

INSPECTION REPORT

LINTHWAITE CLOUGH EARLY YEARS, INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Kirklees

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107693

Headteacher: Mrs Gail Newton

Reporting inspector: Dr Brian Male
14906

Dates of inspection: 25 - 26 September 2000

Inspection number: 224427

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Early years, infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Chapel Hill
Linthwaite
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
Postcode: HD7 5NJ

Telephone number: 01484 222576

Fax number: -

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Wimpenny

Date of previous inspection: 4 November 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community early years, infant and junior school takes pupils from three to 11 years old and is maintained by the Kirklees authority. The school still occupies its 1890 buildings in this former textile village outside Huddersfield. At the time of the inspection there were 205 pupils on roll in six classes. There were a further 20 full-time and 40 part-time pupils attending the Early Years Unit. Most pupils start school with standards of attainment in line with those usually expected. Fourteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average. Seventeen per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register which is also in line with the national average. There is one pupil for whom English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school where the headteacher provides very strong leadership and has ensured a trend of rising standards. Pupils make very good progress across the school and the standards they attain by the age of 11 represent very good achievement. This progress is brought about by the quality of teaching and the very positive ethos where excellent relationships and pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work enhance learning. The school receives a below average income per pupil and offers very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils leave the school as 11 year olds with high standards of attainment.
- The school has a very positive ethos where excellent relationships and pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work contribute to progress.
- The good quality of teaching contributes to the high standards.
- The school provides a high quality physical environment that creates a stimulating setting for learning.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide very effective leadership for the school.

What could be improved

- The school needs to continue its development of target setting to provide realistic learning goals.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then, the headteacher has made a significant impact upon the school. Standards of attainment have risen significantly, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good overall. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work have also improved on their previously good standards. The school has addressed all of the key issues raised by the last report: assessment systems are now slimmer and more informative, expectations have been raised, and standards of writing have been raised, although they are still not as good as reading at the end of Key Stage 2.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. 1999 is the latest year for which national comparisons are available.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	A	A
Mathematics	B	C	B	A
Science	A	A	A	A

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

The school's scores in national tests in 2000 continued the well-above-average standards of 1999 in all three subjects. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Although national comparisons are not yet available, the 2000 scores are likely to be well above the average of similar schools in all three subjects. This was a particularly high achievement as the Year 6 group contained an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection confirms that the school is on target to sustain this trend of high standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. They work hard and take a keen interest in their lessons. These positive attitudes make a significant contribution to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils are respectful and polite and show a high sense of responsibility. They work very well unsupervised.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is excellent. Pupils learn to care for others and to act responsibly in social situations. Relationships are excellent across the school and make a significant contribution to progress.
Attendance	Attendance is average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11
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.

In the school as a whole, the quality of teaching and learning was very good in 40 per cent of lessons, good in 30 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 30 per cent. No teaching was

unsatisfactory. This is a strong profile. Teaching is generally consistent across the three key stages, but strongest at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is underpinned by the excellent relationships that teachers have with their pupils and the very strong ethos for learning that they create in their classes. Where teaching is very good, there is a sharp focus on what needs to be learned next, targets are specific and achievable, and lessons are exciting. Teachers work hard and are dedicated to the welfare of their pupils. They are to be commended for their professionalism and commitment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers a wide range of rich learning experiences. The range of experience is particularly rich in the Early Years Unit. There is also a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is good support in classrooms and individual education plans are generally effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is excellent provision for pupils' personal development with many valuable opportunities created for them to take responsibilities and to help others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a high level of care in a very supportive environment. This is based on the excellent relationships and the way the school cares for each individual.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school. She sets a very clear educational direction and has had a significant impact upon standards of attainment. She also sets an excellent tone of caring relationships along with high expectations. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a very good oversight of the school and fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are kept well informed by the school and are fully involved in its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is particularly effective in evaluating its performance. There is a very positive reflective ethos where a wide range of information about performance is carefully collected and rigorously analysed. There is a strong commitment to attain high standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of resources, and ensures that the principles of best value are applied. It receives below the national average income, but ensures that pupils attain well above average standards. The school therefore provides very 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 standards attained by pupils.• The leadership offered by the headteacher.• The quality of teaching.• The very caring atmosphere of the school.• The way the school caters for pupils of all interests and aptitudes.• The standards of behaviour in the school.• The school's welcoming and responsive approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no aspect of the school that parents would like to see improved.

Parents were very supportive indeed of the school in the questionnaire and in their comments. They hold the headteacher and staff in very high esteem. The inspection agrees with the parents' very positive feelings.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils leave the school as 11 year olds with high standards of attainment.

1. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11, standards of attainment in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above the average of similar schools. This represents very good achievement for the pupils. There has been a rising trend of standards over the last four years, and standards are significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection.
2. In national tests for 11 year olds in 1999, (the latest year for which national comparisons are available) standards were well above the national average in English and science, and above the national average in mathematics. Compared to schools of similar background, scores were well above average in all three subjects. The year 2000 test scores maintained these high standards, which was a significant achievement as that particular group contained an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs.
3. These well above average standards are brought about by the quality of the teaching, by the well organised curriculum, by the high expectations teachers have of the pupils, and by the pupils' own very good attitudes to work. The very strong ethos of the school where all pupils feel valued, and the excellent relationships across the school also make a significant contribution to standards. The headteacher and senior management of the school have been very successful in creating the conditions for the rising trend of standards.
4. Standards in reading are well above average, with a high number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) where they not only read with fluency and understanding, but also show understanding of a range of texts and look for meaning beyond the literal. For instance, some Year 6 pupils were able to infer Anne Frank's feelings from the text of her diary entries. Most pupils are able to refer to the text and select sentences or phrases to support their views. Pupils in the same Year 6 group were able to select the phrases that indicated that passages of writing were diary entries rather than another form of writing. Even younger pupils in a Year 3/4 class were able to select sentences to illustrate their suggestions about what Tom was feeling in 'The Mousehole Cat' story. Pupils enjoy reading and talking about books. This is encouraged by teachers' own enthusiasm which was well illustrated in a Year 1/2 lesson where the teacher's approach brought real excitement to pupils reading 'Owl Babies'.
5. Standards of writing are not as good as reading at the end of Key Stage 2, but are still well above the average of similar schools. Pupils are involved in a good range of writing and often write with sensitivity and feeling. A number of pupils attain the highest expected standards; for instance, a Year 6 pupil's writing imagining himself in the war in Bosnia contained both sophisticated literary devices and use of vocabulary, but also represents a mature and sensitive sympathy for the feeling of those concerned in the tragic events. Younger pupils are also capable of this sensitive use of language, with a Year 4 pupil's poem about a caged bird ending: "Although the caged bird is trapped, he can still sing, and that is his freedom".
6. The number of pupils attaining these highest levels of writing is lower than in reading. Some pupils need more opportunities to practise, in extended pieces of independent

writing, the separate writing skills they are taught in literacy lessons. There are some opportunities for pupils to reflect on the quality, rather than just the accuracy, of the pieces of writing, but there are not sufficient of these for all pupils to develop their writing to the extent they develop their reading.

7. Standards in mathematics are also well above average, with a high number of pupils attaining the higher level, Level 5. Pupils' ability to perform quite complex operations mentally is particularly well developed with some very good teaching of the use and applications of mathematics, especially at Key Stage 2. There is a high challenge to pupils' thinking with, for instance, a Year 6 pupil able to work out a method for calculating the exact amount of fruit required to bring a total to an exact price. Even younger pupils are able to work well in this way, with Year 5 pupils able to enter the correct formulae into a computer spreadsheet to make calculations involving several steps to work out the varying price of sandwiches. This is also a high level of attainment in terms of information technology.
8. Standards at the end of the early years and the end of Key Stage 1 are not as high as at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils enter the Early Year Unit with overall standards slightly below those usually expected, and standards are broadly average by the time they are five years old. Standards are also broadly average by the time pupils are seven. The more rapid progress through Key Stage 2 results from the very clear focus of the teaching and also from the good grounding the pupils have already received. Through the Early Years Unit and through Key Stage 1, pupils develop self confidence and the very good attitudes to school that allow them to make the rapid progress through Key Stage 2.

The school has a very positive ethos where excellent relationships and pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work contribute to progress.

9. The outstanding feature of the school is the positive ethos and the excellent relationships that prevail. The school provides a high level of care in a very supportive environment and values each pupil as an individual.
10. Relationships are excellent across the school and make a significant contribution to progress. Pupils' comments and contributions are really valued by their teachers and this encourages them to be thoughtful in what they say. It also encourages them to take their turn because they know they will be listened to appropriately. Teachers set excellent models to their pupils in this way.
11. There is excellent provision for pupils' personal development with pupils learning to care for others and to act responsibly in social situations. This provision is very successful indeed because pupils are very caring towards each other. They listen to each other, play well together in the playground and co-operate well in learning situations. There was a good example of this in a Year 3/4 lesson where pupils worked in pairs acting out the roles of two characters in the book they were reading. Pupils are given many valuable responsibilities, such as answering the school telephone, that they take very seriously and perform well.
12. Behaviour is very good across the school. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They work well unsupervised, for instance in the study room, and act responsibly. The atmosphere in the dining hall is exceptionally good, with pupils talking sensibly to each other and behaving very well indeed.

13. The school's success in this area has not come about by accident, but from a concerted effort by all staff under the strong leadership of the headteacher. She has a very clear vision of the sort of ethos she wants to create, and the methods she wants to be used. The school has very successfully avoided using systems of rewards and punishments and has relied upon the quality of relationships and motivating children to want to learn, and to understand how to behave. This has made the development all the more powerful. Children receive a very good induction into this ethos in the Early Years Unit which sets an excellent tone for caring relationships. This tone is continued throughout the school by teaching and non-teaching staff alike.

The good quality of teaching contributes to the high standards.

14. In the school as a whole, the quality of teaching was very good in 40 per cent of the lessons seen, good in 30 per cent and satisfactory in 30 per cent. This is a strong profile. The overall quality is generally consistent between the three parts of the school: the Early Years Unit, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but strongest at Key Stage 2. Teachers work hard and are dedicated to the welfare of their pupils. They are to be commended for their professionalism and commitment.
15. Underpinning the quality of teaching are the excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. This encourages the pupils' very good attitudes to their work and also ensures that pupils work well together and are keen to comply with their teachers' requests. Teachers listen well to their pupils, and this valuing of responses encourages pupils to think more carefully about answers and suggestions. This was particularly evident in the Year 1/2 literacy lesson looking at the 'Owl Babies' book where the new teacher had already established outstanding relationships with the pupils and was able to use these to set high expectations of behaviour and learning.
16. In the very good lessons, there is a high degree of challenge to the pupils. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, very good questioning from the teacher promoted clear understanding of the properties of three types of triangle. Pupils were not just told, but challenged to work out the differing properties. In another very good mathematics lesson, Year 5/6 pupils were challenged to perform and explain complex calculations, and clever questioning increased the challenge by altering elements of the problem.
17. Where teaching is very good, pupils are often given opportunities to learn in a range of styles: listening to the teacher, researching independently, working in pairs and groups and solving problems for themselves. Pupils are well taught to be independent learners and use the study room very responsibly. They are also taught clear procedures and routines; for instance very young pupils in a Year 1/2 class were able to move physical education equipment in a safe and sensible way ("Thumbs up when you carry a mat"!) and did so very sensibly indeed.
18. Teaching is most effective when pupils are involved in a rich variety of learning experiences and lessons are stimulating and exciting. This is often the case in the Early Years Unit where activities are made exciting by such devices as the eating of the crisps being counted and the drinking of the fruit cocktails made after studying fruit.
19. The overall quality of teaching is responsible for the very good attitudes of the pupils and for the progress that they make.

The school provides a high quality physical environment that creates a stimulating setting for learning.

20. The school still occupies its original 1890 buildings, but the interior has been made into a very welcoming and attractive environment. There are three aspects to this. Firstly, the fabric of the building has been well maintained and kept in good decorative order. Such features as the stripped wood classroom doors and the quality of the carpeting add to the attractiveness. Secondly, there have been some imaginative improvements and alterations. Foremost amongst these is the Early Years Unit where an excellent physical environment has been created in a former open store.
21. Thirdly, the staff have worked hard and very successfully to create interesting displays that value pupils' work and stimulate their thought and interest. The display is of high quality not only in terms of its visual impact, but also in its content which is stimulating, interesting and often thought provoking.
22. The impact of the environment on learning is not to be underestimated, and the school has done particularly well to create such a stimulating setting for learning in such an old building.

The headteacher and senior staff provide very effective leadership for the school.

23. The high quality of the leadership underpins all the above good qualities of the school. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has a particularly clear vision of what the school can achieve. She has the enthusiasm and drive, as well as the right professional approach, to ensure that this has come about. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the governors.
24. The headteacher and senior staff set a very good tone for the school in terms of relationships and the caring approach to children coupled with high expectations. This has brought about the excellent relationships and very good behaviour and attitudes that underpins progress and high attainment. She has ensured that this is a consistent approach from all staff across the school. The consistency of the approach is essential to its success.
25. The leadership of the school has also set a clear tone of high expectations in terms of commitment, professionalism in the staff, and in behaviour and attainment in the pupils. Staff and pupils have responded very well to this because the expectations are coupled with strong support and a valuing by the leadership of what others have achieved. This is very good management indeed.
26. The significant feature of the leadership is the rigorous approach to evaluation of the school's achievements. Data on pupils' progress and attainment are carefully collected and analysed and conclusions drawn from the analysis. The implications are discussed and fed back into teaching. The school has not sat back and accepted its successes, but has constantly striven to maintain its trend of rising standards. There is a professional rigour and a shared commitment to improve on what is already good.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school needs to continue its development of target setting to provide realistic learning goals.

27. The school has introduced some very valuable initiatives in the area of setting learning targets for pupils. These are targets for individual pupils and are shared with pupils and parents to build the partnership in learning, and to enable pupils to know what they need to learn next and what they need to do to improve. This is very good practice.
28. The school now needs to build upon and refine this process to ensure that all targets are sharp and relevant, and that the individual targets are consistent with the learning objectives set for the class. This will concentrate teaching on the areas of identified need.
29. Some of the targets set are very general; for example 'To use phonic skills and the recognition of some words in reading'. This actually encompasses the whole of the reading process. Targets are most effective when they are specific, for instance specifying which phonic skills need to be learned or which words need to be recognised. They are also most effective when they can be achieved within a short time-span. Progress in achieving the targets can then be measured, and pupils can experience the benefits of relatively quick success. Some targets seem to be applied to a large number of pupils; for example 'Selecting examples from the text to support opinions'. These may well relate to actual assessments, but do not necessarily relate to what individuals can do.
30. The school also needs to consider how all the individual targets set will be addressed in the context of the overall curriculum planning and the lesson objectives that derive from that planning. There is a third element which is the assessments made in terms of the National Curriculum. There is a need to link these three elements in the teaching: the levels appropriate to the year group (usually contained in the curriculum planning), the learning objectives of the lesson (derived from that planning), and the individual pupil's targets (which do not necessarily relate to the first two). Where there are too many disparate targets they become increasingly difficult to address and achieve.
31. At the moment, the general class targets in the curriculum planning are mostly appropriately challenging, but there are some instances where this is not the case. For example, the Early Years Unit sets generally very challenging work for nursery-aged children, and some that it unusually high, such as questioning about floating and sinking in science which actually address Level 3 in the National Curriculum, or working in the style of Modigliani in art. The challenge to reception-aged children in literacy and numeracy is not as high, and there is less focus of time on these activities. Attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 1 has not been as high compared to other schools as at the end of Key Stage 2. The effective use of targets could help address this.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

32. In order to build on the strong trend of rising standards, and its already high standard of provision, the school needs to continue its development of target-setting for pupils so that the targets set:
- are specific and achievable within a short time-span;
 - build specifically on what the pupil has already learned;
 - relate to assessments made in terms of the National Curriculum;
 - are linked to the learning objectives of lessons.

CONCLUSION

33. This is a very good school where the headteacher provides very strong leadership and has ensured a trend of rising standards. Pupils make very good progress across the school and the standards they attain by the age of 11 represent very good achievement. This progress is brought about by the quality of teaching and the very positive ethos where excellent relationships and pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work enhance learning. The school offers very good value for money.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	31	28	34	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	245
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	17	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	7
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	23	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82	89	86
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	7
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86	86	86
	National	82	86	87

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
	1999	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	24	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77	84	90
	National	70	68	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	24	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77	77	84
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	11
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	195
Any other minority ethnic group	

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30.6
Average class size	30.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	63

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	414,896
Total expenditure	419,769
Expenditure per pupil	1,555
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,104
Balance carried forward to next year	7,231

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	245
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	22	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	78	22	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	80	20	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	32	11	3	8
The teaching is good.	83	16	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	81	18	1	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	15	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	15	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	76	20	2	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	27	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	22	9	2	25