

INSPECTION REPORT

HASSELL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle-under-Lyme

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124110

Headteacher: Mr D W Edwards

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 198602

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barracks Road Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST5 1LF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M G Pellington
Date of previous inspection:	10 th – 14 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hassell Community Primary School is situated in the centre of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The school draws its pupils from a wide area, with many pupils travelling some distance to attend it. With 153 boys and 151 girls aged four to 11 who are full-time pupils, and a further 11 boys and 14 girls aged four who attend part-time, the school is above average in size. Children with birthdays in September to December enter the pre-reception class in the January after their fourth birthday. Those with birthdays in January to April begin at the start of the summer term. Children attend the pre-reception class for mornings only as preparation for full-time education in the reception year. Children with birthdays in the summer term go straight into the reception year on a full-time basis in the September of the school year in which they will be five, along with the children from the pre-reception class.

There are a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few from traveller backgrounds. A few have English as an additional language, although no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (13 per cent) is below the national average. Most pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (nine per cent) is also below average. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the school is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features. Children are given a good start in the pre-reception and reception classes, where they are well taught. Pupils now in Years 1 to 6 are making satisfactory progress overall in English, mathematics and science. Standards in the present Year 6 are average in these key subjects. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. The school gives appropriate attention to ensuring equal access for all pupils to the learning opportunities provided. Good standards are achieved in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and relationships are good. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, as is value for money provided.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a strong start in the pre-reception and reception classes. They are well taught and are given stimulating and exciting opportunities for learning.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and they behave well. They work and play amicably together and get on well with the adults in school.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who require extra help with their learning. As a result, they make good progress.
- The partnership with parents is effective. Parents give good support to their children's learning.
- The school makes some good additional provision, such as through visits to enrich pupils' learning and the before and after school care.

What could be improved

- Teachers do not always provide demanding enough work for pupils in Years 1 to 6 who have potential for higher attainment.
- There is not enough formal assessment of pupils' attainment or checking of their progress.
- The range and quality of fiction and non-fiction books are poor and do not support the development of pupils' independence as learners.
- The play provision for pupils in Years 1 to 6 lacks stimulus.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in November 1997. There has been good progress in developing the learning opportunities for children in the pre-reception and reception

classes. Full account has been taken of national developments in the provision for children of this age. The last inspection found that the provision for design and technology needed improvement in Years 3 to 6 in order to raise standards at the end of Year 6. As required, the school has increased the time allocation for this subject and staff have received training. The standards now achieved by pupils in Year 6 are as expected nationally.

There has been satisfactory progress in developing whole-school planning documents for subjects in which this was not in place. However, in some subjects such as history and information and communication technology, this work is still being undertaken. The school development plan is better now. It gives a clearer strategic view of priorities for improvement and is more closely linked to the budget plan. At the time of the last inspection, procedures for checking the effectiveness of what the school does, particularly in the standards it achieves and in the quality of teaching and learning, had only just been introduced. They are now much more established and are satisfactory. There is better use of the time when pupils are in school, although some afternoon lessons are very long and the pace of learning can be slow as a result.

On one key issue arising from the last inspection progress has been unsatisfactory. The school was required to improve and extend the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to achieve well. Some action has been taken, for instance to ensure that a few of the highest attaining pupils are taught with older pupils in mathematics. However, teachers do not always meet the needs of pupils with potential for higher attainment in lessons or make sure that they are well enough challenged in their reading books. This continues to be a key issue for improvement. Although not a key issue at the last inspection, assessment was found to need further development. Progress on this has been slow, although there have been some developments this school year, particularly for the assessment of writing.

Since the last inspection, the school has maintained National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 at a level above the national average, and often well above. Although the standards seen in the school work of pupils now in Year 6 are not as high and are average, the present Year 6 has made satisfactory progress in relation to their test results in Year 2. Good standards have been maintained in pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The attendance level has improved and is now well above the national average. The school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

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	B	A	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The above table shows the high results achieved by Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science in 2001. The mathematics results were in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The results were well above average compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In 1997, the year of the last inspection, the test results were also very high in mathematics and above the national average in English and science. The rate of improvement in the school's test results since the last inspection has been similar to that found nationally, following the general upward trend.

This year, the standards seen in pupils' school work in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are average. Although the standards of pupils' school work are lower than those shown by the test results over the years, the pupils now in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress as they have moved up through the school. There is no evidence of changes in the quality of the school's provision causing standards to be lower. At the last inspection, it was also the case that test results were higher than the school work seen. There are also some natural variations in year groups of pupils that contribute to differences in standards from one year to another. Girls tend to do better than boys in English. Boys and girls achieve equally well in mathematics and science. In the light of test results in previous years, the school's targets for improvement in English and mathematics standards at the end of Year 6 appear unambitious. However, in relation to the standards of work seen, the targets are appropriate and the school is making satisfactory progress towards them.

Results were also well above the national average, and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, in the tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2001. These results were significantly better than at the last inspection in reading and mathematics, but much the same as then in writing. In 2001, teachers assessed pupils' performance in science as well above the national average. The standards seen in pupils' school work in the present Year 2 are above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress overall in these subjects, with some elements of good progress in English and mathematics in Year 2 in particular. Although boys have done better than girls in the mathematics tests for the last two years, there is no significant difference between boys and girls in the school work seen. Boys and girls achieve equally well in English and science.

Children in the pre-reception and reception classes are making good progress. Almost all are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age at the end of the reception year. Many are likely to exceed them in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Lower attaining pupils also make good progress in mathematics from Year 3 to Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do well. Most pupils try hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is almost always good in lessons. Pupils move sensibly about the school and show a good awareness of others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together at work and at play. They willingly help each other during lessons. They are friendly and polite when speaking to adults.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate is well above the national average.

Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, together with their very good attendance, help to create an environment supportive of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Pre-reception and reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

Judgements on teaching and learning are made on the evidence of teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books as well as on lessons seen. During the inspection, 21 lessons were observed. In just over two-fifths of lessons, teaching and learning were good and they were very good in a further tenth of lessons. The instances of very good teaching and learning were in the pre-reception and reception classes. No unsatisfactory teaching and learning was seen.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including the basics of literacy and numeracy, are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. There are some good elements in Year 2, such as in the development of pupils' reading comprehension skills and in aspects such as working with data in mathematics. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in science. Teachers do not always provide challenging enough work for pupils with potential for higher attainment. There is satisfactory attention to the needs of average attaining pupils. Those with special educational needs, or who require additional help with an aspect of their learning, are supported well.

There are some good examples of marking that help pupils to improve their writing in English. In mathematics and science, however, marking is not used well enough. Children in the pre-reception and reception classes are taught well. This is giving them a good start in the important areas of communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is good coverage of the areas of learning for children in the pre-reception and reception classes, who are provided with many exciting learning opportunities. In addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education in Years 1 to 6, there is a good range of activities such as clubs and visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' special educational needs are identified early and effective action is taken to help these pupils to make progress. Good use is made of outside agencies to provide help and advice.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school is aware of and sensitive to the needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils' moral and social development. This contributes to pupils' good behaviour and relationships. There is little attention, however, to developing pupils' awareness of modern multi-cultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactorily. There are effective procedures for child protection and appropriate arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and safety. The school is successful in promoting race equality. The procedures for

	assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress are unsatisfactory.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The school is well managed on a day-to-day basis and functions smoothly. While areas for development are clearly identified, the action taken to bring about improvements is sometimes slow, such as in assessment and whole-school curriculum planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are very supportive, have a presence in the school and understand what it does well. They are not, however, as well involved in shaping its direction or in checking its performance and progress.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There is a range of established methods for checking teaching and learning, such as lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Areas for improvement, such as in the provision for higher attaining pupils, are not sharply enough identified and acted upon.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All resources are targeted on priorities for pupils' education. However, not enough attention has been given to ensuring that there is an adequate range of good books to support pupils' learning. Specific grant money is spent on the purposes for which it is intended. Satisfactory consideration is given to whether the school provides the best value for pupils and their parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching and the progress their children make. • Their children are expected to work hard. • Their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How closely the school works with them and the information they receive on their children's progress. • The range of activities additional to lessons.

In the main, inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. Inspectors find the information provided for parents to be satisfactory overall and there are some good features to the partnership with parents. The range of activities additional to lessons is good, although most clubs are for sports.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Children get off to a strong start in the pre-reception and reception classes. They are well taught and are given stimulating and exciting opportunities for learning.

1. The last inspection found a number of weaknesses in the school's provision for children in the pre-reception and reception classes. There has been good progress in rectifying the weaknesses found at that time. The result is that children are now provided with good teaching and an effective range of learning opportunities. Taking the intake as a whole, children enter the pre-reception class with above average attainment in relation to the expectations for their age. In the reception classes, they are achieving standards well above those expected for their age. Almost all children are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age at the end of the reception year. Many are likely to exceed them in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.
2. Staff have high expectations of children's capacity for independence. This is seen in the pre-reception class as children self-register in the mornings by getting their name cards from the wall and placing them on pegs. Children are expected to behave appropriately in school, for instance sitting sensibly when gathered together and remembering not to shout out. There are clear but gentle reminders of this, so that children know what is expected of them. In both the pre-reception and reception classes, independence is promoted well through opportunities for children to choose activities from a range provided. While staff keep a watchful eye on children at all times, there are many opportunities for them to sustain involvement and work independently of an adult. Through 'circle time', when children sit together in a circle to discuss experiences and feelings, those in the reception classes make good progress in recognising the consequences of their actions. When considering, for example, how they might feel if a toy they had been given was broken, they suggest that they 'might feel guilty'. They are also able to suggest that they would feel sad if the toy had been given to them by someone special.
3. Talk in a wide variety of situations successfully develops children's speaking and listening skills. Many children are confident and articulate communicators for their age. Social conversation is developed during registration in the pre-reception class. Children are asked personal questions, such as "How did you get on at the dentist?" In 'circle time' sessions in the reception classes, children are helped to give extended answers. Teachers' 'open ended' questions allow children to think through responses carefully. Staff constantly involve children in talk about what they are doing. As children work with an adult in a group, such as when investigating what materials might stop an egg from breaking when dropped from a height, they develop and use good vocabulary. They are given good opportunities to describe their thinking in words. Make-believe play, such as in the role-play 'doctor's surgery', allows children to explore and practise speaking and listening. The result of all these experiences is that children listen carefully to others and know when it is their turn to speak.
4. There are many purposeful opportunities for children to develop their writing skills, for example as they write 'get well' cards for Humpty Dumpty, the diary of 'Squeak' the class teddy bear, or posters to advertise the school fashion show. The 'writing table' allows children to write as they make booklets. The basics of pencil control and letter formation are taught well. There is also good attention to the basics of reading, such as developing children's awareness of letter sounds. This helps with their early spelling as well as with their reading. Activities such as 'Humpty's Game' allow children to explore changing the initial letter sounds of words using letters on a board. They think of words that rhyme with 'Humpty', for example 'mumpty' and 'wumpty', and alter the letters to show the new word. 'Big books' are used well to develop reading skills and children's understanding of stories.
5. Many good opportunities develop children's confidence in counting and working with numbers. In the pre-reception class, number rhymes and songs successfully reinforce children's knowledge of

numbers. Such rhymes are built on well to extend counting, for example to 10. Through practical activities, such as building towers or a wall for Humpty Dumpty, children readily develop their awareness and use of mathematical language, such as 'tallest', 'smallest' and 'highest'. Resources, such as 'number lines' and buckets with objects for counting, are used very effectively in the reception classes to further develop awareness of sequences of numbers. Children very competently count backward from a given starting point, such as 20, as well as counting forwards to 20. They solve simple problems, such as $5 + 3 = 8$ and $6 + 6 = 12$, and know how to record such sums in writing. The highest attaining children recognise patterns in pairs of numbers that can be combined to make 20. Many very well organised free-choice mathematics activities are provided, for example involving sorting objects into sets, to develop children's mathematical skills. Play with sand and water effectively develops children's early understanding of volume and capacity. Their awareness of shapes is also very effectively developed, including through the use of a computer program.

6. A stimulating and imaginative range of learning opportunities effectively promotes children's knowledge and understanding of the world and also their creative and physical development. Adults make good use of both the indoor and outdoor areas. Children develop early scientific concepts and an awareness of scientific investigation as, for example, they work with an adult in finding out what materials might cushion the fall of an egg dropped from a height. Children learn about growth as they plant cress. Designing and making skills are developed as they create egg boxes, using a variety of tapes and glue for fastening. Effective use is made of visitors such as a doctor, to extend children's knowledge of work and people who help us. During the inspection, children made items for the 'doctor's surgery' role-play area, such as the chart to be used for eye tests, after a doctor had visited the reception classes. 'Small world' toys promote imaginative play, as does the use of role-play, for instance as children pretend to get on a bus and go on a journey. Children have good access to computers and are making effective progress in developing their skills in using them. Outdoor equipment, such as tricycles, scooters and pedal cars, are used well to support physical development.
7. Teachers and other adults are very aware of the range of children's needs in their classes. They are sensitive to the needs of the lowest attaining children and those with English as an additional language. The highest attaining children are well challenged. In one mathematical activity in the reception classes, for instance, a teacher worked with one of the highest attaining children to ensure that he achieved well. Teachers continually assess children's learning and how well they understand new concepts during lessons. They make careful judgements about when to intervene in children's learning. All activities are well organised and discussion is very effectively managed.
8. There is effective teamwork of staff in the pre-reception and reception classes. The staff have been keen to take on national initiatives and to review and improve the provision. They have been out of school to see examples of good practice in the education of young children. They are now very secure in their understanding of the recommended areas of learning for children of this age and of how young children learn. Since the last inspection, good improvements have been made to the accommodation for children in the reception year. Resources to support teaching and learning have improved and are now good. The adult to pupil ratio is high and this contributes to children's progress through the attention each receives. The time allocated for teaching is also higher than in many schools for children of this age and supports effective learning because it is used well.

Pupils have good attitudes to school and they behave well. They work and play amicably together and get on well with the adults in school.

9. Children in the pre-reception and reception classes have very good attitudes to learning and they behave very well. They respond very positively to the many exciting learning opportunities that are provided for them and are very well motivated and eager to learn. This is seen, for example, by their enthusiasm to answer questions in mathematics activities. They eagerly join in discussion and ask questions at the start of morning sessions when the child whose turn it was to take home 'Squeak', the teddy bear, reports on its experiences. Children work and play together very well in the role-play areas and in the sand and water trays. They willingly share toys and resources, for

instance when building with construction kits or playing in the outdoor area. Children know how to behave in a range of situations. When speaking to adults, they are friendly, courteous and polite.

10. Pupils throughout Years 1 to 6 have good attitudes and want to do well. Most pupils try hard in lessons and pay good attention to their teachers. Those in Year 6 were seen showing a good level of interest as they watched a video of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and thought about the characters and relationships. In a Year 1 design and technology lesson, pupils were enthused by the task of tasting a variety of fruits and grouping them according to their taste and texture. Pupils maintain involvement in activities for fairly long periods of time. Year 2 pupils kept to the task well when discussing in groups whether particular books should be classified as fiction or non-fiction. Pupils are proud of their achievements. Many in Year 2, for example, are pleased to show how well they read.
11. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Almost all pupils get on sensibly in lessons and follow instructions carefully. During quiet reading sessions at the end of the day in Years 3 and 4, most pupils get on quietly while their teachers hear individual pupils read. Pupils move sensibly about the school, for instance when going to the hall for assembly or physical education. Even at lunchtimes, when there is much free movement about the building, pupils are aware of others and the school remains an orderly environment. Pupils eating school meals and packed lunches behave well in the dining hall. Although the playground is small, most pupils show consideration for others when at play. Pupils of all ages take care with school property and respect other pupils' belongings. There were two exclusions in the last school year, reflecting the school's determination not to accept untoward behaviour.
12. Relationships are good among pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils willingly help each other in lessons, especially those with special educational needs. They readily share ideas, as was seen in a Year 2 science lesson when pupils made block graphs to show data, such as the different sizes of hand-spans in the class. Pupils are friendly but polite in their dealings with adults. They show respect for their teachers, while at the same time appreciating the relaxed relationships. The school is a harmonious community in which boys and girls and pupils of different ages mix well. The few pupils from minority ethnic or traveller backgrounds are well integrated.
13. Pupils like school and this is reflected in the attendance level, which is well above the national average and higher than when the school was last inspected. They appreciate the efforts that teachers and other adults in school make for them. Year 6 pupils speak with great enthusiasm about the school holiday, which this year took place in Ilfracombe during the Easter break. Even more appreciated is the Year 6 week spent at an activity centre.
14. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, together with their very good attendance, all help to create an environment supportive of learning. The school has maintained the strengths found in this area at the last inspection. The attitudes and behaviour of the younger children have improved.

There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who require extra help with their learning. As a result, they make good progress.

15. The school pays good attention to pupils' special educational needs and to providing support to those who need extra help with an aspect of their learning. Much emphasis is placed on identifying pupils' needs at an early stage. For this purpose, good use is made of the assessment of children on entry to the school. This is further supported by the careful watch that staff in the pre-reception and reception classes have on how well children settle and respond to the learning opportunities provided.
16. Throughout the school, there is effective use of learning support assistants, of which there is a good number, to support pupils in lessons. Teachers plan carefully for the use of assistants and there is effective teamwork between teachers and assistants. The results is that, for many

activities, pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attaining, are able to undertake the same work as most other pupils. In a Year 2 science lesson, for example, all pupils were able to do the same work on using data to make a block graph because the lowest attaining group had targeted adult support. In the other Year 2 class, in an English lesson, the lowest attaining pupils were able to enter a good discussion about a range of books because they were supported by careful questions, which were gently but persistently probing. These were specifically targeted to help them to think through the issues and to develop their understanding. During quiet reading sessions in Years 3 and 4, teachers gave their main attention to developing the basic reading skills of pupils with special educational needs.

17. In addition to the targeted support provided for pupils in lessons, there is good attention to pupils' special educational needs when they are withdrawn from class for intensive teaching, individually or in small groups. In Years 3 to 6, there are classes that focus on the needs of the lower attaining pupils in English and mathematics. These involve Year 3 and 4 pupils and Year 5 and 6 pupils being taught together. An indication of the success of this is the good progress that has been made by the lower attaining Year 6 pupils in mathematics. Many of these pupils have been helped to achieve the expected level for their age. This is even though they were performing at a slightly lower level than expected for their age at the end of Year 2.
18. External agencies are used well to support pupils and this aspect of provision is better now than when the school was last inspected. The school is involved in outreach work with the Newcastle Assessment Centre and uses the Dyslexia Centre to help assess pupils' learning difficulties. Pupils' individual education plans are good and have clear targets towards which work is planned. The headteacher, as special educational needs co-ordinator, gives effective leadership for this aspect of the school's work. All the strengths found in this area at the last inspection have been maintained.

The partnership with parents is effective. Parents give good support to their children's learning.

19. As at the last inspection, the school has good links with parents and there is an effective partnership. Most parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children and think that the school is a good one. They appreciate the extra provision, such as the before and after school care clubs. Most parents feel welcome in school. They are pleased with the general attention teachers and other staff give to their children's wellbeing and also with the headteacher's individual knowledge of pupils.
20. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. They are supportive of homework. Most parents of younger pupils, in particular, frequently hear their children read at home. They complete their children's reading diaries, often making evaluative comments. This parental support contributes to the good reading standards of pupils at the end of Year 2. Many parents also take their children to the public library and this increases the range of fiction and non-fiction books to which pupils have access. Termly parents' meetings are well attended, as are other meetings. There are effective links with parents of pupils with special educational needs.
21. The school actively encourages parents to be involved in the life of the school and seeks their views on a range of issues concerning their children. Help is sought from parents with particular expertise, such as in the development of the healthy eating policy. Parents who help in lessons and with hearing pupils read make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They often give further valuable support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Parents also help with visits out of school. When teachers accompany pupils on residential visits they keep in touch with a small core of parents, who in turn can be contacted by parents of other children taking part.
22. There is a thriving parents and teachers association. This body raises funds for additional resources. The school is presently looking to the association to help to increase the book stock in school. The Care Club Committee provides an additional opportunity for staff and parents to work

together for the benefit of pupils.

The school makes some good additional provision, such as through visits to enrich pupils' learning and the before and after school care.

23. The school is successful in enriching the curriculum through good use of a range of visits and visitors. All pupils take part in visits to enrich their learning. During the inspection, there was some good use of visitors. The school nurse and a dietician enhanced the Year 6 science curriculum through talks to pupils on healthy eating and the digestive system. These lessons formed part of a series with contributions from the nurse, each lesson looking at a different system of the human body. This is a good initiative that leads well into sessions on puberty, when the nurse teaches boys and girls separately.
24. A highlight for pupils is the Year 6 residential to an activity centre. They speak about this with much enthusiasm. This event, like the school holiday, which is usually to a seaside location, contributes well to pupils' social development. Pupils are given the opportunity to work and play together in a situation very different from normal lessons. Team spirit is built through outdoor activities, as it is through the good range of extra-curricular sporting activities.
25. The choir and participation in drama productions provide further opportunities that support personal development. Such activities do much to boost pupils' confidence. The chess club has had notable success, regionally and nationally, at team and individual levels. Pupils are helped to develop an awareness of the needs of others through organising games and other activities to fund a Christmas party for senior citizens. Pupils perform musical items for the senior citizens. They also cater for them and wait on them.
26. The before and after school care clubs are school initiatives and are managed by the school, rather than being the provision of an external group using the school premises. The clubs are greatly appreciated by the participating pupils and their parents. More than 80 pupils attend in the mornings and over 90 in the evenings. A good variety of activities are provided for pupils, some of which are active and some that are quiet. Relationships are good between the pupils and the staff that lead this provision. The clubs extend into a play scheme in all the school holidays apart from Christmas. There is also a playgroup that takes children in the term prior to their admission to school. The school has been successful in maintaining all the strong features found at the last inspection in the additional provision for pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Teachers do not always provide demanding enough work for pupils in Years 1 to 6 who have potential for higher attainment.

27. The last inspection found that the school did not do enough to help pupils with potential for higher attainment to achieve well. Although some action has been taken, such as in teaching a few of the highest attaining pupils with older groups, not enough has been done. This area was a key issue at the last inspection and it is again a key issue arising from this inspection.
28. While there is good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in lessons, there is not always adequate challenge for pupils who are capable of working at a higher level. There are occasions in lessons when these pupils are marking time because they have completed the work set, or it is too easy for them. Examples were seen in mathematics lessons when all pupils did the same work. There was sometimes a lack of urgency to the pace of work of higher attaining pupils, who did not have to work very hard. In a history lesson in Years 3 and 4, questioning was at the same level for all pupils. There was no additional challenge for higher attaining pupils, either through probing questions or through tasks set.
29. An analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that all pupils do the same science work. Lower attaining pupils are given support to access this work. The higher attaining pupils are

not, however, moved on well enough or encouraged to develop a sufficiently deeper level of knowledge and understanding. Generally in mathematics, pupils also all do the same tasks without sufficiently demanding enough work being provided for the higher attaining pupils.

30. In the quiet reading sessions for Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teachers focused on the lowest attaining pupils only. While many other pupils were reading appropriately demanding texts of their own choice, a few would have benefited from more guidance by the teacher. In Year 2, there are pupils who are reading books that are too easy for them and this does not only apply to the higher attaining pupils. These pupils read far more demanding texts at home and the books provided in school are not challenging them.

There is not enough formal assessment of pupils' attainment or checking of their progress.

31. Although it was not a key issue at the last inspection, formal assessment was identified as an area in need of further development. This was judged to be necessary so that realistic targets might be set for pupils' future work. Although there has been some development of assessment this school year, particularly in writing, there has been too little action in improving assessment procedures since the last inspection almost five years ago. The result is that the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress are now unsatisfactory. This is preventing some pupils from achieving more highly.
32. An initiative this school year has been the provision of a record sheet for each pupil to show the results of formal assessments. These include the assessments on entry to school, the end of Year 2 National Curriculum tests and other assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5. The school does not, however, have adequate systems in place for tracking pupils' progress against National Curriculum levels in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science as they move up through the school. Consequently, the ongoing setting and review of targets for year groups and individual pupils is not taking place. There is no ready way of identifying if a year group, class or pupil is not achieving at the level at which they should be at any given time. The school has not picked up, for instance, weaknesses in the performance of some of the higher attaining pupils.
33. A good development this school year is the introduction of books in which pupils produce a piece of writing each term. Teachers assess this work against National Curriculum criteria. This has the potential to be a strong basis for tracking pupils' progress in writing. Teachers have also started setting individual targets for pupils in writing to help them become more aware of what they have to do to improve their work. This also supports teachers in marking pupils' writing, which they generally do well. In other subjects, such as mathematics and science, in which such targets are not set, marking does not do enough to help pupils to know how they might improve.
34. There are no whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in science, although some ideas for assessment procedures have been tried out in Years 1 and 2. Although there are some assessments built into the commercial scheme of work used in science, these are not enough in themselves to check whether individual pupils are doing well enough. Assessment procedures are not established across the other subjects of the curriculum, although in some subjects, such as design and technology, assessment sheets are being developed.
35. The weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' attainment and checking of their progress contribute to the lack of challenge in much of the work provided for higher attaining pupils. Because teachers do not have adequate information about all pupils' performance, they cannot plan work closely matched to their full range of needs. The school is not analysing pupils' progress and the assessment information it has by different backgrounds of pupils, including ethnicity.

The range and quality of fiction and non-fiction books are poor and do not support the development of pupils' independence as learners.

36. Although the school has sufficient basic books such as dictionaries, it does not have a good enough range of fiction books from which pupils can choose. Although many pupils are members of Newcastle library, the school is not providing pupils with sufficient good quality fiction to broaden their experience of authors and different types of fiction. There are instances of teachers providing their own books for pupils to read because the school does not have a good enough range.
37. There are also too few non-fiction books in classrooms to support the topics being studied, even though good use is made of the local education authority loan service. The library bookshelves in the main corridor have very few books to support pupils' independent enquiry. The lack of books restricts the opportunities that teachers can provide for pupils to learn through research and to develop independence in their learning.

The play provision for pupils in Years 1 to 6 lacks stimulus.

38. The playground area is small and is also used for car parking. Even allowing for the restrictions this imposes, not enough is done to make play times interesting, such as through organised games and activities. The playground is not marked out with stimulating games for younger pupils. Because children get into nooks and crannies to play, including among cars, and do not have enough that is interesting to occupy them, there are a number of instances of pupils being involved in disagreements. The school does not have enough strategies to help pupils who do not have a friend to play with. The school recognises the need to improve play provision but progress on this has been slow.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To rectify the weaknesses, while maintaining the strengths of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- a) Ensure that teachers in Years 1 to 6 have high enough expectations of pupils with potential for higher attainment and that they provide them with work that is sufficiently demanding.

(Paragraphs 27-30)

- b) Improve the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment by:

- tracking progress in English, mathematics and science to support the setting of targets for individuals and groups of pupils;
- developing and implementing effective assessment procedures for other subjects; and
- using the information gained from assessment when planning work to meet pupils' needs.

(Paragraphs 31-35)

- c) Improve the range of fiction and non-fiction books to support pupils' development as independent learners.

(Paragraphs 36 and 37)

- d) Develop the play provision for pupils in Years 1 to 6 so that it is more stimulating and allows better use of their play time.

(Paragraph 38)

The school has already recognised the need to develop assessment procedures and to improve the book provision and arrangements for play in Years 1 to 6.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	9	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	10	45	45	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Pre-reception	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	304
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Pre-reception	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	39

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.6

	%
School data	0.4
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	21	19	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	21
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	37	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (86)	98 (86)	100 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	21
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	38	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (94)	98 (98)	100 (98)
	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	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	30	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (90)	97 (87)	97 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	15
	Girls	14	15	16
	Total	23	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	81 (74)	97 (74)
	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	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	254
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.38
Average class size	25.33

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	311.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: pre-reception

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.5

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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	607015
Total expenditure	565897
Expenditure per pupil	1814
Balance brought forward from previous year	8000
Balance carried forward to next year	49118

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	329
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	28	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	41	7	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	12	1	1
The teaching is good.	57	40	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	43	18	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	30	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	47	16	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	36	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	41	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	31	17	5	14

Not all responses to questions total 100 owing to rounding.