

INSPECTION REPORT

NICOL MERE SCHOOL

Ashton in Makerfield
Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106430

Headteacher: Mr W North

Reporting inspector: Mr D Cann
20009

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th November 2000

Inspection number: 225290

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Roman Road
Ashton in Makerfield
Wigan
Lancashire
Postcode: WN4 8DF

Telephone number: 01942 720871

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Dr C Wooff

Date of previous inspection: 25th - 29th November 1996

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REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

9

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

14

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

16

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

17

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Nicol Mere School is a school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years with 464 pupils (241 boys and 223 girls). Pupils live in the immediate area and are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Their attainment on entry is broadly average. Currently 55 pupils (12 per cent) are eligible for free school meals which is in line with the national average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is below average at 15 per cent but the number with statements is broadly average at 1.5 per cent. There is one pupil for whom English is a second language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Nicol Mere School provides a safe and caring environment in which pupils make good progress. Current pupils in Year 6 are attaining the nationally expected levels in English and exceeding them in mathematics and science. The school benefits from the sensitive leadership of the headteacher who works closely with teachers to maintain a good quality of education. Teaching is good and helps pupils to develop very good attitudes to school and learning. Pupils behave exceptionally well and relationships are very supportive. The school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of 11, pupils achieve good levels in mathematics and science. Strong foundations are laid in their first years of schooling and pupils progress well as they advance through the school.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers manage their classes very well and set high standards in what they expect pupils to achieve.
- Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. They apply themselves very well and develop very positive attitudes to learning. They receive clear guidance on moral and social issues which helps to develop good relationships throughout the school.
- The care and support of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in speaking and writing, especially at Key Stage 2.
- Use assessment information more effectively to set improvement goals for classes and individuals at Key Stage 2.
- Identify more clearly the targets and timescales in curriculum developments.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996 when four key areas for action were identified to maintain the school's good standard of education. Under the good leadership of the headteacher the school has addressed these effectively while also adapting to a significant increase in the numbers of pupils on roll. The roles of the co-ordinators have been well developed to ensure that schemes of work are in place and satisfactory progress has been made in monitoring teaching and learning. Teaching methods, timing and classroom organisation have been greatly improved and tasks are well structured with clear learning objectives. There has been an increase in the number of curriculum support staff. They are well deployed and fully involved in planning and recording pupils' work. The school has effective systems for evaluating its performance and is in a strong position to continue providing a good standard of education.

STANDARDS

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

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

During the period 1996 to 1999, pupils' attainment in tests at the age of 11 was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. In 2000, pupils' attainment was below average in English and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. The cohort contained a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, several of whom joined the school in Year 6. The attainment of current pupils in Year 6 indicates that pupils are achieving levels in line with national expectations in English and above expectations in mathematics and science. Their progress is sound in English and good in mathematics and science. By the age of seven, pupils attain levels which are above average in English, mathematics and science. By the age of five, pupils attain levels which are in line with the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils take a pride in the school and feel secure.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good both in class and at play-times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are friendly and relate very well with each other and staff. Pupils develop a mature attitude to their work and are keen to undertake responsibilities when they have opportunities to do so.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
27 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.

The quality of teaching is good, with 56 per cent of lessons judged to be good and 11 per cent judged to be very good. Teaching was of a similar high standard for all age groups. Teachers plan very well together and set out clearly what they want pupils to do and how they expect them to behave. Relationships are very good throughout the school and pupils respond extremely well to the business-like and purposeful atmosphere which teachers create in their classes. The teaching of literacy promotes good standards in reading and is being adapted to raise standards in writing. Pupils are good at listening but have relatively fewer opportunities for speaking and developing their confidence in using a wide range of vocabulary. In numeracy, teaching is very good at promoting pupils' understanding and skills in number work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers pupils a broad and balanced range of learning activities throughout the school although outdoor learning for pupils in the foundation stage is still limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils on the special educational needs register are supported very effectively both in class and in small groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, with particularly good guidance on moral and social issues.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good arrangements for monitoring pupils' welfare and their personal and academic development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership which ensures that the school maintains its commitment to improving standards. Management structures are sound and being adapted to make best use of all senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors keep themselves well informed about school developments and support the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at analysing its performance but does not yet establish targets for all development areas in sufficient detail.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of staffing and other resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifteen parents attended a meeting prior to the inspection and 125 questionnaires (27 per cent of those distributed) were returned for analysis.

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Children make good progress and are expected to work hard. • Behaviour is good and children are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about how their children are getting on. • Working more closely with parents. • A greater range of extra-curricular activities.

Parents are generally well pleased with the school's provision for their child's education. Of those who responded to the questionnaire, the great majority were pleased with the school but 32 per cent expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of out of school activities and 23 per cent of parents did not feel that the school kept them well informed about their children's progress. The school is aware of the concerns raised and is considering ways of improving communications with parents. While after-school clubs are limited the school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities at lunch-time as well as visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the age of 11, pupils achieve good levels in mathematics and science. Strong foundations are laid in their first years of schooling and pupils progress well as they advance through the school

1. Pupils' attainment in English tests at the end of Key Stage 2 has been well above average in the period 1996-1999 and they have made good progress through the school. In 2000, pupils' attainment in reading was in line with the national average but attainment in writing was below the national average and below the level achieved in similar schools. The lower level of attainment is attributable to the fact that 28 per cent of pupils were on the special educational needs register, several of whom joined the school during the year 1999-2000. Those pupils who had enjoyed continuous schooling throughout the key stage achieved levels which were in line with the national average and made sound progress overall.
2. Current pupils in Year 6 are achieving levels in reading which are above expectations and levels in writing which are in line with expectations. The school's records of pupils' reading indicates that they achieve levels at the end of Key Stage 1 which are above average and continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2. The records of writing tests indicate that while pupils make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 2 their progress year on year varies widely. Pupils attain levels at Key Stage 1 which are above average but have not always improved these sufficiently in Year 4. More teaching time is being allocated to the development of writing skills and current pupils are achieving levels which indicate that their progress is at least sound. The setting of pupils by ability generally promotes good progress among both higher attaining pupils and those on the special educational needs register.
3. By the end of Key Stage 1, current pupils attain levels in reading which are in line with the national average and their writing is above average. They read from a variety of texts and teachers monitor and record progress carefully. In writing, they present their work well and have good standards of handwriting. Pupils have a good command of punctuation and most construct sentences well. Spelling is in line with expectations. Pupils make good use of computers for writing stories. They are reminded to check their work and introduced to the idea of redrafting.
4. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils' listening skills develop very well. They are very attentive and listen carefully to instructions. In mathematics lessons, pupils respond well to good questioning by teachers in order to keep pace with mental arithmetic sessions. In science lessons, they carefully follow what each other say in discussion sessions. In an information and communication technology lesson, pupils followed precise directions on how to access a program and how the teacher wanted them to use it. They followed this by carrying out the set graphics task with a high degree of success and many proceeded to develop their own ideas and extend their skills further.
5. Children enter school with language skills which are broadly average and develop them well at the Foundation Stage. They quickly learn to listen to the adults in school and most are good at listening to each other. Teachers are good at leading discussion sessions with the class or groups of pupils and encourage pupils to develop their answers in full. There is much additional adult support in classes which helps pupils improve their spoken language. Teaching introduces children to writing and reading skills very effectively and they are beginning to recognise letters, sounds and some words with confidence.
6. In the period 1996-1999, pupils at Key Stage 2 attained levels in mathematics which were well above the national average and better than those achieved in similar schools. In 2000, pupils achieved levels in line with the national average and in line with those achieved in similar schools. Current pupils in Year 6 are achieving levels which are above those expected from pupils of a similar age. Pupils benefit from studying in ability

sets at Key Stage 2 which promotes the attainment of both higher and lower attainers. At Key Stage 1 in 2000, pupils attained levels which were well above the national average and well above those attained in similar schools. Throughout the period 1996-1999, pupils attained above average levels in Key Stage 1 tests.

7. Number skills are well developed in the Foundation Stage where pupils learn to order articles by size and use words to describe them such as huge, medium, small and tiny. They know their colours well and match bears of similar colour as well as making patterns and deciding which they prefer. Teaching is good at developing pupils' understanding that patterns can be based on both size and colour and the tasks set for them help them to count to 10 confidently. In whole class discussion, pupils recognise comparative expression such as big, bigger and biggest.
8. In Year 2, pupils order numbers confidently and have a good understanding of place value in two-digit figures. Teachers ask challenging questions to make pupils think and look carefully at units and tens so that they can order numbers up to 50. Tasks are well adapted to extend the learning of different pupils and higher attainers are given more difficult problems. A higher attaining pupil picked out the pattern in the numbers 7, 17 and 27 etc and clearly explained the sequence to the class
9. Pupils have good number skills and benefit from well-organised sessions of mental arithmetic. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the skills which they want pupils to develop and pace sessions well. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils successfully extended their skills for converting time from a 12 hour clock to expressions using the 24 hour clock. The teacher questioned pupils closely to gauge how well they understood the process and provided an appropriate range of tasks to challenge those who found it easy. Higher attaining pupils were given the task of planning an imaginary outing which they worked on independently and presented to the class in the concluding plenary session. In a well-paced Year 4 lesson, pupils demonstrated a good command of tables and were encouraged to share their ideas and methods of working in discussion. Teaching was particularly effective in building on pupils' previous learning. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils had a clear understanding of place value when they counted on and back in tens. They were confident in handling numbers up to 1,000 and responded well to the questions which the teacher asked, requiring them to look closely at different figures and identify the differences and similarities.
10. Pupils have a sound understanding of shape, space and measurement and apply their learning in work on symmetry and in identifying the different properties of triangles. They extend their mathematical skills effectively at both key stages by studying the size and shape of Egyptian buildings in history and recognising the shapes in Kandinsky's paintings. However, the development of mathematics is not yet consistently planned across other areas of the curriculum in order to extend pupils' skills in using and applying their knowledge. Pupils learn to handle data in carrying out surveys of pupils' likes and dislikes and they use information and communication technology to present their findings. In other lessons, computer programs are used satisfactorily to help pupils reinforce learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
11. In science at Key Stage 2, pupils attained levels which were well above the national average during the years 1996-1999 and levels which were well above those attained in similar schools. In 2000, pupils attained levels which were in line with the national average. Current pupils in Year 6 are attaining levels which are above expectations in terms of knowledge and in line with expectations in their investigative skills. In assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieved well above average levels in 1999 and average levels in 2000. Current Year 2 pupils are achieving levels which are in line with expectations.

12. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world well at the Foundation Stage. They investigate how plants grow and know that they need light and warmth. They work with a range of materials such as paint, modelling materials and construction kits and discover how to use them effectively. In role-play, children use a number of implements and re-enact encounters such as Goldilocks and the three bears. They use computers to aid their learning and develop basic skills well.
13. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of physical properties. They develop their investigative skills through work on light, its sources and how well it passes through different materials. Pupils have a sound knowledge of how to conduct a test and record their findings. They present good explanations as to why light does not pass through some materials but they do not have a good command of technical vocabulary. Teachers identify clear objectives in their planning and share these with pupils. They organise resources well and encourage discussion. They adapt tasks to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils on the special educational needs register also progress well. However, pupils' language development is not promoted as well as it could be. New vocabulary is not sufficiently explained and pupils' recording skills are not always well developed by completing work sheets rather than trying to write up their own notes.
14. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of life processes and living things and materials and their properties. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of food chains and accurately used technical terms such as habitat and predator. They responded well to the teacher's close questioning and were able to apply terms such as carnivore and herbivore correctly to animals. Pupils in Year 5 worked carefully together to carry out tests on food colourings and inks. They understood the principles of a fair test and implemented these in their experiments. In writing up their investigations, however, pupils are often required to follow a format which does not allow them to develop their own expressions. As a result, pupils do not always fully understand what they have written nor can they explain why things have happened. Teachers do not always set tasks which challenge the abilities of higher attaining pupils but the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are given a good degree of help with vocabulary and work in mixed ability groups, often receiving support from other pupils.
15. In information and communication technology, pupils achieve the nationally expected levels at both Key Stage 1 and 2. They make satisfactory use of computers at Key Stage 1 developing basic keyboard skills and applying their knowledge in writing stories, creating graphics and in control technology. At Key Stage 2, pupils acquire skills well in their weekly sessions when classroom computers are brought together as a suite. Teachers set clear objectives for these lessons and ensure that pupils follow up instructions with appropriate tasks, many of which teachers prepare themselves. In Year 3 pupils imported pictures into a text; in Year 4, pupils had a good understanding of word processing and in Year 5 they worked confidently with a graphics program. Teachers make satisfactory use of computers in class but do not yet assess pupils' progress on a systematic basis.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers manage their classes very well and give pupils clear guidance as to what they expect them to do

16. The quality of teaching is good for pupils of all ages. At the Foundation Stage, 75 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better; at Key Stage 1, 56 per cent of lessons were good or better; and at Key Stage 2, 71 per cent were good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching which is a significant improvement over the last inspection. The programme of observing teaching, undertaken by the headteacher and deputy has had a beneficial impact on raising standards. It has helped teachers to identify areas for development and to agree professional targets for themselves with the headteacher.
17. Teachers are good at creating a business-like and purposeful atmosphere in their classes. They make a point of explaining to pupils what are the objectives for the lesson and link these well to previous learning. Pupils respond positively to the clear direction which this gives them.
18. Teachers plan well together to ensure that all classes within the year groups follow the same programme of study. The professional exchange of ideas has been further strengthened by whole staff discussions and increased input from subject co-ordinators. Planning is regularly monitored by the headteacher and co-ordinators and the newly appointed deputy headteacher is playing an increasingly valuable role in observing teaching and learning.
19. Teachers manage pupils sensitively and well. They have quiet and well-ordered routines in which pupils settle to work sensibly and quickly. Class rules are clearly displayed and pupils understand and follow them very co-operatively. Pupils are good at working in small groups and maintain very good standards of behaviour in all school activities. In nearly all lessons, pupils work hard and have high levels of concentration and commitment to their work.
20. Teachers organise resources well and appropriately match tasks to the needs of different pupils. In practical science activities in Years 5 and 6, materials were well laid out and accessible to pupils in spite of the shortage of space. In Year 6 lessons on newspaper articles, teachers had organised good displays of recent reports for pupils to read. The tasks set at both key stages are adapted to provide challenges for higher attaining pupils and to develop the learning of pupils on the special educational needs register. The setting of pupils at Key Stage 2 for English and mathematics considerably assists the pace of the learning for both the upper and lower groups. Where pupils have additional support, there is good communication between the class teachers and support staff.
21. Very good teaching is characterised by strong subject knowledge, searching questioning and a stimulating range of tasks. In a Year 6 science lesson, the teacher built on pupils' learning from a previously watched video to extend their understanding of producers, consumers and predators. Pupils were encouraged to use technical terms accurately and could apply them in compiling a food chain. Teachers pace lessons well to ensure that there is time to reinforce learning in concluding plenary sessions.
22. Learning is less successful where pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to ask questions or contribute. In some lessons, key vocabulary is not properly explained to give pupils the confidence to use it. In a Year 4 religious education lesson, the effectiveness of a good introductory discussion was reduced by asking pupils to read a complicated text together without giving them time to ask questions or ensure they had fully understood it. In a Year 6 English lesson on newspaper articles, pupils were not given enough time to make their own observations before being set a writing task. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils were not confident about using and explaining terms such as opaque.
23. Learning at the foundation stage has been significantly improved since the last inspection, although the range of resources for outdoor play are still limited. Teachers plan lessons well and involve support staff in the process of planning and recording children's progress. Teachers are good at promoting the basic skills of language and numeracy across the curriculum. They pay particular attention to developing children's personal and social awareness, discussing and explaining words such as rules and respect for others. Children learn to work and play well together and are independent and sensible. In their creative development children explore art and

craft activities but their language is not always sufficiently extended by being asked to discuss their work.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. They apply themselves very well and develop very positive attitudes to learning. They receive clear guidance on moral and social issues which helps to develop good relationships throughout the school

24. The very high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes towards school have been maintained since the last inspection. Relationships continue to be very good and these underpin the atmosphere of enthusiastic learning which is a feature of the school. Pupils feel safe and happy to be at school. Attendance continues to be good and is above the national average.
25. Pupils respond positively to the clear expectations which staff have regarding behaviour and attitudes. In over half the lessons observed, pupils' approach to work was judged to be very good and in a further 21 per cent of lessons it was good. Pupils settle into school without losing any time in the mornings and afternoon school begins punctually. They understand class routines and follow them willingly. Pupils are particularly good at listening, both in class and in assemblies. The school has an orderly atmosphere in which pupils are courteous, helpful, quiet and orderly.
26. Staff promote pupils' awareness of their responsibilities to one another and monitor their personal development well. They value pupils' comments and contributions and there is a high level of mutual respect throughout the school. Older pupils willingly take responsibility for setting a good example. They act as play leaders for younger ones in the lunch break and also help with paired reading. Pupils showed excellent self-control during wet break-times and played very happily together. Pupils develop their awareness of how to help others by raising funds for local and national charities. They also support a local home for the elderly where pupils sing carols every Christmas.
27. Opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning habits are satisfactory but often restricted by a lack of space. The lack of room for classes of over 30 pupils constrains activities which involve carrying out their own research or pursuing investigations in science. Older pupils carry out their own research at home and complete homework tasks well. In class, pupils take responsibility for organising their own resources and settle to group tasks maturely. The school plans to include pupils in a school council which is likely to improve their independent thinking and speaking skills.
28. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of the principles of right and wrong. The success of this is reflected by the supportive and well ordered atmosphere which exists in the school. Where teachers include circle time in their timetable, they make good use of opportunities to discuss rules and help pupils develop positive and tolerant attitudes to one another. Religious education lessons and assemblies effectively develop pupils' understanding of spirituality. The school provides pupils with a good understanding of the celebrations and beliefs of Christians as well as Muslims, Jews and Hindus. Pupils learn to appreciate elements of non European culture through singing and hearing a range of music. Visitors such as the school nurse help to give pupils important information on matters of health, drugs awareness and safety.

The care and support of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good

29. The school cares for its pupils very well. There are comprehensive policies for promoting health and safety procedures and staff are well aware of the importance of safe practice which they share with pupils. Pupils' good attendance is encouraged by awards and by maintaining a careful check on registers and absentees. Child protection procedures have been reviewed since the last inspection and are now very well organised. Staff are well aware of issues and are regularly updated through discussions and appropriate training. Pupils are made aware of child protection within the school's personal and social education programme. The school has a draft policy for teaching citizenship which draws together the important strands currently presented to pupils through science and other aspects of the curriculum.
30. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains first-class records on pupils' progress which she shares with

teachers and parents. There is close communication between staff to ensure that tasks are appropriate to the needs of the pupils and that targets are reviewed as necessary. Pupils benefit from support in class or in small withdrawal groups. At Key Stage 2 they respond well to working in sets in English and mathematics and progress well as a result.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' attainment in speaking and writing especially at Key Stage 2

31. Speaking skills are in line with expectations at Key Stage 1 but are not well developed throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and ideas but do not often demonstrate a wide vocabulary or use a fluency of expression. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, pupils are good at listening to stories and to one another and are keen to contribute. In a discussion session in Year 2, pupils were confident about describing what made them happy. They responded easily to the natural way in which the teacher and classroom assistant gave personal examples from their lives. The teacher managed the session skilfully and encouraged responses from a range of pupils as well as highlighting vocabulary which helped define their feelings. In other lessons, teachers do not take enough time to ensure pupils understand new words nor do they develop strategies to build pupils' confidence to use them. Technical vocabulary in science and mathematics is introduced but not always emphasised or written up for pupils to see. Circle or discussion sessions are not timetabled on a regular basis and opportunities for drama are infrequent at Key Stage 2. With large classes, opportunities for each pupil to speak are inevitably restricted and in some useful discussion sessions, teachers do not ensure pupils go beyond short answers to explain their thinking in full sentences. When pupils have the opportunity to discuss ideas in groups, as in a Year 6 science lesson, they are keen to express their ideas and communicate with each other well.
32. Pupils' attainment in writing across Key Stage 2 has varied widely over the last three years. While some of these variations can be explained by differences in the cohorts, the progress of pupils has declined from very good to satisfactory. The school believes that writing skills have suffered from the introduction of the literacy hour and has allocated more time to extended writing. The 'sustained writing' initiative in Years 3 and 4 has had a positive impact although the precise targets have not yet been agreed. The increased emphasis on developing writing skills is clearly raising standards of current pupils but the school has not yet ensured that pupils practise their skills across all subjects. There are good opportunities for pupils to study and employ different styles of writing in English but they do not regularly extend these by writing in subjects like religious education, history or science. In science lessons at Key Stage 2, pupils often complete photocopied sheets after investigations rather than develop their own recording skills. There are some good links between geography and poetry in river descriptions and some imaginative personal accounts in history. However, teaching does not yet place sufficient emphasis on developing English skills through these activities.

Use assessment information more effectively to set improvement goals for classes and individuals at Key Stage 2

33. Although the school closely analyses the progress of cohorts every year, it is not yet using this data to identify areas for development in sufficient detail. Key stage test and assessment results are analysed by class and gender and trends are carefully recorded. This is well used by the school and governors to monitor the school's overall performance and helps them to identify areas for school development. The results of the annual QCA tests in English and mathematics are also recorded and analysed. The school has begun to use this information to set targets for the year groups and to plot the progress of cohorts. However, while senior management and co-ordinators keep themselves well-informed of the overall trends in pupils' attainment, they are not analysing the data to identify precise areas for development in teaching and learning. Year 6 teachers analyse test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning but this is not common practice in all year groups. While teachers indicate areas for improvement in pupils' annual reports they do not set termly targets for individuals or groups of pupils. The school is aware of the need to implement this and monitor the progress of certain groups of pupils on a termly basis.

Identify more clearly the targets and timescales in curriculum developments

34. While there is an effective procedure for agreeing the school development plan this does not satisfactorily incorporate the action plans for individual subjects. The school development programme is agreed and planned on an annual basis with the involvement of staff and governors. Priorities reflect the school's long-term aims and initiatives planned for the next year, like literacy and numeracy. The plan identifies costs, personnel and sets appropriate target dates and goals. The priorities are reflected in budget plans for the next financial year. In addition, senior management and co-ordinators carry out regular reviews of teaching, planning and pupils' work. Curriculum priorities are identified as a result of these and action plans are drawn up and agreed. However, these plans are developed separately from the school development plan and do not always receive the emphasis which they deserve as whole school areas for improvement. In addition, targets and dead-lines in these action plans are not always set in sufficient detail to ensure that developments take place within a reasonable timescale and progress can be accurately measured.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

35. In order to improve the good standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

raise pupils' attainment in speaking and writing, especially at Key Stage 2, by:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to participate in discussion and clearly identifying the skills which pupils should develop in such activities;
- incorporating writing activities into other subjects of the curriculum in a way which develops specific English skills;

use assessment information to set improvement goals for classes and individuals at Key Stage 2 by:

- fully implementing the school's procedure for target setting;
- analysing the results of the annual tests at Key Stage 2 and identifying the strengths and weakness in teaching and learning;
- agreeing short-term improvement targets with pupils to help them progress;

identify targets and timescales more clearly in curriculum developments by:

- establishing priorities and dead-lines more precisely;
- providing measurable criteria by which success can be evaluated;
- incorporating subject action plans into the school development plan in order to focus whole school attention and ensure regular progress reviews.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	11	56	33	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)	455
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	55
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	68
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
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	29	40	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	26
	Girls	34	36	38
	Total	58	60	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (91)	87 (92)	93 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	29
	Girls	36	38	40
	Total	60	64	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (91)	93 (92)	100 (100)
	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	32	21	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	26	30
	Girls	16	18	19
	Total	41	44	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (81)	83 (85)	92 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	26	28
	Girls	13	17	17
	Total	37	43	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (69)	81 (81)	85 (77)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	460
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	184

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	2	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
	£
Total income	768,272
Total expenditure	767,380
Expenditure per pupil	1,626
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,400
Balance carried forward to next year	27,292

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 27.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	455
Number of questionnaires returned	125

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	36	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	45	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	50	11	1	2
The teaching is good.	54	42	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	53	21	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	31	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	30	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	41	19	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	37	4	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	43	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	43	22	10	13