

INSPECTION REPORT

BURFORD SCHOOL

Marlow Bottom, Marlow

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110314

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Bowie

Reporting inspector: Mrs Valerie Singleton
223044

Dates of inspection: 11th ~ 12th March, 2002

Inspection number: 198277

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Marlow Bottom Marlow Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	SL7 3PQ
Telephone number:	01628 486655
Fax number:	01628 898103
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Pattie Beresford
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
23044	Mrs Valerie Singleton	Registered inspector
19798	Mrs Jane O’Keefe	Lay inspector
23233	Miss Jo-Anne Cheadle	Team inspector
22170	Mr John Viner	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Ltd
Langshaw
Pastens Road
Limpsfield Chart
Oxted, Surrey
RH8 0RE

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	11
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burford is a community primary school situated on the outskirts of Marlow in an attractive village setting. It is bigger than most primary schools with 416 pupils on roll aged 4 to 11, including two reception classes with 21 full-time and 35 part-time children. Standards of attainment on entry to the reception classes are above those expected nationally. No pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average, and nearly all pupils come from socially advantaged homes. Seven pupils have English as an additional language, none being at the early stages of learning English. Most pupils are white and British, with a small minority who are Indian or Turkish. Nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs, for a variety of learning difficulties, with 4 having a Statement, both proportions being below the national average. The school has experienced significant teacher turnover in the past two years and now has five classes in which two teachers have a job-share. The school received an 'Investors In People' award last year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burford is a very effective school which successfully develops pupils' academic, social and creative skills. Pupils enjoy a rich and broad range of experiences. They achieve very well and attain very high standards. The quality of teaching is very good and the school is effectively led and managed so that it continually seeks to improve its work. The school actively encourages close links with parents and the community, which ensures shared values, very good working relationships and very good support for pupils' learning. Everyone takes great pride in the success of the school. The school provides very good value for the funding it receives.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very effective leadership, well supported by a very efficient governing body, and a strong and committed staff team.
- Teaching is very good, particularly at Key Stage 2, which stimulates the pupils' very good attitudes to learning throughout the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement, and pupils consistently attain very high standards by Year 2 and by Year 6.
- The school provides a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
- The very good partnership with parents and the community creates a close, supportive link between home and school enabling the pupils to flourish.

What could be improved

- Teachers' lesson planning is not based consistently enough on what pupils' already know, understand and can do, and does not always have appropriate timings.
- The senior management team does not yet play a full enough role in strategic planning.
- The facilities in the playgrounds are limited and there is only a very small outdoor learning environment for the reception children.
- The school does not always check that pupils' are progressively acquiring the key skills in the foundation subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected in October 1997, standards of attainment, the quality of education, the climate for learning, and the management and efficiency of the school were all judged very good.

The school has maintained these strong aspects of its work, and also successfully addressed the key issues for improvement. Good assessment and monitoring procedures have been established to check pupils' progress in English and mathematics, but not, as yet, in other subjects. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are now above average by Year 2 and in line with national expectations by Year 6. All health and safety issues have been addressed, and the prospectus and annual report of governors to parents meet statutory requirements. In addition, results in the national tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have further improved. The proportion of very good teaching has increased, despite significant changes in staffing. The role of co-ordinators has improved, albeit somewhat slowly. The school is not complacent and has a good capacity to continue to seek improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

Key

highest five percent of all schools A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the 2001 national tests for Year 2 pupils, results were well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and in the highest 5 per cent of all schools for writing. When compared to schools that have a similar intake of pupils, results in all subjects were well above average. In the tests for Year 6 pupils, results were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, results were also well above average in all three subjects. The Year 6 pupils had achieved very well in English and science against their results as Year 2 pupils, and had achieved well in mathematics. The school's results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have improved since the previous inspection. The overall upward trend matches that of the national picture. The school sets itself very challenging targets for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards. In 2001, the school met its target of 94% in English and almost met that of 93% in mathematics.

Inspection evidence supports these results. Children enter school with standards that are generally above those expected. They achieve well in the reception class due to the good provision. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 1 and, by Year 2, pupils reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. By Year 6, well above average standards are reached in English and mathematics. Pupils achieve well throughout Key Stage 2, and particularly well in Years 5 and 6. By Year 6, all pupils read and write at the expected standards, with a significant number performing above this. Pupils have very good mental mathematical skills. A significant number of pupils are working at the higher Level 5 in mathematics, and the most able are working within Level 6. In science, pupils achieve well in many aspects of the subject by Year 2. Standards overall are good, apart from in experimental and investigative science. This has recently been identified by the school as an area to improve and, in Year 6, pupils are beginning to use experiments effectively to support and extend their learning and understanding. Overall standards in science are above average, though results in the national tests were well above average. This is because this aspect is not tested. The recent focus on ICT has had a positive impact and pupils are now achieving well. Pupils in Year 2 are

reaching above average standards, and standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used well to support learning across the curriculum, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their targets. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well alongside their peers, though the school has identified the need to monitor their progress carefully when they reach the higher levels in English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work, enjoy all the experiences they are offered and are proud of their school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and play together happily in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There are very good relationships between pupils and with staff. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to take on responsibilities and show initiative.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good. This judgement is made from the observation of 19 lessons and an analysis of pupils' work. Of the 19 lessons observed, one was excellent, six were very good, seven were good and four were satisfactory. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory, because the activity did not relate sufficiently to the subject, so pupils did not make gains in their learning.

In reception, teachers provide a good range of activities, including those led by staff and those that the children can choose themselves. Most areas of learning are covered well, with a good focus on personal, social and emotional development, literacy and numeracy. As a result, children achieve well in these areas. English and mathematics are taught effectively in Key Stage 1 and 2, and pupils achieve well against their prior learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in class from the class assistants, so they make progress alongside their peers. Teachers identify pupils requiring extra help with literacy, and they receive support through well-focussed teaching in withdrawal groups. Older pupils are set for mathematics so work can be matched to their different abilities. Pupils benefit from this and achieve well as a result. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons and they make use of a range of effective strategies to engage the pupils' interest. The very good relationships mean pupils are eager and willing to complete all the tasks set. In upper Key Stage 2 especially, teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and pupils rise to the challenges set and make very good gains in their learning. Teachers offer good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Over-reliance on worksheets in some subjects in Key Stage 1 limits the opportunities for pupils' independent writing. In Key Stage 2, however, there are good examples of research, discussion, writing in a range of styles and from

different viewpoints, and recording information in tables and graphs. Homework is set consistently and is well matched to work in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good overall. Reception children are given a good range of worthwhile experiences, but their learning is restricted by the lack of an outdoor learning area. The school offers its pupils a very broad and enriched curriculum, with very good use of the local area, visitors, visits and residential trips to support all areas of learning. The extra-curricular provision is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive good support from well-trained class assistants, both to learn well in lessons and to work on their own individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English. They achieve well alongside their peers. The school now monitors their progress carefully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social provision is very good and underpins the pupils' excellent attitudes and very good behaviour. Provision for pupils learning about their own culture is good, but limited in developing their knowledge of other cultures. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils Assessment	All necessary procedures are satisfactorily in place. Good procedures are in place to check pupils' progress in English and mathematics and this information is used well to address any weaknesses.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. He is well supported by his deputy head. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to develop their role in the monitoring of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are well informed, have an effective committee structure and play a full part in agreeing priorities for school development and monitoring the targets set.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school monitors its work systematically and compares its results with those of other schools. It takes appropriate action as a result. Parents are now involved in the consultative process. Funding decisions are evaluated against improved standards.
The strategic use of	Good. All grants and funding are appropriately used. Financial planning

resources	is very good.
-----------	---------------

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 enjoy going to school. • The school is well led and managed. • They are comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • High expectations support their children's good progress, and they are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour is good. • The school works closely with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority feel there is too much homework

Over 60 per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire and nearly all were pleased with the school's work. Parents offer very good support to the school and they are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's learning. The team supports all the parents' positive views. Inspectors do not agree that there is too much homework, because pupils say they do not find it over-burdensome, they recognise that it is well matched to the work they do in lessons, and it supports them well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher provides very effective leadership, well supported by a very efficient governing body, and a strong and committed staff team.

1. The headteacher is held in high regard by governors, teachers, parents and pupils alike. He has a strong educational vision, based on achieving high academic standards and the provision of broad and rich experiences for the pupils. He firmly believes that every person working in the school, and all the parents and community who are associated with it, have their own important role to play. As a result of his consultative approach, he has built up a strong and committed staff team with shared values, and links between home and school are 'seamless'. The headteacher and deputy head work in close partnership and complement each other well. Despite the high standards attained by pupils, the headteacher is not complacent, but constantly seeks to further improve and refine the school's provision.
2. Since the previous inspection, the role of the senior management team has been gradually developing. They are beginning to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and have had some recent training in observation techniques. Time has been allocated and money set aside for these procedures to be fully implemented. Each member is responsible for either a core subject or a major aspect of the school. As such, they are closely involved in forming, implementing and evaluating any agreed action plans. Each member also leads team meetings for their year groups, and is responsible for checking that whole-school decisions are implemented. They also provide members of their team with opportunities to share their ideas or concerns, so the management team can build up a picture of what is happening throughout the school. Any identified concerns or weaknesses are used to formulate the priorities for the next school improvement plan. As the senior team are widening their responsibilities, they are beginning to be more effectively involved in strategic decision-making.
3. The governing body is very well organised, with good systems for meeting its responsibilities. Many governors offer specific expertise, which they use to good effect, such as successfully introducing the termly 'Bulletin'. This well-presented publication is delivered to every member of the local community, keeping them informed and promoting the school most effectively. Governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs visit the school each term for formal discussions with the co-ordinators. They then report back to the full governing body. Other governors visit the school each term by rota, with a focus agreed in advance. In this way, the governors keep well informed about the work of the school. The governors are fully involved in setting priorities, financial planning, and monitoring developments. They offer good help in providing a strategic direction for the school. Their decision-making is firmly based on an informed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For instance, money was allocated in order to employ classroom assistants, to address the problems of large classes. The governors carefully monitor the school's performance against both local and similar schools, and against the national picture. The outcomes of any agreed initiatives are carefully checked, such as the school's recent focus on improving writing. They also seek the views of parents on a range of relevant issues. The school is now at the early stage of developing a self-evaluation policy, in order to further improve its monitoring processes.

Teaching is very good, particularly at Key Stage 2, which stimulates the pupils' very good attitudes to learning throughout the school.

4. In the reception classes, teachers provide a good range of relevant experiences for the children, including those which are led by staff and those which are available for the children to choose themselves. The activities are planned carefully to the recommended curriculum and cover all six areas of learning. As children progress, teachers plan for those of higher ability to work within National Curriculum Level 1, thus keeping them fully challenged. Teachers promote the children's personal, social and emotional development well. They provide very good role models and treat everyone with care and respect. Children are encouraged to make independent choices, to work with each other and take turns, and to celebrate each other's important moments. For instance, when it is a child's birthday, lights are dimmed, a candle is lit, the class sing 'Happy Birthday' and give five claps. This makes each child feel very special and raises self-esteem. Children are encouraged to tell and then write their news after the weekend. Teachers initially act as scribes, then progress to helping the children to spell the words they want to use. As they develop a writing vocabulary, children are encouraged to write without seeking help. Few opportunities are evident, however, for children to write independently, for a purpose, in their role-play and other activities. In mathematical activities, teachers make good use of resources, such as a 'feely bag' and magnetic numbers, to promote children's understanding of ordering numbers 1 to 9. Classroom assistants are used well as they make notes on the children's understanding throughout the teaching session, and support those who find it difficult. Children who are identified as needing extra help with specific skills, such as whole-word recognition, or number formation, are given regular one-to-one help.
5. Throughout the school, teachers teach literacy and numeracy well. In a good Year 2 literacy lesson, the teacher selected an attractive and motivating 'Anansi' book that successfully illustrated the use of adjectives. She used questions effectively to encourage pupils to suggest their own, and modelled answers to introduce new and challenging vocabulary. Classroom assistants had their own small copies of the 'big book' so they could work with one or two pupils who needed to focus on the text. Before writing their own sentences, each group was reminded of their literacy target, so pupils were involved in trying to improve their own work. In a very good Year 1 numeracy lesson, a fast pace during the mental maths session really focused the pupils and ensured an enthusiastic response. Questions were pitched well to challenge pupils of different abilities, whilst the classroom assistant identified which pupils were meeting the learning objective of knowing the addition doubles to 5. For the main activity, the classroom assistant was well briefed and, as a result, offered effective support to pupils with special educational needs and those of lower ability. Well-made resources engaged the pupils' interest as they matched halves of sweets requiring a double number for a fit. A real strength to the lesson was the very positive attitudes pupils had towards their work. There was an air of excitement and shared discovery.
6. Some high quality teaching was observed in Key Stage 2. Lessons start with a clear learning objective, so pupils know what they are going to learn about and why. Teachers' own enthusiasm for the subject motivates the pupils and engages their interest. As a result, pupils are eager to respond to questions and to share their ideas. A carefully structured delivery of the main teaching point develops pupils' understanding, and follow-up activities are chosen that help them to use and apply existing knowledge. For instance, in a very good geography lesson in Year 3, pupils took on the role of 'travel agents' and used what they knew about the likes and dislikes of a set of people to select an appropriate destination for each. They made independent

choices about which resources they used and referred to previous work on climatic zones around the world. Pupils were very interested and responded well to the challenge set. In an excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher created an industrious working atmosphere, within which good humour was used to motivate all abilities. Pupils were given opportunities to find their own strategies to work out a problem mentally and the teacher's very good subject knowledge meant the most able pupils were fully challenged and involved throughout. Generally, lessons move at a good pace, keeping pupils engaged and fully challenged. Time is allowed at the end for pupils to reflect on their learning and to share some of the outcomes with each other. Homework is set that matches the work that has been covered. A few lessons were less successful because they lacked pace and rigour, too much questioning about the text interrupted the flow, and activities did not match the learning objective sufficiently to move pupils on in their learning. Even so, the very good relationships between teachers and pupils meant that pupils' attitudes remained positive and they did their best to stay on task.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement, and pupils consistently attain very high standards by Year 2 and by Year 6.

7. In the 2001 national tests for Year 2 pupils, results were well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and in the highest 5 per cent of all schools for writing. When compared to schools that have a similar intake, results in all three subjects were well above average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) was significantly better than the national average. In the Year 2 science tasks, results were above the national average and well above at Level 3. Boys attain as well as girls, unlike nationally. In the tests for Year 6 pupils, results were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, results were also well above average. Results at the higher level (Level 5) were well above both the national average and those of similar schools in all three subjects. The pupils had achieved very well in English and science against their results as Year 2 pupils, and had achieved well in mathematics. Boys attain as well as girls, unlike nationally, and boys do significantly better in English than nationally.
8. The school's results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have improved since the previous inspection. The overall upward trend matches that of the national picture. The school sets itself very challenging targets for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards. In 2001, the school met its target of 94 per cent in English and almost met the 93 per cent target in mathematics. Good tracking procedures mean the school knows pupils' abilities well, and sets challenging but realistic targets based on this knowledge. Targets for 2002, for instance, are appropriately slightly lower at 91.5 per cent.
9. Inspection evidence supports these results. Children enter school with standards that are generally above those expected. They achieve well in the reception class due to the good provision, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy skills and in mathematical development. Although most only attend part-time until the summer term, teachers set high standards and expect the children to meet the challenges set. By the time they leave reception, children have formed very good relationships with adults and each other, and they maintain attention and concentrate well. They work together harmoniously. They all are beginning to read and some are capable of completing a simple story independently. They copy underneath scribed writing, many writing some sentences on their own. Writing is neat, on the lines, and words have spaces in between. Children respond well to regular opportunities to tell the class about significant events in their lives and develop good speaking and listening skills. Through activities such as joining dots from 1 to 20 accurately to

create a picture, drawing items that are either longer or shorter than their shoe, and matching different-sized bears to the right chairs, children develop good mathematical knowledge.

10. By Year 2, pupils reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Their speaking and listening skills continue to develop well, and they benefit from the many opportunities to express their views and share ideas in lessons. Pupils read regularly, and are well supported at home by their parents and by those who come into school to help. Teachers select challenging texts as a focus for literacy lessons, and pupils are encouraged to read instructions or information on work sheets independently. All pupils are reading at the expected level, with a significant number who are above. In writing, nearly all pupils are already writing at the expected level for their age, and the few who are finding it more difficult are on track to reach this level by the end of the year. Pupils are taught how to develop a simple story line well, to use punctuation accurately, including some use of commas and speech marks. Most commonly used words are spelt accurately and a particular strength is the use of a wide vocabulary and well-structured sentences. Pupils benefit from the opportunities provided to use writing for a range of purposes. They create a class story, compile a list of instructions on how to look after fish, describe a character in a story, make notes from non-fiction text and devise a quiz on 'Swans'. Rewards are given for consistently good work, or for working to overcome a difficulty, which motivates and encourages pupils to try hard.
11. In mathematics, pupils' good reading skills are used well to support them, as they are set lots of word problems to solve. Numeracy skills are particularly well developed, with all pupils working at the expected level and many above. They count in 2s, 5s and 10s and understand place value to 100. They use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 and written methods with larger numbers. They measure length with standard units, and name and describe the properties of common 2- and 3-dimensional shapes. Some work is evident on the use of graphs and charts, but this aspect is less well covered. Teachers carefully assess pupils' written and numeracy work and identify which elements need to be improved in order for the next level to be reached. They use the assessments to set clear targets for each pupil. These are clearly displayed in classes and teachers make constant reference to them during lessons. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and try to reach the goals set. Some good use of literacy and numeracy skills is evident in other subjects. For example, pupils write an account of a visit from an optometrist as part of their science topic on senses, draw a time line to show when the Fire of London and the World Wars occurred, and compile a chart to show their birthdays and sequence the story of Florence Nightingale. Generally, however, writing is often limited because of the use of worksheets.
12. Science is taught regularly and pupils gain a good knowledge about plants and animals, living and non-living things. They learn about healthy foods and label the main parts of the body. They study the senses and identify the use of electricity in the home. There is little evidence, however, of pupils gaining scientific skills and understanding by investigating and conducting experiments. When given the opportunity in a lesson to investigate first-hand which force was used when handling a range of household items, they made very good gains in their learning. However, they did not have the necessary experience and skill to set up an experiment to discover which of three textiles had the most stretch. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and is addressing it accordingly.
13. By Year 6, pupils reach well above average standards in English and mathematics. Pupils achieve particularly well in upper Key Stage 2. By Year 6, pupils listen in a discussion with concentration and put forward their ideas clearly and expressively. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in regular school productions. They read a range of challenging texts,

and confidently use non-fiction books and the internet to locate information. They select key points, use inference and justify their own views by selecting appropriate phrases from the text. Teachers take pupils through the process of understanding the technical aspects of writing, they extend their vocabulary by encouraging the use of a thesaurus, and expect to see new learning reflected in pupils' independent writing. Pupils learn to write fluently and imaginatively, as when completing an adventure tale set in the mountains, creating a Tanka poem, or debating 'Do circuses still need animal acts?' Pupils are given the opportunity to draft their work and then critically edit it. In this way, pupils are constantly encouraged to improve and refine their work.

14. Pupils have very good mental mathematical skills. By Year 6, a significant number of pupils are working at the higher Level 5 in mathematics, and teachers ensure that the most able are moved on to Level 6. All aspects of the subject are well taught and given detailed coverage. Pupils work with numbers over a thousand, they apply and test rules, understand angles and bearings, and represent and extract information from graphs. In science, by Year 6, pupils have a secure and broad base of scientific knowledge and understanding. As a result of a recent initiative, teachers are giving pupils regular opportunities to conduct experiments and scientific investigations, which effectively is supporting and extending pupils' learning and understanding.
15. The school monitors and tracks pupils' progress in both literacy and numeracy across the year and throughout the key stage. Any identified weaknesses are addressed, and all pupils have targets for each subject that set them good challenges and identify how to further improve their work. For instance, the school identified a relative weakness in writing so targeted 76 pupils to raise their attainment by at least one grade. As a result, 68 met or exceeded the target, indicating that most pupils respond to the high expectation of improvement.

The school provides a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.

16. The school teaches the National Curriculum in a varied and imaginative way. Although the weekly timetables reflect an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, the aim of encouraging pupils to reach their potential socially and personally, as well as academically, is not ignored and many opportunities are provided to enrich and extend pupils' learning experiences. The youngest children visit the local woods, a farm and a toy museum in Henley. Each class goes on a trip or has a visitor each term, to reinforce what is being covered in the curriculum. For example, Year 4 visited Hampton Court as part of their work on the Tudors. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to go on residential trips to East Anglia and to Yorkshire. These offer very good support to pupils' social and personal development, as well as extending their learning experiences and knowledge of other communities. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities within the school, such as the older ones helping to supervise the younger classes at lunchtimes. They have limited opportunities for decision-making and showing initiative, however, though they have the skills to do these well.
17. Many visitors are invited into school, either to talk about their work in the community, such as the police and post office worker, or to bring in specific expertise, such as an illustrator in Year 2 or the 'Roman' Legion XIII group in Year 3. The work produced by pupils as a result of all these visits and visitors is of high quality and reflects the benefits pupils have gained from these first-hand experiences.
18. The school supports pupils' musical interests and talents by accommodating and organising instrumental tuition. At present, six peripatetic staff offer guitar, woodwind, 'cello, brass and

violin tuition and many pupils choose to take advantage of this. The school also runs extra-curricular clubs for band, choir, recorder and folk guitar. Pupils take part in concerts and festivals, so they have the opportunity to perform as a group, and with others, which encourages them to reach even higher standards.

19. The school is committed to providing a wide range of extra-curricular activities by running regular clubs and coaching sessions. These are available to pupils across Key Stage 2 and are very well supported. An impressive list includes chess, table tennis, short tennis, French, and wildlife, as well as the team sports of netball, football and rugby. Pupils have regular opportunities to play in competitions and learn a sense of fair play, co-operation and group rules. With a regional coach on the staff, the school has become famed for its success at orienteering, which gives the participating pupils the chance to travel over the country to take part in national competitions. Overall, the school's provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent and it is very well supported by teachers and parents alike.

The very good partnership with parents and the community creates a close, supportive link between home and school, enabling the pupils to flourish.

20. Nearly all children who join the reception classes have attended one of two local pre-school groups, so they have no difficulties settling into the reception classes amongst a group of well-known friends. Also, children and parents have an opportunity to visit and meet the teachers twice, prior to starting in the September. From the beginning, parents are encouraged to take an active and full part in their children's learning and to become part of the school community. Many help regularly in the school and, last year, over 130 were invited to attend the 'Thank-you' party for parent helpers! This indicates tremendous support. Parents help in a range of ways; they hear children read, support teachers within the class, or use their expertise to teach groups of children. For example, one parent helps to teach Year 6 ICT skills, and another explains aspects of the Hindu religion. Some come after school to coach sports, such as table tennis and cricket, and many help by supervising groups on visits to places of interest. A large number are involved with the sporting competitions and willingly take their children, after school and at weekends, to a variety of inter-school, county and national events. Parents say that this regular and close contact between home and school creates a real sense of community, and a chance for social interaction involving all the family and school staff. This plays a very important part in developing the excellent attitudes pupils have towards their school and work, the very good behaviour evident, and the very good relationships between staff and pupils.
21. Parents offer good support to their children's learning at home. They hear them read, even in the reception classes, and ensure that homework is completed regularly and well. They often take their children to places of interest that are of relevance to their learning. For instance, some took their children in Year 2 to visit a war cemetery, and researched their family's involvement in the World Wars, when pupils were learning about Remembrance Day. Parents help their children research topics associated with their work in school using books and the Internet, so children become very knowledgeable and aware of issues as a result. Nearly all parents are supportive of the homework because they feel it keeps them informed about their child's learning, it reinforces basic skills, they like to be involved, and it prepares their children well for the demands of secondary education.
22. The school works hard to keep parents well informed. Regular, informative letters are sent home, often in lunch-boxes so they will not be missed! Formal meetings to discuss their children's progress are arranged each term and these are very well supported, with usually

every family attending. Should any extra information be required, or concerns arise, parents find teachers and the headteacher very approachable. Pupils' annual reports are personal, relevant, and realistic. As pupils move through the school, they are encouraged to set their own targets on their report, alongside those of their teacher, for the next year. Parents are also aware of the literacy and numeracy targets that are set for their child.

23. Good links are developed with the local community in a variety of ways. Local experts are invited to talk to classes about their work. In order to address the usual problem of parking at the beginning and end of school, the governors successfully introduced the 'Crocodile Trail' which resulted in over 300 children walking to school with their parents last summer. This was successful because the parents were consulted first and so were positively involved in the project from the beginning. Local residents were very pleased to see the school take such positive steps. The 'Bulletin' also keeps everyone in the village informed about events in the school. Parents say they are very proud to be part of the school and they feel there are closely shared aims and values between both. The school is viewed as an asset to the community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Teachers' lesson planning is not based consistently enough on what pupils' already know, understand and can do, and does not always have appropriate timings.

24. The good teaching and standards achieved by the pupils indicate that teachers' planning is generally appropriate and meets the needs of the pupils well. However, where weaknesses were observed, it was generally due to teachers not matching the learning objective for lessons well enough to the needs of the pupils, based on what they had covered before.
25. Some planning does not take sufficient account of the length of the session between assembly and playtime. As a result, either the pace slows and the lesson loses purpose, or less time is available for other subjects. For example, the school plans to fully implement a personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), but this is not yet allocated a regular time in every class.
26. Teachers generally plan activities that have a different challenge for pupils of different abilities within the class. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were constantly challenged, firstly in the mental activity, then in the main task of making a table that converts miles to kilometres, and through the teacher's high expectations about how hard pupils would work. However, in an analysis of pupils' past work, there were few examples across the school where those of the highest ability were really challenged by an investigative, open-ended task. Better opportunities have recently been introduced through developing experimental and investigative science. In some subjects, an over use of worksheets, that do not give pupils the opportunity to express their own ideas, sometimes puts a 'ceiling' on their learning.
27. The school provides many worthwhile opportunities for the pupils to learn about their own culture, but it is less evident where teachers plan to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and the contribution these have made to learning and the arts. In religious education, pupils study other faiths and so they are developing an understanding of and respect for different beliefs. There are examples, such as using a Bengali story and an Anansi story in Year 2 literacy, where good experiences are provided, but it is not systematically part of teachers' planning.

The senior management team does not yet play a full enough role in strategic planning.

28. The senior management team (SMT) is beginning to widen its perspective. As curriculum co-ordinators, members of the SMT monitor teachers' planning and are responsible for implementing any action plan associated with their subject. In this respect, they are engaged appropriately in the operation of the school. However, they do not have a clear role in planning and monitoring the longer-term development of the school. One is a member of the governing body, and, as such, can follow through a strategic role via this forum. This is not the situation for the others, though it is evident that the school takes its management seriously with its success in gaining the IIP award. Recently the members of the SMT have had access to training in lesson observation, though, to date, the monitoring of teaching has been mostly informal. Also, they have a limited input into the formulation of the school development plan. However, the school has yet to build on this work so that the members of the SMT have a close focus on the performance of their teams and operate a participative approach to school monitoring and evaluation.

The facilities in the playgrounds are limited and there is only a very small outdoor learning environment for the reception children.

29. Although they appreciate the space available, pupils and parents have identified the playground as being an area they would really welcome being improved further. The school has worked to make the environment more interesting, with flower tubs to brighten the entrance, an attractive pond and water feature, and an area where pupils can sit and read or talk. However, when the grassed area is not available during much of the year, the rest of the play space is somewhat bleak and uninviting. Some markings and games had been painted on the surface, but these have faded over time and do not invite use. Those who enjoy ball games have access to a fenced area. However, pupils, especially the younger ones, do not have access to many interesting challenges and activities in which to participate at playtimes and during the lunch break.
30. The reception children have access to only a very small, dedicated outdoor area. They use this when the weather permits for a few activities. With 14 classes time-tabled to use the hall, it is only possible to allocate an hour a week to the reception classes for physical activities. At present, they have to use an outdoor playground for a time-tabled morning and afternoon break. The new Foundation Stage curriculum, for nursery and reception children, promotes the use of an outdoor environment that helps to develop children's skills in all six areas of learning throughout the day. This is particularly desirable when, as all children join the reception classes in September, many are only just four years old. The guidelines recommend that children are encouraged to make choices from activities both indoors and out, in a flexible way. Although there is plenty of space indoors, with extra rooms for role play and creative activities, teachers are limited in how they plan the activities each day because the children do not have a suitable outdoor area

The school does not check that pupils' are progressively acquiring the key skills in the foundation subjects.

31. A key issue in the last report was to further develop and unify assessment procedures. It also identified that assessment opportunities were missing in teachers' planning. The latter has been addressed, and these are now included as and when appropriate. The school has built up some strong and effective procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics. However, the school does not have a consistent system for ensuring that pupils are making progress in gaining the necessary key skills in other subjects.

32. Procedures are being introduced, based on the local authority's guidelines, for monitoring pupils' progress in all the strands of ICT. These should provide a clear picture of pupils' achievements, and indicate if aspects of the subject need more support. At present, teachers have insufficient information to know exactly what pupils' have covered and understood previously.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. In order to further improve the work of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should: (Each is followed by a reference to the paragraph(s) in which it is discussed.)

- i) Improve curriculum and lesson planning, particularly for the foundation subjects, so that:
- learning objectives and activities build on pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding;
 - there are opportunities for the most able pupils to be given some real challenges through experimental and investigative work;
 - the timings and pace of the lessons are appropriate;
 - the programme to progressively develop pupils' PSHE is included; and
 - it features multicultural and spiritual elements, so pupils develop an awareness of their part in the wider community.

(see paragraphs 6, 12, 24-27)

- ii) Further develop the role of the senior management team, so they can take a full part in the strategic planning of the school.

(see paragraphs 2, 28)

- iii) Improve the facilities in the playgrounds and to seek ways of providing an outdoor learning environment for the reception children.

(see paragraphs 29-30)

- iv) Identify the key skills that pupils need to acquire in ICT and the foundation subjects, and to check pupils' progress against them in order to inform teaching.

(see paragraphs 31-32)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	7	4	1	0	0
Percentage	6	31	36	21	6	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 five 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)	416
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	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	4.0	School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

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	39	21	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	37	37	38
	Girls	18	19	21
	Total	55	56	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (98)	93 (98)	98 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	38	38
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	58	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (98)	97 (100)	98 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	39	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	25	27
	Girls	37	35	39
	Total	62	60	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (92)	91 (86)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	24	27
	Girls	37	35	37
	Total	63	59	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (92)	89 (89)	94 (92)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	5
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	362
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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	1	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- Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.1
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR- Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	257

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
	£
Total income	702059
Total expenditure	694310
Expenditure per pupil	1654
Balance brought forward from previous year	16501
Balance carried forward to next year	24250

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	433
Number of questionnaires returned	275

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	38	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	46	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	12	3	1
The teaching is good.	63	34	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	54	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	31	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	49	7	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	25	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	36	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	44	6	3	4