

INSPECTION REPORT

BELL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bell Lane, Ackworth, Pontefract,
West Yorkshire WF7 7JH

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 130965

Headteacher: Mrs C Oldham

Reporting inspector: Mr M J Morgan
3547

Dates of inspection: 27th February – 1st March 2002

Inspection number: 199064

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	County
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bell Lane Ackworth Pontefract West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF7 7JH
Telephone number:	01977 722230
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G R Lyons
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd February 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bell Lane is an average size primary school situated near the centre of the large village of Ackworth, eight miles south of Wakefield and four miles from Pontefract. At the time of the inspection the school had 235 children on roll and 52 pupils attending part time in the nursery. The school was formerly a first school but became a primary school the year prior to the last inspection in 1997. There are 12 pupils eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language. There are 38 pupils on the register of special educational needs, of whom three have statements. This is less than the national average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the reception class is a little higher than the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bell Lane is a very effective school. It is clear from walking through the school entrance that this is a lively, stimulating place to learn. The whole school environment is enriched by high standard displays of children's work, celebrating their achievements and providing an inspiration to others. This is matched by good quality education for all pupils. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2001, most pupils achieved well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The results for seven year olds, whilst not as consistently high as for the older pupils, are at the level expected nationally and above average in writing. These results are indicative of the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. These high standards are reflected in many other subject areas. The curriculum is broad and provides all pupils with a wide-ranging and balanced programme of learning. Teaching is good and the headteacher provides strong and well-directed leadership. As a result, the school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school effectively fulfils its aim of 'exhibiting the qualities of a good home...a secure and stable environment, a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where ...pupils are valued and given the very best opportunity to develop, learn and grow'.
- Pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science; pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The curriculum is broad, imaginatively planned and implemented, providing all pupils with a stimulating and balanced learning programme; the high standard of the physical environment contributes well to the pupils' interest in learning.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school; classroom assistants have a very positive effect on learning and standards.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, form very good relationships and behave very well indeed.
- The social, moral and spiritual awareness of pupils is developed very well
- Parents are happy with the education provided by the school.
- The headteacher provides clear direction and effective leadership for a very committed staff; governors are actively involved in school management and fulfil their responsibilities well.

What could be improved

- There are not enough seven year old pupils achieving the higher levels in national tests.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not yet systematically in place.
- There is inconsistency in provision for the Foundation Stage.
- The school prospectus does not provide insights into the qualities of the school.

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 the spring of 1997 when it was judged to be a very effective school. Since then, not only has the school maintained the 'many strong features' reported at the time, but it has also made good progress in addressing the key issues for action and improving even further. Standards achieved by eleven year olds have risen. Those achieved by seven year olds, whilst fluctuating more, are now showing clear gains.

The school governors now have clearly defined and active roles in school management and organisation. Individuals are linked to an aspect of the curriculum and receive reports from subject co-ordinators as well as making visits into school to review developments. They have a good grasp of their management responsibilities and a clear view of the school's strengths and areas where there is further work to be done. The school development plan has had several revisions to its format and scope and is now a clear and appropriately detailed document that makes an effective tool for checking and assessing progress. All health and safety requirements have been met. The roles of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating work in their subjects have been substantially addressed through clearer job descriptions and annual targets. However, the systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not yet sufficiently in place to inform areas of strength or where improvements might be made. The school is well placed to make continued further improvement.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	B	B	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	B	
Science	A	A	A	B	

On the basis of national test results for eleven year olds, standards in English have risen gradually over the past three years and are now well above average. Results in mathematics and science have remained consistently well above average throughout the same period. When the results for 2001 are compared with those for similar schools, standards in all three subjects are above average. Results in Key Stage 1 have been in line with, or above national expectations over the last three years but have also been less consistent. The 2001 national results for seven year olds show greater consistency in reading and mathematics and a significant improvement in writing to above average. However, too few pupils attain at the higher level 3 in reading, mathematics and science. Inspection findings confirm these standards. By the end of the Foundation Stage, five year olds are at least achieving the early learning goals, and most are exceeding them.

Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress so that by the time they leave the school the standards they are achieving are not significantly different from the national average. In all other subjects, standards are at least in line with national expectations; they are above average in design and technology, music and art. Pupils achieve particularly well where subject strands are taught in a connected approach, for example in combining design and technology with art, and drama with music. Religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good indeed. Throughout the school, pupils are interested in, and enthusiastic about their learning from the earliest stages. They take great pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Consistently very good in classrooms and in moving around the school. Pupils are genuinely considerate to each other and polite to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have the capacity to work well both independently and in co-operation with others. They have caring attitudes.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good. In some lessons, teaching seen is very good. Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge and understand how aspects of those subjects can be effectively linked to strengthen pupils' learning in a way which is meaningful to them. Lessons are planned well, using information from assessments as well as teachers' detailed knowledge of individuals. Teachers clearly enjoy teaching, and plan imaginative and purposeful activities which help pupils to enjoy learning. Expectations of pupils are generally high, although more could be expected of able children in Key Stage 1 in terms of the breadth of their reading and in planning their own investigations. Similarly, in the Foundation Stage, many children could take more responsibility for planning and carrying out some learning tasks. Pupils are managed very well indeed and individual needs are catered for effectively by thoughtfully arranging class groups to cater for differences in ability. Throughout the school, teaching is enhanced by the quality of support staff and by the skills and knowledge of nursery nurses.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics but these are also taught within the context of other subjects. The curriculum is broad and imaginatively conceived.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Provision for these pupils is well structured and the quality of intervention enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils in the school with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is undoubtedly a strength of the school. This leads to the strong personal development of pupils at each stage. Cultural development is good and introduces pupils appropriately to cultural and religious diversity.
How well the school cares	Very good. The school knows and cares for its pupils very well. There are

for its pupils	effective procedures to track the academic progress of individual pupils.
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There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include various sports, dance, music and computers in addition to the inclusion of an artist in residence, a children's poet and numerous educational visits.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides clear educational direction and strong leadership. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and an effective team who share management responsibility well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed and active in school management. They make good use of the school development plan to evaluate progress in planned change. Governors are committed not only to the achievement of high standards but also to providing a curriculum that enriches children's experience.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good in using a range of data to identify strengths and areas that need improvement. The evaluation of teaching, especially through classroom observation, is not yet sufficiently systematic to accurately inform the school of its key teaching strengths and areas for professional development.
The strategic use of resources	Generally good. The governors and school management have worked hard to reduce a deficit budget and have been rightly cautious on spending. They have, however, wisely maintained the level of staff and are now in a position to spend more on learning resources and equipment. Resources are used efficiently.

The principles of best value are beginning to be used in the school. The building is in good repair and has a high standard of internal decoration. The school continues to give good value for money.

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 children like their school Children make good progress Behaviour is good The children are taught well The school is welcoming and staff are approachable Children are expected to work hard and achieve well The school is well led and managed Children are helped to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework given Information about how children are getting on The extent to which the school works closely with parents The range of activities outside lessons

Parents are generally very supportive of the school's work in achieving high standards and promoting good behaviour and personal development. The inspection team fully concurs with all the positive points made by parents. It is the judgement of the team that homework set is appropriate to the age of the pupils.

Equally, information for parents on children's progress through written reports is good, clear and in sufficient detail. The team also finds that a good range of extra-curricular activities are provided by the school, including educational visits and a number of sports, dance, music activities, and a computer club.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school effectively fulfils its aim of ‘exhibiting the qualities of a good home...a secure and stable environment, a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where ...pupils are valued and given the very best opportunity to develop, learn and grow’.

- 1 As soon as you enter Bell Lane school, you are immediately aware of those qualities that governors and staff seek to provide. Office staff meet and greet visitors brightly, and children’s displayed work reflects the pride they take in their achievements and the care taken by staff in presenting it to a very high standard. Parents comment very favourably about the ease with which they can approach school staff and many help in school regularly. The good results that pupils achieve are, in part, as a result of active parent and school partnership in learning. From the earliest stages, children are given opportunities to develop independence and responsibility; a ‘helper of the day’ is nominated in the nursery, and each week every class has a ‘champion person’ selected for their positive attitudes or help for others.
- 2 Pupils are arranged into classes where there are often pupils from two year groups. However, this grouping is very carefully thought out so that no pupils are disadvantaged and teachers plan well to meet individual needs. A very good example of this care is shown by the inclusion of a Year 7 pupil in one of the Year 5/6 classes, where the developmental needs of the child are judged to be most effectively met in this familiar and supportive context.
- 3 All pupils are known and valued as individuals; the children treat teachers, support staff, lunchtime supervisors and all adult helpers with equal respect. Governors and the staff of the school can take great pride in the creation of this learning environment, where high standards of achievement and pupils’ personal development are equally valued.

Pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science; pupils with special educational needs make good progress

- 4 The results of the 2001 national tests for eleven year olds show that pupils achieve standards well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. When these results are compared with those from similar schools, the standards attained by most pupils are above average. These standards have risen gradually over the last four years. Boys and girls perform equally well. Pupils who have special educational needs are effectively supported throughout the school and, by the time they leave, most have made good progress and attained standards not significantly different from what would be expected for their age.
- 5 Results for seven year olds show that pupils’ performance in reading and in mathematics is at the level expected nationally, whilst writing is above average. Standards attained in all three aspects represent clear gains on the previous year’s results. Again, there are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.
- 6 By the end of the Foundation Stage, almost all the children will have achieved the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. Many children will have exceeded them and in some aspects will be working at a level within Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Most have playgroup experience before starting in the nursery class and their knowledge is built on skilfully by the teacher and the two nursery nurses. Many of the children are articulate and able to describe and explain their activities. They listen well and respond eagerly to adults’ questions. In the reception groupings, children co-operate well with others in learning tasks and are able to sustain involvement for longer periods of time. Two girls spent over 20 minutes in the ‘small world’ play area, arranging the open-fronted doll’s house into a ‘classroom’ and enacting typical encounters, no doubt observed from their own setting!

- 7 The work seen during the inspection was of a consistently high standard. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been integrated effectively into the structure of the school curriculum. The quality and range of writing in both key stages reflect the pupils' understanding of writing for different purposes and their ability to sustain an appropriate style. Pupils in a mixed Year 5/6 class showed considerable agility with language. They connected key ideas from literature, well chosen by the teacher, with writing their own haiku poems. The pupils having the opportunity to discuss ideas and phrasing in pairs before committing their thoughts to paper, enhanced the quality of the writing. From Year 2 onwards, there are many examples of extended writing which have interest for the reader, are neatly handwritten and contain accurate spelling and punctuation.
- 8 Especially in Key Stage 2, pupils read from a variety of books. Many have an enthusiasm for non-fiction and show good levels of skill in seeking and retrieving information relevant to their interest and investigation. They also have the ability by Year 3 to distinguish fact from fiction and to appreciate that the same events can be described in different ways by different authors.
- 9 Classroom assistants provide very good support for pupils who experience difficulty with the composition of writing or in understanding the text of a book, helping them to clarify their ideas. This, added to the opportunities teachers provide for paired and group discussion, results in high standards of both speaking and listening.
- 10 The oral aspects of mathematics are highlighted in numeracy lessons and pupils in both key stages show a good command of mental calculations. By Year 2, most are able to perform simple number operations quickly and accurately and describe how they arrived at an answer. These skills develop well so that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are dealing with large numbers confidently. They can use their knowledge of number to interpret information, such as times of trains on a 24-hour timetable. The work seen across a wide range of mathematics in Year 6 showed that most pupils are working at a level above that expected for pupils of their age. In both key stages, pupils use specialist mathematical vocabulary well.
- 11 Attainment in science is good, and notably in Key Stage 2. Teachers have established good practice in science enquiry so that pupils approach investigations observing accurate sequences of prediction, fair testing and analysis. Pupils in a Year 3 class showed how they had accurately measured the amount of water in different materials in a lesson on absorbency. Their understanding of the conclusions they reached was impressive, all the more so as the results were not as might have been expected!

The curriculum is broad, imaginatively planned and implemented, providing all pupils with a stimulating and balanced learning programme; the high standard of the physical environment contributes well to the pupils' interest in learning.

- 12 The school has worked hard to implement the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy across the school. Teachers are confident in what they are doing, thoroughly knowledgeable of the frameworks and able to interpret them in a way that is appropriate to the needs of their particular pupils. Whilst English and mathematics take up a substantial part of each day, no other subjects are neglected as a result. In effect, the skilful interpretation of the two frameworks, in which aspects of both are taught partly within the context of other subjects, strengthens learning in numeracy and literacy and also seeks to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum. For example, the use of extended writing in a Key Stage 2 history lesson allowed pupils time to think through the issues raised and to place their own interpretation on events. Similarly, through good discussion of purpose and design, pupils made excellent use of a deliberately limited, but effective, range of art media to express ideas with skill and confidence.
- 13 In the Foundation Stage, the nursery curriculum is planned in depth and in detail. It offers continuing and daily provision of learning activities that provide opportunities for the youngest children to explore and investigate materials and to develop their skills. Alongside these activities are also planned, short, adult-led sessions where new learning is introduced to the whole group. Progression is built in through the design of planned extensions of the learning in each area of activity. This combination of adult-led

and child-initiated learning results in well-developed speaking and listening skills and real enthusiasm from the children for finding out about their world.

- 14 In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is planned with an overall school theme. The current theme is 'water' and this provides a broad and encompassing notion to which almost every area of the curriculum can contribute. What is more, children of all ages can readily relate the work they are doing to such a theme and are enabled to contribute their own particular interests and enthusiasms. Lively examples of related work include examining patterns in recorded rainfall over a period of time in a Years 3 and 4 class; Year 3 pupils investigating absorbency; older Key Stage 2 pupils designing and making umbrella covers, including batik work for decoration; and similar aged pupils practising the performance of a short opera based on *The Owl and the Pussy Cat*. This imaginative approach engages the interest and commitment of pupils of all abilities and enhances the quality of learning in all areas of the curriculum. There are high standards of work in design and technology, art, and music.
- 15 In all parts of the school, the thematic work is enriched by the range of display in classrooms and shared spaces. The quality of this display is both motivating and interactive. The collections of objects, artefacts and pictures are beautifully presented and demand attention. The well-designed computer suite, complete with its interactive whiteboard, provides a good learning base for information and communication technology. Pupils' skills are being developed progressively and related to the other areas of the curriculum in a meaningful way.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school; classroom assistants have a very positive effect on learning and standards.

- 16 The good standards achieved by pupils of all abilities by the end of Key Stage 2 are directly attributable to teaching which is generally good and, in some of the lessons observed during the inspection, very good. Teachers have a good grasp of the key skills and concepts they are teaching in literacy and numeracy. This good subject knowledge is used well and enhanced by very effective ways in which teachers ask challenging questions and extend learning through developing pupils' responses further.
- 17 Teachers plan very effectively for the wide range of ability they have in classes and especially those with pupils from more than one age group. In a mathematics lesson with a mixed Year 5/6 class, the teacher planned work on time and the interpretation of timetables in a way that allowed all pupils to participate. The use of targeted questions to achieve the maximum understanding enabled pupils to tackle the different group tasks – matched to ability – with a good degree of confidence. In this way challenge and support are interlinked to good effect.
- 18 Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils. They communicate the purposes and themes of lessons clearly. They expect that pupils work hard and behave well. This leads to high levels of concentration and a good pace to lessons. In a Year 3 science lesson, the teacher provided the opportunity for pupils to discuss their predictions for the outcome of the planned investigation. This they did seriously and considerately, listening to each other's views and putting counter arguments backed up by reasons. This clarifying of ideas by speaking them 'out loud' helped pupils to examine the results of their enquiry more carefully and review their original explanations thoroughly.
- 19 Classes are managed very well. Teachers design lively activities, sensibly linking different areas of the curriculum. In a mixed Year 1/2 class, the teacher made effective use of the computer suite to develop children's skills in the use of *Clipart* and the manipulation of text within the context of designing a decorative Easter egg. Both those working at the computer and others drawing up draft designs had well-planned activities which secured their interest and involvement at all times.
- 20 Teachers show an excellent knowledge of individual pupils and their diverse learning needs. They know the stage pupils have reached in their learning and what they now need to do to make progress. Pupils are regularly reminded of their learning aims and what they are working towards. Most are aware of their individual targets and how well they are progressing towards achieving them. Within all subject areas, teachers take opportunities to encourage pupils to co-operate and to support each

other's learning. This supportive atmosphere is present throughout the school and enables all pupils to feel included in the work of each class.

- 21 The school believes that work done by classroom assistants has a positive effect on standards achieved by pupils, and especially on the progress of those who find learning difficult. The inspection team entirely concurs with that view and recognises the skill and commitment of these staff in supporting effective learning.

The nursery nurses use their knowledge and expertise well to complement the skills of the nursery teacher. Together, they provide a stimulating programme which, as in other areas of the school, is both challenging and appropriately supportive.

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, form very good relationships and behave very well indeed

- 22 Through the very high quality of planning and preparation of the teachers, pupils are very well motivated in lessons and show that they can concentrate well, sometimes for long periods. This is helped by the nature of the planned activities which have variety and which genuinely draw upon pupils' own interests and enthusiasms. In the Foundation Stage, reception class children are able to work happily together in pairs at an activity outside the classroom where they are only indirectly supervised. At the later stages, Year 5 pupils sustain interest over a number of lessons in the creation of decorated umbrella covers, showing a skilful use of quite difficult techniques such as wax batik, print making and needlecraft.
- 23 Behaviour during and outside of lessons is very good indeed. Pupils are courteous to one another and to adults. They respond eagerly to teachers' questions and follow simple and sensible class procedures at all times. During the inspection, it was difficult to find any occasion during the planned or unplanned day where pupils were not engaged in purposeful activity, which they were enjoying. Relationships are good amongst pupils of different age groups. Many examples were seen of good collaborative working. Particularly impressive is the way in which pupils respect the time set aside each day for assembly and collective worship. They walk to the hall very quietly, enter in an orderly way listening to the music being played and wait until all the class are in place before sitting down together.

The social, moral and spiritual awareness of pupils is developed very well

- 24 These aspects of provision are a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual awareness is raised through assemblies and lessons when there is also the opportunity for reflection on beliefs, their own and those from other cultures. They are encouraged to discuss their own feelings and emotions and develop a sense of 'self'. All of this is enhanced through the way in which the school places great importance on pupils experiencing good literature, listening to and making their own music and developing their imagination beyond the everyday occurrence.
- 25 Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and understand the consequences of their actions and attitudes on others. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an awareness of justice and injustice and a group of the older ones took an active part in a Blue Peter appeal for disadvantaged people. Throughout the school, pupils are pleasant and courteous to adults, their hearty "good mornings" being spontaneous and genuine. They have a concern for each other and are keen to share their own skills and knowledge to help their peers. In many instances observed, older pupils were taking care of younger ones in the playground and at lunchtime. In lessons, pupils understand the need for agreed classroom procedures and observe them well. They co-operate readily in shared tasks and there is no problem with boys and girls working together.

Parents are happy with the education provided by the school

- 26 The great majority of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with the quality and standard of education their children receive. They find the teaching good, the teachers approachable and informative, and that the school is well led. In

informal discussions with parents during the course of the inspection, it became clear that a great many parents actively participate in school during the day, supporting teachers and other staff on a regular basis. Parents described the school as a "happy, caring place" where everyone knows the children well. Pupils receive generally good support and interest from home, and parents often actively support school themes through lending items and offering their own expertise to studies taking place. This high level of involvement and interest has a hugely positive effect on the pupils and on their determination to succeed.

The headteacher provides clear direction and effective leadership for a very committed staff; governors are actively involved in school management and fulfil their responsibilities well

- 27 The headteacher is a highly committed leader who provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Whilst she was still the acting headteacher, the school suffered the trauma of a serious fire. Given the distress caused to all staff and the children through such an event, it took admirable resolve and leadership to return the school to a high quality place of learning, not just materially, but in terms of staff morale and team determination. Substantially, key issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and the school has developed well in that period. The headteacher is well supported by an able deputy and senior staff who lead by example.
- 28 The present induction of two recently qualified teachers on the staff is a model of good practice. Each teacher has two mentors who can share complementary skills with their new colleague and provide a broad range of support and encouragement. The new staff have already developed a healthy self-confidence tempered by appropriate self-criticism and both feel very well supported within the school.
- 29 At the time of the last inspection, the governing body was criticised for a lack of involvement in school policy and decision making. The present governing body has had six changes of governor since then and now forms an active, informed and positively critical group of people, fully committed to the school and its development. Governors work hard and have assigned connections with each area of the curriculum. Through regular reports from subject co-ordinators and their own school visits, governors are well placed to monitor and assess progress in planned school development. Financial understanding is good and the headteacher and governors have worked successfully to reduce a deficit budget through prudent housekeeping. This has not been at the expense of quality in the school, however, and the chair of governors has very clear views about what needs to be tackled next in school development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There are not enough seven year old pupils achieving the higher levels in national tests

- 30 Analysis of national test and task results at the end of Key Stage 1 shows that in some aspects of the curriculum, the performance by able pupils is disappointing. Given the generally above average attainment of pupils entering the reception classes, the value added by the school at Key Stage 1 is limited – notably in mathematics and in reading. If results in these aspects are compared with similar schools, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 are below what would be expected, with the exception of writing.
- 31 There may well be a number of contributory factors to these outcomes.
 - The fire, which seriously damaged the school, disrupted school life and effectively meant the quality of the learning environment for the younger pupils was significantly reduced; there were changes to staff and a number of supply teachers.
 - Picture story books do not form a part of the structured programme and pupils do not encounter the enriched text found in such books, although published reading scheme books are plentiful.
 - Teachers can raise their expectations of those pupils who could attain higher standards.

- More opportunities can be provided for pupils to plan and pursue their own investigations.

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not yet systematically in place

- 32 Since the last inspection, the roles of curriculum co-ordinators have been thoroughly revised. There are now clear expectations of co-ordinators that include a responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the delivery of their particular subject or aspect and the standards being achieved. There are a number of ways in which standards and progress can be assessed, but the most informative and effective is that of classroom observation of teaching by the headteacher, senior management and other teachers. This has begun. Some structured observations have taken place and teachers have received feedback from the observer.
- 33 However, this observation and feedback are not yet systematically in place. Even more importantly, the question 'What do these observations tell us?' has not yet been asked by senior management nor have the responses been sufficiently analysed. To enable teachers to share strengths and particularly effective strategies, and for senior management to determine areas for professional development, the information from structured observations must be evaluated and shared. Such analysis would provide essential insights into improving aspects of teaching and learning discussed in the previous section.

There is inconsistency in provision for the Foundation Stage

- 34 The development of a coherent programme for the Foundation Stage is hampered by the physical placing of the nursery in relation to the two classes with reception children, and to the local arrangements for the admission of children to the nursery. In order to receive new children three times a year and 'move on' the older children into a reception class, arrangements are made for the nursery teacher to work in the nursery in the morning and in one of the reception classes in the afternoon. The second group of reception children are in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. Neither of the two classes with reception children has a full-time nursery nurse or a full time class assistant. Whilst the school does arrange daily, but limited support from classroom assistants, the onus for implementing a Foundation Stage curriculum with these children falls almost entirely upon the teacher. Thus, while many children are able to sustain interest and involvement in some learning activities independently, others need the intervention and support of an informed adult to take their learning further. At present, such support is not always readily available.
- 35 Because of the limitations of the present position, the nursery teacher, who also co-ordinates the Foundation Stage, has huge demands made on her. Whilst policy and planning are very good and her understanding of the ways in which young children learn are of an equally high standard, there are difficulties in consistently implementing what is planned for the Foundation Stage. At present, the nursery teacher chooses to work only with the morning session nursery children, and not the afternoon group. This situation does not allow her to have a sufficiently clear understanding of those children's learning needs and the progress they make. As these are also the youngest children, her judgement and expertise are essential. The two nursery nurses are efficient in running the afternoon session due partly to the good standard of planning and partly to their professional skills and commitment.
- 36 The Foundation Stage staff do liaise in a number of ways, but one reception class teacher is part time and the other has both reception and Year 1 children to cater for. This limits opportunities for frequent and focused dialogue on provision and progression through the whole Foundation Stage. The reception age children have insufficient access to planned outdoor learning or to structured opportunities for planning their own play-based learning and talking about it afterwards.

The school prospectus does not provide insights into the qualities of the school

- 37 As the headteacher is aware, the present school prospectus is an update of a version designed and produced by the previous school management. Whilst it fulfils the statutory requirements, it does not provide insights into the school's character, strengths or curriculum. It does not present the school

as a stimulating place to learn, nor does it reflect the imagination and creativity shown in other aspects of school life.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38 The school should now:

- (1) Examine carefully the approaches to teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 to identify the most effective strategies for challenging those pupils who could attain higher standards.
- (2) Identify areas of strength and aspects for development in teaching:
 - through a more systematic and rigorous approach
 - through the analysis of feedback given to teachers following classroom observation.
- (3) Ensure the quality and equality of provision for children throughout the Foundation Stage by:
 - Replacing the present arrangement of all younger children in the afternoon nursery session by mixing ages in both sessions
 - Having the nursery teacher in the nursery full time
 - Providing full-time specialist adult support for the teachers of reception age children
 - Providing access to outdoor learning for reception age children
 - As funding allows, making plans for a re-organisation of accommodation for the Foundation Stage to provide greater continuity and progression in learning.
- (4) Re-design the school prospectus to provide a livelier document and one which more accurately describes the strengths of the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	14
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	3	8	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	21	58	21	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [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)	26	235
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	38

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
%	%

School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

School data	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	18	20	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	35	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (86)	92 (97)	92 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	34	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (92)	92 (97)	92 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	19	16	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	16	19
	Girls	15	13	15
	Total	34	29	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (89)	83 (93)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (74)	77 (93)	80 (89)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	207
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	36
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49
Number of pupils per FTE adult	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	496577
Total expenditure	504823
Expenditure per pupil	1761
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12790
Balance carried forward to next year	-21036

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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	274
Number of questionnaires returned	210

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	34	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	53	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	49	15	4	3
The teaching is good.	58	41	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	38	13	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	34	0	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	36	48	14	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	47	45	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	46	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	39	14	8	7