

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bredbury, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106100

Headteacher: Mr. J. Murray

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. H. Cole  
3369

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 198392

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Osborne Street Bredbury Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK6 2EX
Telephone number:	0161 430 2675
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr. C. Gordon
Date of previous inspection:	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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18889	Mr. A. Perks	Team inspector
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a large infant and junior school which educates 390 boys and girls aged five to eleven. In addition, 40 younger children attend a nursery class part-time. The residential area served by the school has a good level of employment and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. However, other national measures show the overall social and economic circumstances of the area to be below the national average. Pupils start at the school with an overall level of attainment which is below average, especially in their language and communication skills. A very small number of pupils, about two per cent of the total, are of minority ethnic origin. A few of these pupils use English as an additional language. About twenty-eight per cent of pupils, a broadly typical proportion, are identified by the school as having special educational needs. Seven of these pupils have statements of special educational needs, an average number for the size of the school.

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

This is a good school. As they proceed through the school pupils make good progress both in their work and in their personal development and behaviour. The teaching is of good quality. The school has many strengths and no significant weaknesses, a result of very good leadership and management. The school is successful with fewer funds than most, making it very good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well at the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> and in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.
- Teaching throughout the school is of good quality.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school, make very good relationships and behave very well.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and for their care and welfare.
- Parents are pleased with the school.
- The school benefits from very good leadership and management.

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

- Although the school's checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning are satisfactory, further development of them, especially through fuller involvement of subject co-ordinators, could help to raise standards.
- The curriculum and resources for information and communication technology, though improving, are not adequate.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work, and setting of targets for their day-to-day progress, could be improved by extending the very good practices recently tried out in Year 6.

These improvements have already been identified in the school's planning for the future.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since its previous inspection in November 1997 the school has achieved a good level of improvement. There has been a gradual rise in the standards achieved by the oldest pupils, especially more able ones. The latest signs from work seen during the inspection are that standards have also begun to rise for the younger pupils, too. Rising standards reflect the improved teaching found at this inspection. An element of unsatisfactory teaching found in 1997 has been completely eliminated and there is now a greater proportion of good lessons. Behaviour, which was previously judged good, is now very good. The pockets of misbehaviour found previously in some lessons are no longer to be seen. The quality of the provision for spiritual development has improved from satisfactory to good. The leadership and management has also improved; previously judged good it is now considered to be very good. This, together with the clear commitment of a strong staff team, gives the school a good capacity for further improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> *Foundation Stage: education before Year 1; in this school this means the nursery and reception classes.*

In all of the “key issues for action” identified at the previous inspection the school has made at least satisfactory improvement. Assessment of pupils’ progress is now good, music lessons have improved significantly, teaching is now monitored satisfactorily and homework arrangements are now satisfactory. There has been a good improvement in the attainment of more able pupils. The school now meets all requirements for publishing information to parents, resolving some previous omissions.

## 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 <sup>1</sup>
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	C
mathematics	B	C	B	B
science	A	B	B	B

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

<sup>1</sup> Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

Pupils’ test results **at age eleven** have shown a steady improvement over recent years in line with the national trend. Last year the school exceeded its official target for improved results in mathematics but fell a little short of its target for English. The work of the present Year 6 pupils is generally not of the same standard as shown by the 2001 test results. However, this is because this particular year-group has a lower profile of ability than that of the previous year. Work in mathematics continues to be a little above average, work in science is close to the average, but work in English, where several pupils find difficulty with writing, is below average. This year-group has been well taught and pupils of all ability levels have achieved well when their earlier attainment is taken into account. Their work generally compares favourably with that found in similar schools. Examples of work undertaken by pupils aged seven to eleven, in a range of other subjects, is of satisfactory quality.

In National Curriculum tests of reading, writing and mathematics taken by **pupils aged seven** in 2001 the school’s results were well below the national average. There are several reasons for this, including the low level of pupils’ attainment when they started at the school, a significant level of special educational needs amongst pupils, changes of teacher, including some temporary arrangements, and a lack of classroom assistants to support the teaching in pupils’ early years, when the school’s finances were squeezed. The school now has more settled and improved teaching in the classes for pupils up to age seven and standards are beginning to rise. The work of pupils aged seven seen during the inspection was of average standard in mathematics and science, though standards in English, especially writing, remain well below the standard expected. Examples of work seen in other subjects were of satisfactory quality. In relation to their attainment on starting at the school, pupils of all ability levels are achieving well. This is also true of the children at the Foundation Stage, where most in the present reception classes are likely to achieve the national goals for early learning that are expected of them at the end of the reception year.

## PUPILS’ ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school, are willing to learn and take an interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond well to school rules and to adult direction. It is a calm, orderly and happy school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils almost always show responsibility and they make very good relationships with adults and each other.

Attendance	Satisfactory. The level is close to the national average.
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Unauthorised absence has been high in the past but improved procedures have led to a marked reduction this year.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Good quality teaching is found in all parts of the school. Lessons are well planned and clearly focused on exactly what pupils need to learn. Teachers clearly expect pupils to work well and do their best. They provide stimulating activities and give much encouragement, including rewards for effort. As a result pupils behave very well, concentrate on their work and waste no time. The management of pupils' behaviour is a particular strength. Teaching of English and mathematics, including basic literacy and numeracy skills, is effectively systematic. Teaching meets the range of pupils' abilities and needs, including special educational needs, well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. A good number of educational visits and visitors, a good range of activities outside lessons and a well-designed programme of personal, social and health education help to provide for a stimulating range of opportunities for learning. The work in information and communication technology is not fully developed or sufficiently linked to subjects across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Planning of work for these pupils is mostly sound. Where additional staff support is provided progress is particularly good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The small number of pupils concerned is satisfactorily supported. Support is best when specialist visiting staff are available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good in all aspects. Pupils are set clear examples that help them to know how to behave. They are effectively encouraged to think about and value themselves, their lives, and their world and to consider how they should relate to others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good formal procedures that combine with caring relationships to provide well for pupils' welfare.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very good leadership to a hard-working and committed school staff. He shows determination to promote improvement and clear ideas about how to do so. He is well supported in management of the school by senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are well-informed about the school, keep a good check on its development and contribute well to planning and financial decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall, but more searching checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning would be beneficial.
The strategic use of resources	Decisions about use of financial, staffing and other resources are made very carefully to ensure that pupils receive maximum benefit. Decisions

	apply principles of “best value” very well.
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Very careful financial planning and management helps the school to minimise the effect of receiving fewer funds than most comparable schools.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Almost all parents say that their children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• like school</li> <li>• make good progress</li> <li>• behave well at school</li> <li>• become more mature and responsible</li> </ul> <p>and, that the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is well led and managed</li> <li>• provides good teaching</li> <li>• expects pupils to work hard</li> <li>• works closely with parents and is approachable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small minority of parents does not think pupils get the right amount of homework</li> <li>• A small minority of parents, mainly those of the youngest pupils, would like to see more activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

Inspectors’ observations support all of the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors judge homework arrangements to be satisfactory and the provision of activities outside lessons to be good. They note that the level of parental concern on these matters is lower than in most schools.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

<b>Pupils achieve well at the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.</b>
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1. Pupils start at the school with a wide range of ability but the overall picture is that pupils begin with attainment which is below the national standard. This is especially the case in pupils' language and communication skills. Many children start in the nursery with a reluctance to speak at any length. The nursery and reception class teachers and support staff work hard to encourage pupils in a greater willingness to communicate with others and express themselves. Their sensitive and caring approach to young children and the stimulating activities they provide are especially effective in promoting good progress. Lively and purposeful activity is planned across the curriculum recommended nationally for the age-group. Children respond with interest, behave well and make good relationships with adults and each other. The provision at the Foundation Stage is well managed, though hindered at times by the awkward shape of the nursery classroom and a shortage of suitable space for outdoor activity. Most children approaching the end of the Foundation Stage meet the goals for early learning set for their age-group within the nationally recommended curriculum.
2. Despite the good progress at the Foundation Stage, for the first few years of their schooling pupils continue to show a weakness in oral expression. Many pupils up to age eight, and a few beyond this, if asked to retell part of a familiar story, or to state an opinion or explanation, respond with a few hesitant words and rarely with extensive or well-formed comments. Many pupils also find difficulty in spelling and grammar as local patterns of speech and pronunciation do not match the expectations within which the school is required to work, as when pupils say "they was" rather than "they were". In their writing, pupils are slow to acquire habits of correct punctuation, spelling and handwriting even though they are taught these matters systematically.
3. Pupils' limited vocabulary means that their reading and writing are also slower to develop than usual. When, in recent years, pupils have taken National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at age seven, their results have generally been below or well below the national average. This is borne out by the work of present Year 2 pupils seen during the inspection. Nevertheless, by the age of eleven continued good progress has helped most pupils to catch up with the standards of reading and writing expected nationally for their age-group. In national tests of English for pupils aged eleven the school's results in recent years have matched the national average. This has been a good achievement considering pupils' low attainment when they started school. School and inspectors agree that the results in the 2002 tests, which pupils were due to take immediately after the inspection, are unlikely to be as good as in recent years. However, this is because the present group of Year 6 pupils contains a higher proportion of pupils who have difficulty with writing than usual. Still, though, the evidence is that pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. A minority of pupils exceed the level of attainment expected at age eleven. Some of these are competent and enthusiastic readers and some write lively, engaging text with a sure sense of using a style of writing suited to their particular purpose such as to describe, persuade or instruct. The school works hard to help pupils overcome their slow start with language. During the inspection lessons throughout the school showed pupils making progress in English that was often good and always at least satisfactory.
4. In mathematics and science, too, pupils start at the school with below average knowledge, understanding or skill. Sometimes pupils' poor reading and writing skills become a hindrance in learning in mathematics and science, too. As in reading and writing, pupils' recent National Curriculum test results in mathematics have been well below average. In science, teachers' own formal assessments in 2001 also showed pupils' attainment at age seven to be well below average. However, the work of present pupils aged seven seen by inspectors shows that they are

achieving an average standard in mathematics and science, although their weak writing skills mean that they are not always able to do justice to their science knowledge and understanding when writing it down. The fact that present pupils' work in mathematics and science is better than past test results is consistent with other evidence that the quality of teaching and learning in the classes for pupils up to age seven has been improving.

5. Although in the past pupils have got off to a slow start in mathematics and science they have been able, as in English, to make up lost ground in the longer term. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven the school has scored above average results in these subjects in most recent years. In view of pupils' below-average attainment when they started at the school, this is a considerable achievement. Present pupils in the classes for those aged seven to eleven are also achieving well in these subjects. As in English, the oldest pupils, in Year 6, show a lower profile of ability than usual, but nonetheless their work in mathematics continues to be above the national standard while their work in science is close to the standard. Most of the oldest pupils can calculate well using large numbers, fractions and decimals and they can apply these skills to solving practical problems. In science, pupils show a sound range of knowledge and they carry out investigations well, testing their predictions through good observation and measurement and drawing conclusions from their results to explain cause and effect.

<b>Teaching throughout the school is of good quality.</b>
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6. Throughout the school, from the nursery class to Year 6, teaching is of good quality. The great majority of lessons seen during the inspection were of good quality, and some were very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The overall profile of the teaching is significantly better than at the previous inspection. Parents, too, have noticed the improvement and almost all expressing a view agree the teaching is good. The many changes of teachers in recent years, including some temporary appointments, have led to some lack of continuity, particularly for teaching of pupils up to age seven. The school has begun to emerge from this period and the good teaching and good pupil progress seen in these younger classes are raising standards above the levels shown by past National Curriculum test results.
7. There is a consistency about the quality of, and approach to, teaching throughout the school which reflects well on the way in which the school's senior management supports the teaching and keeps a check on its effectiveness. Within the overall good picture of the teaching, a particular strength is teachers' very successful management of the pupils. Teachers take the trouble to make the work interesting and stimulating. This is seen, for example, when games are used to make mathematics both challenging and fun. Similarly a Year 1 English lesson on relating letters to sounds was made exciting and instructive for the pupils when they were able to correct Croaker, the teacher's puppet, when he mispronounced words. Pupils respond to these approaches by wanting to work and concentrating well. Teachers are also encouraging. They use rewards well to build pupils' self-esteem and enthusiasm for their work. Rewards, consistently used, make it clear to pupils how they should behave. Pupils respond by working and behaving very well almost all of the time in lessons. Little time is wasted and much work is done.
8. Teachers also make very clear to pupils what they should achieve in their work. They challenge pupils to do their best, doing this especially effectively in some of the classes for older pupils. Lessons are well prepared and planned. Teachers are very clear about what new knowledge, understanding or skills they want pupils to learn and they design relevant tasks to help pupils succeed. In English and mathematics, particularly, teachers adapt the work well to provide for the range of pupils' abilities and needs. This is helping the school to answer effectively the criticism at the previous inspection that more able pupils were not helped to achieve as highly as they should. The proportion of pupils aged eleven whose attainment is above the expected level of attainment (level four) has risen markedly since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, receive extra help from support staff either working alongside the teacher or working with an individual or small group aside from

the class. Where provided, this support often leads these pupils to make good progress towards the individual targets set for them. At other times, when this support is not available, pupils with special needs or English as an additional language sometimes progress less well, but usually satisfactorily. These inconsistencies reflect the fact that the school's levels of funding and staffing that might support this work are lower than in most schools. Work for pupils with special educational needs is soundly guided by individual education plans written for each pupil. These are clear in relation to the good many pupils with difficulties in English or, in a few cases behaviour. However, individual education plans do not cater well for a few pupils finding difficulty in mathematics.

9. A further strength of many lessons, and an especially valuable one in the teaching of pupils up to age seven, is teachers' skilful use of questions to stimulate pupils' thinking and encourage them to express themselves. Teachers are persistent but patient and encouraging as they strive to draw out pupils' ideas. The school has been conducting a drive over the last year to encourage pupils to speak more and teachers are working well to achieve this aim.
10. In only one aspect of the teaching is there a clear inconsistency. Marking of pupils' work and its use to encourage individuals to take the next steps in their learning are variable. The practices recently introduced in English work in Year 6 are impressive. There are excellent examples here of close analysis of pupils' work and relevant comments when books are marked that both reward pupils when they succeed and show precisely how they can improve their work still further. Charts in the form of ladders are pasted in the front of pupils' exercise books to record their progress toward personal targets. New targets are provided to move pupils on when previous ones have been met. Pupils respond well to this detailed feedback on their progress. The clarity, precision and regularity of the guidance they receive on improving their work helps with the establishment of good habits and consistency in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. These practices in Year 6 are, though, the exception not the rule. Elsewhere marking is not as helpful to pupils, though still satisfactory.

**Pupils have good attitudes to school, make very good relationships and behave very well.**

11. As almost all parents say, pupils like school and are keen to attend. Pupils generally show a good level of interest in their work, try their best and take pride in their achievements. A good many choose to give up lunchtimes or time after school to join in clubs and activities organised by the school.
12. Pupils also show positive attitudes toward other members of the school community, both children and parents. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils work together well, sharing equipment harmoniously. Pupils are pleasant and helpful toward visitors. Pupils take pride in their own achievement but also enjoy others' success, applauding them warmly in assemblies when they receive certificates or rewards.
13. Positive attitudes and good relationships lead to very good behaviour. Pupils willingly comply with adults' wishes and teachers rarely have need to resort to sanctions for misbehaviour. Pupils move about the school sensibly and treat school property responsibly. Lessons and school assemblies are calm, orderly and purposeful events and as such are an ideal setting for pupils' academic and personal development.

**Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and for their care and welfare.**

14. Pupils' positive attitudes, their very good behaviour and their very good relationships in school are largely the result of the school's good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents applaud the way in which the school helps pupils develop good attitudes and to grow in maturity and responsibility.

15. School assemblies help pupils to think about questions of right and wrong in life and in relationships, and to think about the way they might apply these thoughts to themselves and their own behaviour. This is effective in helping pupils to develop responsibility for their own behaviour so that they become less reliant on adults telling them what to do. Pupils' work in religious education and when writing in English sometimes encourages them to think about personal feelings and values. In geography they are encouraged to reflect on values in an international setting when they consider environmental issues, like the destruction of the rain forests or water shortages.

16. Further encouragement of pupils' reflection on ideas of right and wrong comes in the regular weekly "circle time" for each class when pupils can take turns to talk about their thoughts and feelings, good and bad, find support from others and resolve upsets. These events are an important part of the school's thorough and well-considered programme of personal, social and health education. Equally important is the very clear example adult members of the school community, whatever their role, set for pupils. Adults show respect and concern for children. Children respond with respect for adults and by following the adults' example in caring for and co-operating with each other. The good examples shown to pupils support the clarity of school rules and expectations which are consistently applied. Respect for these rules is enhanced when all members of the school community, including office staff and site manager, attend an assembly at the beginning of each term when school rules are agreed. As a result of all these measures pupils both want and know how to behave well. They expect and encourage good behaviour of each other. They want to be involved in the good relationships within the school community they identify with.
17. Pupils are given some good opportunities to develop responsibility through particular duties, such as when they act as "playground buddies", an idea admired by parents. An unusual but valuable feature in the school's approach to encouraging pupils' maturity and responsibility is the holding of an annual "careers day" for Year 5 and 6 pupils when representatives of local employers attend and help older pupils begin to think about their long-term futures.
18. Provision for pupils' cultural development helps them to understand and value the culture of their society, its past and its achievements. It also helps them to appreciate the cultural heritage of other members of their own society from a background different from their own and to value the diversity of religious faith and culture across the world. On occasion pupils consider art, music or dance from unfamiliar cultures or meet with visitors representing a range of faiths and cultures. Cultural development is often promoted through visits to places of cultural interest. The good number of educational visits and visitors is a further reason for pupils' positive interest in and attitude to their time at school. Learning to understand and respect cultural traditions other than their own helps the pupils to respect those different from themselves and thus plays an important part in developing the very good relationships found within the school.
19. The school is conscientious about safeguarding pupils' health, safety and welfare at school. Pupils benefit from the school's good formal procedures combined with the staff's caring and co-operative relationships with both pupils and their parents.

<b>Parents are pleased with the school.</b>
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20. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed overwhelming support for the work of the school. On ten of the twelve questions asked, more than ninety per cent of parents expressed a positive view of the school. On the other two questions, about homework and about activities outside lessons, the proportions of parents expressing concern (fourteen per cent and seventeen per cent) was still lower than in the case of most primary schools. Parents speaking to inspectors during the inspection also stated their positive feelings about the school and their respect for the headteacher.
21. The fact that parents find that the school is approachable and welcomes close co-operation with them is an important part of parents' satisfaction. Open and responsive relations with parents, helps parents to trust and have respect for the work of the school. The school's commitment to partnership with parents is illustrated by the way it has sometimes brought together a representative group of parents in order to sample parents' views and wishes. This group also worked with the school to put together the school's own questionnaire which was sent out as a means of keeping in touch with parental opinion. This has allowed the school to adapt and develop itself, for example in relation to homework arrangements, in a way that satisfies almost all parents. By consulting with parents the school has created a sense of partnership which encourages and

enables parents to support and involve themselves in their children's education.



## **The school benefits from very good leadership and management.**

22. The headteacher leads the school with determination and a clear vision. He is well supported in this by his deputy. In recent years the headteacher has been faced with difficult decisions about staffing and financial matters. His approach has been well considered and always focused on the needs of pupils. Success in steering the school through a difficult period of many changes has led to a situation now where a consistently strong, hard-working and united team of staff has both the commitment and competence to further improve what is already a good school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good and the school is now even better placed to move still further forward. Very good leadership is seen in the consistent and effective way in which members of staff work together to implement clear agreed aims, policies and practices.
23. Senior staff have a good general awareness of the strengths of the school's work and of areas where improvement is desirable. As a result the school is already working towards the improvement inspectors, too, have identified as desirable. Since the previous inspection, processes for keeping a check on teachers' performance and promoting development in their skills have improved. In addition, more careful analysis of pupils' test results and other work has led to the setting of targets for each pupil's progress each year. These developments are helping to raise standards. In achieving a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, the school feels it has been well supported by local authority personnel providing advice to the school.
24. School governors play a very good part in encouraging school improvement and keeping a check on the school's performance. They are well informed about the work of the school, are aware of its strengths and of where it needs to improve; they work closely with senior staff to plan key school developments. Governors visit the school frequently, each having a link to a particular class. They have discussions with a wide range of staff and examine carefully data measuring the school's effectiveness.
25. Governors are well informed about financial matters and work closely with the senior management to ensure that precious funds are used in the most effective way possible. This is especially important in this school where the level of funds provided is lower than in most comparable schools nationally. Consequences of this are that, compared with similar schools, the teacher-pupil ratio is inferior and the deputy headteacher and the special needs co-ordinator have larger teaching commitments and less time for their management duties. The funding and provision of support from external specialists in relation to special educational needs is also lower than usual. The school feels that it has been particularly dependent in the last two years on special funds made available by central government to supplement the routine income from the local authority. However, the school is unable to know far enough in advance about the availability of these centrally provided funds to carry out proper long-term planning, such as recruitment of teachers.
26. The school's very good financial planning and management reduce the impact of the financial disadvantages it experiences and they help the school to provide very good value for money. The school manages to be effective with fewer funds than most similar schools. The recently increased efficiency of administrative staff themselves contributes to this success.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

**Although the school's checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning are satisfactory, further development of them, especially through fuller involvement of subject co-ordinators, could help to raise standards.**

27. Most checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning in recent years have been undertaken by a few senior staff. This has been effectively done and has helped to bring about the good quality of the teaching found throughout the school. However, processes need to be extended if the school is to have a sufficient understanding of how to make further improvements in teaching, learning and the resulting standards of pupils' work.
28. At the previous inspection subject co-ordinators were said to have "no role in the monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects". There has been some improvement here so that co-ordinators now check planning of the teaching, examine samples of pupils' work and analyse pupils' performance in tests. More direct monitoring through observation of lessons by co-ordinators has not happened. The headteacher has rightly judged that the many recent changes of staff meant that this was not an appropriate time to introduce lesson observation by co-ordinators. In any case, pressures on finance and staffing levels recently would have made it difficult to do.
29. The headteacher agrees that the time is now ripe for this development and subject co-ordinators and teachers generally show an enthusiasm for this move. All agree that close analysis of what is effective in teaching and learning, and what can be improved, can only help all teachers to improve their practice by learning from each other's strengths. Teachers in the school display a good range of strengths and these need to be fully exploited to benefit everyone.

**The curriculum and resources for information and communication technology which, though improving, are not adequate.**

30. The school is in the middle of a programme of developing its work in information and communication technology and of providing the necessary resources. Since the previous inspection, resources for the subject have been much improved and much training has been undertaken to help staff exploit the potential of these new resources. A computer suite has been established and every class from Year 1 to Year 6 is timetabled to use it once a week. During the inspection the suite was being well used for effective teaching of skills in using computers. The suite is a long way from the Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms so that some time is taken up with movement of classes. However, plans are in place for provision of a second computer suite particularly for use by these classes.
31. Outside of the computer suite, equipment is in short supply. Some classrooms do not currently have a computer. This means that information and communication technology is not being fully exploited as an aid to teaching across the curriculum, although there are some examples of this happening, as when pupils word-process their stories or search the Internet for information in connection with history topics. Also, the present situation means that, outside of their sessions in the computer suite, pupils have too few opportunities to practise, consolidate or extend their skills with computers. The school's improvement planning recognises that further development is necessary if the school is to comply fully with the revised National Curriculum which since 2000 has required that information and communication technology is incorporated into work across the subjects of the curriculum. Senior staff are currently exploring the best kinds of equipment to acquire.

**Teachers' marking of pupils' work, and setting of targets for their day-to-day progress, could be improved by extending the very good practices recently tried out in Year 6.**

32. Much of teachers' marking of pupils' work is satisfactory because it is regular and sometimes

includes comments that usually praise pupils' achievement. However, comments that show pupils exactly how they can do better are few in some classes. A very notable exception, though, is in the marking of pupils' English work in Year 6 where some very good practice has recently been introduced as a trial (see paragraph 10). Since younger pupils' English work is marred by a tendency to inconsistency and forgetfulness about basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar, they, too, are in need of the sort of intensive help Year 6 pupils have recently been given through target-setting and related marking. However, learning in other subjects, too, could also benefit from this approach to assessment, marking and target-setting.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

1. Promote further improvement in teaching, learning and standards by increasing checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, especially through observation of lessons;
  - provide time, support and guidance for subject co-ordinators that allows them to be effectively involved in these processes;
  - ensure checks lead to clear and precise identification of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning;
  - use these findings to extend successful practice across the school and to plan action to tackle weaknesses.
2. Proceed with existing plans to extend computer resources and ensure these are fully used both to support teaching across the curriculum and to develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology. Use assessment of pupils' progress and checks on the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that developments are successfully implemented.
3. Extend across the school the very good practices in Year 6 English of linking assessment of pupils' short-term progress, marking of their work and setting of precise targets for pupils. Make targets concrete, clearly understandable, and as individual as pupils' needs show to be necessary. Give pupils frequent feedback on progress towards their targets.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	15	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	13	62	25	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 approximately 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)	20	390
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	45

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	122

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	1.3
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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	29	28	57

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	23
	Girls	22	25	23
	Total	42	47	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (83)	82 (83)	81 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	25	23	24
	Total	46	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (83)	81 (93)	84 (90)
	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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	21	33	54

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	22	27	30
	Total	41	46	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (80)	85 (75)	93 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	97 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	19
	Girls	21	24	24
	Total	39	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (64)	80 (66)	80 (88)
	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	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	422
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*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	3	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)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	27.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	298.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	839032
Total expenditure	810786
Expenditure per pupil	1972
Balance brought forward from previous year	12878
Balance carried forward to next year	41446

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1



Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

*Results of the survey of parents and carers*

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	430
Number of questionnaires returned	153

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	36	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	46	10	4	2
The teaching is good.	58	40	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	43	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	0	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	43	53	0	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	46	50	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	32	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	29	13	4	8