

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE BISHOPS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115204

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Sumpton

Reporting inspector: Dennis Maxwell
8798

Dates of inspection: 20 - 21 May 2002

Inspection number: 230218

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Beardsley Drive
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Chelmsford
Essex

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Sister Margaret Mary

Date of previous inspection: 1 December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Bishops' Church of England and Roman Catholic School is a voluntary aided, joint foundation church primary school for pupils aged four to eleven years. It is situated within a large housing estate consisting of modern, private housing and provides education for children in the local parishes. It is larger than most other primary schools, with 354 full-time pupils on roll. At the time of the inspection 15 children under five were in the reception classes. Very few children come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. The socio-economic background of the community serving the school is a little more favourable than that found nationally. There is a wide range of ability amongst the children and, overall, their attainment on entry to the school is close to the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average and six pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The school is growing in size, which is placing extra demands on facilities such as the school hall, library and playground.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful school which provides a good education for the children. Christian values are evident in the school's good community spirit and work, and all members of staff have a shared commitment for the children's personal development. The leadership of the headteacher is strong and the staff give hard-working support so that the school is making substantial improvements. The recent focus on English and mathematics has led to good planning and improving standards, which by Year 6 are above average. Science has been identified as an area for development. The children make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. The good teaching through the school has a clear focus on basic skills as well as on work that opens children's minds, such as poetry, history and art. Pupils' progress is good in the junior classes. The governors have good procedures to make focused visits that help to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and art are above average by Year 6 because of effective teaching.
- The children's attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good.
- The management of special educational needs is very good and the children make good progress.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy are very good and all staff are committed to making improvements. The school's priorities for development are very clear.
- The school has a good community spirit and sense of care for the children. Provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- The quality of provision and learning in science are satisfactory but not of the same good standard as for English and mathematics.
- Procedures for assessment have been established, but are at too early a stage of use to support learning fully.
- The outside play area for children in the reception classes is inadequate so that it is not used sufficiently for imaginative play and physical development.

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 December 1997 and has made satisfactory improvement overall since then. It has made satisfactory progress on the key issues identified at that time and further good progress on matters identified recently by the headteacher's clear analysis. There is now a whole-school curriculum plan, with schemes of work for all subjects. Standards in design and technology and in information and communication technology have improved. The headteacher and governors plan for

improvements and are developing procedures to evaluate the work of the school. Standards have improved in line with the national trend by Year 6. The quality of teaching has improved and this is endorsed by the parents' opinion. The school has procedures to assess and monitor pupils' work but these are not yet used well enough to support pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff have responded positively to recent national initiatives which have tended to take priority. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	C	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	C	A	A	
Science	A	B	C	C	

Standards in the work seen during the inspection are above average in English and mathematics by Year 6, and average in science. Standards in these subjects are broadly average by Year 2. Work in the other subjects meets nationally expected standards by Years 2 and 6, including information and communication technology (ICT); and exceeds the expectation in art by Year 6. Standards have improved in design and technology and in ICT, and have been maintained in other subjects since the last inspection. The table above shows that standards in the most recent national tests in Year 6 were well above the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. More pupils gained the higher Level 5 than usual, particularly in English and mathematics. Standards were above average when compared with similar schools in English, well above in mathematics and at the average for science. The trend in results from 1997 to 2001 was in line with the nationally improving trend. The school met its targets in English and mathematics for the percentage of pupils expected to gain Level 4 or above in 2001. Overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve as expected in relation to their prior attainment while in Years 3 to 6 pupils achieve better than expected, as do those with special educational needs. Children who are identified as gifted or talented make good progress. The school has agreed targets for all pupils in English, mathematics and their personal development which are used positively to promote standards. The school has set very challenging targets for English and mathematics in the summer 2002 tests, based on internal assessments of the pupils in Year 6, and they are on course to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' great interest in their work contributes to their good learning and gains in skills. Most pupils concentrate well and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, and has a clear effect on pupils' learning. The pupils are polite and are helped to think about others through the school's high expectations. The teaching assistants support all children in the classrooms, and particularly help the few pupils who have not yet developed self-discipline to improve their behaviour.

Personal development and relationships	The children have very good relationships with one another. Their very good personal development supports their learning and standards.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are good. Children come happily to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

All teachers create a good climate of interest and attention, with well-chosen activities. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and good learning takes place as a result. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, having been a particular focus in the school. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, capturing pupils' imagination well, for example, in Year 6 by the task of writing a rap song into standard English. Lesson planning is good, drawing upon national guidance but demonstrating teachers' individual good choice of activity, such as entering data from a survey about swimming in Year 3 into a spreadsheet. No teaching was less than satisfactory. This demonstrates the strength of teaching through the school. The teaching of science indicated less secure subject knowledge and approach than in the other subjects seen. Pupils work hard during lessons. They produce a good amount of written work and are keen to give answers. Daily assessment is satisfactory, and there are good procedures to monitor pupils' progress. Several teachers write helpful comments on pupils' work as they mark it, but the quality of comment varies. Teachers usually plan to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils, although higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in science. Pupils with special educational needs are enabled, through good teaching, to achieve well in relation to their learning targets. The skills of literacy and numeracy are applied well in other subjects and applications of ICT are developing well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The school's curriculum now meets statutory requirements. Pupils benefit from working in the ICT suite. The emphasis on English and mathematics to implement national initiatives has been successful in raising standards.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, and meets the specific needs of identified pupils. Pupils' learning needs are assessed and managed well by the co-ordinator. Classroom assistants provide good, thoughtful support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils receive good support when it is required and they make similar progress to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good provision is an integral aspect of the schools' approach to learning. Pupils are helped to become increasingly mature and responsible. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to take on a wider role. The school promotes pupils' moral understanding very well through high expectation and example. Cultural development is enhanced by visits, and children are helped to understand the

	multicultural dimension of society.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff provide thoughtful personal care. There are very good procedures to promote good behaviour. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress are not yet fully effective in raising standards.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school works hard to maintain the good relationship with parents. While parents value the quality of education provided, overall, they have high expectations which both help give direction but also at times place considerable pressure on the teachers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy give a very good lead for school developments, taking well-considered initiatives to promote standards. They have thorough monitoring procedures. School improvements, such as curriculum planning and assessments, are tackled well as a whole-staff exercise.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have good procedures for focused visits linked to subjects which help inform them of strengths and weaknesses in the school. Through discussions and visits, they demonstrate effective routines to contribute to school developments, such as the new ICT suite, basing their decisions on the impact on children's learning. Governors have satisfactory procedures to monitor costs but are less sure in monitoring the effects of their spending decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher has established several good procedures to monitor aspects of the work of the school, and their good programme of staff release enables them to fulfil responsibilities such as evaluating children's work. The headteacher and staff analyse information carefully.
The strategic use of resources	Staff are deployed well, and have subject or other responsibilities that relate well to their experience. The learning resources and building are fully used.

Accommodation is satisfactory, overall, but whole-school facilities such as the hall, dining accommodation and playground are proving less than sufficient as the school roll grows. The outside play area for the reception age children does not encourage worthwhile activities to be planned there.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They think their children enjoy school. • They think the children work hard and make good progress. • They think teaching is good. • They find the school approachable and management good. • They believe that behaviour is good, and that children are helped to become responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several parents do not think children get the right amount of homework. • Several parents do not think the school works closely with them. • Several parents do not feel well-informed about their child's progress. • Half the parents responding do not think there is a good range of activities outside lessons.

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive opinions. They find that the school has a sensible policy for work to do at home that is based on children enjoying activities and games at a rather easier level than in school. A few parents try inappropriately to make the homework more formal than teachers intend. The inspectors find that arrangements to meet parents to be good, overall, and the headteacher holds a weekly surgery, which is helpful. Information on the pupils' progress is provided well through two termly parent evenings and through the governors' annual report, but a formal occasion to discuss the end of year report on their child would also be helpful. The range of activities outside lessons is similar to most schools, although most are for older children and there is, currently, not enough variety over the school year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in English, mathematics and art are above average by Year 6 because of effective teaching.

1. Standards of the work seen during the inspection are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, maintaining the position at the last inspection. Pupils receive a solid foundation of activities and teaching in the infant classes so that they are well prepared to learn and become more independent. Standards in English and mathematics are broadly average by Year 2; hence, pupils achieve better than that normally expected during Years 3 to 6. The school has followed national guidance well, with good teaching, and has extended the choice of tasks and texts for English, so that the quality of work shows the benefit of recent focused attention to literacy, especially writing. The quality of work and skills in art and design exceed national expectations by Year 6. The school has made good improvements, overall, in addressing the issues relating to standards identified at the last inspection.
2. In the most recent national tests at the end of Year 6 standards were well above the national average in English and mathematics. More pupils gained the higher Level 5 than usual in these subjects. Standards were above average when compared with similar schools in English and well above in mathematics. The trend in results from 1997 to 2001 was in line with the nationally improving trend. The school met its targets in English and mathematics for the percentage of pupils expected to gain Level 4 or above in 2001. The school has set very challenging targets for English and mathematics in the summer 2002 tests, based on internal assessments of the pupils in Year 6, and is likely to meet them.
3. The results of internal tests are used sensibly to inform grouping arrangements and sets and to give pupils clearer expectations for their work, helping to promote skills. The school has agreed individual targets for all pupils in English, mathematics and their personal development, which are used positively to promote standards. The specific group work in mathematics is effective, enabling teaching and tasks to be closely matched to the pupils' needs. The good teaching of basic skills in reading, writing and calculation is having a positive impact so that progress in literacy and numeracy skills is good. The improved results reflect this preparation. There are no significant variations in the attainment of different groups of pupils, except that in science the higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged to make good progress. A few pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons but, not having gained the skills to learn independently, rely on further careful teaching to recall and consolidate their learning.
4. Pupils generally exceed national expectations in all aspects of English, including handwriting, spelling and writing for a range of audiences and in different styles. Throughout the school pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening. Most pupils express their ideas and answers clearly, often using the technical language for a subject that the teachers have emphasised. Pupils contribute to lessons confidently. When answering questions in literacy sessions, they take care to ensure that they construct sentences that are grammatically accurate, such as in Year 6 when writing out a rap poem in standard English. Pupils across the school are mostly confident in reading texts aloud and they hold a good conversation with visitors. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils are articulate, they listen to the teachers' instructions with understanding and are confident orally.
5. Overall, standards in reading are good. As they become older, pupils develop their skills of self-correction well, taking account of the punctuation to give meaning and phrasing, and re-reading to clarify meaning. By the time they are in Year 6 most pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression from a range of books. They are keen to discuss the stories they read and recall many details about the events and characters. Pupils identify patterns of rhyme, rhythm and sound in poetry and they recognise the use and effect of figurative language, including personification within poetry. Most pupils know how punctuation can help reading aloud, providing

- appropriate pauses, emphasis and inflection. Pupils know the structure of books and talk about characters and plots. Older pupils use the Internet to locate information using the CD-ROMs.
6. Attainment in writing is good and pupils make good progress in the junior years. Pupils write for a good range of purposes - for example, on a dilemma, a character description of Oliver, and account of The Hunt. As they move through the junior classes, pupils build upon their early writing skills and in Year 6 their writing becomes more varied and interesting, with good examples of speech within memories in a story, and rhyme patterns. Pupils respond creatively to stories, sustaining their ideas well and using increasingly complex vocabulary. Handwriting, while generally legible, is not always well-formed and clearly shaped. Although pupils practise handwriting skills this area is weaker among some pupils since the presentation is not always careful. Pupils make good progress in developing their use of punctuation and improving spelling to enhance the fluency and clarity of their work. Pupils understand the use of adjectives and other parts of speech. Across the school, they are encouraged to try out spellings for themselves, identify common spelling patterns and to learn spelling rules. By the time they leave the school pupils know how to use paragraphs to organise their writing; their spelling and punctuation are generally accurate and most pupils write in a fluent style. Pupils make suitable use of ICT to support a range of work in literacy. They show improving levels of concentration and take pride in developing their skills. Teachers use well-structured, open-ended questioning to motivate and encourage pupils to think before they answer, to use extended, reasoned answers where appropriate and to provide grammatically correct answers. The majority of teaching demonstrates clear communication and good discussions that promote good learning. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, is highly committed, dedicated and skilled and is having a positive effect on the quality of learning and standards.
 7. The good teaching of basic skills in mathematics and well-chosen tasks are having a positive impact. The standard of pupils' numeracy skills is above average by age eleven. The pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior learning, overall. The pupils in Year 3 have average skills and understanding, having had good learning experience across a good range of topics by Year 2 - for example, composing their own additions to equal 24. Pupils' skills of mental and written calculation improve well. The generally good attention that teachers give to developing pupils' mental methods supports good confidence and skill in recorded work when pupils set their calculations out in the usual way, building effectively on thorough work in the infant classes. Most pupils count reliably to 100 and beyond, and have a good, early understanding of place value - for example, calculating $25 - 4 - 9 = 12$ and understanding how a 100 square helps with calculations. The higher-attaining pupils are usually quick and accurate. The pupils apply number to simple everyday contexts in science and other subjects, such as in Year 3 entering the data from a survey on swimming into an ICT data package to form a block graph.
 8. The teachers plan from and use the numeracy materials carefully so that numeracy is taught well. Previous work indicates a good emphasis on number with satisfactory attention to measure, shape and data handling. There are occasional examples of investigational work. By the age of eleven, pupils perform number calculations with two- and three-digit numbers using standard layout, and answers are usually correct. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place value. They understand the effects of multiplying by 10 and 100 and are gaining confidence and speed with tables facts. Most recorded work is set out correctly, using carry figures as needed, and pupils have an early understanding of decimal numbers. Previous work indicates that pupils have a good knowledge, overall, of simple two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, such as hexagons. Pupils make good progress, overall, through the junior years, helped by their good interest and willingness to take part, and progress in lessons is usually good. Attitudes to mathematics are good through the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support so that they maintain their interest and effort, and make good progress.
 9. Teaching and learning in art and design are good, so that pupils exceed the national expectation by Year 6. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils - to look carefully and observe in detail, as well as to use their imagination and emotions in their compositions. The teachers' good subject knowledge ensures that pupils learn how to create shape and texture thoughtfully, giving careful attention to how they apply their skills. Pupils demonstrate growing confidence and skill through the school. For example, by Year 2 many pupils have produced well-formed pencil

sketches and pastel pictures of fruit. By Year 5, pupils have, for example, made good use of charcoal to create circular patterns. They have also been lifted by Wordsworth's poem 'The Daffodils', making good observational drawings of daffodils. Pupils in Year 6 express good techniques and insights through their pastel drawings, showing the emotion of anger well. Their designs in the style of Mondrian are drawn well, making attractive and well-formed patterns.

The children's attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.

10. This judgement represents an improvement since the last report and this aspect is now a considerable strength of the school. Pupils have a pride in their school that is well justified. There is a good sense of pupils sharing their ideas and working co-operatively. Many listen well to their peers and recognise how to help those who find the work more difficult. Most pupils continue to work well, even when not directly supervised, and they maintain concentration well.
11. Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are very good. In the reception classes the teachers' good organisation, encouraging children to listen, to take turns and to develop independence, helps them to be interested and form good relationships. In all years, the well-chosen activities encourage pupils to stay on task with good concentration and to enjoy their learning. During English lessons in Years 5 and 6, for example, the pupils enjoyed the style of a new poetry form, concentrating well to appreciate the pattern of syllables. Since the teachers were showing their own pleasure in the neat phrasing the pupils were very interested and wanted to contribute their observations. Pupils listened very well to each other's poems - such as 'Bob the Builder', 'Yellow Submarine' or 'Kids Cry' - with real appreciation of the language. The supportive relationships amongst the pupils and with the teachers promote good attitudes towards the tasks. The pupils feel that their ideas are valued and they respond well to the inclusive nature of teachers' questions, which are varied carefully so that pupils of differing attainment may contribute. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils work well together in pairs or groups, for example, at a computer or in making up questions about the book cover 'Gardening for Beginners'.
12. Behaviour is very good. By Year 6, pupils have good self-discipline, and this is demonstrated in their increasing maturity through the school from the reception year. The good climate of care and consideration that all staff promote encourages this good behaviour. The few pupils who find self-control difficult receive sensitive support, which is effective in modifying their behaviour. Teachers set consistently high expectations and act themselves as good role models. This contributes positively to the quality of life in the school. Teachers speak quietly to the children in a way that gains respect. Pupils move around the school quietly when going to assembly or playtimes. Around 90 per cent of parents who completed the questionnaires and parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting consider that behaviour is good. The school council is a good means of including pupils in decisions about school life, encouraging good attitudes and behaviour.
13. Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good, and this applies also to those with special needs. Pupils contribute to their class rules and are fully involved in their class routines. In Year 6, pupils take responsibility for a good range of duties such as helping at lunch-times and taking charge of the music in assemblies. Pupils respect the feelings and values of others, and the school provides a suitable range of opportunities for children to learn about and understand the faiths and beliefs of other cultures. Pupils support some national and Christian charities, which helps to extend their understanding of needs in the world. Their study skills and independent research are promoted through the use of the library - each class is time-tabled once a week - and some evidence of this work is found in pupils' writing.

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good.

14. The teachers' good relationships with the children and their purposeful style help to create a good atmosphere for learning right from the start of lessons. Teachers give lively and well-presented introductions that are based on good subject knowledge. Their clear explanations and discussion about texts, ideas or information help to capture the pupils' interests and promote good learning. This was evident in a very good lesson in Year 4 in the ICT suite, for example, where the teacher

demonstrated how to find information from a CD-ROM by using the index or key words. High expectations and keen interest led to the pupils having a good understanding of the steps needed to make a search. In general, the teachers give careful attention to the teaching of basic skills, which include letter sounds and blends for early reading or syllable patterns when writing poetry to a particular form.

15. The quality of teaching is good, having a positive impact on pupils' gains in knowledge and skills so that their learning is good. This marks a good improvement since the last inspection and follows on from the direct action taken by the headteacher in establishing good support for, as well as regular monitoring of the work of, a stable staff. The good teaching was observed across the subjects and year groups, other than in science, indicating that teaching is a strength of the school. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, and teachers are supported well by the subject co-ordinators. The school has provided support and training to ensure that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are taught well and this has been successful in improving standards. Teachers are careful to include the recommended elements of literacy and sufficient time is allocated for pupils' writing. Individual lesson plans for English and mathematics are clear about what the different groups of children are expected to learn and how the lesson will be organised. Planning for other subjects is less clear as to how each group of pupils will be challenged or as to what teaching methods are to be used.
16. Teachers employ good teaching methods. They are mostly confident in their discussions with pupils, explain tasks clearly and ask searching questions that extend pupils' understanding. Discussion times are used effectively to check pupils' understanding. The pace of lessons is matched well to the needs of the tasks. The plenary sessions are carefully structured to pull ideas together. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied well in several subjects but the use of ICT is less widespread so far.
17. The school has worked hard on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, especially in the core curriculum. This has helped to consolidate strengths such as the skilful use of teaching methods and the very effective management of pupils. Lesson planning is thorough, and tasks are chosen well to promote pupils' learning and interest. The teaching of the under-fives is good within a stimulating environment. Teachers throughout the school use their skills of questioning to good effect in helping pupils to think about their work. Teachers' informative, lively and well-structured explanations, based on good subject knowledge, contribute well to good quality learning. They make good day-to-day assessments of the progress of the pupils as they work.
18. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Their good management of the pupils and behaviour strategies are effective. Resources are used well in most lessons - for example, photocopies of cinquain poems or number squares to help with subtracting 19. Learning support assistants are effective in helping pupils to engage in the tasks and make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Teachers are perceptive about and observant of the children and use questioning well to check on their understanding or to reinforce learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly, with some praise, although the comments vary in usefulness as to how pupils can improve their work. Teachers set suitable homework for pupils to reinforce their learning. Younger children, for example, in the reception classes, take reading books home regularly and older pupils usually have a few days to complete relevant tasks.
19. The few pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from classroom strategies such as questioning employed by their teachers or working with a friend. The school makes appropriate provision when it is required.

The management of special educational needs is very good and the children make good progress.

20. The careful attention that teachers give to planning for and working with children with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress towards their targets. The support assistants provide close support that is appropriate to the pupils' needs. Throughout the school, children with special needs receive good, focused support that is having a clear, positive impact

on their learning. Pupils are given sensitive support that maintains their attention well and helps them to achieve. The register of special educational needs shows that several pupils move off the register as they make progress. Effective support is provided for the pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs.

21. The experienced co-ordinator for special needs has a very good understanding of the pupils and is effective in her role. Her very good management has a clear effect on their progress through the well-organised administration and perceptive support. She holds regular meetings with the support assistants to ensure that they understand the focus of their work. She spends a considerable time with outside agencies, including speech therapists, who work well in partnership with the school.
22. The co-ordinator writes the generally clear education plans, giving good attention to the assessments of those working with the children. Parents and pupils are increasingly involved in the preparation of the plans, and all class teachers and support assistants have copies to help them focus the children's learning. She has taken full account of the revised Code of Practice, arranging in-service training for members of staff, and also keeps a file on children under observation who are at an early stage of need. There are good procedures to review the education plans and support is available in relation to needs, such as apparatus or help from outside agencies. In general, pupils are withdrawn from class only for specific group work; otherwise the good arrangements for support in class are used. Overall, the co-ordinator is very experienced in the role and is very clear about her responsibilities.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy is very good; and all staff are committed to making improvements. The school's priorities for development are very clear.

23. The headteacher provides very good leadership with the deputy head and has given the school clear direction since her appointment in January 2001. She has established a very purposeful team spirit and approach amongst the staff. The headteacher has good insight into the immediate needs of the school and, with the governing body, she has made priority decisions that are having a clear, positive impact on the quality of work and standards. She and her deputy have rightly identified having a stable staff, ensuring that a well-structured curriculum is in place and having to hand the necessary learning resources, as amongst the immediate priorities. The headteacher and senior management team provide good leadership, support and direction as the school takes on the necessary improvements. These improvements are expressed well within the one-year development plan that the headteacher has produced following her clear analysis of strengths and weaknesses. The second development plan, in draft, is produced through a very good process of consultation and the priorities are expressed clearly by the headteacher and her deputy during discussions. However, the priorities are not immediately evident within the action plans, and an outline of likely priorities for the next two years is missing. The whole staff works together well as a team under the headteacher's leadership, incorporating aspects of evaluation that are now part of the climate of the school.
24. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has made the improvements expected since the last inspection. The procedures for performance management had not been put in place prior to the headteacher's arrival and she has rightly given this a high priority in order to place a clear expectation and accountability upon all staff. This, with her good monitoring and evaluation of teaching, is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and hence on standards. The headteacher has been successful in recruiting staff of high quality who are committed to the school. This is significant in light of the previously high turnover of staff, which had slowed the pace of change and caused considerable concern amongst the parents.
25. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have introduced formal assessment procedures that are intended to track pupils' progress and inform planning. The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection in standards in ICT and design and technology have been addressed. The senior management team fulfil a clear leadership role and responsibilities are delegated very well to the subject leaders through the headteacher's enabling approach and high expectations. The

priorities identified by the headteacher, senior management team and chairwoman of governors match the views of the inspection team closely. The school recognises the need to continue to support and develop the role of subject leaders since several are so new to the post. The strong leadership and direction provided by the headteacher and deputy are resulting in a good standard of education for the children as well as meeting the expectations of the governors for a high level of personal care for the children.

26. The identified priorities for development have been appropriately costed by the headteacher with a time-scale for action. The school's financial planning takes good account of immediate needs. The headteacher, with the governors, has established careful oversight of the finances and budget and is aware of the need to obtain good value and to consider the effects of spending decisions on standards when considering improvements. Money obtained through the standards fund is used effectively. The financial control is good.

The school has a good community spirit and sense of care for the children. Provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

27. The school provides a very good level of support, care and guidance for the children. The provision for their welfare and personal development is very effective. It makes a positive contribution to educational standards and to helping pupils feel happy and secure. The pupils develop a strong moral and social sense through assemblies and the school's good emphasis on pupils' social and moral education. Class discussions help pupils to act responsibly and to learn to communicate. A good example of children helping others was noted in the consistent support friends give to pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs.
28. The school has a very welcoming atmosphere and strong sense of community. Class teachers and learning support assistants look after their pupils well. They know the children's strengths and character well and use this knowledge to motivate and challenge for good standards. They keep a close eye on personal progress, especially that of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils know that they can turn to the assistants or other adults for help with confidence. All children are included fully in the caring atmosphere, which helps modify the behaviour of those who are immature for their age.
29. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The promotion of moral development is very good and pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong which is developed in lessons and the general life of the school. School assemblies reinforce pupils' understanding of moral behaviour as well as enabling children to take part in the spiritual dimension which is such an integral part of school life. Pupils have a good understanding of wider moral issues. Moral development and concern for others is encouraged through pupils' charity work and collections. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good, offering a very wide range of opportunities. Pupils learn very good social skills through many shared activities in lesson group work, in music lessons and in assemblies. They learn social responsibility through active engagement in the school council and learn how their suggestions can influence decisions. Pupils also learn to take on individual responsibilities within the school. The pupils in Year 6 go on a residential visit, which is intended to provide opportunities for personal as well as academic development.
30. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Several visitors talk to or work with the pupils, and they make regular visits to places of interest. There is less direct evidence of the school celebrating the cultures of others, although recognition is given to festivals and the multicultural nature of the wider community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The quality of provision and learning in science is satisfactory but is not of the same good standard as for English and mathematics.

31. The standards in science seen during the inspection are broadly in line with the national average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This represents a decline from the standards reported at the last inspection, which were above average. The analysis of pupils' work and observations made during lessons indicate that most pupils achieve satisfactorily over their time in school. The results of teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2001 indicate that overall, pupils' performance was close to the national average for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above. There was little variation in pupils' performance across the different elements of science, except that standards in experimental and investigative science were judged to be below average. The percentage reaching Level 3 or above was well below the national average.
32. Standards in the national tests for Year 6 in 2001 were at the national average. The trend in standards was above the upward national trend from 1997 to 1999 but has since declined to a position where standards are just above the national average. This fluctuation trend in the school's results may be partly explained by the effects of varying abilities of the cohorts of pupils, but was also likely to have been influenced by a lack of clear direction. There was no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was just above that found nationally. Inspection evidence shows that pupils of all abilities are usually given the same tasks and that pupils capable of higher attainment are not challenged sufficiently to demonstrate higher order skills. Investigative science is included within the planning and there are examples in pupils' previous work, but this aspect does not receive sufficient emphasis as a basis for learning across all year groups. This adversely affects pupils' enquiry skills and their ability to record what they find independently, since most of the experiments are recorded on prepared work-sheets.

Procedures for assessment have been established but these are at too early a stage of use to support children's learning fully.

33. A key issue of the last inspection was to improve assessment, recording and reporting procedures. The school has made uneven progress on this since then, but there has been an excellent recent focus on having clear, supporting arrangements in place. The recently appointed headteacher and the deputy have a clear and well-expressed policy for the curriculum and learning whereby effective teaching is to be supported by well-structured curriculum planning, which in turn is informed by a manageable assessment system that tracks pupils' progress. Lesson planning is now supported by good schemes of work that are being adapted from national guidance to reflect the emphasis of the school on providing high quality, relevant experience. The school administers reading tests and the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 as well as the statutory tests in Years 2 and 6, using the results to group children by ability in class and to inform individual and school targets.
34. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good overall. The baseline assessments for pupils as they enter school are thorough and used carefully to plan activities. Procedures for assessing attainment in English and mathematics using the outcomes of national tests provide data that are used well to set both individual and school targets. There are good examples through the school in the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning, although the whole-school procedures are at an early stage of implementation. Teachers' formal assessments of pupils' work are not recorded systematically in a way that helps further planning and teaching across the school, and staff are aware of this. Current assessment practice does not provide a sufficiently secure basis of recorded evidence for monitoring attainment and progress.
35. All pupils are given individual termly targets for English, mathematics and personal development that are shared with parents and used to focus teaching and learning. In addition, within the reception classes, the teachers complete a profile for each child covering a very large number of statements related to language, mathematics and personal development: this is over-detailed for its potential use. The deputy headteacher has also devoted considerable time, experience and effort to preparing a computer-based assessment system intended to cover all the significant indicators of learning in all subjects to Year 6. The sum total of this effort and the school's routines shows that there are good procedures for assessment but they are new and their use is

underdeveloped at present in informing further planning. The school has not yet established a whole-school assessment system that is a natural and manageable part of the teaching, learning and review cycle. The school's procedures for assessment, recording and reporting do not yet fully support children's learning.

The outside play area for children in the reception classes is inadequate so that it is not used sufficiently for imaginative play and physical development.

36. The two reception classes function satisfactorily in providing a reasonable working space for the teachers and children. Each room is organised well by the teacher to provide areas for aspects of the early learning goals, although the space does not allow for convenient, flexible use for children to move freely around as they make choices. The adjacent 'golden room', which is often used for several free-choice activities, is a good additional space where both teachers can set up activities requiring more space, although without an adult present the level of supervision and constructive talk is necessarily limited. The outside area, accessed from the 'golden room', offers space for children to learn and play outside but is limited in several ways, so that it is not used sufficiently for the children's development as recommended for the Foundation years. The fencing and gates are poor, there is no outside covered area and the selection of large wheeled and other toys is limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. The headteacher, governing body and staff should give attention to the following issues:
- (1) Improve the quality of provision, teaching and learning in science, and hence standards, to that of English and mathematics, by (a) arranging relevant staff training; (b) re-visiting the National Curriculum for science, with a particular focus on AT1 Scientific enquiry; and (c) ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation role of the subject leader is effective. (*Paragraphs 32, 33*)
 - (2) Improve the process of using assessment information to support children's learning by (a) setting realistic expectations on class teachers for recording assessments; (b) applying the structures prepared by the deputy creatively to understand pupils' stages of learning; and (c) refining and focusing the assessment information provided to class teachers for the greatest impact on teaching and learning. (*Paragraphs 34, 35, 36*)
 - (3) Review the provision for outside play for children in the reception year, making sure that it meets the recommendations for the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, with an appropriate level of adult supervision. (*Paragraph 37*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	16	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	14	72	14	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

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)	354
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	18	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	23	24	23
	Total	38	39	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (87)	87 (96)	87 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	23	24	24
	Total	39	40	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (96)	89 (96)	91 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	25	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	22	23
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	41	40	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (86)	87 (75)	91 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	24	23
	Girls	17	18	20
	Total	40	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (79)	91 (84)	93 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	286
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)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.6
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	743,992
Total expenditure	746,731
Expenditure per pupil	2,210
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,474
Balance carried forward to next year	24,735

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	338
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.	50	45	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	52	6	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	59	18	2	4
The teaching is good.	24	62	8	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	48	29	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	38	44	16	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	51	7	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	13	49	28	8	2
The school is well led and managed.	20	52	13	3	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	66	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	6	27	40	14	13