

INSPECTION REPORT

MERRIDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104334

Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Ward

Reporting inspector: Mrs Mary Speakman
21581

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th November 2000

Inspection number: 224264

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Aspen Way Merridale Wolverhampton
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M K Bannister
Date of previous inspection:	24 th – 27 th June 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Merridale Primary School serves an area of Wolverhampton very near to the town centre. It has 223 pupils on roll in the main school, who are between the ages of four and eleven, and there are 40 children who attend the nursery unit on a part-time basis. Children join the nursery during the school year in which they are three. Children are admitted into the main school in either September or January of the school year in which they are five. About 30 per cent of pupils are from the Indian ethnic heritage and further 20 per cent of pupils are from other non-white cultures. Sixty pupils speak English as an additional language which, at 27 per cent, is above average. Forty-two pupils, (20 per cent), are identified as having special educational needs. This figure is just above the average for a primary school. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, with the majority from families that experience high levels of social or economic stress. Children enter the school with a great range of abilities, but their achievement on entry is generally below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Merridale Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and there are clear indications that this is improving. Standards in English, mathematics and science are, in line with those expected, overall, and pupils attain the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are too low. The quality of teaching is good overall, with particular strengths in the teaching of the oldest pupils. The provision for children in the nursery is good. The school is well led and managed by a competent and hardworking head teacher who is realistic about what needs to be done to improve the school further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The overall quality of teaching is good and teaching for pupils in Year 6 is consistently very good.
- The good provision in the nursery ensures that children make a positive start to school life.
- The headteacher gives effective leadership and manages the school well, working in close and productive partnership with the governing body.
- The school provides well planned and high quality support to pupils who have special educational needs, and those who are in the earlier stages of learning English.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology, and design and technology, are not high enough.
- Provision for music and physical education does not ensure full coverage of all programmes of study.
- Pupils are given few opportunities to evaluate their own achievements.
- Not enough use is made by pupils of shared areas in the school for independent study.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The rate of improvement since the last inspection in June 1996 has been interrupted by an eighteen-month period between the departure of the previous headteacher and the appointment of another. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues raised during the last inspection. Progress has speeded up since the appointment of the current headteacher, who has lost no time in building on earlier achievements. Attainment in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved steadily since 1997. Standards in religious education have also improved and are now securely in line with the required standard. However, certain aspects of

practical subjects, such as design and technology, music, and physical education have been neglected and pupils' experiences in these subjects need to be broadened. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved and is now satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology, which were in line with the national expectations, have not been maintained. Currently, pupils make insufficient progress and do not reach the expected standard at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. There have been a few improvements to the accommodation but the building is still far from ideal. Although pupils are given opportunities to take initiative and responsibility, through their involvement in the day-to-day life of the school, these chances are lacking in lessons. There are few opportunities for pupils to undertake independent study or to evaluate the quality of their own work. Not enough use is made of the library or shared space as areas for independent work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C	C	A
Mathematics	E	C	C	A
Science	E	C	C	B

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

At Key Stage 2, the current rate of improvement in the national tests is at a similar rate to that seen nationally. In 2000, pupils' attainment was in line with national averages in all three subjects. These are similar standards to those seen during the inspection. When compared with similar schools¹, attainment is very much higher in English and mathematics and higher in science. At Key Stage 1, in 2000, test results were very low in reading, writing and mathematics. The group of pupils taking the tests in 2000 had the highest number of pupils with special educational needs in the school, and had a high level of mobility within the year group. The school recognises the need to improve levels of attainment, particularly in this year group, and at Key Stage 1. A good level of additional support has been committed to the pupils currently in Years 2 and 3. Particular attention is being given to improving standards in writing. The results of the Key Stage 1 tests were much lower than the standards seen in lessons, or through the scrutiny of pupils' work. At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science were in line with those found nationally. A significant minority of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve highly in English and science. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, is lower than it should be. This is also the case for pupils' attainment in design and technology. The school sets pupils targets for achievements in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2. These are based on the findings of assessments made during Key Stage 2 and on teachers' knowledge of the pupils. Targets for attainment in English and mathematics were exceeded in 2000, with the scores in mathematics being 19 per cent higher than predicted. A more focused use of assessment data is a major priority in the school's current development programme.

¹ The school's results are compared both to the national average (ie the average of the results of all schools in England, where pupils took National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 1) and to the average for similar schools (ie the average of the results for all schools whose pupils come from similar socio-economic backgrounds, determined by the eligibility of pupils within the school to receive free school meals).

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school. They are keen to learn and respond well to challenges they are set.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The great majority of pupils behave well in class, around the school and in the playground. They know the school and class rules and understand the reasons for them. A very few pupils who have behavioural difficulties sometimes find it difficult to conform in lessons, but they are sensitively and sensibly managed by their teachers and the support staff.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils undertake duties in class and around the school cheerfully and with a good level of maturity. Relationships in the school are positive.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

During the week of the inspection, teaching was good or better in 62 per cent of the lessons observed. Teaching was very good in a quarter of lessons. The quality of teaching was consistently very high for the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A particular feature of the more successful lessons is the teachers' very careful planning, with the purpose of the lesson clearly identified, and a range of relevant and interesting activities provided. These are well planned to match the needs of pupils of all abilities. In many lessons, there is a brisk pace to teaching and pupils are expected to work hard. Teachers make effective and challenging use of questioning to discover how much pupils know and to direct their thinking forward. In the best lessons, teachers' questioning makes considerable demands on pupils. In the less successful lessons, although planning is useful and suitably detailed, and work is pitched at the right level for most pupils, there is, sometimes, a lack of challenge built into the tasks provided for the more able pupils. Teachers rarely give pupils opportunities for independent study or require them to assess how much progress they have made.

Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are taught well. Support teachers and other staff work in close partnership with class teachers, they all know their pupils well and have a thorough understanding of their needs. The provision in the nursery is good and the experiences provided for the youngest children ensure they make a positive start to school life. Children who are under five make good strides in their learning. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Overall, pupils are learning at least at a satisfactory rate, and, frequently, the level of effort and their acquisition of new understanding and knowledge is good. The rate of learning speeds up for pupils in Year 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage ² is good and provides a stimulating start to school. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is generally satisfactory. There is good quality provision for English, mathematics, and science. However, the provision for information and communication technology does not meet statutory requirements. There are some weaknesses in provision for design and technology, physical education and music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The co-ordinator has a good overview of provision throughout the school, and works in close partnership with class teachers, particularly when planning pupils' work programmes. Additional support is strategically deployed and of good quality.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision is efficiently managed. Pupils who need support are carefully identified and their progress is regularly evaluated. Language support teachers and support staff have a good level of expertise and work effectively with class teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are particular strengths in the provision for social and moral development. Spiritual development has improved since the last inspection. Cultural development is satisfactory. There are particular strengths in dance, with the Bhangra group achieving a high reputation in the West Midlands.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures in place for child protection. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory and improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has initiated a good pace of development. She gives strong leadership and manages the school effectively. Key staff have a good understanding of their various roles and know what needs to be done to raise standards further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors give good support to the school. They have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher makes good use of assessment data and monitoring evidence to identify areas for school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and time are generally used effectively. The shared-work areas are under used. Sensible procedures ensure the school obtains best value in its acquisition and use of resources and services.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year in primary school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Pupils make good progress.• The great majority of parents feel comfortable sharing questions and concerns with the school.• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The limited range of activities that takes place outside lessons.• The school does not work closely enough with parents. Frequently, the notice given for events is very short.• Older pupils do not get enough homework.

The inspection team agrees with most of the parents' positive comments, although, the rate of pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. The inspectors agree with parents' comments about out-of-lesson activities. The activities that do take place, such as the Bhangra dancing club and the nature watch activities, are very interesting and of great benefit to pupils but the range is too narrow. The school does work sufficiently closely with parents and there is a reasonable flow of information between school and home. However, the notice given for many activities is often too brief. The level of homework set is satisfactory and it links with pupils' current learning appropriately.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The overall quality of teaching is good and teaching for pupils in Year 6 is consistently very good.

1. The high quality of teaching seen at the time of the last inspection has been maintained overall, and is good. During the week of the inspection, the teaching of pupils in Year 6 was, consistently, very good. These pupils are, constantly, having considerable demands made on them to work hard, think logically and creatively, and to use their knowledge and understanding to make further gains in their learning.
2. Throughout the school, there is careful planning of lessons and this successfully supports what is happening in the classrooms. These plans are very detailed and build well on the broader termly planning. The purpose of the lesson is identified precisely and accomplished through various interesting activities. These are matched well to the learning needs of the pupils. One useful feature of the planning format is the 'comments' section, in which teachers evaluate the success, or otherwise, of the lesson. Teachers' detailed comments are self-critical, with suggestions about how processes could be improved. However, most are about the general impact of the lesson, and not used to identify particular pupils who have made significant leaps in understanding, or those who have found the work too easy or too difficult. In a few lessons, although there is careful planning, activities planned for higher-attaining pupils do not extend or challenge them sufficiently. Planning for pupils who receive additional support is very detailed and matched well to their learning needs. For example, during the week of the inspection, a supply teacher was in charge of one class and the high quality of planning meant that she was able to follow the curriculum intended for the class and to plan at an appropriate levels for the pupils' abilities. This mitigated any disruption that might have been caused by the teacher's absence.
3. Another common feature of the most successful lessons is the stimulating and expressive style of teaching. Teachers set a positive working atmosphere by their ability to transmit to pupils their own interest and enthusiasm for what is being taught. In a very good literacy session, seen in Year 1, the teacher was using the pupils' interest in their toys as a starting point for independent writing. The teacher's own expression of delight at 'discovering' a large soft toy in the collection bag, the sympathetic way in which she encouraged the pupils to share their thoughts about their toys, and her careful questioning, enabled many pupils to speak clearly using complete sentences rather than one-word answers. The pupils listened intently to their classmates. The teacher's firm but unobtrusive control of her class was managed very skilfully. No-one's enthusiasm was dampened, but everyone was expected to listen respectfully. Pupils who received additional support were quietly encouraged by staff to participate and offer their ideas. This very effective session enabled pupils to make considerable strides in developing their speaking and listening, the more able pupils produced writing that was interesting and logically structured. All pupils, whatever their ability, developed confidence in using word prompts to help them spell correctly and all completed some creditable written work by the end of the morning.
4. The quality of teaching for the oldest pupils is, consistently, of a very high standard. The very careful planning of lessons supports lively, interesting teaching well. The high expectations of pupils' understanding are well demonstrated by the teacher's use of language. The appropriate technical language, linked with the subject, is always used and the pupils are quick to pick it up, for example in a science lesson, when discussing investigations about saturated solutions, pupils were soon using 'saturated', 'sediment' and other related terms. There is attention to detail and an insistence on accuracy and neatness when pupils record their work. The marking of pupils' work is helpful, with regular written comments by the teacher, that will help pupils improve. In a very good religious education lesson, that introduced some crucial ideas about Islam to Year 6, the teacher set a very respectful tone and the pupils were all aware that they were discussing matters of importance and value. The discussion that took

place was very thoughtful and pupils were asked to suggest what the main purpose of meditation might be. The teacher was not satisfied with the initial answers, but probing questions extended pupils' thinking and a serious discussion about the benefits of meditation and its spiritual dimension took place. The pupils drew on their understanding of other major religions, and demonstrated good recall of work covered earlier in the key stage. Because all the pupils were absorbed by the discussion, contributed their ideas, and listened carefully, their knowledge of Islam and their appreciation of key concepts was extended considerably by this lesson.

5. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. Teachers have been well grounded in the requirements of the national strategies, plan carefully and ensure that all pupils get maximum benefit from the literacy and numeracy sessions. In numeracy, good attention is given to mental mathematics and the best conducted lessons are brisk, they challenge pupils and make good use of props, such as number cards. Pupils are required to explain how they arrived at their answer and there is constant use of appropriate mathematical language. In reception, children's mathematical development starts when the register is called and the number of children present and absent is used as a counting opportunity. In literacy, as in other areas of the curriculum, good use is made of technical language. Interesting texts and extracts from children's literature are carefully chosen to fit the purpose of the lesson. Pupils in Year 2, learning about writing instructions, enjoyed considering directions for making a mask, and were able to consider the key elements in this type of writing, such as the use of bullet points to clarify their meaning, and to identify the key words being used.
6. Some parents were concerned that pupils receive insufficient homework. The inspectors judged that homework was used appropriately to extend and consolidate pupils' current learning, and all pupils questioned were clear about what they were required to do.

The good provision in the nursery ensures that children make a positive start to school life.

7. At the time of the last inspection, the provision in the nursery was judged to be good. The placing of an Early Years specialist teacher in the nursery, for the first time in several years, is ensuring that this quality of provision is maintained.
8. The nursery is a stimulating and exciting place to be. The staff provide a secure environment for the children, and have a good understanding of their learning needs. Interesting activities are prepared which are matched well to the children's differing abilities. Children's progress is monitored carefully and records are clear, detailed and useful.
9. On entering the nursery, the staff's high expectations of what children will achieve are immediately noticeable. Many of the displays have written captions painted by the children. Children's work is displayed attractively and informative photographs of a recent visit to a local church provide an interesting focus for further discussion and activity.
10. During the inspection, the theme was 'Noah's Ark'. The whole of the nursery was organised to support different aspects of this theme across all the areas of learning. Activities ranged from a 'Noah's Ark' homeplay corner, to opportunities to observe worms in a wormery. Children's paintings and early writing are attractively displayed; the care with which they are displayed shows how staff value the children's efforts.
11. The good quality teaching makes use of every available opportunity to promote children's independence and their acquisition of skills and knowledge across all the areas of learning. Particular attention is paid to promoting children's use of language. The teacher never misses a chance to introduce new language and reinforce what children are learning through conversation. The children respond well to these opportunities, they co-operate well and are prepared to work independently.

The headteacher gives effective leadership and manages the school well, working in close and productive partnership with the governing body.

12. At the time of the headteacher's appointment the school had been without a permanent headteacher for eighteen months and the pace of school improvement had slowed. Since her appointment, the current headteacher has reinstated a good pace of change and development. She has a clear sense of the school's educational direction. Her energetic and inclusive style of management has had a positive impact on the school and a great deal has been accomplished in a comparatively short time. There is a strong sense in the school of a united staff, all working with a common purpose to improve the quality of education.
13. The headteacher recognised the need to give urgent attention to raising of standards particularly at Stage 2. In order to accomplish this, she established an effective system of monitoring how the school is functioning. This has also involved local authority advisers and curriculum co-ordinators. Direct monitoring of teaching is further supplemented by regular scrutiny of pupils' work by the headteacher and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. There are regular discussions about planning, with members of staff, and a consistent approach to this aspect has been introduced across the school. An extensive programme of staff development has continued. All these initiatives have contributed to the rise in standards. There has been a necessary focus on English and mathematics and pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 tests have risen steadily since 1998.
14. The headteacher has a realistic view of what needs to be done and staff and governors share this perception. The headteacher and staff have undertaken a critical review of the school's current provision before establishing the priorities for improvement. As a result, the school development plan is a detailed and useful document that reinforces the school's improvement programme. Governors were drawn into its construction at a pertinent stage. The headteacher, senior staff and governors' curriculum committee keep a close watch on the rate of school improvement, comparing the pace of achievement with the time-spans and outcomes that have been agreed.
15. The headteacher has made good use of available data to identify areas of weakness in provision and which pupils need additional help. In order to extend the staff's understanding of the uses of assessment, an assessment co-ordinator has been established and a range of initiatives to improve and extend the use of assessment have a high profile in the school's development plan.
16. There is an effective governing body which has a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body is becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the school's performance, through visits to school, the discussion and scrutiny of test data with the headteacher. The headteacher works in close partnership with the governing body and is committed to promoting its further development.

The school provides well planned and high quality support to pupils who have special educational needs, and those who are in the earlier stages of learning English

17. The school is committed to ensuring that additional support is carefully targeted at the pupils who need it the most and that it enhances the work that they are undertaking with their class teacher. The support given to pupils who have special educational needs and those who are in the earlier stages of learning English is most effective. This enables them to make good progress towards their individual goals and have full access to the curriculum.
18. Pupils who require support are identified at the earliest opportunity. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with her colleagues to plan and monitor pupils' learning. Pupils who receive additional support for language learning are, likewise, identified as soon as possible and they receive high quality support from a bi-lingual nursery nurse and experienced support teacher.

19. One of the strengths of this provision is the close and harmonious relationship between class and support teachers. As well as formal monitoring of progress, a considerable amount of informal discussion goes on, before and after lessons, about the needs and achievements of these pupils. All the staff know all the pupils extremely well and take great pride in their progress.
20. In a very effective literacy lesson for pupils in Year 6, the support teacher, worked with the group of pupils who speak English as an additional language. During the class discussion, she quietly prompted, explained, and encouraged the pupils so that they were sufficiently confident and competent to express their views in front of the whole class. During the follow-up session, she led the group in tackling written work that was very carefully tailored to their particular linguistic and learning needs. This was effective in enabling pupils to make good strides in their learning and they were confident enough to share their achievements with the whole class during the closing session of the lesson. This high quality partnership between teachers and all support staff was observed throughout the school. Support staff work with small groups of pupils within the whole-class lessons. They make sure that their charges work very hard indeed and pupils and staff gain great deal of satisfaction from the pupils' successes.
21. The special educational needs co-ordinator also works as a part-time class teacher for some of the week. She ensures that the two roles complement each other. She is committed to her own professional development and has a clear view of how the provision for special educational needs can be improved further.

The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.

22. The high quality of provision for pupils' social and moral development makes a meaningful contribution towards promoting their positive attitudes to school and to the good quality of relationships. This is a school in which pupils, from many different cultures and faiths, work and play together in harmony. Parents support strongly the values and attitudes that are promoted by the school and feel that these have a positive effect on their children
23. Attention to pupils' social and moral development starts from the earliest stage. Children in both the nursery and reception are encouraged to be independent, for example, in reception, on their arrival in class, children have to register their presence by putting their name card on the 'smiley face' poster. Throughout the school, teachers are always encouraging and praising pupils' achievements. Assemblies are used as opportunities to promote positive attitudes and relationships, as well as giving priority to considering the school's shared values. Teachers award stickers to pupils for achievements in both their work and daily life. Successes are regularly celebrated in achievement assemblies.
24. Teachers promote values such as honesty and fairness consistently. Each class has its own set of class rules and pupils and teachers have discussed these together. The school's values and its expectations of pupils' behaviour are displayed around the school in the shared areas and classrooms. The school raises pupils' awareness of environmental issues effectively, through regular use of the school's very well developed environmental area. The 'nature watch' activities provide an important focus for developing pupils' understanding of the need to care and protect the environment.
25. At the time of the last inspection, a need to promote pupils' initiative was identified as a key issue. The school has worked hard to promote pupils' independence and has gone a good way towards achieving this in terms of the responsibilities that pupils are required to take on throughout the school. Older pupils help the younger ones with their reading, as part of the school's 'reading partner' scheme. They also undertake duties as monitors, by selling apples and helping at lunchtimes. However, more work needs to be done in providing opportunities for pupils to develop independence in learning. Independence is encouraged and nurtured in both nursery and reception as part of the programme for children's personal, social and emotional development and it is important that the early steps, that these children take, are built upon as they move through the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in information and communication technology, and design and technology, are not high enough.

26. At the time of the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were found to be in line with national expectations. This is no longer the case. Discussions with pupils, and observations during the inspection, indicate that pupils have few opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. Although some are able to use word-processing programs to refine their work, there are many aspects of the curriculum, such as data-handling and control technology, that they have not tackled. All teachers lack the expertise to teach the subject confidently. The school recognises that there is an urgent need to improve provision. The headteacher has assumed management of the subject as, currently, nobody on the staff has sufficient expertise to fulfil this role. She has put together a scheme for improvement and considers this a high priority in the school's development plan. The intention is to provide a structure within the curriculum for the subject, to ensure that staff have relevant training in the subject and that sufficient resources are sensibly deployed. Very little use of computers was seen during the inspection, but the school does make good use of expert parental support and this is enabling individual pupils, throughout the school, to gain some useful experience in manipulating computer controls and accessing programs that support their learning well.
27. The improvement of provision and standards in design and technology was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Since then, action has been taken to make improvements by establishing a co-ordinator, providing training, and devising guidelines. The school has started from such a low point in its development of this subject that, although some progress has been made in the organisation of this subject, the standards pupils attain are still below those expected for their age.
28. Pupils in all year groups are required to undertake three design and technology assignments a year. From the scrutiny of current work, and records of earlier work, there would appear to be an over-emphasis on food technology and, insufficient attention paid to dealing with hard materials, such as wood and plastics, and designing mechanisms for making things move. Discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of accompanying written work shows that pupils produce very little planning for their designs and are unable to evaluate the quality of what they have made. Sometimes, the process of making is over-directed by the teacher so that pupils have virtually no input into the design element of the exercise. The part of the design and technology curriculum that requires pupils to develop, plan and communicate their ideas has barely been addressed and needs considerable development.

Provision for music and physical education does not ensure full coverage of all programmes of study.

29. During the inspection, very little music or physical education was observed. However, on the evidence of work seen, scrutiny of teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils, it is clear that both these subjects are in need of further development.
30. Currently, there is no up-to-date music policy or scheme of work in place and the main focus of lessons is singing. A small number of pupils receive individual and group instruction in brass instruments. During the inspection, two singing lessons were observed and, although the quality of singing in one class was particularly good, it was clear from pupils' responses that there are very few opportunities for them to perform with pitched and unpitched instruments. Further conversations with older pupils confirm that there are insufficient opportunities for working with instruments or composing.
31. Parents expressed concern about the lack of a broad physical education curriculum and the inspectors agree with their comments. Scrutiny of lesson plans, discussion with pupils, and

the work observed during the inspection, all confirm that gymnastics and dance are taught regularly and pupils attain reasonable standards in these aspects of the subject. There is also provision for adventurous activity on an annual residential experience for the pupils in Years 5 and 6. However, the provision for games is not part of the physical education routine for much of the school year. In discussion with pupils, it emerged that outdoor games activities were mainly confined to the summer term and there is little evidence of regular teaching of the required skills.

Pupils are given few opportunities to evaluate their own achievements.

32. Although some teachers make the intention of the lesson clear to pupils, this is not a regular feature of teaching. The marking of work for the older pupils contains comments that provide suggestions for further improvement, but the setting of individual targets is currently in its infancy. The effectiveness of teachers' use of the concluding part of the lesson to review progress is, thus, limited to a general overview of what has been accomplished in the lesson.

Not enough use is made by pupils of shared areas in the school for independent study.

33. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to encourage pupils to use their initiative in social settings and these opportunities have made a good contribution to pupils' social development. However, the promotion of pupils using their initiative to study or work independently does not feature as a regular part of the school day.
34. In lessons under the direct supervision of the teachers, pupils work co-operatively and productively together in groups, managing the process of their work without frequent direct reference to the teacher. This skill develops as pupils move through the school. However, no opportunities were observed for pupils to develop this further, through independent study or work, by using the library area, or the shared areas adjacent to the classrooms.
35. The inspectors acknowledge that classrooms are small and that certain features of the building are far from ideal. These shortcomings in the accommodation were identified correctly at the time of the last inspection. However, the library area, although small, could be used much more by pupils as a venue for independent study.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

36. The headteacher and staff in partnership with the governing body should now:

raise standards in information and communication technology by:

- developing staff expertise and confidence in this subject, so they are able to use the available resources effectively;
- devising and implementing guidelines that effectively support the teaching of this subject in sufficient depth;
- reviewing the need for more up-to-date machinery.

(Paragraph 26)

raise standards in design and technology by:

- continuing to develop teachers' expertise in this subject;
- ensuring that planning for the subject takes account of all the required elements in the design and technology curriculum and that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop and communicate their ideas and evaluate the quality of their work.

(Paragraphs 27, 28)

- ❑ broaden opportunities for music and physical education by:
 - reviewing the current provision and identifying those areas that need further development;
 - developing further teachers' expertise in these subjects;
 - ensuring that planning for these subjects takes account of all the required elements in the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 29, 30, 31)

- ❑ throughout the school, develop pupils self knowledge of their own pace of learning by:
 - setting pupils individual targets for improvement and reviewing these with the pupils on a regular basis;
 - making sure that from the start of the lesson pupils are clear about its purpose;
 - giving pupils more routine opportunities to appraise the quality of their work.
(Paragraphs 32)

- ❑ make more planned use of the shared areas of the school, particularly the library, as places for independent study. *(Paragraphs 33, 34, 35)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	24	38	38	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

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	223
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	60

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.4

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	10	11
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	19	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (78)	77 (74)	81 (85)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	10
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	19	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (78)	71 (78)	77 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	23	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (63)	77 (63)	84 (84)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	11	14	10
	Total	20	24	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (63)	77 (63)	65 (53)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	15
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	9
Indian	52
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	88
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	32

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	56

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99-00
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	£
Total income	342,060
Total expenditure	347,820
Expenditure per pupil	1,748
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,484
Balance carried forward to next year	9,725

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	67
Percentage of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	63	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	55	13	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	42	33	0	4
The teaching is good.	34	60	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	52	18	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	39	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	42	6	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	19	54	25	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	51	9	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	63	7	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	28	27	22	9