

INSPECTION REPORT

LEIGH ST THOMAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leigh

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106448

Headteacher: Mr A Dutton

Reporting inspector: Mrs C E Waine
23081

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th September 2000

Inspection number: 224744

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
School category:	Church of England, Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Astley Street Leigh Lancashire
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Telephone number:	01942 672730
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father John Wiseman
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas's is a large and popular Church of England school, based in three separate buildings on the same site. There are 472 pupils from 4 to 11 years of age, including 69 children in the reception year. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. On entry to school pupils' attainment is below average, particularly in communication skills and social skills. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average but the number with formal statements of their needs is above average. There are few representatives of ethnic minorities and only one child has English as an additional language. The inspection took place in the fifth week of the school year; this was only the second week of full-time schooling for the youngest pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school that provides its pupils with a highly effective education in the context of a caring Christian ethos. Consistently good teaching promotes high standards in English, mathematics and science at age 11, although pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below average. Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave very well. The cost per pupil is below average and the school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very well and attain high standards in English, mathematics and science at age eleven. Assessment information is very well used to target high achievement.
- The school benefits from strong leadership and is very well managed.
- Teaching is good for all pupils, particularly in the basic skills of English and mathematics.
- Provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school's Christian ethos permeates its life. Relationships are very good and pupils are cared for well.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology.
- The provision of opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned in solving problems or in personal investigation is inconsistent throughout the school.
- The physical development of the youngest children and the range of sports and competitive team games.

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

The school has already identified some of these points and introduced plans to remedy them.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997 and, in response to the key issues of that inspection:

- Teaching quality has been raised and unsatisfactory teaching eliminated
- Management by the governing body has improved significantly.
- Use of assessment information has improved and a very good system has been established to set targets to raise individual attainment and monitor the progress of individuals

Other improvements made:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved considerably at age eleven
- A new management structure has been introduced
- With the help of the Leigh Education Action Zone, the school has improved its provision for information and communication technology by the creation of a computer room with excellent resources.

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection and is in a good position to continue to do so.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A*	A	A
Science	B	A*	A	A

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

The pupils' results in national tests, in 1999, in English, mathematics and science were well above those found in other schools nationally and in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. This represents very good achievement for that group of pupils, who entered the school in 1993 with average levels of attainment. Their results in 1999 showed that they were working about one year ahead of most pupils in mathematics and science and two terms ahead in English. In 2000, this high standard was maintained in all three subjects. Standards have improved since the last inspection at a similar rate to that nationally but science standards have improved faster than nationally.

At age five, most children attain the levels expected for their age. In some year groups, there is a significant group of pupils with special educational needs and, despite having made good progress, they are below the levels expected in language, literacy and communication. In 1999, in the national tests at age seven, standards were below the national average in reading, although average in writing and mathematics. The school introduced good measures to remedy this in 2000 but the group contained an unusually high number of pupils with statements of special educational needs and results remained at a similar level to those of 1999. Inspection evidence shows that, at age seven, most pupils attain at the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards in information and communication technology are close to the average at age seven but are below average at age 11 because all aspects of the National Curriculum are not covered.

Inspection evidence confirms that pupils of all abilities achieve very well and that standards are well above average by the time they leave the school. Standards in literacy and numeracy are particularly good. The school sets itself very high targets and has met them in both 1999 and 2000.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, despite the cramped conditions in the hall and playground.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and very good relationships are fostered in the strong Christian ethos.
Attendance	Good – slightly above average with no unauthorised absence

The school's Christian ethos promotes very good relationships amongst all members of the school community, which support the development of pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

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.

Teaching is good throughout the school and promotes very good learning. This is particularly so in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development of children in the reception classes and in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy throughout the whole school. During the inspection 35 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and teaching was always at least satisfactory. In 49 percent of lessons it was good and in 23 percent it was very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, who respond very well. This promotes effective learning and helps pupils at all levels of attainment to achieve well. Recent training and support provided by a specialist information and communication technology suite manager has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, which is now good. Teachers make good use of the excellent resources in the computer suite and pupils are making good progress. As the inspection took place early in the school year this has not yet been sufficient to raise attainment to expected levels at age eleven.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, with a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The school has sound plans to manage the introduction of the new National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good and very well managed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one child has English as an additional language. He has only just entered the reception year and no additional support is provided from outside the school. The school provides as well as it can for his needs and he is making satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The Christian ethos permeates the life of the school and underpins pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good provision. Use of assessment information to promote their progress is a strength of the school.

Opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned, such as in solving problems and in investigating for themselves are not provided consistently through the school. Despite the hard work of teachers, there are difficulties in providing for physical development for the children in the reception classes and for team games in physical education curriculum because of accommodation problems. The range of out-of-school sports clubs and teams is limited, although the range of other activities is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. Excellent leadership by the highly committed headteacher promotes high standards. He is well supported by the senior management team. Teamwork by the whole staff is strong.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; governors form an effective team and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very thorough. The school compares itself to other schools and highlights development points. Governors and staff are committed to consistent improvement of already high standards
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are matched well to the needs of the school and are used efficiently to promote high standards.

Staffing is good throughout the school and allows targeting for individual and small group teaching where needed. Most of the indoor accommodation is good and well maintained but the hall and outdoor areas are inadequate for the numbers of pupils. This affects the range of competitive sports played and pupils' social development in breaktimes and lunchtimes. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Those in the information and communication technology room are excellent and enhance teaching and learning significantly. Governors are conscientious in obtaining the best value for their 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 school attains high standards and their children achieve well • Pupils behave very well and develop good attitudes to work and to each other • Teaching is good • The way the school is run • Their children are happy and well cared for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of sporting activities outside the classroom • Homework • A small minority of parents expressed concern about provision for pupils with special educational needs • Some parents felt that the time allowed for subjects other than Literacy and Numeracy was too limited.

Parents have very positive views of the school and inspectors support these views. In respect of the negative points made the inspection team finds that:

1 Inspectors agree that the range of extra-curricular sports teams is limited, largely as a result of the poor outdoor facilities at the school. The range of other activities is similar to those in most schools.

2 There were differing views amongst parents about homework. Some felt that there was too much and some felt that there was not enough. The inspection team finds that it is appropriate for the different age groups in school and is similar to that in most other schools.

3 The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is one of the strengths of the school. Where problems arise the school does all that it can to resolve them.

4 The curriculum is generally broad and balanced, although in physical education and information and communication technology there are some areas needing further development. The school provides a good length of teaching time and the time allotted to each subject is similar to that in most primary schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve very well and attain high standards in English, mathematics and science at age eleven. Assessment information is very well used to target high achievement.

1. In the national tests, at age eleven, pupils attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are much higher than those in all schools nationally and in those schools with a similar background. This has been consistently so over several years and, since the last inspection, the school has continued to improve standards year on year. The overall rise is similar to that nationally, although science has shown a greater rate of improvement. In each subject a significant proportion of pupils achieve standards that are higher than those expected for their age and this proportion is also rising. Evidence seen during the inspection confirmed these high standards.

2. There are many factors that contribute to the high standards, such as teaching and pupils' attitudes to work but the recent introduction of a target setting system is proving to be extremely effective. High targets are set for all pupils and work is systematically checked to ensure that pupils are achieving as well as they can. Governors use the assessment information well in setting high targets for the school. These are consistently met. Those pupils with special educational needs have effectively managed support to help them achieve their targets. The current focus on writing has significantly improved the proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected, both in the test results in 2000 and in the current Year 6.

3. Children enter the school with a wide range of experience and prior attainment levels. Overall, attainment is below average, having declined over the past few years, particularly in social and communication skills. This is confirmed by the assessment system used in children's first weeks at school. This shows the average for the school to be below that of the Wigan Education Authority and also below the national average for that system. Children make good progress and achieve well, with most attaining the levels expected by the time they enter Year 1. In recent years a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs have entered the school, several of whom have statements of their needs on entry. They make good progress towards their personal targets but do not match the levels expected at age five in communication, language and literacy.

4. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and, at age seven, most attain the levels expected in the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are usually similar to those found nationally. However, in 1998 and 1999 standards in the tests were lower, with most attaining the level expected but few achieving at a higher level. The school introduced a plan for widening the reading curriculum and improving writing but, despite this, results were similar in 2000, when there was a large group of pupils with special educational needs. During the inspection a similar picture was seen. Most pupils are achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics and many now in Year 2 are already at, or approaching, the level expected at the end of the year. The success of the school's improvement planning is apparent in pupils' writing and many write stories, accounts, letters and poetry, spelling most words correctly. They are beginning to use capital letters and full stops with a good degree of accuracy for their age. There are early indications that this may be promoting higher standards for those who are higher attainers. Once again, however, there is a large group of pupils, including five with statements of special educational need, working at a lower than average level. The school works hard and effectively to support these pupils and they achieve as well as they can but they do have a significant effect on the school's overall test results.

5. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6. All are well supported by a good level of staffing and by the way in which the school is organised, with extra teaching staff in Years 3 and 4 and by the grouping of pupils, based on their attainment levels, in Years 5 and 6. This enables teachers to concentrate on particular groups of pupils and for additional classroom support staff to be concentrated in lower attaining sets. Some teachers have developed good levels of expertise with higher or lower attaining pupils and this is very well used by the school to raise attainment for all. The effectiveness of this organisation and good teaching is seen in the consistent raising of standards so that most pupils, including some of those with special educational needs, attain the levels expected and a well above average proportion exceed them.

6. Many pupils currently in Year 6 have already attained the levels expected nationally in English, mathematics and science and are working at the next higher level. Again the focus on writing is having a beneficial effect and pupils enjoy a wide range of challenging and interesting activities, producing lengthy pieces of writing. For example, they compare and contrast different productions of Shakespeare's plays and write stories, poetry, letters and accounts, organised into paragraphs. They use a wide range of vocabulary to interest their readers and their punctuation and spelling are good. Numeracy skills are well taught and pupils are again working at above average levels. Attainment in science has improved greatly over the years because of the teaching of a very good depth of knowledge and a good range of skills. Pupils throughout the school are proud of their work and this is reflected in the good standard of handwriting and presentation.

7. The quality of teaching, pupils' attitudes to learning and the very good use of assessment information are significant factors in the progress pupils make and reflect the school's commitment to high standards for all.

The school benefits from strong leadership and management

8. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He is dedicated to promoting high standards and creating a Christian ethos in which pupils can flourish. To this end he is constantly striving to improve provision for all pupils and has been instrumental in developing the very effective assessment and target setting procedures and in developing a self-evaluation system. He is not afraid of taking unpopular decisions, such as ceasing to use the school's field for games, when they are necessary to promote pupils' welfare, and is active in seeking improvements to conditions for pupils and staff. The way in which he manages and organises staffing and resources, targeting specific groups of pupils for support, is a significant factor in the school's success. He is well supported by a committed and effective staff team and governing body. His success in promoting high standards has been recognised within the Leigh Education Action Zone and he is involved in supporting other schools in the local community.

9. This school year has seen several changes of staff, including the loss of a deputy head. The school has taken the opportunity to develop an even more effective management structure. The remaining deputy is responsible for the curriculum and is introducing new procedures for systematically checking pupils' work and classroom teaching as part of the school's work in self-evaluation. Together with new key stage co-ordinators, she is building up a useful bank of supportive information for staff. Senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators are matching the school's schemes of work to the new National Curriculum appropriately. The new Foundation Stage curriculum is in place in the reception classes, although that for physical development is limited by poor facilities. Curriculum co-ordinators are supported by subject committees of staff from different year groups. This not only improves a co-ordinator's overview but also gives less experienced staff insight into management roles and supports their professional development.

10. At the time of the last inspection the governing body was not working as a cohesive and well-organised team and that impinged on their management of the school. Since that time they have worked very hard to develop their roles and responsibilities and now form a knowledgeable and effective body. They fulfil all their statutory duties and manage the school very well, sharing the commitment of the headteacher and staff to high standards in the context of a Christian ethos. They are closely involved with the school's target setting procedures and compare their standards carefully with those of other schools, understanding its strengths and knowing what it needs to do to improve. Governors are active in supporting the headteacher in his drive to improve provision and standards, sometimes seeking funding from outside the school to achieve this. They are concerned about the low level of funding for the school and work hard to ensure that they get the best value that they can for their pupils.

11. Overall, the headteacher, staff and governing body form a united team that promotes high standards effectively.

Teaching is good for all pupils, particularly in the basic skills of English and mathematics.

12. Teaching is good throughout the whole school and particularly so in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In the 35 lessons observed teaching was always at least satisfactory. In 49 percent of lessons teaching was good and in 23 percent it was very good. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils, expecting them to work hard, behave well and achieve as much as they can and this promotes good learning. They have a clear focus on helping pupils to attain the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science and the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is particularly good. At the time of the last inspection there was inconsistency in the quality of teaching, particularly for the pupils aged five to seven, where a third was unsatisfactory. Staff changes and professional development have significantly improved this situation.

13. Teaching of the children in the reception classes is consistently good. Teachers and nursery nurses have a good knowledge of the new curriculum for this age group. They form an effective team, planning carefully together to provide a stimulating range of practical activities. Some activities are directed but children are also encouraged to develop independence by choosing for themselves from a carefully selected range. Teachers are careful to give children many opportunities for listening and talking. As the inspection was held very early in the year, when some children were only in their second week of full-time schooling, staff were concentrating on improving social and emotional skills, helping children to understand the classroom and breaktime procedures and supporting them in new experiences. Relationships with children and their parents are very good and children quickly settle into the school's routines.

14. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is of consistently good quality throughout the school. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and plan carefully together in year-group teams to promote pupils' achievement. The way in which classes are organised and the levels of support staffing for pupils who are lower attainers or have special educational needs enables teachers to focus on particular groups of pupils. Some have developed particular expertise with certain groups of pupils and promote very good learning within those groups, particularly in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They make good use of assessment information to target pupils and concentrate on the skills that they need, providing a wide range of interesting activities to meet the lesson targets. For example in Year 6, pupils enjoy their literacy lessons when comparing and contrasting different ways of presenting Shakespeare's plays, including cartoon adaptations.

15. Teachers give lively introductions and involve pupils well by asking questions skilfully. Pupils know exactly what it is that they are expected to learn and what they are expected to do by the end of the lesson. They are motivated to learn, settle to work quickly, concentrate well, and make good progress. There are very constructive relationships between staff and pupils.

16. Teachers and support staff treat their pupils with respect and manage them quietly and calmly. They promote personal development well, although, particularly in Key Stage 2, not all provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge independently.

17. The systems of planning and assessment have been improved and teachers implement these very effectively to promote pupil achievement. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when not all teachers used their assessment information to promote good learning. The excellent resources in the new computer suite and the use of a specialist assistant, who provides a staff training and teaching support considerably enhances the quality of teaching in information and communication technology.

18. Overall, teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

19. The school has faced a large rise in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with statements of their needs. (From 2 pupils two years ago to 19 currently) It has managed this increase very well and set up a strong structure for their support. This system is flexible and is varied from year-to-year depending on the needs of the different year groups.

20. There is good provision in terms of the numbers and quality of support teachers and assistants who work with pupils in the classroom and in small groups withdrawn for part of the day. They work closely with class teachers so that, as far as is possible these pupils complete the same topics as the others. Relationships are very good and staff have high expectations of their pupils. They promote good progress towards pupils' personal targets.

21. A mixed-age booster class for Years 1 and 2 supports lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and this promotes their progress in basic literacy and numeracy well, whilst allowing the other teachers to concentrate on average and higher attaining pupils. Pupils from the booster class are then re-integrated into their year group classes in Year 3, where they then get extra support in small groups if necessary.

22. In Years 3 to 6 a range of teachers and classroom assistants provide effective support for each year group. Grouping of pupils in Years 5 and 6, on the basis of their attainment levels, and the very effective use of particular teachers' skills promote good progress. Work is well targeted to pupils' needs and pupils work on the same topics as other pupils, albeit at their own level.

23. In the last few years there have been some difficulties and delays in the diagnosis and provision for the pupils with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. This is not entirely within the school's control and strenuous efforts have been made to provide for these pupils, within the school's own expertise. This has often been successful. For example, the work of one of the current Year 6 pupils shows that she is already attaining the levels expected at the end of the year. Whilst the problem is now almost resolved the school has committed some of its training budget for the special educational needs co-ordinator to undertake specialist training.

24. The co-ordinator is experienced and skilled in special educational needs and has time allowed to fulfil her role. She teaches small groups in Year 3 and manages provision across the whole school very effectively. There is good liaison with supporting agencies to ensure that specialist additional staff are well used. Overall, the management of special educational needs is a strength of the school and promotes good progress for pupils.

The school's Christian ethos permeates its life. Relationships are very good and pupils are cared for well.

25. The school's ethos is firmly rooted in its Christian values, which underpin the provision for pupils' welfare and personal development.

26. Children in the reception year are well supported by adults and other pupils. They quickly and happily settle into school life. Other pupils grow in confidence and self esteem and develop good attitudes to school. The quality of relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff is a strength of the school. All pupils are valued and the staff treat them with respect and work hard to support their achievement. Pupils respond well to staff and co-operate well together when working in groups, sharing and taking turns. They listen to each other politely and respect others' points of view.

27. There is a strong moral code, based on Christian values which promotes very good behaviour and pupils know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. High standards are expected and achieved in a quiet and calm way. In the dining room and playgrounds, which are small and over-crowded, the same high standard is evident and pupils are tolerant of each other in difficult circumstances. Parents and pupils have confidence in the school's ability to sort out any problems that arise.

28. The school provides a number of appropriate opportunities for social development, such as visits, links with the community and a residential visit for Year 6. However, the range of sporting activities which promote team spirit and contacts with other schools is very limited.

29. Pupils undertake a good variety of tasks that promote their sense of personal responsibility, such as caring for younger pupils or answering the telephone. However, older pupils do not have as much opportunity to undertake personal research and investigation as they could and this limits their progress in taking the initiative in organising their own learning.

30. All staff consistently apply the school's very good range of policies to support pupils, such as the health and safety, behaviour and child protection policies. The school is split between three buildings, with a footpath running through the middle and great care is taken to ensure that the accommodation is safe and secure.

31. Overall, good provision encourages pupils to concentrate on their learning and on achieving their best.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in information and communication technology are below average.

32. Attainment is below average because pupils have not had experience of all aspects of the subject. The school has just opened a new information and communication technology suite that provides excellent facilities for teaching and learning. The combination of the new suite, a new curriculum and a good programme of training for teachers is enhancing pupils' skills rapidly. As the inspection took place early in the school year this has not yet been sufficient to raise attainment to the level expected at age 11, although the pupils in Year 2 are close to the nationally expected levels for seven-year-olds.

33. The school has benefited from its inclusion in the Education Action Zone through a special grant to raise attainment in information and communication technology. Combined with the national grant that all schools receive, this has provided sufficient computers and teaching equipment to allow for whole class teaching of basic skills and knowledge. It also provides part of the cost of the school's specialist technician, who is currently training teachers and supporting teaching effectively.

34. Within classrooms there is some inconsistency in the use of computers, many of which are outdated. Different programs are in use, which can be confusing, especially for younger pupils. For older pupils there are some shortages of programs which involve problem solving or the control of events. Teachers do not use classroom computers in other subjects as much as they could and so pupils do not practise and apply their skills on a day-to-day basis. For example, pupils rarely enter data and produce graphs in mathematics and science. Future plans for the school include the upgrading and networking of classroom equipment to match that in the suite.

35. There are plans to extend the use of the suite to parents and the community in the evenings to help them help their children and develop their own skills.

The provision of opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned in solving problems or in personal investigation is inconsistent throughout the school.

36. Pupils learn a very good level of knowledge and skills and, at age 11, they attain high standards in the results of national tests. During the inspection little evidence was seen of pupils consolidating their understanding and extending their own thinking by applying these skills and knowledge in personal investigation, particularly in mathematics and science. Progress is good for all pupils but it could be even further enhanced by a more consistent approach to providing opportunities for pupils to make decisions, organise their own work and solve problems independently, drawing on what they have learned. For example, in mathematics pupils learn how to collect information and present it in a range of graphs but do not consider how these skills can be used effectively when analysing their own data in science.

37. This situation is also apparent in information and communication technology. Pupils make good progress in learning skills in the computer suite but these are not regularly applied in the classroom. Whilst it is recognised that some of the computers are outdated it is felt that more use could be of them in a range of subjects.

The physical development of the youngest children and the range of sports and competitive team games.

38. The school is a victim of its own success in that, because it has grown considerably over the last few years, extension work has been necessary. Whilst most of this is spacious and attractive the hall is too small for the numbers of pupils in the school, there is no secure outdoor area for the youngest pupils and the playgrounds are too small.

39. The hall is used by all classes for physical education and although it provides adequately for the younger pupils, the pressure on the timetable means they only have one period a week allotted. For older pupils the hall is barely adequate for large apparatus work. The hall is also used as a dining room for the whole school and the cramped conditions spoil the social aspect of lunchtimes, with pupils having to rush through their meals.

40. There are two playing fields within walking distance of the school and there used to be a good programme of games lessons and team sports, including after-school clubs. However, because the fields are not fenced and are constantly fouled by dogs, with no facilities on site for pupils to be cleaned up, the headteacher and governors have taken a decision not to use them. This means that, currently, there are poor facilities for teaching athletics or team games such as football, rugby and cricket. This not only limits the physical education curriculum but also reduces the range of out-of-school sports clubs offered. Teachers work effectively in teaching good games skills but pupils do not have the chance to apply these in competitive matches. Governors are in the process of obtaining resources from outside the school to provide for fencing and changing facilities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. In order to build on already high standards the school should:
- (1) raise standards in information and communication technology by fully implementing the National Curriculum and providing more opportunities to apply the skills learned in all subjects;
 - (2) develop a consistent approach to providing opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge in independent investigation and problem solving, particularly in mathematics and science;
 - (3) provide for the full range of physical development for the children in the reception classes;
 - (4) provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in competitive sports.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	49	29	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.
NB Figures are affected by rounding and may not add up to 100.

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)	N/a	472
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	61

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	35	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	29	31
	Girls	27	27	28
	Total	56	56	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	88 (93)	92 (89)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	32	28
	Girls	27	28	28
	Total	56	60	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	94 (89)	88 (92)
	National	82 (81)	86 (86)	87 (86)

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
		1999	37	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	33	36
	Girls	24	26	28
	Total	56	59	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (85)	89 (90)	97 (92)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	34	35
	Girls	24	26	28
	Total	57	60	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (74)	91 (84)	95 (73)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	393
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	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)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.2
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	727795
Total expenditure	715579
Expenditure per pupil	1523
Balance brought forward from previous year	15887
Balance carried forward to next year	28103

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	472
Number of questionnaires returned	167

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	3	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	36	3	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	37	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	43	12	3	6
The teaching is good.	65	32	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	45	9	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	29	7	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	23	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	43	47	7	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	39	1	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	25	30	9	15

NB Figures are affected by rounding and may not add up to 100.

Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting and in comments on questionnaires a very small group of parents of pupils with specific learning difficulties expressed concern about delays in diagnosis of dyslexia and specialist teaching for their children.

A few parents expressed concern that too much time was spent on English and mathematics and too little on other subjects such as art and music.