

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSELEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Moseley

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103398

Headteacher: Dr J Burton

Reporting inspector: John Lilly
12487

Dates of inspection: 5 – 6 December 2000

Inspection number: 224763

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oxford Road Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev H Osborne
Date of previous inspection:	29 April – 1 May 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moseley School is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school of average size. There are 226 boys and girls between the ages of four and eleven. The school serves an area of Birmingham with mixed housing and a local community that represents many cultures and faiths. Most pupils come from families that, in social and economic terms, are significantly more favoured than the national average. There are very few pupils eligible for free school meals. Most children join the school with above average attainment, although the range of attainment has become wider over recent years. The proportion of pupils from families with minority ethnic heritages is slightly higher than average. A small number of pupils can speak languages other than English but, for most, English is their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average, although the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Need is above average. The school's aims include the promotion of a Christian ethos within which pupils can become independent and life-long learners, and give priority to the creative arts, sport, and partnership with parents and the community. The current school development plan is comprehensive and priorities include improvements in provision for the Foundation Stage and information technology.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school because staff do most things very well and many things excellently. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and the school is very well managed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and all the staff work as a very strong and close-knit team, and share complete commitment to raising standards even further. Staff have extremely high expectations of their own performance, and reflect this in their very high expectations of the pupils. Teaching is consistently very good and the curriculum provides a rich and varied programme of learning. Pupils make very good progress throughout the school and their standards of attainment by the time they are eleven are extremely high. Provision for the pupils' personal development is very good. This is a highly effective school and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership, and governors and staff in their management roles provide very good support for continued development.
- Teaching is very good, and enables very good learning and progress.
- Plans for improvement are guided by very effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, based upon very comprehensive and accurate assessment.
- There is a broad, balanced, rich and highly relevant range of learning opportunities.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Very good provision for the care, welfare and guidance of pupils.

What could be improved

- The further involvement of parents in the learning of their children.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement in standards since the previous inspection (April 1996) has been very good, and school has addressed with determination the following areas identified by that inspection. Standards of attainment in all years are now high and extremely high by the time pupils are eleven. Management is much improved and is very good. This improvement is well informed and supported by accurate assessment, and systematic and frequent monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. Teachers are well aware of the standard each pupil should attain, and ensure that pupils know what they need to achieve. The curriculum is very well planned and is broad, balanced and relevant; pupils of all levels of ability find their work challenging, exciting and worthwhile. Teaching is consistently very good. The school has significantly increased opportunities to build the partnership between home and school, but there is room for further development. The many strengths mean that the school is very well placed for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A*	A*	A*	A*
Mathematics	A*	A*	A*	A*
Science	A*	A*	A*	A*

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

By the time pupils are eleven, the trend in improvement over recent years matches the national average, and improvement in science has been particularly good. These extremely high standards attained are mainly due to the very high proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5. The school's targets for future years are appropriate and ambitious, and include targets for the very high Level 6. By the time pupils are seven, standards of attainment overall have tended to remain the same, although in reading they have slightly declined. In 2000, standards in reading and writing were well above the national average, and above this average in mathematics. Standards were well above the average for similar schools in writing, above in reading, and in line in mathematics. Since current children when they join the school tend to have slightly lower attainment than in previous years, this apparent decline hides the fact that the progress of pupils by the time they are seven, has improved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils come to school extremely enthusiastically and are very keen to learn and do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and at play times. There is a marked lack of oppressive behaviour and pupils are extremely determined to care for and value others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are warm and very positive. Pupils grow into very responsible, perceptive and independent young people.
Attendance	Attendance overall is very good.

The very effective teaching develops the pupils' very good attitudes and their determination to succeed. Staff teach pupils to think for themselves and to be responsible for their own decisions. Teachers guide the few pupils who find it difficult to behave, firmly yet lovingly, and the behaviour of these pupils improves. Particularly marked, both within and beyond lessons, are the very positive relationships between pupils of different cultures, and adults provide fine examples for the pupils to follow.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very 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 throughout the school is very good, and equally good in each class and across subjects. Of the lessons observed, all were taught at least well, and almost three-quarters very well or excellently. There was excellent teaching in more than a tenth of lessons. Teachers plan very effectively with clear and challenging objectives. They provide a stimulating range of learning opportunities that are well suited to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those of very high ability. Numeracy and literacy are taught very effectively, particularly when developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills. The key to the very good progress made by pupils is the way teachers use skilful questioning to make pupils think for themselves and work very hard on their own and collaboratively with others. This teaching enables pupils to achieve very high standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and highly relevant to pupils' present and future lives.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported both within classes and also through very focused small groups. Their individual education plans are useful, practical and to the point, and these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	A significant minority of pupils speak other languages as well as English. Teachers are very conscious of their needs and provide positive support. As they move through the school, these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision overall is very good, with excellent provision for moral development. The stimulating, challenging and Christian ethos of the school ensures that pupils develop as balanced, confident and independent young people. The fine role models provided by staff, the very good assemblies and direct teaching make important contributions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes very good provision for the care, welfare and guidance of pupils. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are excellent.

The curriculum offers a rich learning experience for the pupils and carefully planned visits, visitors to the school and school productions significantly enrich the learning. The school offers opportunities to sing in a choir, learn to play instruments and take part in an orchestra, and play sports outside lessons. There is also a French club provided privately that attracts a fee. However, the range of these activities is too restricted and misses opportunities, for example to extend the pupils' learning with computers or, as suggested by a parent, drama. In particular, the current provision misses opportunities to provide for those pupils who have more restricted opportunities outside school, and those with particular talents. The school has significantly improved the opportunities for parents to play an involved part in the education of their children. These include helpful homework books, frequent consultation evenings and good daily access to teachers. The large majority of parents regard the school very highly, but a minority of parents remain very critical of the school. This causes anxieties for both teachers and parents. This atmosphere of misunderstanding mars an otherwise very good picture. It hinders future improvement and damages the day-by-day life and work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent and very strong leadership for both staff and pupils. She is expertly supported by the deputy headteacher, and by skilled and determined work by other staff in their management roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide good guidance for the school, particularly in sustaining its Christian ethos. They have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is highly reflective and managers and teachers evaluate their performance with rigorous precision. They share complete commitment to continuous improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Annual revenue is invested prudently and appropriately. Governors have sensible plans for its use to enhance the provision of the school and improve standards.

The school has adequate accommodation to meet the needs of the pupils, and has and is developing very well the buildings and grounds to provide an even better place in which to teach and learn. The library provides very good support for learning. Resources, in the main, are of at least good range and quality, with the exception of the satisfactory outside play areas for children at the Foundation Stage (the reception class) and provision for information and communication technology. Staff are well qualified and of adequate number to meet the demands of the curriculum.

The strong leadership of the headteacher is the fundamental reason why standards are so high and improvement has been so rapid. This is a school that learns how to increase the value it offers by asking advice and comparing its performance with other effective schools. Staff rarely defend current practice if it requires changing. However, governors miss opportunities to increase through training and external advice their own effectiveness and, consequently, the value for money offered by the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, behave well and develop in maturity. • Their children are expected to do their best. • Their children are well taught and make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistency and effectiveness of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The quality of reports. • The relationship and partnership between home and school.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. As to parents' concerns, inspectors find that teachers use homework satisfactorily to extend the pupils' learning, but not as well as other aspects of their teaching. The range of clubs and activities outside lessons has recently improved and is now satisfactory. However, the provision does not match the high quality offered within other areas of the school's work. Reports to parents are satisfactory, but some do not provide sufficient guidance as to how pupils may improve. The school works hard to build a partnership with parents and the relationship with parents has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Even so, this essential partnership still offers a significant area for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher provides excellent leadership, and governors and staff in their management roles provide very good support for continued development.

1. The headteacher provides excellent leadership both for staff and for pupils, and a very fine example to follow. She supports this by skilled management and a style that welcomes open discussion, and by spreading her influence by always being around the school, encouraging staff and pupils alike. Underpinning this leadership is a very firm commitment to the aims and values of the school, and to achieving the highest standards. She delegates responsibilities with great care and a perceptive awareness of people's strengths and weaknesses. This has allowed the experienced and expert deputy headteacher to make a major contribution in such areas as assessment, behaviour management and collective worship, as well as co-ordinating the work of all staff. Similarly, subject leaders and the co-ordinator for special educational needs work closely with others and also individually to improve provision in their areas and to the benefit of the school as a whole. As a consequence, communication in the school is good, and discussions businesslike and productive. There is complete commitment to improvement.
2. The management of the school monitors planning, assessment information and teaching, and these procedures provide a strong and valid foundation for helpful advice on what works well and what needs improvement. As a result of all the above, staff have a very clear understanding of the direction in which the school is moving and standards that need to be achieved. They work extremely hard in aspects of teaching, and this, at times, is why they miss other opportunities, for example providing a better range of outside-class clubs. There is a marked consistency of high quality learning from year to year and across the various subjects, and this is a key reason why pupils make very good progress and develop very well as people.
3. Governors have previously chosen to maintain large class sizes of a single age group in each year, and use support teachers, including the deputy headteacher, to enhance teaching when classes become very large. They are reviewing this policy. The current strategy is effective, and a significant way of enriching the pupils' learning. However, it is most effective when the class teacher and support teacher work in a very integrated way. The progress of pupils is most rapid and secure when the two teachers enable pupils to work as two groups, either to increase the opportunity for attention to each pupil, or to address a single level of ability. This allows pupils to work in the size of group that research suggests supports the most effective learning. It is worth noting that teachers manage the learning in large classes extremely well even when support is not available, for example in a dance lesson.
4. Governors play a full part in the management of the school and are very supportive of the headteacher. They have a satisfactory awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but have plans to improve this aspect of their responsibilities. Together with staff, they have had a positive influence on improving development planning for both the medium and long term, and in sustaining the Christian ethos of the school. As a consequence, the school development plan is much improved since the previous inspection. It is well focused, provides a clear yet

challenging action plan and defined direction, and has a specified part for each colleague to play. This has led to very good planning of the curriculum. The development plan is effectively related to prudent and carefully considered budgeting for expenditure in each year, and the budget provides well for the future. Even so, until recently there has been insufficient investment in information and communication technology and play areas for children at the Foundation Stage. The governors have accumulated a very large financial surplus as a result of very cautious planning concerning, in particular, the refurbishment and enhancement of the school's accommodation. Potential problems have been recently resolved and considerable and immediate investment is in-hand, for example for information and communication technology.

5. The governors have yet to implement sufficiently systematic and rigorous ways of monitoring and evaluating standards within the day-to-day life and work of the school, and are too reliant on the, albeit very clear and detailed, reports provided by the headteacher. Similarly, considering the very daunting responsibilities facing governors in all schools, the governors do not take full advantage of the training and consultancy offered by, for example, the local education authority.
6. The school meets current statutory requirements for the appraisal of teachers, and this along with other evaluation leads to well-planned staff development. Preparations to meet statutory requirements for performance management are in-hand. The school has plans for effective implementation of these statutory requirements. Even so, overall, the quality of provision for performance management offers an area for further development. This is the next step forward from the previous arrangements for staff development that have been a major reason for improvement in standards. Some parents are concerned at the way training outside school has caused their children's class teacher to be replaced by another teacher. To some extent this disruption has been the result of government initiatives and other essential training. Whenever possible, the school uses other teachers in the school to replace the class teacher or, by planning ahead, employ suitable supply teachers. On the evidence of this inspection, whilst not ideal, these absences of class teachers do not significantly harm the learning. Some parents were concerned over the number of teachers leaving the school. Inspectors do not find the turnover in staff higher than the average for other schools.

Teaching is very good, and enables very good learning and progress.

7. Teaching is at the heart of the school's effectiveness and much improved since the previous inspection both in consistency and quality overall. Its strength lies in the way it is equally effective in every year and in each subject. Of course there are differences, but the difference is one of consistently very good teaching compared with consistently excellent teaching. All teaching is at least good, and the large majority is very good or excellent.
8. Teachers plan their lessons extremely well and in great detail, ensuring they plan for pupils of all abilities. Learning objectives are precisely focused, very challenging and shared with pupils so that each one knows what they need to achieve. Teachers then organise extremely imaginative ways of learning that engage the interest of pupils, often bringing together many areas of the curriculum, for example in a very effective literacy lesson planned around geographic symbols on a pirate's treasure map. Teachers use extremely skilled questioning to help pupils build their understanding of their own learning, as in a superb lesson planning for 'the best' writing for a school newspaper. Such teachers firmly but caringly help all pupils

identify good features in writing that can then be improved, and then look for weaknesses to address. The unit of work with the newspaper provides an example of the very effective use of a support teacher to help a group with their questioning skills.

9. Teachers are excellent managers of learning and behaviour. Using very good assessment and their very good knowledge of the pupils, they form pupils into groups that will work well together. Sometimes the more able help the less able, and often pupils of similar ability work effectively together. Support teachers and assistants work very effectively with such groups. Teachers continually help pupils to gain the skills and work habits they need to work on their own or in independent groups. This confident independence is a strength of the learning, and inspectors often heard pupils evaluating their work and sharing ideas for improvement. This was a central aspect of an excellent dance lesson where groups worked highly independently but the pupils' learning was always underpinned by the tips and examples provided by the teacher. As in most lessons, learning bowled along with exciting pace. This inspired pupils to even greater effort. This strong feature is also evident in the very effective planning of learning at the Foundation Stage (reception class) when children move naturally between imaginative play in the 'play-house' to free-play weighing and measuring sand, and then to more structured learning in reading, creative art and design, and numeracy.
10. Teachers build pupils' speaking and listening skills with great skill, and this forms the basis for very good reading and creative writing. They drive the learning forward by very helpful comments that enable pupils to see why they succeed and how they can overcome problems. This skill is also very evident in the teaching of numeracy. Consequently, pupils concentrate very well and stick at a task even when they find it difficult. This is due in part to the skills they gain from the reception class onwards, and in part to the natural enthusiasm and excitement the teachers bring to the learning.
11. Teachers mark work conscientiously and add helpful comments that tell pupils how they can improve. This marking is satisfactory, but there are ways in which it could be even more effective, for example by always making clear why pupils succeed and what they need to learn so as to improve. Teachers set homework regularly and set tasks that are interesting and worthwhile. This aspect of teaching is satisfactory. However, inspectors agree with the parents who feel that it is not an area of teaching that is equally good in each class. Tasks are rightly set to be completed over time but, especially in the senior years, homework is not set on a sufficiently frequent basis to build the routines that pupils will need to gain before they move on to secondary education.
12. Some parents were concerned that sanctions for unsatisfactory behaviour were sometimes harsh or, when applied to a class as a whole, unfair. Inspectors did not see this. Indeed the opposite was the case, and control was based upon recognition of good work and behaviour, and firm expectations when behaviour became silly or detracted from the learning.
13. Pupils of different levels of ability make equally good progress. Those with special educational needs are very well and precisely supported, sometimes by very effective work with the specialised teacher. The skilled way the teachers group pupils and match the work to each learning need helps those of average ability make very good progress, and yet the more able very rarely feel the work is too easy, and gain considerable satisfaction from attaining very high standards. The school has several

pupils who are extremely able, and they make good progress. The school has innovative plans for improving provision for these pupils even further through use of mentors. A significant minority of pupils can speak languages other than English and they are, in the main, well supported. Most are completely fluent in English. However, the language development in English of a very small number of younger pupils is less than other pupils, even though these pupils can speak English sufficiently well to converse in everyday terms with others. Not all staff understand fully how best to handle this situation and specialist training is needed.

14. At the core of this very good teaching and learning is the way that teachers love and value each child equally, even when they pose problems, and the way pupils value and respect each other and their teachers. There is a very strong commitment to shared endeavour and joyous celebration of success.

Plans for improvement are guided by very effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, based upon very comprehensive and accurate assessment.

15. This is an aspect of the school's work that is much improved since the previous inspection, and this improvement makes a significant contribution to raising standards. The school has very well organised procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, and then using the information to track the progress of each pupil. Staff then evaluate this progress, writing down advice to themselves as to how they can move pupils forward more quickly. This allows them to evaluate and improve their own teaching, and has been a major reason for improvements in the quality of teaching. Assessment in other subjects is usually as good, but not necessarily written down or recorded. The managers of these subjects are implementing improved record keeping and ways of agreeing standards very effectively, for example in information and communication technology.
16. The improvements in teaching and management have led to great clarity of learning objectives, carefully adapted to the needs of each level of pupils' ability. Consequently, each pupil understands what he or she needs to achieve both in each lesson and over time. These targets are written down and linked to ways that the teacher and pupil agree will help them achieve their goals. This approach already makes a significant contribution to the very good progress made by pupils, but offers opportunities for possible further development, for example through greater involvement of parents and the development of more celebratory records of achievement.
17. In parallel, the school has developed systematic monitoring of teachers' work through checking of planning and assessment data, and observation of teaching. This means that teachers receive helpful advice on how to improve. The school has plans to extend even further this professional learning, so that everyone plays a part, including governors. Further coherence within performance management procedures and staff development as a whole offer an area for possible development.

There is a broad, balanced, rich and highly relevant range of learning opportunities.

18. Curriculum planning has greatly improved since the previous inspection. There are now very good planning documents that guide teachers over time and for each day. The good assessment procedures described above enable teachers to know not only what needs to be taught, but also the standard each pupil needs to reach. Similarly, these plans show how each section of learning leads to the next, and how productive links can be made across subjects. For example, within a single lesson on health education, the teachers seized opportunities to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills, numeracy skills and, through poster work, art and design. This very good planning ensures that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and for religious education are met, and appropriate priority and time is given to each subject. A significant strength of the planning and subsequent teaching is the way teachers understand the curriculum as a whole. They use learning in one subject to support learning in another, whilst underpinning every learning activity with learning of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and increasingly information and communication technology. Inspectors observed the way teachers shared the objectives of lessons with pupils, and explained how each topic fitted with their other work, and how the content of the lesson was relevant to their present and future lives. Effective use of 'circle time' reinforces these messages. The school's development towards and achievement of the Basic Skills Quality Award has made a significant contribution to these high standards.
19. The planning does not stop at ensuring that everything is in the right place, but moves on to choose innovative ways of making the learning come alive. For example, in a class where Egypt was the current topic, drama using masks and dance linked to music from the Arab world not only enriched and deepened the learning but also made a major contribution to religious education and the personal development of the pupils. Similarly, procedures to improve behaviour and build pupils' social and personal skills are very effectively woven into the warp and weft of each lesson.
20. The wider life of the school underpins the effectiveness of the curriculum. Many opportunities are used to enrich the learning, for example the use of stairwells to provide an art exhibition or stimulate interest in astronomy, the way information and communication technology provides easy and individual access by pupils to the usefulness and joy of books, and the sense of excitement in displays that celebrates pupils' achievement and spurs them on to learn more. 'Dr Burton's Challenges' are a very good example.
21. The school arranges many visits outside school, including a residential experience, and rich programme of visitors to the school, for example a governor speaking about care of teeth, and a teacher from a local school about their Jewish faith. In a meeting with community partners, it was evident that the community makes a major contribution to the pupils' learning, and is pleased to do so. Similarly, school events, performances and assemblies make a major contribution to the pupils' learning. In an infant class, the pupils were looking forward to the nativity play with eager anticipation.
22. Last year, the range of clubs and activities provided by the school was very limited. More recently, the school has provided opportunities for pupils to take part in a choir and an orchestra, and there is an on-going programme of competitive sporting fixtures with other schools. Even though present provision is satisfactory, almost 40

per cent of parents want provision to be improved. Some parents consider provision for sport requires improvement. Inspectors find it satisfactory. Inspectors agree that, although provision is satisfactory, it is not sufficiently wide or varied to meet the needs of pupils in full. The school misses important opportunities to enhance the pupils' learning, social skills and ability to commit themselves over time to a chosen activity. Similarly, the limited provision reduces the opportunities for pupils who may not have the rich experiences outside school enjoyed by the majority of pupils, and those who have particular gifts and talents. There is very good provision for learning musical instruments, but this attracts a fee as does the orchestra and the privately provided French club. The school has said to parents that, if the family's economic situation makes taking part impossible, the school will pay for any activity offered. Even so, several parents feel there remains a hidden disadvantage for the less advantaged pupils. In a school where inclusion and equality of opportunity are so much a part of the school's mission and values, these views need considering.

Very good provision for pupils' personal development.

23. The high standards reported by the previous inspection have been maintained and further improved. Provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is very good and that for moral development is excellent.
24. The Christian mission of the school is embedded in every side of the life and work of the school. Staff help pupils to gain a sense of reflective meaning and purpose in their lives, and consider the responsibilities and joy that belief in a creator God implies. Some suggest that such meaning is 'caught not taught', and if this the case, pupils in this school 'catch' the importance of faith and belief from the fine role models their teachers provide. This comes through in the way adults value each pupil, respect their views and conditions, and express this through the active prayer life of the school. Regular prayer times during each day are reflective and meaningful. This religious experience is brought together in full school assemblies, and also the very good class assemblies that are very effectively linked to sharing of concerns during 'circle time'. Religious education is taught effectively, although sometimes there is over-emphasis on knowledge and understanding rather than the essential critical reflection, response and expression. Even so, the religious education programme enables pupils to gain a good understanding of not only the Christian faith but also other major religions witnessed in the local community. A few pupils have faiths other than Christianity, and yet they are fully involved in the religious life of the school. Their difference is valued and appreciated, but opportunities are missed to celebrate their active but different faiths more individually. The teachers make good use of pupils' high standards in speaking, listening and creative imaginative writing to underpin and deepen the provision.
25. Provision for moral development is excellent. This is due in part to high and clear expectations as to behaviour, and the careful use of sanctions and rewards. However, equally significant is the way teachers always explain and justify enforcing moral standards, and do so with a powerful concern for fairness. Some parents felt this is not always the case, but it was the case during the inspection. Classes agree and commit themselves to class rules, and these discussions colour the life of each class. In this way, pupils from the reception class onwards learn what is right and wrong and, more significantly, how to apply these values in their own lives.
26. Provision for social development is very good and closely related to the provision for moral and cultural development. Pupils learn how achieving and just societies work by playing important parts in the social life of the school. They learn by achieving

challenging objectives and actively ensuring equal quality of life for all. Even young pupils have responsibilities to undertake, for example ensuring drinks and sandwiches are kept safe. A feature of these duties is the way the class learns how this is essential if a pupil with a food allergy is to remain healthy. Older pupils have duties as monitors that they take very seriously. A school council has been instituted and this body makes an important contribution to pupils' understanding of democracy and the rights and responsibilities of a citizen. The provision is enhanced not only through subjects such as physical education, history and geography, but through literacy when discussing, for example, the needs of a local rugby club and the powerful learning within the personal, social and health education programme. Contacts with the local community help set learning firmly in a wider context, as does the residential visit for older pupils.

27. Provision for cultural development is very good. Art, music, dance and drama play an important part in the life of the school, enhanced by special days involving the whole school. Throughout the curriculum many opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect deeply on human achievement and creativity in many cultures. Pupils gain a good introduction to a good range of British and European culture, and this is effectively balanced by introductions to world cultures, not least in the well-planned music and religious education programme. Currently, major British writers and dramatists are not given sufficient prominence in literacy learning in the upper school, yet even so, pupils' free reading is wide and challenging. The school has an ethos of celebration of cultural and creative achievement, including the achievements of pupils in their home communities.

Very good provision for the care, welfare and guidance of pupils.

28. Provision overall is very good. The high standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and further enhanced. The school works hard and systematically to ensure every pupil has equal opportunity to succeed, and staff continually ask themselves whether anyone has been missed and what more can they, as teachers, do. Consequently, girls and boys of differing ability, including those with special educational needs and those of very high ability, make good progress in their learning and personal development. To improve on these already high standards of care, the school is planning to use the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative to improve provision even further for pupils with particular gifts and talents. However, inspectors agree with the small number of parents who feel that in the drive to achieve very high standards, and in a school where the majority of parents want their children to progress to selective or very academic private schools, the needs of children from homes that are not as favoured as the majority may be missed. For example, in providing outside lessons activities that attract a fee and offering an insufficient range of activities after school, these aspects of the school's current provision pose areas of potential disadvantage for some pupils. The staff developing provision for information and communication technology are aware that, although most pupils have computers at home, a small number do not. They are planning ways of addressing this problem.
29. It is in this aspect of the school's performance that its strengths are best seen as a whole. Pupils' academic and personal development is monitored continuously and with precision, and this leads to improved teaching, support and guidance. Good attendance is promoted effectively, but basically pupils come to school enthusiastically and are punctual for lessons because they feel their schooling is very worthwhile. The procedures for building good behaviour and embedding the pupils' social and personal skills are excellent. This is because teachers are completely

consistent in the way they apply the very good school policies, using rich and varied ways to match support very precisely to the needs of each pupil, some of whom have significant emotional, behavioural and developmental problems. These strengths all operate within an ethos that not only promotes a civilised and caring approach to life, but also has zero tolerance of oppressive behaviour. Pupils feel very involved in ensuring a good quality of life for all.

30. Assessment is of high quality, and helps teachers and pupils too to see why they succeed, and what they need to do next so as to improve. This leads in turn to improvements in the curriculum and in provision for personal development. Statutory procedures for child protection are in place and very well understood by staff.
31. There are clear procedures for maintaining the health and safety of pupils, and good and appropriate support when they are unwell. Health education, physical education and science make major contributions to the pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to maintain their own health and safety, and positive guidance ensures that they put into practice what they learn.
32. Teachers very effectively use 'circle time' to help pupils to share and discuss their concerns and make sensible decisions that affect themselves and others. These 'circle times' are managed with great sensitivity and yet there is also strong attention to points raised by pupils. These sessions are linked to collective worship in ways that significantly enrich the power and purpose of both activities.
33. Topics such as sex education and the misuse of drugs are taught very effectively, and are linked very securely to provision for moral and social development. The level of short-term exclusions was high in the previous academic year, even though these exclusions were considered appropriately and caringly. Prior to that year, the level of exclusions had been very low and there had been no exclusions in the term of the inspection. Pupils are well supported when they join the school, and receive effective guidance in their preparations for secondary education.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The further involvement of parents in the learning of their children.

34. The school's partnership with parents and the relationship between home and school have improved significantly since the previous inspection. The large majority of parents value the school highly and they go out of their way to tell this to inspectors and more importantly the school. Parents have very high expectations of the school and very high aspirations for their children. This challenging support is a major asset available to the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented many initiatives to improve the relationship between home and school, and the involvement of parents in support of their children's learning. These moves have been successful, but governors, staff and even the most supportive parents feel there are still things to be done.
35. The school has a well-considered home-school agreement, but few of those people interviewed saw this as playing a central part in the work of the school. For example, although partnership with parents is a central part of the published aims of the school, effective implementation of the home-school agreement does not have a sufficiently high priority within the current school development plan, although it did carry high priority in the previous school development plan. This needs to be reviewed in the light of the higher than average proportion of parents showing their

concern over the effectiveness of the partnership with parents, and the very high proportion showing concern over the provision for outside-lessons activities. The school promoted a 'parents' forum', and parents told inspectors that following the previous inspection this group played a major role in building positive relationships between home and school, and with governors. However, currently this group is poorly attended and some parents feel it is overly dominated by the critical views of a minority of parents. Many parents feel this is an opportunity that is being lost, and believe it should be more a sharing between staff and parents of good ideas that would move the school forward, rather than simply a gathering of negative concerns to pass on to governors. A minority of parents feel that governors and the headteacher do not welcome ideas from parents, but inspectors do not find this to be the case. It is very evident that governors and senior management want the 'parents' forum' to become a major contributor to the school's future success.

36. The school has an efficiently developed homework policy, and pupils have homework diaries that form a satisfactory vehicle for communication between home and school. However, the policy is not implemented equally effectively in all classes, and inspectors agree with the significant number of parents who feel that homework remains an area for development. The tasks set for completion at home are, in the main, appropriate and usually engage the interest of pupils. However, in homework diaries, pupils often just note the area, for example 'literacy homework', rather than recording for themselves and their parents the content, point and purpose of the task. Some parents say they do not always find it easy to relate these entries to information given to pupils in other forms. For senior pupils, homework is not set frequently enough to build the routines pupils will need when progressing to secondary education. The diaries provide only limited opportunities for pupils and parents to reflect on the learning. The present homework diaries, whilst satisfactory, do not match in effectiveness the strategies often found in similarly very effective schools. Within the governors' and staff's commitment to increasing the value offered by the school through challenging the school's present practice, comparing with best practice elsewhere and consulting with others, homework and the procedures that support it offer an area for development.
37. Communication with parents is much improved since the previous inspection. There are regular and informative newsletters, and the school keep parents well informed as to the topics their children are studying. Parents say how much they value the easy access to class teachers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an 'open door' for parents and most value this approach. However, some feel the senior management does not always listen fully to the views of parents, and there is evidence that agreement between home and school is not always achieved. There are regular consultation evenings with parents, who value them highly. Parents also find the written reports on their children's progress helpful. However, inspectors agree with some parents who say that some reports do not make sufficiently obvious the level of attainment achieved, and do not set out with sufficient clarity ways in which the pupil can improve.
38. The school has a very active parent-teacher association, and four or five parents from each class frequently represent the views of parents to the main committee. A small number of parents provide much valued help in school. However, the number of these parents is smaller than in many similar schools. Parent governors make every attempt to reflect the views and concerns of parents.
39. Taking all the above, the school has made strenuous and determined attempts to build an effective partnership with parents, and to a large extent these initiatives have

been successful. However, many of the letters received by inspectors from parents, discussion at the parents' meeting, and results from the parents' questionnaire show that there is still work to be done.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. The school is already very effective and shows considerable commitment to further improvement. What follows does not highlight weaknesses but areas that should be improved. There is only one area of major focus (paragraph 41), and many of the minor issues listed in paragraph 42 are already present in the school's future plans.
41. To raise standards even further, governors and staff, in partnership with parents, should:
- (1) increase the involvement of all parents in their children's learning by:
- ensuring that effective implementation of the home-school agreement is given increased priority in improvement planning;
 - reviewing the implementation of homework policy and the format and use of homework diaries, seeking ways of gaining even greater value from this aspect of learning;
 - reviewing the function of the 'parents' forum', so that more parents see it as a sharing of ideas that will move the school forward;
 - reviewing present reports to parents, seeking ways that make more obvious the level of attainment achieved by pupils and clarifying what pupils need to do next so as to improve.

This section is best informed by reading the relevant paragraphs 34-40, as a whole. Paragraph 11 also raises issues to be considered.

42. Alongside consideration of the above, there are some minor issues and governors and staff should:

- improve the ways in which governors gain first-hand knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school; (Paragraph 5)
- improve provision for information and communication technology in line with current plans; (Paragraphs 4 and 5)
- improve outside play areas for pupils at the Foundation Stage in line with current plans; (Paragraphs 4 and 5)
- increase the range of outside-lessons clubs and activities in ways that guarantee access to all pupils; (Paragraph 22)
- seek ways to make the contribution of support teachers even more effective; (Paragraph 3)
- seek ways to assure the quality of performance management and wider staff learning and development, in line with current plans; (Paragraph 6 and 17)
- seek ways to ensure exclusions continue at the present low level. (Paragraph 33)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons or parts of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
13	58	29	0	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	226
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	6

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
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
		2000	22	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	20
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	36	36	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (96)	94 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	20	22
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	36	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	94 (91)	100 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	11
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	30	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (97)	94 (100)	94 (97)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (77)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	28	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (97)	94 (100)	94 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

One special educational needs male pupil was 'dis-applied' and did not take the tests and assessments. This depresses percentages at Key Stage 2.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	164
Any other minority ethnic group	33

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	32.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

	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	11	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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	472532
Total expenditure	442934
Expenditure per pupil	1885
Balance brought forward from previous year	77294
Balance carried forward to next year	106892

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

226

Number of questionnaires returned

114

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	50	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	43	15	5	1
The teaching is good.	68	27	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	46	14	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	32	11	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	32	45	13	8	3
The school is well led and managed.	45	39	10	4	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	44	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	46	21	17	3

When percentages do not total 100 this is due to 'rounding'.

Other issues raised by parents

- Some parents feel sanctions are sometimes imposed insensitively and with a lack of equity.
- Some parents find it difficult to discuss concerns with senior management.
- Some parents feel the school could do more to include pupils who may have different backgrounds or conditions from the norm.
- Some parents are concerned over the policy of maintaining large class sizes, and the use of support teachers who do not have class responsibilities.
- A few parents feel the school does not wish for high involvement by parents.

- A few parents were concerned at a perceived high turnover in staff, and the need for class teachers to take part in training, leaving their classes to be taught by others.

The inspection team investigated all concerns raised by parents, and their findings are included in the main report.