

INSPECTION REPORT

OVINGHAM C OF E FIRST SCHOOL

Ovingham

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122278

Headteacher: Mrs J Shields

Reporting inspector: Mrs P A Simpson
1515

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 24th April 2002

Inspection number: 198682

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ovingham Northumberland
Postcode	NE42 6DE
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jane Meera
Date of previous inspection:	17 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ovingham Church of England First School is set in attractive grounds and situated in the village of Ovingham in rural Northumberland. There are 146 pupils (68 girls and 78 boys) on roll, ranging from four to nine years of age. At the time of the inspection 39 children were under six years of age. There are five classes and the school roll is rising steadily.

About 62 per cent of the children live in the villages of Ovingham and Ovington and 38 per cent travel from the villages of Wylam, Stocksfield, Chopwell and the Castlefields area of Prudhoe. A number of the children travel to school by bus, taxi or car. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils (10.5 per cent) eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs (7.0 per cent), due to learning or behavioural difficulties, is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need (0.7 per cent) is below the national average. The majority of children have attended a pre-school playgroup or nursery prior to entering compulsory schooling. The results of tests conducted when children enter the school show that attainment is above average in numeracy and literacy skills and the children have well developed personal and social skills for their age. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ovingham Church of England First School is an effective school that gives good value for money. Standards of attainment are high in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The Year 2 National Curriculum test results in 2001 were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The overall quality of teaching is good. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. The expenditure per pupil is high, but, considering the high standards achieved by pupils in the core subjects, the effectiveness of the educational provision including that for pupils with special educational needs and the significant improvements made particularly since autumn 2000, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards attained by Year 2 pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were higher than average and, by the time Year 4 pupils leave the school, standards exceed the national expectation in English, mathematics and science.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and provide an effective climate for learning.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a result, makes a positive impact on pupil's learning.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good; from reception onwards they develop a mature and growing understanding of others.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and it makes a significant contribution to relationships in and outside school.

What could be improved

- The involvement of key stage and subject co-ordinators in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning.
- The procedures for assessing and using assessment information to guide curricular planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. The overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. From the evidence available, the actions related to the five key issues were scheduled to take place over a five-year period starting in 1998 to 2003. The appointment of the current headteacher has, however, accelerated a climate for change and an initiation of a whole-school approach to all aspects of school life. The school did not have a strategic development plan as a means of shaping the future direction of the school; this is now being formally addressed. The key issue relating to the workload of the headteacher led to a reduction of 50 per cent in her teaching commitment. Policies and schemes of work now reflect the Foundation Stage of the curriculum, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the revised Year 2000 curriculum. Following the appointment of the new headteacher a structured format was introduced for teacher planning, in particular in literacy and numeracy. The assessment policy was revised recently, but this is still not consistently implemented across the school as a whole. Subject and key stage co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning and they do not as yet make a formal contribution to the school development plan. Resourcing has improved for information and communication technology and, as a result, new computers have been purchased. The double glazing of windows and external painting was completed in spring 2002; this had been an ongoing priority for several years.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A*	A	A	A
mathematics	B	A	B	B

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

The information above shows that the school's National Curriculum test results in 2001 for reading and writing were well above the national average and, in mathematics, they were above average when compared with all schools. Comparison with schools of a similar type (those that have more than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent free school meals) shows that standards are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In the three tests both girls and boys are attaining standards above the national figures. Taking the three years 1999-2001 together, the performance of Year 2 pupils exceeded the national average in the national tests. Teacher assessments in science for the 2001 Year 2 group placed the school within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. The reading and writing targets set by the school in 2001 were met with all the Year 2 group attaining Level 2 or above. In the optional 2001 National Curriculum tests administered in Year 4, which is the oldest age group in this first school, two-thirds of the group reached Level 3 and one third of the pupils reached Level 4 in their English, mathematics and science work. (The expected attainment of pupils at age seven is Level 2 and, at the end of Key Stage 2 at the age of 11, Level 4). In the present Years 2 and 4, the pupils' standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are also higher than average. Work produced by Year 2 (the end of Key Stage 1) and Year 4 (the school's oldest) pupils and teacher assessment for pupils in these year groups indicate that the challenging targets set for 2002 in the three core subjects will be met with standards continuing to be higher than average. Children in the reception class are achieving well above the expected Early Learning Goals in all aspects

of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The overall standards of work seen in information and communication technology (ICT) are at least average. The school has identified ICT as a priority area for school development planning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most parents stated in the pre-inspection parental questionnaire that their children like school. From reception onwards they develop a mature and growing understanding of others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	When opportunities are provided, pupils enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance has improved since 1999/2000 when it was recorded as below the national average. It is continuing to improve due to the systematic procedures introduced to monitor and improve attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good. This is also the view of nearly all the parents who commented on the teaching in the parental questionnaires sent out before the inspection. The good teaching and support provided has a beneficial impact upon the pupils' attitudes and the rate of progress made, including for those with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff know well the needs of these pupils as documented in their individual education programmes. A particular strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is the very good knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning and how young children learn. Throughout the school very good attention is given to the teaching of basic skills. Literacy and numeracy are taught well and, as a result, pupils are interested and productive. Time and resources are generally used well, but on occasions some lessons are not as well paced as they might be. Teachers' planning has improved since the 1997 inspection. In autumn 2000 a whole-school approach to planning was introduced. It is particularly detailed and effective in the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics. The reviewed whole-school policy on assessment is applied inconsistently. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is still an area that requires improvement with the exception of the Foundation Stage where good, ongoing assessment takes place. Where other pockets of good assessment practice exist, such as in Year 3, this has not been shared across the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has just started to provide extra-curricular sporting activities for older pupils.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are integrated well into all aspects of school life. A draft policy has been formulated by the SEN co-ordinator to meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice for pupils with SEN, which was introduced in 2002.

Aspect	Comment
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution to relationships in and outside school. Pupils' social development is very good. Their cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning lacks a whole-school approach.

The headteacher has established a whole-school approach to curriculum planning. The structure of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is now represented in medium and short-term curriculum planning. The school has established links with the community including the church, parents and others from the community who visit the school to share their lifestyle and skills with pupils. Regular liaison with the pre-school playgroup and parents enables a smooth transition to the reception class.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. In the short time that she has been in post, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented. She is now initiating new procedures for longer-term, forward development planning. Key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently active in their leadership and management responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	One half of the members of the governing body are in their first year of this responsibility. They are benefiting from governor training events and, as a result of this, are becoming active in their role. They are informed well by the headteacher and readily support the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a performance management policy in place, as required. It is beginning to have an impact on school improvement; for example, on the quality of teachers' planning. Consultation now takes place involving staff and governors in reviewing the current school improvement plan and formulating the next one.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources as planned. Extra literacy support and additional teaching support have benefited pupils of all abilities.

The headteacher has been in the school for four terms. She is aiming to establish a whole-school approach to school development and improvement planning. During this short time in school she has quickly responded to outstanding actions related to the previous inspection report, such as a review of the assessment policy. Subject co-ordinators' files and handbooks have been established to a whole-school format. As a consequence, co-ordinators are now beginning to have an overview of the subjects for which they take the lead. Key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators, however, do not formulate action plans as a part of school development planning or the justification of resources to meet subject/cross-curricular priorities. Members of the governing body formally visit classes and the headteacher has monitored teaching and learning in English and mathematics. This has led to the sharing of good practice in these two subjects and the actioning of areas that were identified as in need of improvement. Key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators have not conducted any formal monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning. Best value principles are applied carefully by the

school; for example, when seeking and ensuring quality from suppliers of services such as the recent double glazing of the main school and its external painting.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed and nearly all parents are comfortable about approaching the school with problems or suggestions. • Their children like coming to school. • The quality of teaching is good and their children make good progress. • The school expects children to work hard. • The standards of behaviour are good. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside lessons by the school. • The information available to them about their children's progress. • The information about work or activities that their children are expected to do outside lesson time.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. Inspectors judge that there is room for improvement in all three areas identified by parents. The school has facilitated provision for a range of out of school, extra-curricular school activities over several years, which are funded by parents, such as music tuition and the French club. Just recently two sporting activities have been provided by the school for older pupils. Extra-curricular provision is an area that the school will be reviewing as a part of school improvement planning. The detailed annual written report to parents on pupils' achievements and marked work does give information on how well they are doing, but targets for improvement are not generally given. Homework is set, but the amount and frequency is inconsistent and not always written down as a means of communicating this information to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The standards attained by Year 2 pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were higher than average and, by the time Year 4 pupils leave the school, standards exceed the National expectation in English, mathematics and science.

1. The results of the Year 2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 for reading and writing were well above the national average and they were above average in mathematics. Comparison with schools of a similar type (those that have more than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent free school meals) shows that the standards are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In the three tests both girls and boys are attaining standards above the national figures. Taking the three years 1999-2001 together, the performance of Year 2 pupils exceeded the national average in the national tests. Teacher assessments in science for the 2001 Year 2 group, placed the school within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. Teacher assessments for the Year 2002, place Year 2 pupils well above average in English, mathematics and science. The school is close to its 2002 target, which is for all Year 2 pupils to gain the expected Level 2 or higher in their reading, writing and mathematics. About one half of the current Year 2 group are achieving well above average standards in their reading, writing and mathematics. Two-thirds of the group are working towards, or have attained, the higher than average Level 3 in science.
2. In 1997, the last inspection reported that on entry to the school, standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy were above average; this is similar to the results of recent screenings conducted when children enter the reception class. It was reported in 1997 that, by the time the pupils had reached the end of Years 2 and 4, attainments were above average in English, mathematics and science. The National Curriculum Year 2 test results, show that from 1998 to 2001, pupils have consistently attained standards well above the national average in reading and writing and, although there were fluctuations in mathematics in 1999 and 2001, the results have remained above average over this four-year period. In 1998 and 1999, the Year 2 test results in writing placed the school within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country.
3. Year 4, who are the oldest age group in this first school, take optional National Curriculum Key Stage 2 assessment tests. Targets are set for them in English and mathematics, based on a review of their 2001 Key Stage 1 test results. The Year 2002 overall targets are that nearly all the Year 4 pupils gain the expected standard for pupils of this age or exceed it. Teacher assessments are consistent with this higher than average forecast of achievement. The significant majority in the current Year 4 group are predicted to reach Level 3 or exceed it. By the time they leave the school to transfer to the next stage of their schooling, about one half of the group will have attained Level 4 in their English, mathematics and science work.
4. In the reception class, the children enjoy listening and willingly respond to what they have heard by offering relevant comments and asking questions. When they are asked to expand their ideas, they do so, clarifying their ideas and thinking. The children can write their names and are beginning to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation. Completed work is well presented. The children show a good understanding of the elements of stories and they link sounds correctly to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. In oral mathematics they can count

reliably up to 30 and then back again to zero. In practical activities on addition and subtraction, good use was made of mathematical vocabulary. Children work independently when using computers to consolidate earlier work on addition. They are confident in their use of the 'mouse' as a control mechanism.

5. In English, pupils of all ages read and write for a range of purposes. They listen attentively and communicate their ideas confidently. Most Year 2 pupils spell everyday words correctly, with some choosing words more adventurously for effect. Handwriting usually shows accurate form and consistent size, with some of the higher attaining pupils using joined handwriting in Years 2 and 3. In a Year 3 literacy session, when writing a story in the style of the text read earlier about 'The Magic Finger' by Roald Dahl, their writing was imaginative and clear. Punctuation was generally used accurately, but spelling was on occasions careless and dictionaries were not used sufficiently as a means of checking words that caused uncertainty. Year 4 pupils are secure in their use of punctuation, they make very good use of vocabulary and their spelling is mostly accurate. They talk and listen with assurance in a range of situations; for example, when communicating about the workshop that had recently taken place about life in Viking times.
6. In mathematics, pupils have a very secure understanding of all aspects of the subject as well as the basic skills of knowing about numbers and number operations. Year 1 use everyday language well to describe, position, direction and movement when making turns and half-turns when using a programmable toy, known as a 'roamer'. Most of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the values of coins and solve money problems accurately using mental calculation. They can classify shapes and name them correctly and they have a good command of key skills, such as working out number problems using multiplication. Year 4 pupils have gained a secure understanding of the place value of numbers up to one thousand. They use mathematical vocabulary well; for example, when responding to questions about area. Very complex patterns were produced when creating tiles in art using numeracy skills of reflective symmetry and rotation.
7. Key elements in the 2001/2002 school improvement plan are to further improve existing high standards of pupil achievement and the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. As a result, actions have been taken by the headteacher supported by the local education authority advisory service to monitor formally the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This information is shared with staff as a means of identifying the strong elements of a lesson and those that require further development. Literacy and numeracy targets are set by the school for the end of all three stages of the curriculum (Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4). These are based on the analysis of earlier performance data information, including baseline testing conducted with the reception classes and the analysis of the end of Key Stage 1, Year 2 National Curriculum test results. In 2001, the Year 2 targets set and those attained in the national tests were closely aligned and teacher assessments for 2002 and inspection evidence, indicate that similar high standards have been maintained in 2002. The school was presented with a School Achievement Award (SAA) for excellence in 2001. It won the award because Year 2 pupils achieved better results in Year 2000 than most schools in similar circumstances.

The leadership and management of the school are good and provide an effective climate for learning.

8. The headteacher, who was appointed in the autumn of Year 2000, leads and manages the school well. The school provides a welcoming and supportive environment in which its Christian values are central to the ethos of the school. In the pre-inspection survey of parents, nearly all who completed the questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed. In the four terms the headteacher has been in post, she has gained a secure knowledge and understanding of what needs to be improved. Her appointment has accelerated a climate for change and an initiation of a whole-school approach to all aspects of school life. She conveys well her sense of direction and the high standards she expects and she is aiming to establish a whole-school approach to school development and improvement planning. The headteacher has engaged the school in formally reviewing the previous school improvement plan as a basis for formulating the next. Six priorities have been identified for action in the current April 2001-2002 school improvement plan. They include the implementation and monitoring of the National Numeracy and Literacy strategies. As a consequence of the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning by the headteacher of English and mathematics, the structures of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have now been introduced formally. The requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum are fully met. Information and communication technology is an ongoing area of priority for the school, to further improve staff confidence and competence in the teaching of ICT and raise standards of achievement. The ICT development plan written by the headteacher is a good example of systematic forward thinking and planning.
9. Realistic and challenging targets are set and met for the attainment of pupils in English and mathematics. The headteacher analyses performance data, including information from the baseline assessments conducted in the reception classes and information from the Year 2 (the end of Key Stage 1) standardised tests. This analysis is used effectively as a means of predicting pupils' potential and supporting school improvement in English and mathematics.
10. In 1997, the school did not have a strategic development plan and this is still the case. The headteacher is initiating new procedures for longer-term forward development planning as a priority. A key focus of the current 2001-2002 school improvement plan is to ensure that governors are aware of their roles and responsibilities. One half of the members of the governing body are in their first year of this responsibility. They are benefiting from governor training events and, as a result of this, are becoming more confident and active in their contribution to supporting the work of the school. New committees of the governing body have been established as a part of the governors' contribution to shaping the direction of the school. Members of the governing body are designated link subject governors. They make scheduled visits to classes and report to the governing body formally on their visits. The SEN governor has worked in liaison with the SEN co-ordinator to review the SEN policy to meet the requirements of the revised Code of Practice for SEN. The policy is at the draft stage. The governors are informed well by the headteacher about the strengths of the school and what is in need of development. Because of this, the governing body has a growing realisation of the importance of their contribution to moving the school forward. Best value principles are applied carefully by the school; for example, when seeking to develop the grounds and buildings to maximum effect and ensuring quality from suppliers of services, such as the recent provision of double glazing in the main school and its external painting. The school secretary administers the finances efficiently and seeks quality and best value when purchasing teaching and learning resources. An internal audit by Northumberland

County Council in December 2001 found systems of financial management to be sound. The school has actioned all but one of the audit recommendations.

11. The school has a performance management policy in place, as required. It is beginning to have an impact on school improvement; for example, on the quality of teachers' planning. Performance targets are set for the headteacher by the governors. Consultation now takes place involving staff and governors in reviewing the current school improvement plan and formulating the next one. Regular staff meetings and training sessions are now scheduled as a means of managing change to move the school forward as a whole. The link between the performance management policy, school improvement planning and staff development is becoming clearer to staff and the governors, because of the formal and informal consultation processes the headteacher has introduced.
12. The school has six aims that are documented in the Information for Parents 2002/3 brochure. The school promotes the highest academic standards in every area of the curriculum so that all pupils achieve their full potential. The teaching and learning in English and mathematics have been monitored and evaluated and feedback given to teaching staff by the headteacher and, on occasion, the local education authority advisory staff. However, across the curriculum as a whole, key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently active in their leadership and management responsibilities. They are not involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in the subjects or key stages for which they are responsible. Moreover, they do not formulate action plans as a part of school development planning and the justification of resources to meet subject/cross-curricular priorities. Subject co-ordinators' files and handbooks were established to a whole-school format in the current developmental planning process and, as a consequence, they are now beginning to have an overview of the subjects that they lead.

The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a result, makes a positive impact on pupils' learning.

13. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire also agree that the teaching is good. The good quality teaching and support provided, including that of volunteer helpers, has a beneficial impact upon pupil attitudes and the rate of progress made, including for those with special educational needs who make the same good rate of progress as their peers. Teachers and support staff know well the needs of these pupils as documented in their individual education programmes. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into the school. The different groupings in the school are achieving to the best of their capabilities in the Foundation Stage curriculum and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In the 15 lessons observed, which were mainly English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage curriculum, with observations also made of science, ICT and religious education, all the teaching was at least satisfactory or better. The teaching in 60 per cent of the lessons was good and in 27 per cent it was very good.
14. Particular strengths in the Foundation Stage of the curriculum are the very good knowledge and understanding of the six areas of learning:
 - communication, language and literacy;
 - mathematical development;
 - personal, social and emotional development;
 - knowledge and understanding of the world;
 - physical development;

- creative development.
15. Teaching and support staff know how children develop and learn during the early years. They evaluate their practice to ensure that good use is made of resources and that the learning environment is rich and stimulating. In order to meet the needs of the children and help all of them to make the best possible progress, pupils' work is assessed thoroughly. As a result, realistic yet challenging expectations of all children are set and by the end of the Foundation stage most of them achieve beyond the Early Learning Goals and some go well beyond.
 16. Throughout the school very good attention is given to the teaching of basic skills. Literacy and numeracy are now structured on the national strategies and they are both taught well. Pupils are interested and productive during whole-class, group and independent activities and, as a result, standards are higher than average throughout the school in English and mathematics. Literacy skills are further developed in other subjects. In a Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils recalled a recent visit to St Mary's the Virgin Church. They were eager to volunteer information about features of the church and why it is such a special place, as a means of informing and devising their own guidebooks. Another example was in science, when a Year 3 group used ICT confidently when formulating and writing letters to Northumbria Water as a means of finding out about water conservation in the area.
 17. Routines are established well in the reception class. At the end of the morning the children take turns on a regular basis to put out book bags and lunch boxes on the tables, thus demonstrating their responsibility for the end of session organisational arrangements. The children are very good at taking turns when using equipment and materials. The high expectations made by adults of the children and the support provided enables them to know how well they are progressing. There is a strong emphasis in the reception class on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills; for example, when the children were brought together to share their understanding of the story, 'The Rainbow Fish'. They recalled specific points of interest to them, asked questions confidently and some of the higher attainers were beginning to know about the beginning, middle and end of stories. In a Year 2 English session, because of the very good relationship between the small group and the teacher, pupils were very comfortable in asking and answering questions. Supportive, encouraging teaching motivated the pupils to attempt new words such as 'shut', 'shall' and 'shell' which were all spelt correctly. In a Year 3 science lesson, very good attention was given to developing pupils' investigative skills in the study of water conservation. Planning was detailed with a wide range of interlinked activities provided, including observation of a water meter. Pupils made good gains in the knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry. They understand the importance of collecting data to answer questions, but as yet some Year 3 pupils do not understand the notion of a 'fair test'.
 18. Pupils of all ages are managed well. Time and resources are generally used well, but on occasions some lessons are not as well paced as they might be. Teachers' planning has improved since the 1997 inspection. In autumn 2000, a whole-school approach to planning was introduced. It is particularly detailed and effective in the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics. It is less so on a daily basis in the other subjects of the curriculum. Moreover, the reviewed whole-school policy on assessment is applied inconsistently. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is still an area that requires improvement with the exception of the Foundation Stage where good, ongoing assessment takes place. Where other pockets of good assessment practice exist, such as in Year 3, this has not been sufficiently shared across the school. The school improvement plan recognises that, although mathematics assessments have been

introduced on a half-termly basis and literacy audits have taken place in Years 2, 3 and 4 there are still issues to be addressed with regard to individual pupil tracking. This is planned for when new applications of ICT are available to the school as a means of enabling more efficient systems of data analysis.

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good; from reception onwards they develop a mature and growing understanding of others.

19. The school aims to nurture links with parents, the parish and the local community and to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. It successfully helps pupils to become motivated, self-disciplined and confident in their ability to do well.
20. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They work hard, listen well and are involved and interested in their work. Almost all parents stated in the pre-inspection parental questionnaire that their children like school. Children in the reception class settle well into school life. They are friendly and confident in initiating conversation with adults. When working on the computer they collaborate well by sharing their ideas and helping each other. In a session involving large construction equipment they co-operated by taking turns during investigative activities. During the plenary sessions at the end of English and mathematics, which draw the lesson together to demonstrate if the learning objectives have been met, groups and individuals willingly shared what they had learned. In a Year 2 literacy support group, pupils were keen and eager to learn because the teacher made learning accessible to them. The teacher has a good knowledge of their basic skills and framed questions to suit their learning needs. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 respond well to humorous comments and praise. They show maturity in the manner and level of their responses to adults and each other.
21. The school has a behaviour and discipline policy (undated) that is set within the context of the school ethos. School rules are kept to a minimum and they are generally on display in classrooms. Behaviour observed during the inspection in and around the school was very good. Pupils' very good behaviour and the relationships they have with each other and adults are a strength of the school. This is also the view expressed by most parents in the returned questionnaires and at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. There have been no exclusions over the past seven years. At all ages pupils listen attentively; they are courteous, polite and respectful to each other, staff and visitors to the school. When given the opportunity, they enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning and being encouraged to ask questions and become involved in the setting of personal targets for improvement; for example, those identified in SEN individual education plans, which address the needs of individual pupils more directly in association with pupils and parents.
22. Visits, events and visitors to the school including the many volunteer helpers, celebration services in the local church, 'Blue Peter' bring and buy sale, the Viking Day for older pupils and visits to the adjacent pre-school playgroup and middle school all make a valuable contribution to the values and personal and social development of pupils.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and it makes a significant contribution to relationships in and outside school.

23. The school aims reflect the importance of promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This area is a strength of the school's work and has a positive impact on the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
24. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Through assemblies, religious education and in the day-to-day life of this church school, teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to explore the values and beliefs of Christianity and other religions and faiths. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. This is particularly evident at the end of lessons when discussions take place about learning outcomes. For example, when Year 4 described what the sky with clouds looks like 'steps floating on air' and 'stretched cotton wool'. The welcoming school ethos and high quality of display around the school are reflections of the value that is placed on every pupil's work and effort. Displays such as 'Toys from the Past' and 'Stories from other Cultures' stimulate reflection. The 'Millennium Garden Book' reminds pupils of the various stages of this successful project and allows them to remember the seasonal changes that take place in their garden. They grow flowers, fruit and vegetables during the year. The produce contributes to the basis of the Harvest Festival celebration.
25. Pupils' moral development is promoted well. From an early age pupils acquire a very good understanding of how their behaviour affects others. The rewards and sanctions system reflects and reinforces the aims and values of the school. It is shared with pupils, parents and governors and is reviewed when necessary. Teachers treat pupils fairly and they know that they all have the same opportunities to learn and meet their capabilities. Assemblies provide an important role in the consideration of moral issues. On St George's Day, the focus was on 'putting things right'. When asked, pupils responded immediately, giving their views about fighting, evil and war and how things could be made better by citizens in contemporary society. The 'Golden Book' acknowledges those pupils who make an outstanding contribution to support others and their good deeds are shared with the school community in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than themselves and raise money to help others locally and farther afield. The school is currently raising funds for the National Children's Home.
26. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. This is an improvement on the 1997 inspection where the provision was reported as good. Teachers' organisation of lessons effectively encourages pupils to work together amicably and to share ideas and opinions and in this they do so with enthusiasm. Opportunities are provided for pupils of all ages to accept responsibility and, as a result, pupils eagerly take messages, return registers, ring the bell and enter items into the school website. Older pupils are encouraged to support younger ones by reading together and playing mathematical games. By giving pupils opportunities to take initiative for tasks that need attention around the school, teachers facilitate an appropriate response. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in class and around school. All adults in school treat pupils with courtesy and respect and, as a result, pupils respond with equal respect and courtesy. Pupils have a strong sense of community because the school enhances the provision through their involvement in village and church activities. Parents, the local community and the church community make a positive contribution to the social development of pupils.

27. The school has facilitated provision for a range of outside the school day, extra-curricular activities over several years, which are funded by parents, such as music tuition and the French club. Extra-curricular provision is an area that the headteacher is reviewing as a part of curricular enrichment. This will be dependent on the skills and availability of staff. Just recently, two sporting activities have been provided by the school for older pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The involvement of key stage and subject co-ordinators in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning.

28. Key Stage and subject co-ordinators are not involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning. In 1997 the last inspection reported that subject co-ordinators did not have 'an essential overview of their subjects, especially the monitoring of standards, which led to a key issue for future action, 'to find practical ways for the co-ordinators to develop an overview of their subjects'. In September 2000 a standardised system for weekly planning was introduced by the headteacher for Key Stages 1 and 2 classes. Subject documentation was assembled into handbooks to lay foundations for the development of an overview by co-ordinators of the subjects that they lead. Neither key stage nor subject co-ordinators have been involved in formally monitoring or evaluating standards. In order to find out what was happening in classes from the outset of her appointment, the headteacher has formally observed English and mathematics lessons. Good practice has been recognised and shaped following this monitoring. Where improvements were identified as a consequence of the lesson observations, effective action has been taken to secure improvement; for example, in the quality of teaching and planning in English and mathematics due to the establishment of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies within the school. Funding has now also been allocated to support additional literacy sessions for lower attaining pupils.
29. Across the curriculum as a whole, key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently active in their leadership and management responsibilities. They are not involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in the subjects across or within the two key stages for which they are responsible. Key stage leaders and subject co-ordinators do not formulate action plans as a part of school development planning or provide the justification of resources to meet subject/cross-curricular or whole-school priorities. The 2001-2002 school improvement plan recognises the need to involve the English and mathematics co-ordinators in the observation of lessons in order to share their findings with the headteacher and staff, but there is no plan as yet to adopt a whole-school approach to monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. Staff, including support staff, know their role in the day-to-day work of the school, but not how they are to be involved in longer-term improvement. The headteacher is fully aware of the need to ensure that delegation to staff with management responsibilities contributes effectively to the future needs and development of the school.

The procedures for assessing and using assessment information to guide curricular planning.

30. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not systematic enough across the subjects of the curriculum. In 1997 the inspection report identified a key issue with regard to identifying and using assessment more effectively to inform future teaching and learning. Work on this key issue was scheduled to start in April 2002 and to be implemented in July 2003, some five years after the first cycle inspection report was published. The purposes and procedures for assessing pupils' work on an ongoing basis are documented, but they are applied inconsistently. No formal monitoring or evaluation of the implementation of the assessment policy into practice has been conducted by the key stage co-ordinators. They have responsibility for the implementation of the school assessment policy in the respective key stages as a means of checking that outcomes of assessment form the basis of planning in the next stages of pupils' learning in all subjects. Samples of work have not been assembled

and annotated against attainment targets and level descriptors to show the knowledge skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to demonstrate by the end of Years 2 and 4 to provide a reliable source of information for staff, including those new to the school, governors and, where appropriate, in discussions with pupils, parents and other professionals who visit the school.

31. The use of assessment and performance data is an integral part of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage of the curriculum. The school makes a thorough assessment of children's basic literacy and numeracy skills on entry to the reception class. During the time children are in reception, staff identify when knowledge, skills and understanding and attitudes have been achieved by individuals or groups of children and use their knowledge well to plan the next steps of their learning. The three, Year 3 class teachers regularly share detailed assessment information to facilitate continuity and consolidation of both the teaching and learning process in all subjects taught during the week.
32. In the other classes, teachers have devised their own systems for using assessment, in particular for science and the non-core subjects of the curriculum. These include recording pupil progress in their own planning files or by less formal methods. The weekly plan for literacy and numeracy is detailed in its structure and outlines whole-class work, group tasks and a focus for the end of session plenary, which draws the lesson together and enables different groups to be involved in assessing whether or not they have met their learning objectives. Whilst the single weekly planning sheet (which is for all the other subjects of the curriculum with the exception of English and mathematics) generally documents main lesson objectives, it is insufficiently structured to identify what different groups are to learn or to evaluate outcomes. Pupils are generally not aware of their individual learning targets nor are they involved in the setting of them. Although pupils' work is marked, targets for improvement are not usually given.
33. The assessment of pupils with SEN is conducted in accordance with the school policy. Individual education plans are in place for those with SEN. Targets and skill areas are documented along with a range of focused activities. Reviews take place on a regular basis involving all appropriate staff and parents. The SEN co-ordinator, in liaison with the designated SEN governor, has reviewed the SEN policy and a draft policy has been formulated to meet the principles that underpin the January 2002, SEN Code of Practice.
34. The school has recognised within its current improvement plan that there is more work to be done on systematically implementing its assessment policy. The headteacher reviewed the assessment policy in Spring 2002, amendments were made and it is now in a draft form, which has yet to be ratified by the governing body. Mathematics assessments have been introduced on a half-termly basis and writing skills have been assessed formally from Years 1 to 4. The school has set end of Years 2 and 4 targets for English and mathematics in agreement with the local education authority for 2002 and 2003 cohorts. A computerised system for tracking pupil progress, using school and comparative national and local performance data, is scheduled to be introduced based on the approved local education authority computer software.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

35. In order to sustain the many notable qualities that are a part of the school and to develop further its commitment to raising standards, to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential in all subjects and be an improving school, the headteacher, governors and staff should focus on:
- involving key stage and subject co-ordinators in formally monitoring the curriculum, teaching and learning as a part of whole-school self-evaluation and school improvement action planning;
 - providing training for key stage and subject co-ordinators on preparing for and conducting classroom observations, and giving feedback to those observed to ensure a consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning;
 - implementing and monitoring the school's assessment policy in order to achieve a consistent whole-school approach in the use of assessment to guide and inform curricular planning.

(Paragraphs 28-34)

The school has identified in the 2001-2002 school improvement plan the need to engage the co-ordinators of English and mathematics in observing lessons and sharing their findings with the headteacher and staff. A review of earlier elements of the improvement plan recognises that there are still issues to be addressed with regard to assessment, including tracking the overall rate of individual pupil progress made during the time that pupils are at Ovingham First School.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

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

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 slightly more than six percentage points.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	4	9	2	0	0	0
Percentage	0	27	60	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	143
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.0
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	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (87)	100 (87)	96 (90)
	National	84 (83)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (90)	96 (93)	100 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

The number of boys and girls as individual groups is small, so these results have been omitted from the table. The results of the group as a whole (boys and girls together) have been included.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	113
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.6
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	284,045
Total expenditure	280,436
Expenditure per pupil	2,026
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,177
Balance carried forward to next year	5,786

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

144

Number of questionnaires returned

98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	34	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	43	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	46	13	5	1
The teaching is good.	54	38	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	43	14	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	31	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	35	52	7	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	39	1	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	47	17	6	2