

INSPECTION REPORT

BARNES INFANT SCHOOL

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108756

Headteacher: Miss S Elmes MEd

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 21 - 22 May 2002

Inspection number: 199160

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Laws
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Barnes Infant School is located in a well established residential area of Sunderland which includes owner-occupied and rented property. Many of the substantial local houses are sublet. About half of the pupils come from outside the immediate locality of the school. This is a very large infant school, having 322 pupils on roll, 142 of whom are in the Foundation Stage (children in nursery and reception classes). Of these, 52 attend the nursery part-time. Children entering the nursery have a broad range of attainment but overall, their attainment is average. Nearly 22 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is average nationally. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups is below the national average of just over ten per cent. Nearly seven per cent of pupils, including children in the nursery and reception classes, are of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African, other Black or Indian heritages. A high percentage (nearly seven per cent) of pupils speak English as an additional language, and this is higher than average. About half of these pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The principal home language is Siletti, a spoken-only language from Bangladesh. Nearly nine per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs; this is well below the national average. No pupils have statements of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an excellent school in which pupils achieve very well and attain high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The overall quality of the teaching is very high and the curriculum is exceptionally rich and interesting. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction and she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior teachers. The governors play a significant role in the success of the school because of their good management. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very well. Compared with the attainment of pupils in similar schools nationally, their attainment is very high in reading and mathematics and very good in writing and science.
- The teaching is of very high quality overall. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to become enthusiastic learners and responsible people.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. It enables pupils to acquire the basic skills securely and have a broad understanding of the world outside school.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership for the school. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Key staff lead and manage their areas of responsibility with high levels of competence and governors fulfil their roles well.

What could be improved

- No significant weaknesses were identified.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in November 1997 identified three important issues which the school needed to address. The school has made very good progress in overcoming these weaknesses and:

- There are now schemes of work which help teachers to plan lessons and to assess pupils' progress.
- Teachers' work is monitored regularly by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders. As a result, the pupils' progress is more consistent and the professional needs of staff are identified and managed more systematically.

- The school roof has been repaired.

In addition to the above improvements:

- Standards of pupils' attainment have improved.
- The quality of teaching is better.
- The leadership and management have improved, with much greater involvement of subject leaders in the running of the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

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

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

In 2001, Barnes Infant School's performance in reading and mathematics was in the highest five per cent when compared with that of similar schools nationally. In writing, results were very good when compared with those of similar schools. From pupils' work seen and lessons observed during the inspection, it is clear that these consistently high standards have been maintained. High expectations, rigorous teaching of the basic skills and a rich curriculum are at the heart of the school's success. The literacy hour and daily mathematics lessons have been introduced very effectively. Pupils' high achievement in reading and writing is based on the early emphasis on speaking and listening and the promotion of a love of literature. In mathematics, pupils practise their very good numerical skills in relevant and interesting activities. Literacy and numeracy are used and developed effectively in other subjects, and pupils record their work very well. They use information and communication technology (ICT) increasingly as a tool for learning and achieve very good standards for their age. In other subjects, including religious education, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they achieve well, and often very well. Standards in art and design and music are very good.

Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well because of the very high quality of the teaching. Children make very good progress in all six recommended areas of learning and most exceed the standards appropriate for their age by the time they join Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic. They work hard and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour in lessons is often excellent and pupils move about the school sensibly.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils show high levels of independence in getting on with tasks. They also work together very well in groups. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Below the national average because a significant number of families take their children on holiday in school time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Excellent	Excellent

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 high quality of teaching is the basis of the school's success. Of the lessons seen, none was less than good. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, so that there is a purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. Pupils behave very well and settle down to work in a mature way because the teachers manage them very well and build effectively on what they already know and can do. Literacy and numeracy are taught very well indeed, and teachers include ICT in many lessons. Teachers ensure that work is planned for pupils of all abilities, so that all make very good progress and achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported with carefully organised work based on their individual education plans. Teaching and support for pupils who speak English as an additional language are of high quality and they learn at a very good rate. Pupils from ethnic minority groups benefit from the excellent relationships which teachers promote in the classrooms. As a result, they enjoy learning and achieve as well as their peers. The quality of teachers' planning and preparation is very good in all subjects. Nursery nurses and classroom assistants play a significant role in the very good teaching of groups and individual pupils. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is consistently of a very high standard. Throughout the school, teachers have secure subject knowledge which enables them to ask searching questions and extend pupils' learning exceptionally well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The school ensures that the basic skills are taught very well, the National Curriculum is in place and there are many activities which enhance pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers ensure that work is carefully matched to the pupils' individual education plans and that there is proper adult support for pupils during lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Specialist help is directed very carefully to meet pupils' needs, and work is done in the classrooms, rather than in withdrawal groups, so that pupils benefit from interaction with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is excellent for their moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' independence and sense of responsibility are fostered. The particularly rich curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own heritages and know more about other cultures, faiths and ways of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Procedures for child protection are very good. Governors carry out safety checks and deal effectively with issues which need attention.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. Together with the deputy headteacher, she inspires the staff and creates an atmosphere in which all who are in the school believe that they can achieve very well. Subject leaders contribute very effectively to this atmosphere of success.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. The governing body is clear about the school's strengths and areas for development. The committee structure ensures that business is carried out efficiently, and governors are conscientious and involved in the school's work
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly. The school's performance in national tests and assessments is analysed rigorously to look for ways to improve teaching, learning and curricular provision. Evaluation leads to detailed development planning in which all staff and governors are involved.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Funds for specific purposes, such as special educational needs, are deployed very well to support teaching and learning.

Governors ensure that the school gets the 'best value' for the money it spends and that expenditure is evaluated against the benefits it brings to pupils' achievement and welfare.

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 teaching is good and the school has high expectations of the children. The children like school and behave well. The children make good progress. The children are encouraged to become mature and responsible. They would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. The school sets the right amount of homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities outside lessons. *The way the school works with parents. The information they get about how their children are getting on. *Admission procedures and the organisation of school meals when children start school. <p>* These items arose at the pre-inspection parents' meeting.</p>

The inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. They feel that the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is outstanding. It is far wider than is usually seen in infant schools and includes a breakfast club, an after-school care club and many visits. There are also sessions for parents and toddlers. Inspectors feel that there are appropriate systems for parents to work with the school, and governors send out questionnaires to identify any problems. Very few parents attend the annual general meetings, which suggests that they have few concerns, and most parents say they would be comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. Many families do not live near the school, and the recently revived 'Friends of the School' group, organised by conscientious parents, is playing an increasingly significant role in building relationships between school and home. Information for parents on their children's progress is similar to that seen in most schools. Governors review arrangements for the admission of pupils and the day-to-day administration of lunchtimes, bearing in mind the large number of young children and the particular features of the school building. Pupils enjoy the meals. Governors' decisions are made on educational and health and safety grounds and are always a compromise, but they please

most parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve very well. Compared with the attainment of pupils in similar schools nationally, their attainment is very high in reading and mathematics and very good in writing and science.

1. By the end of Year 2, evidence of past work and results in national tests show that pupils achieve very well in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and current pupils are well set to continue this trend. Their enthusiasm for learning, the excellent teaching and the support they get from their parents lead to very high standards. The school's results in reading and mathematics are among the top five per cent of those of similar schools nationally. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils, both in behaviour and academic performance. Pupils enjoy the challenge. One pupil said, 'Things that are difficult help you to learn.' The headteacher's clear educational direction and the commitment of the staff lead to continuous improvement. Carefully planned work ensures that pupils build effectively on what they already know and understand. Teachers prepare lessons which motivate pupils well so that they benefit from the interesting and relevant curriculum.

2. Children in the nursery and reception classes make very good progress, achieve very well and exceed the early learning goals for this age group. Excellent teaching, support of high quality from nursery nurses and stimulating, very well organised classrooms make learning exciting for the children. The rooms are transformed with features such as a model spaceship, a railway ticket office, a submarine and a bear's den. Children learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy during specific, very well planned activities. Higher-attaining children read very well indeed, and all children know letter sounds and shapes by the end of the reception class. Staff ensure that children's writing is correctly formed. By the end of the reception year, children write simple sentences with capital letters and full stops and show a clear sense of narrative as they write about their experiences. A love of literature is fostered in popular and very well run story sessions, which children enjoy immensely. They enjoy anticipating the refrains in rhymes and songs and know about 'characters', 'authors' and 'illustrators'. By the end of the reception class, children can count confidently in ones, twos, fives and tens to a hundred. They create simple graphs, measure and compare lengths and know the names of simple plane figures and solid shapes. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are good; they are enhanced with a wealth of stimulating activities.

3. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment in reading is very good, and the reading of the higher-attaining pupils is excellent. Teaching of very high quality begins with a delight in words and conversation and the development of pupils' speaking and listening. Staff reinforce and enhance pupils' vocabulary in all subjects. This happens in many ways. Drama is taught and used to help pupils to express their feelings and speak clearly. Visits to the theatre extend pupils' appreciation of literature; for example, when they saw a performance of 'The BFG' by Roald Dahl. In other lessons, teachers use and display specific language; for example, in mathematics lessons on subtraction, when teachers talk about 'partitioning' and 'difference'. This helps pupils to gain a clearer and wider view of what they are learning, rather than just 'taking away' numbers.

4. In writing, lessons concentrate on the teaching and learning of letter sounds, spelling and the conventions of punctuation and grammar. This ensures that pupils have a firm grasp of the skills necessary for expressing their own ideas and writing stories, poetry, reports, instructions and letters. The strength in the teaching of writing lies in the way teachers plan for pupils to write in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils in Year 1 sent postcards to their grandparents after studying life at the seaside in the 1960s. In design and technology, pupils in Year 2 wrote instructions for making puppets and in history, they reviewed Samuel Pepys' eyewitness account of the Great Fire of London. In handwriting lessons, pupils produce beautifully formed and joined-up writing, which is gradually being introduced as the standard form of writing in all lessons.

5. In mathematics, pupils' particular strengths are in the use of numbers. They understand the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and are able to apply them confidently in everyday situations. For example, pupils in Year 2 chose three-course meals from a menu and tried various combinations to ensure that they spent less than five pounds for two meals. They used their numerical skills very well. Teachers plan links between mathematics and other subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. In a survey on parking, pupils completed tally charts as they counted cars. In this way teachers reinforce pupils' mathematical learning and add relevance.

6. Pupils gain scientific understanding which is relevant to their own lives. In Year 1, pupils know about healthy food and can sort it into categories which contain fat, starch or vitamins. They know that sugar is bad for their teeth. In Year 2, pupils study the everyday uses of electricity and know that some equipment is battery-operated and some is powered by electricity. They use words such as 'predict', 'explore' and 'investigate', and show that they are aware of the dangers relating to electricity; for example, when they write, 'Touching it will give you a shock.'

7. Standards in other subjects of the curriculum are at least good, and there are examples of very good work on display for most subjects. The use of ICT in many lessons helps pupils to gain very good levels of skill in all the required aspects of the subject. Computers were in operation in many of the lessons seen during the inspection. In Year 1, pupils made graphs in geography and mathematics. In Year 2, they extended their reading skills as they learnt to use the menu and index in CD ROMs. The high quality of pupils' artwork is the result of the exciting curriculum, which includes visits to galleries and work with resident artists. There is an emphasis on observational drawing and the exploration of a wide range of interesting materials and techniques for making pictures and sculptures. In drama and music, pupils gain an appreciation of performance because of trips to the theatre and concert halls. In religious education, they benefit from the school's close links with local residents from a range of cultures and faiths.

The teaching is of very high quality overall. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to become enthusiastic learners and responsible people.

8. Pupils' very good achievement is the result of the very high quality of the teaching. The overall quality of teaching during the inspection was excellent; in no lesson was the teaching less than good. The most significant feature of the teaching is the teachers' very high expectations of the pupils. Teachers manage the pupils very well so that classroom discipline seems effortless. The first part of lessons usually consists of direct, whole-class teaching and questioning. Teachers ask probing questions which help to extend pupils' learning and promote their understanding. Teachers' planning of activities which follow the direct teaching is very good, with suitably challenging work for pupils of all abilities. The learning of higher-attaining pupils is extended with thoughtful tasks to stimulate their interest and sharpen their understanding. Teachers provide well chosen work for pupils with special educational needs, who build effectively on what they already know. Attention to detail is central to the very good achievement of these pupils; for example, when a classroom assistant in Year 1 insisted that pupils held their pencils properly while they were writing. A specialist teacher gives very good support within lessons for pupils who speak English as an additional language, so that they benefit from being with their peers. At the end of each lesson, teachers gather all pupils together and get them to explain what they have been doing. This helps to reinforce ideas and skills and provides further opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening.

9. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic to learn, and teachers maintain and foster this enthusiasm in many ways. They organise simple, relevant activities to reinforce their teaching. For example, in a mathematics lesson on the addition of money, pupils in Year 2 pretended to be 'the little man' under a supermarket checkout; the teacher flashed priced items past them, and they had to calculate the total cost. Every pupil was alert and attentive, and the teacher ensured that all pupils participated, keeping them 'on their toes' by the brisk pace. In a lesson about transport, the teacher in a reception class enhanced the children's speaking and listening and reinforced their

historical knowledge and understanding in a lively and interesting way. He got a group of children to imagine what it was like in an old-fashioned steam train. These children then told the rest of the class about the smoke, dust and noise.

10. Teachers make sure that pupils know what they are supposed to do and learn in lessons. The 'lesson objectives', as they are called, are displayed on the board or on a chart so that pupils can refer to them and concentrate on the main features of the lesson. This happens even in subjects such as physical education, so that pupils are aware of what they are learning, recognise how it fits in with what they already know and can do and can explain the process.

11. Pupils show very good levels of personal responsibility for their age. The staff inculcate sensible routines which lead to a calm and positive atmosphere helping pupils to learn and play safely, happily and productively. The nature of the school building requires high standards of vigilance from staff to ensure that pupils manage the four flights of stairs between the two floors of the school safely. Pupils go up and down several times a day, showing consideration, courtesy and care of a high order for children of this age. In the classrooms, they move from whole-class teaching to group activities with the minimum of fuss, and get on with tasks conscientiously. They concentrate very well and are productive. This is because of the teachers' well chosen, interesting work and the fact that staff interact very well with pupils throughout lessons. Classroom assistants guide pupils when tasks present particular challenge; this helps pupils to persevere and succeed. Teachers monitor pupils very well as they work and get them to explain what they are doing and why. In mathematics pupils are encouraged to explore different ways of solving problems, such as 54 minus 27, and explain their methods to the rest of the class. Pupils are confident and keen to find answers; they are not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them. Staff listen well to them, pick up their ideas and encourage them to tease out their thoughts and look for new ways of doing things.

The curriculum is rich and varied. It enables pupils to acquire the basic skills securely and have a broad understanding of the world outside school.

12. The headteacher's visionary approach to opening up the world to pupils gives the school its special flavour. Few infant schools provide such a rich variety of experiences. To do this, the staff work devotedly, seeking ways to extend pupils' learning outside the classroom. The school has recently been selected for involvement in a two-year pilot project, 'Creative Partnership', to measure the impact of creativity on pupils' learning. The organisation of visits, not only to theatres, recitals, concerts, museums, libraries and local supermarkets, but also to France, requires dedication and hard work. Staff, governors and parents support these trips, some of which are subsidised by local organisations. At Barnes, education begins at birth, when parents can bring their children into twice-weekly mother and toddler groups, and continues in the 'Nursery Nipper' sessions for children who are about to start at the school nursery. There are daily breakfast clubs and after-school care clubs. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, organised by staff or visiting professionals, includes football coaching, gymnastics, music, drama and fitness.

13. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very well organised, with thorough provision for the six required areas of learning for children in the nursery and reception classes. The National Curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is securely in place, and elements of the curriculum for Year 3 are included for higher-attaining pupils in Year 2. Whole-school planning is managed very well by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team, who consult staff and analyse the school's performance in order to improve or change curricular provision in the interest of pupils' better progress. The literacy hour and daily mathematics lessons, in line with national guidance, are introduced gradually in the reception classes and are continued with rigour in Years 1 and 2.

14. The spread of experiences provided by the school is exceptional. Citizenship is at the heart of much of the school's work. The pupils learn for life, not just for this year or for the period of infant schooling. In the nursery and reception classes, children are taken out for walks in the

neighbourhood. They become increasingly aware of the complex systems which contribute to everyday life and wider developments in the world. They learn about roads and railways and look at maps to identify holiday destinations. Staff find innovative ways to promote children's learning. In a reception class, children have 'passports' which allow them to participate in activities, so that all get turns. In the railway 'ticket office', the clerk takes money and gives tickets. In the nursery, children talk about space travel and consider what astronauts need to take with them for long journeys in space.

15. Because of the large number of pupils, there are several classes for each age group. Teachers work in teams of four or more. In this way, pupils have equal access to the curriculum because they are taught the same lessons using similar methods. For example, all pupils in Year 1 have carried out a survey of car parking outside the school. They have discussed and interpreted their findings, made graphs using ICT and written articles for the school newsletter to explain the parking problems to parents. In addition, all pupils have been taken for a walk to practise crossing roads safely. These activities demand a great deal of careful planning and organisation, and teachers do this very well.

16. For enrichment activities, classes are sometimes divided so that pupils visit different places and then tell the rest of the class about their trips. In this way, pupils develop very good levels of speaking and listening and gain knowledge and understanding from their peers as well as from teachers. A few parents would like the whole class to be involved so that all pupils in a class visit the same places. Inspectors feel that the current arrangements allow for an equal number of trips and an equally wide range of different experiences which benefit the pupils. Some visits are likely to be more popular than others, but the school does its best to give pupils a very rich education.

17. The school is keen to expose pupils to the best possible range of cultural experiences. Visitors to the school include musical ensembles, dancers and musicians from a range of cultures, authors and resident artists so that pupils see, hear and have chances to practise with experts of high calibre. This results in art and design of high quality, as pupils draw, paint and make pictures with a wide range of materials. Pupils from ethnic minorities benefit from seeing their cultures valued; for example, when parents bring in interesting food to share. Pupils and staff enjoy occasions when festivals such as Eid are celebrated in school. The school benefits from support from the local education authority for translation and interpretation of other languages. Recent suggestions from the local education authority, concerning the enrichment of the learning environment to reflect the home culture of pupils, have been taken on board, and displays throughout the school explain religious and cultural features of the Bangladeshi way of life.

18. Pupils learn some French during lessons in European citizenship, and know greetings in a number of European languages, including German, Italian and Spanish. They also learn about European culture, songs and the similarities and difference between countries. Residential trips, especially abroad, are unusual for infant schools. The school works with the local Member of the European Parliament, and 30 pupils from Barnes have visited France each year for the last seven years. They learn about everyday life in France, such as shopping, using different currency, eating and travelling. They also visit French schools. The journey includes the trip through the Channel Tunnel. Pupils have also visited Belgium to see how representatives of countries meet in the European Parliament building in Brussels to discuss ideas and make decisions. The school has won a national award for its work on European awareness.

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership for the school. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Key staff lead and manage their areas of responsibility with high levels of competence and governors fulfil their roles well.

19. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction for the school. The deputy headteacher plays a crucial role in managing the day-to-day oversight of the budget, the organisation of the curriculum and the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress. Members of

the senior management team work together very effectively both as leaders and managers. New initiatives are introduced thoughtfully so that staff are well prepared with professional training and support. Subject leaders have been skilfully coached so that they provide leadership of high quality. As a result, teachers are confident, enthusiastic and successful in their work. The headteacher's unique style includes the courage to 'lead from the front' and the firm belief in teamwork. She has very high expectations of herself, the staff and the pupils. All rise to these high expectations and the ethos of the school is therefore positive and purposeful.

20. The school is popular, over half of the pupils coming from outside the immediate locality. A few parents feel uncomfortable with the procedures for the admission of new children and the arrangements for school meals, but all recognise the high quality of the education which their children receive. The headteacher and governors review procedures each year. This is an unusually large infant school, both in the number of pupils and the size of the building, and admitting approximately 142 children each September requires careful handling. The school's system of staggered entry, though inconvenient for some parents, has been approved by the governors on sound educational grounds. Children settle in to become keen and happy learners with positive attitudes to school. The school meals arrangements have been decided with health and safety as the prime concern. The inspectors feel that, bearing in mind the age and number of new children and the daunting size of the accommodation, the current arrangements serve pupils throughout the school well.

21. The school monitors pupils' attendance rigorously and reminds parents of the negative effects of absence on their children's progress. Attendance is satisfactory for most pupils, but a significant number of families take their children on holiday in school time and this adversely affects the school's attendance figures.

22. Governors are keen to provide opportunities for staff to extend their professional expertise and qualifications. In addition to specific curricular and school management courses, members of staff have had work experience with the Northumbrian Police Force, the local department of social services, the local newspaper, a large local retailer and other organisations. This widens their knowledge and understanding of the world outside school and adds to the depth and breadth of curricular provision for the pupils.

23. School self-evaluation is very good. The monitoring of teaching and learning is very well organised. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, together with subject leaders, set clear objectives for monitoring so that particular aspects of teaching are highlighted. Teachers value the dialogue which follows such monitoring. They have a highly professional approach to their work and want to improve their teaching in the interests of the pupils. The staff and governors use analysis of assessments and results in national tests to consider what they can do better to improve the pupils' performance. They are not afraid to face up to any identified weaknesses. For example, although the school does very well in writing, the staff and governors decided that pupils could do even better. Teachers have worked together conscientiously to ensure that writing is planned and developed in subjects such as history, geography and science. Staff have also improved planning in ICT, and computers are used sensibly and effectively in many lessons so that pupils accept them as a useful tool for learning. As a result, pupils' attainment in writing and ICT has improved.

24. The governing body manages the school well. Recently appointed governors are inducted thoughtfully so that they gradually gain a clear understanding of their role. Experienced governors use their skills effectively in the service of the school, so that matters such as teaching, the curriculum, finance and health and safety are managed well. Subject co-ordinators give regular presentations to the governors so that curricular issues are aired and reviewed. The system of committees for particular aspects of management, such as finance and personnel, is well organised so that the workload is shared and essential matters are discussed with the full governing body. There are sensible plans, principally for the maintenance of staffing levels, for the use of the budgetary underspend. The school's development plan is a lengthy document, which includes action plans relating to all aspects of school life. It is the result of intensive school self-

evaluation and is used, among other things, to determine developments in particular areas of curricular provision, to inform budgetary decisions and to identify staff training needs. A shorter version, perhaps in the form of a wall-plan, would be helpful for staff, governors and parents to see the overall picture at a glance. The evident commitment and vigilance of the staff and governors gives the school the excellent capacity to maintain very high standards of provision and further raise pupils' attainment.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

25. No significant areas for improvement were identified.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	11	19	5	0	0	0	0
Percentage	31	55	14	0	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 about three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	270
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	8.3	School data	0.0
National comparative data	5.6	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	47	51	98

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	42	45
	Girls	47	46	46
	Total	89	88	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (92)	90 (91)	93 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	42	45
	Girls	47	46	47
	Total	87	88	92
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (91)	90 (90)	94 (99)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	2
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	254
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	27.0

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	179

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	672,446
Total expenditure	702,072
Expenditure per pupil	2,372
Balance brought forward from previous year	61,953
Balance carried forward to next year	32,327

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	322
Number of questionnaires returned	95
Percentage response rate	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	45	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	44	7	1	2
The teaching is good.	58	39	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	46	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	42	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	41	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	41	13	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	43	45	6	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	40	8	4	14