

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOAN OF ARC RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Islington

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100449

Headteacher: Mr A Elfer

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn
15676

Date of inspection: 27th - 29th November 2000

Inspection number: 224432

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Northolme Road
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London

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Crawley

Date of previous inspection: 29th April - 3rd May 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joan of Arc is a larger than average primary school situated in the Highbury district of Islington, North London. There are 377 pupils on the school roll, compared with the national average of 226. The school serves the parish of St Joan of Arc and two neighbouring parishes. There are a large number of pupils from families of ethnic minorities. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is above average at 41 per cent. The main languages spoken in addition to English are Yoruba, Spanish, Ibo and Twi. There are 20 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, which is similar to the national average, and five pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average at 22 per cent.

Approximately half the pupils who begin in the reception classes have previously been taught in the school's nursery. Attainment on entry is as expected for children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Through sound leadership and good teaching in many lessons, the school is effective in achieving above average standards in English, science and information technology at Key Stage 2 and average standards in mathematics at both key stages. Taking into account the attainment of pupils when they enter the school and the satisfactory progress they make, the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- It achieves above average standards in English, science and information technology at Key Stage 2.
- Through a combination of very good specialist teaching and excellent resources the school has raised the attainment of pupils in information technology throughout the school and has also provided valuable in-service training for staff.
- The governors have given firm leadership during a period of significant change and seek to provide best value for the school in major purchases and appointments of staff.
- Through very good teaching the personal, health and social education co-ordinator provides a model of good practice to influence the development of 'circle time' throughout the school.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching, where it is unsatisfactory, in relation to teachers' understanding and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, the use of lesson time, the pace of learning, assessment and planning work to meet the needs of different pupils in all classes.
- The regular, rigorous and systematic monitoring of all teaching to ensure that weaknesses are identified and remedied.
- The breadth and range of the curriculum in English and mathematics to provide opportunities for pupils to apply more widely the skills they have learnt and to develop the capacity for independent work and personal study.
- The organisation of the school day to ensure that time is always used productively, particularly at the beginning and end of morning and afternoon sessions.

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 May 1996. Despite disruption caused through significant changes in leadership, problems with recruiting permanent teaching staff and the upheaval caused by changes to the school's accommodation, sound progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards in the most recent national tests for 11 year olds are above average but are not as good as they were in 1996. Most of the issues arising from the last inspection have been addressed. The temporary classrooms have been replaced by a modern, purpose-built extension to the main school, which is a significant improvement. Improvements to information technology have been started with the establishment of a computer suite in which the co-ordinator teaches all classes on a regular basis. This has resulted in improved standards in all aspects of the subject. Pupils' behaviour in the playground has improved through the introduction of additional play equipment. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to determine whether the teaching of design and technology has improved, although an examination of previous work indicates that it now takes place regularly in all year groups.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A*	A	B	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	B	A	
Science	B	A	C	B	

In the most recent tests for 11 year olds, pupils attained above the national average in English and mathematics and well above the average for pupils in similar schools. In science they attained national average standards, and above the average for pupils in similar schools. Results improved in line with the national trend up until 1999, but in 2000 they were not as good as they were previously. The school has fallen slightly short of the suitably challenging targets they have set for 11 year olds in English and mathematics.

In the tests for seven year olds there has been an improvement in reading, writing and mathematics results, which were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 attain average standards in English at Key Stage 1 and above average standards at Key Stage 2. In mathematics, standards are average at both key stages. In both English and mathematics pupils have a sound knowledge of basic skills, but their capacity to use them in writing for difference purposes and in practical mathematics and problem-solving is underdeveloped. In science and information technology pupils attain standards by the end of Key Stage 2 which are above those found nationally.

Pupils with special educational needs often receive appropriate support in small groups which enables them to make sound progress towards targets identified for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are sufficiently fluent in English to take a full part in all lessons, and as a result they also make sound progress.

Children who are under five make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning as a result of the good teaching they receive.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school and concentrate well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school generally. There have been three short-term exclusions over the past two years.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils of all ethnic backgrounds are good. Pupils work and play well together. Their personal development is satisfactory, but there are too few opportunities, particularly for older pupils, to work independently and so develop the capacity for personal study.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are generally punctual, but there is often a delay between registration and the start of lessons in morning and afternoon sessions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	satisfactory

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

Ninety one per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory, with 28 per cent good and 22 per cent very good. This is broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection. Teaching was best in information technology, where it was consistently of a very high standard. In these lessons, taught by the co-ordinator, good subject knowledge, high expectations of pupils and the challenging use of questions contribute to pupils making very good progress in their learning. Teaching was also very good in a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 5, in literacy in Years 4 and 6, and in numeracy in reception. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there are weaknesses in the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, use of teaching time available, the pace of lessons, assessment, and planning for pupils' different abilities.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 teaching in both subjects is more variable but is better in literacy than in numeracy. The school does not fully meet the needs of all its pupils in every lesson due to the fact that work is not always planned to match their differing abilities. Consequently in some lessons pupils do not make the progress in their learning that might be expected.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school plans all subjects in accordance with the National Curriculum. Learning opportunities in information technology and in some personal, social and health lessons are good, but those in English and mathematics are too narrow to allow pupils to develop fully the skills they have learned. Extra-curricular activities to enhance pupils' learning are limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well supported by a Learning Support Teacher from the local authority. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and targets for improvement clear and attainable. The school provides the opportunity for the special needs co-ordinator to be released from her full-time teaching commitment to carry out her duties, including attendance at all necessary meetings.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils whose first language is other than English is satisfactory. The majority are fluent in English and take a full part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision in this area is good, with particular strengths in 'circle time', which enables pupils to discuss with one another particular issues of concern. This is at an early stage of development and has yet to be used fully in all classes.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well and child-protection measures are satisfactory. Some aspects of health and safety need attention, notably evacuation procedures and the inspection of electrical appliances. These are being addressed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide sound educational leadership. Although the headteacher is relatively new to his post, through a consultative approach he is leading the school towards a broader curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all its responsibilities very well. Governors provide clear overall direction and have carried the school forward successfully through a period of significant change.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher checks standards by teaching all classes on a regular basis. He looks at how well new and inexperienced staff teach but does not check the teaching of more established staff. Also the numeracy co-ordinator has not had a chance to observe mathematics lessons. In these respects the school's

	evaluation of its performance is unsatisfactory.
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The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources and the funds allocated for specific purposes, such as special educational needs and computers. Governors are prudently carrying forward a significant percentage of the school budget to cover outstanding building costs.
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The governors seek to provide best value in important areas such as the appointment of a new headteacher, selection of a design for the new school building and providing equipment for the new information technology suite.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school is helping children to become mature. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information which they receive about how well their children are getting on. • The range of extra-curricular activities provided. • The way in which the school works with parents.

Overall, parents' views of the school are positive. The inspection team agrees with most of the positive opinions expressed by parents. Pupils like school. Many make good progress and are expected to work hard. Older pupils have too few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning in order that they might become more mature in this respect. Of the areas which parents would like to see improve, the school is reviewing the information it provides and is considering how to extend the range of activities for pupils in addition to their lessons. The way in which the school works with parents is satisfactory. Parents regularly work alongside teachers in several classes and provide additional support on educational visits.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

It achieves above average standards in English, science and information technology at Key Stage 2.

1. Standards in English are above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils speak clearly and confidently when addressing the whole class, for example, at the end of literacy sessions. They explain the work that they have been doing in groups during the lesson and use technical terms such as 'genre' with understanding and ease. Activities are closely matched to the different abilities of pupils in most lessons and as a result they apply themselves well to discussing words which will help them decide on the type of writing they are considering.
2. Pupils read well and some higher-attaining pupils do so expressively. They read a range of books and are confident and resourceful in working out the pronunciation and meaning of unfamiliar words. There is a well-stocked library, but it is not used enough by pupils for independent research, and so their capacity for personal study is underdeveloped.
3. Pupils not only identify different types of text in their reading but also write in a variety of forms such as autobiographical accounts and diary writing after the style of Anne Frank and Samuel Pepys. An examination of past work reveals a difference between the two classes in Year 6 in the amount of independent writing produced. Writing is technically of a high standard; handwriting is fluent and well formed, spelling is usually accurate and punctuation, including paragraphs, is often used correctly.
4. In science many pupils in Year 6 have already attained the National Curriculum standard that they are expected to reach by the end of the school year and some achieve beyond this. From an examination of previous work, for example, it is clear that pupils have a clear understanding of how to conduct a controlled test by changing one item whilst keeping others constant. They learn about the water cycle, for instance, and experiment to find the different properties of water. Pupils predict the outcomes of experiments and form hypotheses which they later evaluate. They present their results in the form of clear diagrams and line graphs.
5. Standards in information technology are rising throughout the school as a result of improved resources and better teaching. From an early stage pupils achieve well. In reception, for example, most pupils are able to carry out basic functions using the 'mouse' and the keyboard. By the time they reach Year 6 most pupils are confident in carrying out more complex procedures. They know how to select and open programs and files saved on the computer. Pupils use the 'mouse' and the keyboard to find their way through a spreadsheet. They understand how to enter new information and know how to retrieve that which they have entered previously. Pupils represent their work in a variety of ways, including graphs, and are familiar with functions such as 'cutting' and 'pasting' as a means of moving information and text from one place to another.

Through a combination of very good specialist teaching and excellent resources, the school has raised the attainment of pupils in information technology throughout the school and has also provided valuable in-service training for staff.

6. This is an area that the school has worked hard upon since the last inspection, to good effect. As a result standards are now much better than they were. The governors and headteacher took the strategic decision to release the co-ordinator from her full-time teaching commitment in order to teach all classes for a period of one year, on a regular basis, in the newly-established computer suite. They realised that this would not only benefit pupils, but also provide staff with incidental training opportunities as they watched their classes at work.
7. The school has provided an information and communication technology suite as part of the new building and has invested in enough new computers to enable the co-ordinator to teach a whole class together. The suite and computers are of excellent quality and are well used by all classes. The school has carefully evaluated the impact that noise from the computer suite has upon other classes, due to the design of the building, and has taken appropriate steps to minimise the disturbance by providing glass partitions.
8. The co-ordinator teaches the subject to all classes very well. She is confident and knowledgeable in the subject, and plans and prepares very carefully for all classes according to their particular needs. For example, she provided a large diagram for reception pupils in order that they might understand what was going to happen on the computer. Her explanation was very clear and as a result children understood what they had to do and approached the lesson with confidence. Her planning for older pupils indicates high expectations of what they might achieve in their learning. This was further reflected in the way in which the teacher spoke to pupils; for example, in lessons involving pupils in Years 5 and 6 she used technical terms freely and easily, confident in the expectation that pupils would understand what she was referring to. Their responses confirmed that they had done so. Lessons proceeded at a brisk pace, with teachers' high expectations being further apparent in the challenging tasks set for pupils in relation to the work with spreadsheets. Through her secure understanding of the subject the teacher stimulated pupils' thinking further through questioning; for example, she resisted the temptation to intervene immediately to solve minor problems, but instead first asked pupils what they thought needed to be done.
9. Teachers accompanying their classes in the computer suite benefit from the expertise of the co-ordinator. They follow the lesson plan by providing support to pupils and in so-doing increase their own understanding commensurately. The level of expertise amongst staff varies considerably from some who are extremely proficient to others who have a more basic understanding. By working alongside the co-ordinator they not only increase their own skills but also know what they should do to consolidate and develop in the classroom that which has been learnt in the computer suite. This element is underdeveloped, however, and full use is not always made of computers in individual classes.

The governors have given firm leadership during a period of significant change and seek to provide best value for the school in major purchases and appointments of staff.

10. There have been many changes to the school since it was last inspected, related to staffing, two changes of headteacher and major developments to the school building. The governors sought to minimise the negative and potentially disruptive impact of these changes and, in so doing, have succeeded in pursuing their strategic view for the school within the context of the Catholic community it represents. Most governors are firmly established in their roles and have taken an active part in deciding targets

for the school development plan, in consultation with the headteacher. In this way they provide firm direction to the work of the school.

11. The headteacher and co-ordinators keep governors well informed about school activities and developments indicated in the school development plan. For example, the information technology co-ordinator reports on the success of the new arrangements for teaching the subject. The governing body is very concerned to secure the best possible education for the pupils. For instance, it has actively supported initiatives such as the new information technology suite by raising additional funding. This has included the use of the school playground for car parking on Saturdays, when the local football team was playing at home. Governors are currently carrying forward a percentage of the school budget in order to cover any additional costs associated with the new school building.
12. Since the retirement of the previous headteacher in 1997 there have been two changes of headteacher. The governing body was duly concerned to appoint someone of sufficient calibre to lead the school forward and consequently advertised several times before appointing a suitable candidate who met their high expectations. Governors were also concerned that the good work of the school be maintained during this period of uncertainty. They therefore appointed the experienced deputy head to the role of headteacher during the interim period, and he successfully supported the work of the school pending a permanent appointment.
13. The last inspection report identified some of the school's classrooms as unsatisfactory and said that improvements were needed. The school has made very good progress on addressing this issue, with the result that pupils in reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 are now housed in modern, permanent accommodation, which is more conducive to learning. Here again the school governors were anxious to provide the best possible premises and considered submissions from several architects before making a decision.
14. The appointment of permanent, suitably qualified and experienced staff is a problem for this school as it is for others. The governors and headteacher acknowledge that this is an area over which they have little control. Nevertheless, the headteacher takes a great deal of trouble to ensure that governors are presented with the best available newly-qualified and temporary teachers when considering appointments. Approximately half the teaching staff has changed over the past two years, mostly at Key Stage 2. This is a major contributory factor to a recent decline in National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6.

Through very good teaching the personal, health and social education co-ordinator provides a model of good practice to influence the development of 'circle time' throughout the school.

15. The school has identified personal, social and health education as a major area for development. As such, it is well supported by the governing body through the formation of a working party to take the initiative forward, comprising headteacher, governors and members of staff. Six members of staff have received training in 'circle time', which provides an opportunity for pupils to discuss personal, social and moral issues and to respect the views of others. However, the use of 'circle time' is inconsistent between classes, but the headteacher anticipates that it will eventually be used regularly throughout the school.

16. The model of very good teaching provided by the co-ordinator is an excellent example through which to introduce other staff to 'circle time'. In the one lesson timetabled for the period of the inspection good links were made with literacy. Pupils built effectively on the theme of argument and feelings from a previous lesson, to consider how they might make decisions when confronted with moral choices. The book 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' was used as the starting point. The teacher introduced the topic well and skilfully linked her comments to the school's mission statement to provide additional relevance. The lesson was very well planned with clear learning objectives based on being able to say 'no' when tempted. The class teacher's management of pupils was very good and she made effective use of role-play to capture and sustain pupils' interest. As a result pupils became very involved with the predicament of a character in the story who had hard decisions to make related to right and wrong and some were animated in their responses such as, "... it is alright to go wild inside your own head but not outside...". The teacher used her very good understanding of the subject and her knowledge of the pupils well to decide when and where to intervene in order to take the lesson forward. She skilfully related the story to pupils' own lives and to how there are times when they have to say "No" to a grown up. All pupils were fully involved in the lesson, and the period of consolidation at the end revealed that most had made considerable gains in their understanding of the issues involved. In addition, the knowledge that their views were important contributed well to their self-esteem.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The quality of teaching, where it is unsatisfactory, in relation to teachers' understanding and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, use of lesson time, the pace of learning, assessment and planning work to meet the needs of different pupils in all classes.

17. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in 91 per cent of lessons, good in 28 per cent and very good in 22 per cent. In slightly less than one lesson in ten teaching was unsatisfactory. This is broadly as it was at the time of the last inspection.
18. Teaching is best in information technology, where it is taught by the co-ordinator to pupils in all classes on a regular basis. Overall, teaching is better in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, where some numeracy lessons are unsatisfactory. Teaching of literacy is generally better than that for numeracy. This is attributable to a range of factors: literacy is more well-established; there are clearly displayed National Curriculum levels of attainment in every classroom which not only guide teachers but also help pupils measure their performance; the literacy co-ordinator has had the opportunity to check the quality of teaching and provide feedback to teachers, whereas the numeracy co-ordinator has not.
19. The weaknesses in teaching relate mainly to how lesson time is used, the pace of lessons and the way in which teachers assess pupils' learning and plan tasks to meet the needs of pupils' different abilities.
20. In a significant minority of lessons, time is not used to best effect. Pupils are occasionally expected to sit for too long listening to the teacher, which slows the pace of learning. This was an unsatisfactory element, for example, in an otherwise successful history lesson at Key Stage 2. In some numeracy lessons there is insufficient time allowed for consolidation and reinforcement of learning with the whole class at the end of sessions. As a result pupils do not always have a clear

understanding of what they have learned and teachers miss important opportunities to assess pupils' progress in their learning and whether objectives for the lesson have been met. Also planning is not always clear about what pupils are expected to learn and as a result too much time is spent on incidental matters such as discussing mathematical vocabulary with which pupils are already familiar.

21. The pace with which lessons proceed is directly related to the use of time. In the most successful lessons teachers introduce a sense of urgency. For example, in a very good literacy lesson in Year 4, pupils responded enthusiastically to provide alternatives to a given adjective within 30 seconds. There is variety in activities to secure and maintain the interest of pupils, as in a literacy session in Year 6. Here pupils spent sufficient time on each element of the lesson to make effective gains in their knowledge and understanding of types of writing, but not so long that they became bored and lost interest. Similarly, in a very good numeracy lesson in reception, children were pretending to buy buns with the help of the teacher, who introduced variety skilfully to keep their interest alive. Where learning is unsatisfactory, as in some numeracy lessons at Key Stage 2, the lessons lack pace, and activities presenting too little mathematical challenge are prolonged to fill the time available. As a result, pupils do not make progress at an appropriate rate.
22. From an examination of teachers' planning files and observation of lessons it is apparent that staff do not regularly and systematically assess how well pupils learn. As a result pupils' work is insufficiently planned to match pupils' abilities in many lessons. This is supported by an examination of pupils' previous work, which shows, for example, that those with different abilities complete tasks at a similar level in English at Key Stage 1. Where planning is effective, as in some literacy lessons at Key Stage 2, teachers think carefully about the tasks they provide, to challenge higher-attaining pupils, pupils of average ability and those who have special educational needs. In several lessons, however, pupils complete the same work regardless of ability, and where more-able pupils finish tasks quickly, there is insufficient extra work to enable them to extend their knowledge and understanding further. Consequently, in these circumstances they seldom make the progress that might be expected. Work planned for pupils with special educational needs does not always relate to the targets on their individual work programs, and where they are not well supported they too do not learn as well as they might. A lack of planning for different abilities was not only evident in unsatisfactory lessons at Key Stage 2, but was also a feature of some otherwise successful lessons at both key stages.

The regular, rigorous and systematic monitoring of all teaching to ensure that weaknesses are identified and remedied.

23. Since his appointment in September 1998 the headteacher has employed different strategies to check how well the school is performing. He has begun a system whereby he teaches every class on a fortnightly basis. This allows him to get to know the pupils more individually and also check standards of their work. Teaching each class in turn also enables him to evaluate the possibilities and problems of working in the new school building. For example, through teaching Years 2 and 3 he experienced the difficulties encountered by teachers in making themselves heard against the noise of pupils working in the newly-established information technology suite. This reinforced the need for sound-proofing partitions, which were duly fitted. In addition the headteacher observes newly-qualified and temporary staff teaching and provides them with useful guidance on how well they perform and what they need to do to improve. However, he has not yet extended this to more-established staff in order to determine whether the unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson out of ten,

identified in the last inspection, is still evident. As a result he cannot be totally sure whether the quality of teaching has improved or deteriorated with changes in staff. Inspection evidence shows that just under ten per cent of teaching is still unsatisfactory.

24. The school has provided the opportunity for the English co-ordinator to check standards and teaching in literacy. He looks at pupils' work regularly and has also monitored how well literacy is taught, with the help of the headteacher, the local authority and the teacher with responsibility for Key Stage 1. Towards the end of the summer term he provided general feedback to staff on the basis of his observations. He identified many good features in teaching and also some areas in which teachers might improve. Consequently, literacy teaching is satisfactory overall and occasionally very good at Key Stage 2. The mathematics co-ordinator has had only limited opportunities to carry out similar observations and as a result there are weaknesses in teaching numeracy at Key Stage 2.

The breadth and range of the curriculum in English and mathematics, to provide opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they have learnt more widely and to develop the capacity for independent work and personal study.

25. Pupils develop skills in English and mathematics well at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, insufficient time is planned within the curriculum for them to apply these skills widely to purposeful writing and mathematical problem-solving, as required by the National Curriculum. Older pupils at Key Stage 2, particularly, have too few opportunities to use their positive attitudes to learning in independent study and research, other than under the direct supervision of an adult.
26. The school is concerned that there is too little time within the curriculum for pupils to write extensively in different forms. However, the proportion of time which the school spends on English is less than that found in most schools at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
27. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn to write clearly and legibly in written exercises during literacy sessions. The writing of pupils in Year 2 is generally well formed and consistent in size; for example, where they consider the difference between instructions and questions. Spelling of simple words is usually correct and pupils are aware that a capital letter begins a sentence and a full stop ends it. Also in Year 1 pupils begin writing sentences and test them to see that they make sense. However, opportunities for pupils to use what they have learnt independently, in meaningful writing, are limited and where they do occur the high level of teacher direction limits pupils' capacity to record original ideas. Provision for pupils to write purposefully varies considerably between classes at Key Stage 2 but overall is a little better than at Key Stage 1. For example, pupils in Year 3 produce poems associated with Christmas. They think carefully about what they are doing and some choose their words well for effect, such as 'the holly twisting around the wreath'. Pupils in one of the two Year 6 classes write in different forms, sometimes in connection with other subjects such as history. They identify different types of writing in literacy sessions and employ this to writing autobiographical accounts. Pupils write diaries in the form of those produced by Samuel Pepys and Anne Frank, provide clear instructions on how to carry out everyday functions such as making tea, and write descriptively in connection with the book 'The Midnight Fox'. Overall, however, there is too much teacher direction and concentration on dictation, grammatical exercises, spelling tests and comprehension exercises in some classes to allow pupils to respond with originality and produce work to consolidate the skills they have learnt.

28. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils cover the full range of work at both key stages, except for that related to problem solving and the practical application of their mathematical knowledge. They acquire all necessary skills well, but have too few opportunities to apply them in meaningful ways. For example, pupils in Year 2 know and understand the value of different digits in numbers to 100, add and subtract numbers ending in 0 up to 100, and double and half amounts of money. However, they are insufficiently aware of how to approach problems using these skills and how to employ their knowledge of mathematics in unfamiliar situations. Pupils are confident in straightforward mental computation and some can reverse number operations well, as was evident in a Year 4 lesson. However, they are not proficient in finding their own strategies for arriving at an answer. In Year 6, for example, pupils understood how to work out the cost of a number of items at 17 pence each, but were less secure in calculating how many could be bought for £1.50.

The organisation of the school day to ensure that time is always used productively, particularly at the beginning and end of morning and afternoon sessions.

29. The amount of time the school devotes to teaching exceeds that found in most schools. However, the time between registration and assembly in the mornings, and at the beginning of the afternoon session, is not used to best effect in some classes and time is wasted each day. Although some teachers use the time for silent reading, not all do so well. For example, where it is not effective, the constant movement of pupils around the classroom, and occasionally that of the teachers as they prepare materials for the lesson to follow, is an impediment to concentration, and pupils do not make the progress that might be expected. In one Year 6 class, on the other hand, pupils use the time productively for a range of activities such as writing down homework and reading quietly. In this class the teacher creates a climate that is conducive to quiet, thoughtful activity by playing recorded classical music in the background as pupils enter the room and settle down to their work. A clear message is sent out to pupils about the importance of what they are doing, through the way that the teacher listens to individual pupils as they read.
30. On other occasions, such as in some numeracy lessons at Key Stage 2, too much time is allocated to individual sessions and there is insufficient content planned to fill the time available. Consequently these lessons proceed at too leisurely a pace and there is no sense of urgency for pupils to complete the tasks they are set.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. The governors, headteacher and staff should address the following:
- (1) Raise the quality of teaching where it is unsatisfactory, by improving the following:
- Better understanding and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in all classes.
 - The way in which teachers use lesson time available.
 - The pace and productivity of lessons.
 - Teachers' assessment of how well pupils learn and subsequently plan to meet the different abilities of pupils.
- (see paragraphs 17 -22)*

- (2) Build on existing arrangements for checking the quality of teaching to provide a systematic and rigorous timetable of observations covering all classes, in order that weaknesses may be identified and remedied as soon as possible. *(see paragraphs 23 and 24)*
- (3) Broaden the curriculum for English and mathematics in order to provide the following:
 - Increased opportunities for pupils to use the skills they have learnt in meaningful ways such as purposeful writing for different purposes and practical and problem-solving activities in mathematics.
 - Opportunities for older pupils to develop the capacity for independent work and personal study. *(see paragraphs 25-28)*
- (4) Review the way in which the school day is organised to ensure that the most productive use is made of all time available, particularly at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. *(see paragraphs 29 and 30)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	28	41	9	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-Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	351
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	76

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	155

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	34	24	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	31	31
	Girls	23	24	24
	Total	52	55	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	95 (90)	95 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	31
	Girls	23	24	24
	Total	51	54	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	93 (97)	95 (95)
	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	22	33	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	27	24	31
	Total	44	41	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (85)	75 (77)	89 (84)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	19
	Girls	17	24	27
	Total	43	41	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (75)	75 (72)	84 (80)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	21
Black – African heritage	84
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	112

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	3	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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	24.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	112

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	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	891,442
Total expenditure	965,754
Expenditure per pupil	2,305
Balance brought forward from previous year	234,446
Balance carried forward to next year	160,134

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	377
Number of questionnaires returned	107

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	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	38	7	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	39	4	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	9	4	4
The teaching is good.	52	39	3	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	40	16	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	36	5	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	31	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	35	13	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	39	2	1	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	37	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	27	24	13	19