	20	22
	Total	50	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (85)	90 (83)	95 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	42	42	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	42	42	41
	Girls	36	39	39
	Total	78	81	80
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	93 (84)	96 (95)	95 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	37	40	40
	Girls	35	33	37
	Total	72	73	77
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	86 (86)	87 (91)	92 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	2
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	7
Chinese	1
White	480
Any other minority ethnic group	10

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	8	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	336

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-20001
	£
Total income	955307.00
Total expenditure	967593.00
Expenditure per pupil	1959.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	42669.00
Balance carried forward to next year	30383.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

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	381
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	52	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	51	9	6	1
The teaching is good.	61	36	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	30	13	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	29	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	43	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	48	51	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	52	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	48	13	3	3