

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117339

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Beeden

Reporting inspector: Mrs Joy Richardson
6676

Dates of inspection: 7 - 8 May 2002

Inspection number: 198723

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Berry Avenue Watford Herts
Postcode:	WD24 6ST
Telephone number:	01923 245490
Fax number:	01923 230710
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Rogers
Date of previous inspection:	17/11/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
6676	Joy Richardson	Registered inspector
14214	Gillian Smith	Lay inspector
21397	Ingrid Bradbury	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	13
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	14
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 184 boys and girls aged from four to eleven, with one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6. It also has a nursery which 39 children attend part time. Most transfer to the school's reception class, in the September or January before they are five. The school draws pupils mainly from the local area where there is a predominance of rented housing and many families are under stress. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. These needs include emotional and behavioural difficulties and a range of physical disabilities. Just over a quarter of pupils come from an ethnic minority background. Most of these pupils have families originating from the Kashmir Pakistan border area; a small but increasing number are of African Caribbean heritage. Forty eight pupils speak English as an additional language, and 38 are at an early stage in acquiring the language. Mobility is high among pupils and many join the school late, occasionally without prior education. There have been a number of staff changes recently related to difficulties in recruiting teachers. At the time of the inspection, two classes were being taught by temporary or supply teachers. Children start school with widely varying skills and experience, but overall, attainment on entry to Reception is lower than that expected nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful school. Pupils achieve well, making good progress over their time in school. They are generally well taught, although the learning of some pupils this year has been adversely affected by staffing problems which the school is working to resolve. The school's leadership promotes a climate in which all pupils, whatever their background or individual needs, are valued and helped to succeed. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in reading and in mathematics.
- They achieve very well in science.
- Children make a very good start in nursery and reception.
- Teaching is generally good and teachers and support staff work well together.
- The school provides effective additional support to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn.
- The school works well in partnership with parents and the community.

What could be improved

- Long term planning for the recruitment and retention of high quality staff.
- Guidance for all teachers about classroom expectations, to secure consistency.
- Monitoring by the school's leadership of pupils' work and progress.
- Standards in pupils' writing.
- The extent of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Behaviour in the playground.

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. Since then, standards have risen significantly and this has led to a School Achievement Award for the school in each of the past two years. The school also gained the Investors in People award in 2001, and this is particularly reflected in the development of its support staff since the time of the last inspection. Key issues for action in the last inspection report have been addressed. The curriculum framework has been improved and the development of schemes of work is ongoing. An assessment system, which includes twice-yearly target setting for each pupil, is now in its third year. Since the last inspection, the match of teaching to pupils' needs has been helped by the division of open plan areas to create a classroom for each year group. Governors are beginning to develop their role in strategic planning through the use of committees. Procedures for self-evaluation and performance management are taking root, and the monitoring of teachers' planning has become established. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and, despite recent uncertainties over staffing, has the capacity to continue to do so.

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	D	B	B
mathematics	B	D	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Since 1997, when the school was last inspected, the results achieved in National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds have improved sharply, from below to above the national average. In 2001, the results were above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science, when compared with all schools nationally, and also in comparison with similar schools. More than 90 per cent of pupils reached at least Level 4, the level expected at this age, in each subject, exceeding the challenging targets which the school had set. Standards are not as high in the current Year 6, although pupils are on course to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

The results in National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2001 were below the national average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. However, pupils showed sound progress in relation to their attainment on entry.

Pupils make good progress in English and in mathematics through the school. In English, they reach higher standards in reading than in writing. Pupils achieve very well in science because of the careful attention given to scientific language, systematic coverage of the curriculum, and the reinforcement of understanding through practical investigation.

The school is very successful in helping pupils to reach the level expected for their age, providing extra support where necessary. Boys achieve as well as girls. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress, so that they achieve in line with their peers. Those with special educational needs also progress well. There is less focus on ensuring that higher attaining pupils achieve their full potential, particularly in mathematics and in writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes, making the most of what the school offers. They are keen to learn and participate well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. School lunch is a pleasant and sociable occasion. Most pupils play harmoniously outside and enjoy lunchtimes, but there are recurrent playground incidents of swearing, name-calling and physical aggression by a small number of pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Most pupils are polite and friendly. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example in the School Council. Boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, work and play together co-operatively, accepting and respecting each other.

Attendance	Attendance is a little below the national average, but it has improved since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is higher than average because of unexplained absences and extended holidays.
------------	--

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The teaching seen during the inspection was very good in Nursery and Reception, and good in Years 1 and 2. Teaching was satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 with good, and occasionally very good, teaching in some classes. Years 3 and 6 were being taught by temporary or supply teachers at the time of the inspection. Although pupils in these classes were seen to be making progress, the pace of their learning has been affected by staff changes over the course of the year.

Teachers plan lessons well and are skilled in managing their classes. They explain and give instructions clearly and ask questions well to encourage thinking. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught effectively. Pupils contribute and co-operate well in lessons, and usually work hard.

Additional, good quality teaching support is provided for individuals and groups who are learning English as an additional language, who have special educational needs, or who are falling behind in their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, including art and music, which is enriched by special events and extra-curricular activities. Activities in 'circle time' help to build good relationships, as part of the school's programme for personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, including those with learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties and physical disabilities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Bilingual support staff identify pupils' needs and provide an effective programme of support to strengthen pupils' understanding of what they are learning. Careful attention is given to developing pupils' grasp of technical language within subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school effectively fosters pupils' social and moral awareness, and their appreciation of religious and cultural diversity. A sense of community is built within the school, and pupils' interest in the environment and the wider world is successfully cultivated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff work together well as a team to take good care of pupils and to meet their individual needs. There are clear procedures for securing pupils' health, safety and welfare. Pupils are well supervised, and the school is reviewing playground arrangements in order to improve behaviour.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, promotes staff teamwork and a positive climate for learning. The school's senior management leads by example. Procedures for guiding and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school are not yet fully established.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are extending their overview of the curriculum. They are at an early stage in the development of strategic planning, for example regarding the recruitment and retention of staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All staff contribute to planning for school improvement, and review of the school's performance. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and targets are set and reviewed for each year group. The school has analysed its results by gender and taken action accordingly. However, not enough use is made of assessment information as a management tool, to track the performance of individuals or ethnic groups, or to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources, including additional grant funding, for the benefit of pupils. Expenditure is carefully considered, and the governors' finance committee is supporting the application of principles of best value. The surplus carried forward from last year is larger than expected, because of the difficulty of budgeting for funds received during the year, and there are sensible plans for its use.

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 high quality of provision in the nursery. • The care for pupils' individual needs. • The commitment and approachability of staff. • Encouragement for children to do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stability of staffing and consistency of teaching. • Behaviour, particularly in the playground. • Information about how children are getting on. • The amount and organisation of homework.

Only a small percentage of parents returned the questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting before the inspection. Many of these parents had serious concerns about the impact of staff changes in two of the classes. They generally considered that the school had done well by their children previously, but that this had not been the case recently. This was reflected in the questionnaires: around a third of the 36 returns expressed dissatisfaction about homework, teaching, behaviour, information for parents and the school's leadership.

The inspection team agrees with the majority of parents that the school has strengths and that pupils achieve well overall. They recognise, as does the school, that staff changes have caused problems in two classes, and that these have had an impact on pupils' learning and behaviour. The school's leadership has worked hard to recruit new teachers and the staffing for next year is now being finalised. The view of the inspection team is that longer term planning is needed for the recruitment and retention of staff. Also, for the benefit of new and experienced teachers, pupils and parents, guidance on teaching, learning, homework and behaviour should be made clearer and monitored more consistently across the school. Inspectors consider that pupils generally behave well in lessons and the school has an orderly atmosphere, but that poor behaviour in the playground is not consistently or effectively challenged. The team's view is that the school works hard at its partnership with parents and is a force for good within the community.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics.

1. Most pupils reach standards broadly in line with those expected for their age, in reading and mathematics. They make good progress over their time in school in relation to their attainment on entry.
2. Pupils read regularly at school, individually, in groups and as a class. They also take a reading book home daily, and a library book which they can change as they wish. A reading record travels between home and school to aid communication. Pupils make steady progress through the reading scheme, and use of the library extends their reading diet. In the early stages, pupils learn to build words from sounds. They practise key words commonly encountered in reading, for example spotting the word 'said' within a story in reception. They participate enthusiastically in shared reading, as when pupils in Year 2 read and re-read the letters in 'Dear Greenpeace' about a whale in a pond. Older pupils encounter a wide range of literature, for example considering different versions of 'Beauty and the Beast' in Year 5, or writing their own modern version of 'Macbeth' in Year 6. They learn about the structure of language and the use of words, using a dictionary in Year 3 to find word meanings, and a thesaurus in Year 6 to explore synonyms. Older pupils develop their reading comprehension, learning to scan text to find information and to interpret finer points of meaning.
3. Pupils progress well in mathematics, keeping up with expectations for their age. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy to good effect, and pupils are becoming confident in working with numbers in their head. For example, in Year 1, pupils rapidly recalled addition and subtraction number facts within ten. New concepts, such as symmetry in Year 1, and the use of co-ordinates in Year 2, are clearly explained so that pupils have a solid foundation for later learning. Weaknesses, such as problem solving in mental calculation, are recognised and worked on, as seen in Year 5.

Pupils achieve very well in science.

4. In recent years, pupils have achieved consistently well in science, as shown in the results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds. In 2001, 97 per cent of pupils reached at least Level 4, the expectation for this age, and 60 per cent achieved beyond this, reaching Level 5.
5. Interest in science and the natural world is promoted throughout the school. Children in the nursery are able to watch fish swimming and butterflies hatching out. The wildlife area created in the school's grounds provides the opportunity to find insects, to watch birds or to investigate pondlife. Pupils work practically, growing seeds, constructing circuits and investigating the effects of heat in Year 2. Older pupils begin to learn to plan an investigation, asking questions, recording findings and drawing conclusions.
6. Pupils' attainment in science is underpinned by careful attention to the use of scientific vocabulary. Words such as 'evaporation', 'condensation', 'pollination' and 'germination' are explained, used in context and re-visited. As a result, pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, develop a good understanding of scientific terms and of the concepts they represent. The curriculum is well organised so that learning is reinforced from year to year.

Children make a very good start in nursery and reception.

7. The Foundation Stage, spanning nursery and reception, is very well organised and planned. Children make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning.
8. In the nursery, children learn to be independent and responsible. They plan what they will do and reflect on it afterwards, for example discussing a painting and how it could be made even better. Children learn to listen to each other and to the teacher, joining in with reminders to 'Look at me

with your eyes. Listen to me with your ears'. They concentrate and try hard, for example spotting which number was missing between one and five, and naming months and days of the week. They enjoy the settled routines of the nursery and the range of activities provided. Children are very well taught, building on what they already know, and their progress is recorded meticulously.

9. In reception, children extend their skills, taking pleasure in reading and writing independently and applying their knowledge of phonics. They use the computer confidently to practise their skills. They develop their knowledge of number, reinforcing this through number songs, and are quick to learn names such as 'cube', 'pyramid' and 'sphere'. In role play they explore the world around them, for example becoming absorbed in sorting laundry, washing and ironing. Children co-operate well with each other.
10. Staff plan together and share good practice. Children's progress over the two years is very carefully assessed, and their individual needs are identified. Children make a smooth transition from nursery into reception and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teaching is generally good and teachers and support staff work well together.

11. Teaching, in lessons during the inspection, was good in most classes. Teachers generally manage pupils well, engaging their attention and keeping them focused on the task in hand. They explain difficult points clearly, as seen when a supply teacher in Year 6 revised the life cycle of plants with pupils, or when the teacher in Year 5 introduced work on negative numbers. Teachers give clear instructions so that pupils understand how to approach tasks, such as observing and drawing flowers in Year 1, or painting in the style of Bridget Riley in Year 2. Teachers ask questions well to check learning and to guide thinking, as when pupils in Year 4 were taken through the process of scanning a text to find key words and phrases.
12. The teacher and nursery nurse work together very effectively in the nursery. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution within lessons. They support individuals and groups well, showing a good understanding of the learning expected and how to bring it about. They are well trained and keen to take advantage of the opportunities offered. Teaching assistants liaise well with class teachers, following the planning provided and sometimes contributing to the evaluation of pupils' learning. Where staff changes have occurred, teaching assistants have helped to provide continuity for pupils. The work of teaching assistants is well managed by the deputy headteacher.

The school provides effective additional support to meet pupils' individual needs.

13. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Three external bilingual support teachers, funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), work in school for the equivalent of three days a week, and there is also a bilingual support assistant.
14. Bilingual support staff work with children in the classroom, helping them with the language needed for the work in hand. For example, pupils were given help in learning the names of the parts of a flower. The headteacher also provides support, withdrawing groups of early English learners in Years 4 and 5 to work in parallel with their class, for example developing comprehension of traditional tales. Such work is well tailored to pupils' needs and pupils benefit from the attention they receive individually and in small groups.
15. Bilingual support staff identify the needs of new arrivals and help the school in its communication with parents and carers. Support staff make effective use of pupils' home language, for example in teaching a reception child the words 'mummy', 'mother', 'daddy' and 'father' while sharing a book. All children gain an appreciation of different languages, for instance sometimes singing number rhymes in Urdu.
16. The EMAG staff work with class teachers to identify where language difficulties may prevent pupils from grasping concepts, and ways of overcoming this. They have also drawn up a useful

action plan identifying areas of concern and strategies for raising attainment by pupils from the main ethnic minority groups within the school.

17. The school provides twice weekly 'Booster' classes for pupils in Year 6 in order to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in preparation for the national tests. These sessions are taught by teachers. They take place before school and begin with breakfast. The classes are well attended and contribute to pupils' achievement, particularly in reading. A programme of Early Literacy Support, provided by a teaching assistant, is helping pupils in Year 1 who are behind in reading to catch up. An Additional Literacy Strategy programme, taught by another trained teaching assistant, provides extra support for pupils in Years 3 and 4.
18. The school is educationally inclusive and welcomes all pupils, whatever their needs. It makes provision for a number of children with physical disabilities, providing wheelchair access and medical room facilities, as well as classroom support. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator provides well-targeted teaching, and support for class teachers. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported with behaviour management programmes. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and provide achievable targets. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn.

19. Pupils participate well in lessons. They are encouraged to think and to explain their ideas and they do so with enthusiasm. For example, a boy in Year 5 eagerly explained to the class his idea that negative numbers are 'like a mirror', with zero as the axis of symmetry. Pupils readily contribute in 'Circle Time', for example in Year 4 exploring what it feels like to be left out.
20. The School Council has two members from each class. Elected members talk with pride about how they contribute to making the school better, and how they keep their classmates informed. The school consults pupils and takes their opinions into account, for example exploring their perceptions of 'fairness'. Pupils meet on occasions within 'family groups' which encourage pupils of different ages to care for each other. Older pupils readily take responsibility for tasks such as preparing for assembly, and adding up the weekly 'house points' awarded across the school.
21. Pupils are friendly and polite. They demonstrate good manners, for example in holding doors open and offering help. They converse sociably at lunch time. The school deals well with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is generally a calm and orderly atmosphere and behaviour in lessons is usually good.

The school fosters its partnership with parents and the community.

22. The school provides two reports a year and opportunities for consultation, and most parents find the school welcoming and approachable. Very good arrangements, including home visits, help children to settle in the nursery and liaison with parents is very strong.
23. The school supports parents in developing their own skills. Currently, Family Literacy and Numeracy sessions, funded by the Basic Skills Agency, are helping parents from the Muslim community to understand what their children are learning in school in order that they might give better support at home. The school also provides counselling in parenting skills, to complement its work with pupils on behaviour management.
24. The headteacher and staff are accessible and approachable and know pupils and parents well. The school is sensitive and supportive in dealing with families under stress, and in working to prevent tensions within the community from spilling over into school. The school surveys parents' views and is alert to parental concerns. The school has a thriving Parent Teacher Association, well supported by staff, which organises social and fundraising events. This builds relationships and encourages a sense of community, as well as raising valuable funds for the school which have been used, for example, to purchase computers. The school has close links with the nearby Regional College, and mentors students in initial teacher training.

25. The school helps to organise the annual North Watford Show, a summer fete which attracts 5000 people and brings together the whole local community. Visits to places of interest, and visitors to the school, broaden pupils' experience and appreciation of the world around them.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Long term planning for the recruitment and retention of high quality staff.

26. The school has several longstanding members of staff, but there has been an increasing turnover in recent years. Since the last inspection, several teachers have been promoted to headships. The school has recruited teachers through agencies and from abroad but has not always succeeded in making successful long term appointments. Considerable effort has gone into making appointments for the coming year, through attendance by the headteacher at recruitment fairs for newly qualified teachers. With the promotion of the deputy headteacher to the post of head, the appointment of a new deputy is now underway.
27. The Chair of Governors has supported the headteacher in explaining to parents the staff changes which have taken place this year. However, governors have lacked training in procedures, and have not had a long term strategy for staff recruitment. The identification and anticipation of staffing needs, and review of the school's policy on pay to aid the recruitment and retention of experienced staff, have not been given a high enough priority. The governing body has recently established a personnel committee to develop its overview of staffing arrangements and this is a positive move.

Guidance for all teachers about classroom expectations, to secure consistency.

28. The staff work well as a team and have developed procedures together over the years. School policies outline the school's philosophy and approaches, for example, in managing behaviour. The staff handbook gives clear information on routines, resources and requirements of staff. It does not, however, provide guidance on teaching and learning, what constitutes good practice in the classroom, and the standards expected of teachers and pupils.
29. Teaching within the school is generally good and teachers have shared successful practice, for instance in implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, there is a lack of consistency across classes, as seen in the setting of homework, the quality of marking, and standards of presentation. This is most evident in classes where there have been changes of teacher over the year. The school has good procedures for the induction and mentoring of new staff, but has not been explicit enough in setting out expectations to support them in pursuing high standards.

Monitoring by the school's leadership of pupils' work and progress.

30. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning on a regular basis and provides useful feedback, commenting on coverage of the curriculum or suggesting ways of helping pupils to learn. Teachers assess work together to moderate their judgements about the levels being achieved. Tracking sheets for each class set out the level of pupils' attainment at the start of the year and set targets for progress over the year. All staff contribute to action planning for school improvement, led by the headteacher.
31. All this is positive, but monitoring by the school's leadership is not yet fully established as an effective management tool. Classroom observation and the sampling of pupils' work are not being used consistently to improve teaching and learning throughout the school. There is close attention to the progress of individuals, but an insufficient overview of the performance of pupils who have received bilingual support or special educational needs support. Test results have been analysed by gender to ensure that boys achieve as well as girls. They have not been analysed to monitor the achievement of different ethnic groups, or to identify areas of strength and weakness in pupils' learning.

The quality of pupils' writing.

32. In 2002, 97 per cent of pupils reached Level 4 in reading in the National Curriculum tests, and 53 per cent achieved Level 5. By contrast, in writing, only 55 per cent gained Level 4, and only 7 per cent reached Level 5.

33. At the age of seven, pupils' abilities in writing show a very wide spread. Some are writing fluently, confidently and accurately, but a significant number are still struggling to form words independently. Pupils are encouraged to 'do it yourself', in attempting writing, but they do not have enough systematic teaching to ensure that they master basic writing skills.
34. The school has recently changed its approach to handwriting. At present, there is a lack of clear progression from learning the correct formation of letters to achieving a fluent, joined handwriting style. Standards for the presentation of work are not set consistently across the school. Pupils learn to spell and to punctuate, but marking does not ensure that pupils apply what they have learned, or that errors are identified and remedied. Older pupils draft and revise their work, and write for a range of purposes. They do not have enough practice in organising their ideas in writing, for example within science or history, or in developing a theme at length. Progress in writing is not monitored closely enough to gauge how well pupils are doing and to secure improvement.

The school's expectations of its higher attaining pupils.

35. The school has been successful in raising standards and helping pupils to achieve the expectation for their age. In reading and in science, more than half the pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests reached Level 5. However, there is less evidence of high attainment in mathematics across the school and in writing in the older years.
36. The school is alert to pupils' needs and abilities and is now setting targets for individuals each year. Extension work is provided in some lessons for those who finish quickly. However, higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged in lessons, in the way their work is marked, or in their homework. There is more to be done in planning provision for gifted and talented pupils, and in setting sights high for the most able throughout the school.

Behaviour in the playground.

37. The school's broad rules are discussed with, and understood by, pupils. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of social skills. It teaches pupils that name-calling is unacceptable and takes a clear stand against the use of racist language. The school implements behaviour management programmes for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and liaises closely with families and external agencies. The generally good behaviour within school reflects the effectiveness of the school's efforts, often in dealing with troubled pupils.
38. Most pupils play happily and harmoniously and enjoy playtimes. However, there are frequent incidents of poor behaviour, including swearing, name-calling and physical aggression. This is particularly a problem in the junior playground. The recurrence of such incidents, as recorded in the incident book, indicates that current sanctions are not working effectively. The school recognises the need to review the way that bad behaviour at lunchtime is dealt with. There are also plans to extend the hard play area and improve the play equipment available to older pupils, to relieve the pressures on space which contribute to behavioural problems.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

39. **In order to build on what has been achieved and to improve further the school should:**
1. Secure the recruitment and retention of high quality staff by:
 - identifying and developing a strategy to meet the school's long term staffing needs;
 - training governors and developing the role of the personnel committee;
 - regularly reviewing the pay policy.
 2. Provide guidance for all teachers about the school's expectations, to ensure consistency, by
 - extending the staff handbook to include teaching and learning requirements;

- establishing school wide standards for marking, the presentation of work and the use of homework;
- developing codes of conduct for the classroom, around the school, and in the playground.

3. Extend monitoring by the school's leadership of pupils' work and progress by:
 - observing lessons, sampling work and identifying areas for improvement;
 - tracking progress across the school as a whole;
 - reviewing targets with teachers and the means of meeting them;
 - analysing results to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in learning, and the relative achievement of different groups.

4. Raise standards in pupils' writing by:
 - auditing the quantity and quality of pupils' writing, in literacy and in other subjects;
 - developing the teaching of handwriting and spelling throughout the school;
 - attending more closely to errors in writing and setting goals for improvement.

5. Extend the challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
 - identifying gifted and talented pupils and planning provision for them;
 - setting sights higher for the most able pupils in mathematics;
 - tracking pupils' progress to detect underachievement.

6. Improve behaviour at lunchtime by:
 - clarifying the consequences of unacceptable behaviour in the playground;
 - monitoring trends in behaviour and reviewing the effectiveness of sanctions;
 - involving pupils in taking responsibility for playground activities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	8	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	31	50	19	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 one five percentage points. Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	60

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.7
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	14	19	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	14
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	28	27	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (88)	82 (69)	87 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	14	13
	Girls	15	17	16
	Total	26	31	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (81)	94 (85)	88 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (65)	93 (57)	97 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	10
	Girls	11	11	17
	Total	19	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (43)	70 (43)	90 (65)
	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	7
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	3
Indian	2
Pakistani	34
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	121
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.0
Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	547918
Total expenditure	555089
Expenditure per pupil	2722
Balance brought forward from previous year	29122
Balance carried forward to next year	21951

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	39	19	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	28	47	17	6	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	14	50	11	22	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	36	28	17	3
The teaching is good.	25	33	22	14	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	39	17	19	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	47	3	14	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	33	47	11	6	3
The school works closely with parents.	19	33	22	22	3
The school is well led and managed.	17	33	14	22	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	36	14	11	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	61	3	11	3