

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT KINGSHILL C of E COMBINED SCHOOL

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110431

Headteacher: Mr R Dodds

Reporting inspector: Mr J Woodcock
1624

Dates of inspection: 7th – 8th May 2002

Inspection number: 196169

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
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cryers Hill Road Great Kingshill High Wycombe Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP15 6JP
Telephone number:	(01494) 713159
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Smit
Date of previous inspection:	10 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Great Kingshill is bigger than other primary schools in the country, with a current roll of 379 full-time pupils, aged between 4 and 11 years. It is a popular and oversubscribed school in the socially advantaged ward of Greater Kingshill in High Wycombe; 60 per cent of pupils come from outside the reserved area. Pupils' attainment on entry to school at the age of five is above the expected level as measured by baseline assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. A further group of pupils is admitted to the school at the age of seven; their attainment varies widely but is at the expected level for pupils of this age. No pupils are in the first stages of learning to speak English as an additional language; this is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection report. The school has identified 45 pupils as having special educational needs; as a proportion, this is below the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs; as a proportion, this is below the national average and similar to that at the time of the last inspection. The proportion receiving free school meals is well below the national average. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school is low. The number of teachers joining and leaving the school during the last two years has been high. The buildings and grounds are not in good condition and are currently being rebuilt or modernised. The school car park is next to the main road, and facilities are poor.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good and effective school. By the end of Year 6, the standards pupils achieve are consistently well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Over 60 per cent of these pupils are successful in passing the entrance examinations for selective educational opportunities within the local educational authority. A high proportion of teaching is very good and the pupils are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners. The school has effective strategies for promoting educational inclusion for all pupils. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and key staff. There is a strong commitment to maintaining successful practice and raising standards further. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress and, by the age of 11, achieve consistently well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and key members of staff.
- Pupils' personal development is very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted; as a result, pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships are excellent.
- Pupils are eager to come to school; their attitudes to learning are very good; they are enthusiastic about the broad range of interesting curriculum activities provided and are supported well by their parents.

What could be improved

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The standards of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has continued to improve since the last inspection in November 1997. The quality of teaching has improved and well above average standards are often achieved, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, by the end of Year 6. The school is aware of the need not to become complacent and regularly to review its performance. The key issues from the last inspection have been appropriately addressed. Assessment and recording systems are being improved. Standards in information and communication technology have improved considerably, although staff training has not yet been fully completed. The school buildings are being modernised and improved. Limited progress has been made in trying to improving car-parking facilities and safety arrangements for pupils arriving and leaving the school premises; negotiations continue with the District Council and police in search of a solution to these problems.

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					
	all schools					similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	A	A	B	C
mathematics	B	C	A	B	A	B
science	B	B	A	B	B	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

By the end of Year 6, the 2001 test results are above the national average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. They are average in English and science, and above average in mathematics, when compared with results from schools that have a similar intake. The proportion of pupils achieving high standards is well above average in English, mathematics and science, when compared with results in similar schools. Trends over time show that the school is improving at a rate broadly in line with the national picture. Boys and girls achieve similar standards in English and science. In mathematics, boys achieve higher standards than girls. In the current Year 6, pupils are making good progress and are on course to achieve well above average standards in English and mathematics and at least above average standards in science. The school is likely to achieve the statutory targets for 2002 and 2003.

In Year 2, the pupils are likely to achieve at least above-average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the reception classes, children's skills in reading, writing and mathematics are above the expected level and they continue to make good progress. Pupils' achievements in most other subjects are above average; they are well above average in history and music. Achievements in design and technology and physical education are average. No religious education was seen during the inspection. In the aspects of information and communication technology seen during the inspection, pupils are achieving above average standards; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are highly motivated and have a strong desire to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen and none was reported by pupils. The oldest pupils conduct themselves with high levels of self-discipline and set a very good example to others.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships with others are very good. They have respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Many pupils are able to work independently, with confidence and maturity. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.
Attendance	Well above average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.

Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for learning make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school and to the good progress made. Very good concentration and a productive work rate are regular features of lessons. However, the unsatisfactory presentation of written work often detracts from the quality of their writing but not their thinking.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good, with some very good features	Good, with some very good features	Very good, with some excellent features

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.

Overall, teaching is very good. In over eight out of ten lessons seen, teaching was good; it was very good or excellent in five out of ten lessons; no lessons were unsatisfactory. In almost every year group, there were examples of very good teaching. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is often good. The key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well throughout the school. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, history and music is very good. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good. The teaching of other subjects is good. The teaching of information and communication technology is rapidly improving and is at least good.

Throughout the school, lessons are well prepared and planned, with interesting and stimulating activities that add to the pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, manage pupils well and expect them to work hard and achieve high standards. Pupils are told what they are expected to learn at the start of the lesson and, when appropriate, are reminded of their individual targets for improvement. At the end of lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt and how they have improved. A particular strength of the teaching is the quality of questioning that challenges pupils to think more deeply about what they are doing and extends the quality and range of their vocabulary. Pupils work with sustained concentration and are highly motivated. They work at a brisk pace and show an increasing ability to work independently. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving their learning goals.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and caters very well for the differing interests and needs of the pupils. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the statutory curriculum. All pupils have equal access and opportunity to participate fully in all learning experiences. Provision for citizenship and personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, satisfactory provision helps pupils to make good progress. Learning support assistants are used well to support learning. Targets set for pupils are realistic and achievable. However, provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties is less effective, their progress is not monitored with sufficient rigour and parents are not appropriately involved in the review process.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good. Provision for social development is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall, procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Appropriate procedures are being developed to monitoring pupils' achievements and progress. All staff are aware of pupils' social and emotional needs. However, the supervision of the pupils at the beginning and end of the school day needs to be more rigorously and carefully monitored by senior staff.

The school's links with parents are very good. Annual reports are informative, identifying pupils' progress and indicating areas for improvement. Very good emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and on developing pupils' thinking skills.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The strong lead provided by the headteacher sets high expectations for the school community. He is very well supported by all the teaching and support staff, who are hard working and operate effectively as a team; morale is high.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is very good support and an understanding of management issues. Governors are well informed and effective as critical friends, particularly in monitoring the school's achievements, staffing issues and the budget.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring arrangements are satisfactory. Test results are analysed and used well to help determine priorities. Effective action is taken when weaknesses are identified. However, the special needs work of the school at present lacks effective co-ordination.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is managed very well. The school achieves good value for money in all its expenditure.

The effective leadership of the headteacher has established a strong learning ethos within the context of the Christian faith of the school. The budget is managed judiciously and the funds carried forward from last year are being used well to meet the school's priorities this year.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are well behaved. • Their children are taught well and are making good progress. • Teachers are approachable. • Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. • The school is well led and managed. • Most parents believe that the school works closely with them. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaires shows that 16 per cent of parents responding have concerns about children being set the right amount of homework. • In addition, some parents have concerns about the provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties.

The inspection team endorses parents' views about the strengths of the school. Parents believe that Great Kingshill is a very good school. Inspection evidence shows that the school has an appropriate homework policy that gives good advice to parents on the frequency of homework and on how to help their children. The inspection team agrees with parents that the provision for pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties is unsatisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Overall, pupils make good progress and, by the age of 11, achieve consistently well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science.

1. Overall, standards are consistently well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science, but there is some slight variation between different year groups. By the end of Year 6, the National Curriculum 2001 test results are above the national average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. They are above average in mathematics and average in English and science when compared with those in similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving higher standards is well above the average for similar schools in English, mathematics and science. Trends over time show that the school is improving at a rate broadly in line with the national picture. Boys and girls achieve broadly similar standards in English and science. Boys achieve higher standards than girls in mathematics. Overall, boys exceed the national average for boys in English and mathematics by at least two terms. Similarly, girls also achieve higher standards than girls nationally in English and mathematics but by only one term. In science, boys and girls exceed the national average by over one term.
2. Children aged four enter the reception classes with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are above the expected level, and make good progress. By the age of seven, pupils continue to build on their prior attainment, and test results over the last two years show that they achieve standards that are often well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils consistently achieve well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and above average standards in science. In the current Year 2, inspection evidence supports the school's expectations that pupils are likely to achieve at least above average standards or better in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the current Year 6, pupils are making good progress and are on course to achieve well above average in English, mathematics and science; this is an improvement on the last two years' performance. Pupils' achievements in most other subjects are above average; they are well above average in history and music. Achievements in design and technology and physical education are average. No religious education was seen during the inspection. In the aspects of information and communication technology seen during the inspection, pupils are achieving above average standards; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
3. A strong emphasis is placed on reading; this is supported well by parents, as the regular entries in homework books testify, and pupils make good progress. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve well above average standards in reading. They respond well to characters in stories and learn to make deductions from ideas presented in key texts. Most pupils can identify key words and phrases to illustrate a point they are making. They have very well developed research skills and use information and communication technology well to gather and analyse information. Pupils use these skills effectively, particularly in history, music and science and in personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties related to reading work very hard and make good progress and often achieve similar standards as their peers.
4. Pupils are self-assured and confident when speaking and listening to others. The ability to question, to discuss ideas in groups, to listen to the views of others and to justify those views in a mature way enables pupils to learn effectively from each other. When teachers intervene with probing questions, the quality of the dialogue is high, for example, in a science lesson in Year 6 about investigating different aspects of magnetism. Pupils are taught to use correct technical vocabulary to support their understanding in subjects such as science, history and music. This contributes well to the high standards achieved in these subjects.
5. The school has identified pupils' writing skills as an area of relative weakness when compared with reading. The National Literacy Hour and special writing projects have helped to create more time for writing. By the age of 11, pupils are making very good progress, particularly in lessons, with over 40 per cent of them achieving well above average standards. This is due to the very good quality of teaching they receive. Pupils are given good opportunities to write in many different styles and for a variety of purposes. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and extended by using a wide range of complex sentences in their writing. Pupils with special educational needs are able to write conditional sentences with high quality and appropriate help from learning support assistants. Good attention is paid to teaching the structure of writing and improving spelling skills, particularly for middle and lower attaining pupils. However, the standards of handwriting of most pupils lacks a consistent style and their work is often not presented well. By the end of

Year 6, pupils organise their writing into paragraphs and use the conventions of punctuation correctly. They make good progress in developing the skills of drafting and editing. Pupils use a wide and interesting range of vocabulary to enliven their work.

6. In mathematics, pupils are grouped by their prior attainment and this is helping to raise standards, particularly in the upper juniors. Overall, progress is often very good and most pupils by the end of Year 6 are working above the expected level for their age, with over 40 per cent achieving well above average standards. This is due to the good quality of teaching they receive. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and expected to work quickly and accurately. Pupils with special educational needs receive good additional support, are growing in confidence and achieve appropriate standards by the age of eleven. Mental practice sessions are well focused on the quick recall of numbers facts and accuracy of mental calculations. Pupils' errors and misconceptions are used well by teachers to provide a greater level of clarity and explanation, for example, when studying number bonds in a Year 1 class. Older pupils have a well-developed understanding of multiplication and division and very good investigative skills. In Years 6, pupils investigate number problems successfully and lower attaining pupils use key words and phrases well to share their understanding with the teacher. In Year 2, pupils used correct mathematical terms when classifying and describing two- and three-dimensional shapes. By the age of eleven, pupils can construct graphs and have a very good knowledge of angular measurement and probability. They work productively at a good pace and show obvious enjoyment in the subject.
7. By the end of Year 6, pupils make very good progress in science, with nearly 50 per cent achieving well-above-average standards. This is due to the very good and often excellent quality of teaching they receive. Year 6 pupils are developing a very good knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of magnetism. They are able to design successfully their own experiments, and understand the importance of accurate measuring and the need to control a range of variables in order to conduct a fair test, particularly when comparing the relative strengths of different types of magnets. In Year 5, pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of the conditions needed for the successful germination of a variety of seeds. Teachers take considerable care to support pupils with special educational needs, who therefore make very good progress and achieve good standards. Year 2 pupils make very good progress in investigating the variations in hand size within their year group. They recorded their findings accurately, using appropriate graphs and block charts. Pupils are able to successfully identify the similarities and differences between different groups of living creatures. Higher-attaining pupils had very good knowledge of the differences between animals and human beings. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the teacher; they make good progress and use key words well to communicate their thinking. Overall, teachers' very good subject knowledge and clarity of explanation contribute significantly to pupils' learning and their enjoyment of the subject.

Teaching and learning are very good.

8. Overall, teaching is very good. In nearly nine out of ten lessons, teaching is good; it is very good or excellent in five out of ten lessons; no lessons were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the incidence of high quality teaching. In almost every year group there were examples of very good teaching. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is often good. Overall, these pupils make good progress and are well supported by learning support assistants. Many teachers have good knowledge of working with pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties. However, not all teachers have acquired this expertise. The teaching of higher attaining pupils is often excellent, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, history and music is very good. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good. Pupils achieve well and make good progress when compared with their attainment on entry to school. The teaching of information and communication technology is rapidly improving and is at least good; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of other subjects is good, with some very good features, such as in personal, social and health education lessons.
9. Teachers' very good knowledge of the National Curriculum, the Foundation Stage and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are well prepared and planned; they provide interesting and stimulating activities that add to the enjoyment of pupils' learning. Teachers manage pupils very well and expect them to work hard and achieve high standards. In the best lessons, very good links are made between assessments of pupils' prior learning and subsequent planning, so those tasks are pitched at just the right level. At the end of lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt and how they have improved. Homework arrangements are satisfactory and there are appropriate systems for communicating with parents.

10. Many teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations. Pupils respond well and are challenged and extended by the tasks set, especially in English, mathematics, science, history and music. Teachers provide interesting and stimulating activities that add to the enjoyment of learning and result in a very good pace of work and effort from pupils. The excellent and very good teaching is stimulating and perceptive. It makes intellectual and creative demands on the pupils to extend their learning. They work productively and at a brisk pace. They show an increasing ability to work independently and have very good knowledge of their own rates of learning and what they need to do to improve. They work with sustained concentration, are highly motivated and have excellent relationships with adults and their peers. There is a high level of collaboration between class teachers and learning support staff in planning and delivering the work.
11. A particular strength of the teaching is the quality of questioning that challenges pupils to think about what they are doing and to develop specific vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 were asked probing questions about their findings concerning the causes of Apartheid in South Africa, the development of the slave trade, and Emily Pankhurst's influence on the emancipation of women. In Year 4, a teacher extended pupils' thinking by questioning them closely about the impact of television advertising on the viewer when discussing the marketing of blueberry cake. In Year 2, high quality questioning and effective demonstrations helped pupils to listen carefully to the quality of the sounds they made when using their voices as an orchestral instrument to explore the musical themes of pitch, tone, tempo and repeating rhythmic patterns. In Year 5, the teacher continuously questioned the pupils to assess their knowledge and understanding of the factors needed for seeds to germinate and to help them improve their investigative skills, particularly in posing scientific questions, predicting results and recording information accurately. In the reception class, the teacher's good questioning skills helped her to check the pupils' understanding about personal hygiene during a health education lesson about bacteria, germs and dirt.
12. The key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. In literacy lessons, a good balance is achieved between class teaching, group work, individual support and plenary sessions. In Year 6, the teacher's very good subject knowledge was used well to help pupils construct sentences using the past, present and future tenses. In Year 5, a teacher modelled language well, particularly when helping pupils to write stories using a range of interesting and exciting words and phrases. In Year 4, a teacher's very positive style of presentation helped pupils to articulate and explain their thoughts and feelings about the ethics of advertising. In Year 2, the teachers explained clearly the difference between verbs and adverbs. They were particularly skilled at re-phrasing questions and adapting the suggestions of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to help them develop greater understanding of the task set. Pupils in Year 1 were helped by the praise and encouragement given by the teacher to use their newly-acquired phonic skills to read unfamiliar stories. In the reception classes, the teachers' enthusiasm and expressive use of language helped the children to identify correctly the key words and phrases used in a story and to predict its development.
13. In numeracy lessons, mental practice sessions are well focused on the quick and accurate recall of numbers facts and are conducted at a brisk pace. In the reception classes, the teachers' good knowledge of how younger children learn helped provide a good range of apparatus and counting games to help them order and sequence numbers. In Year 1, the tasks set matched the differing needs of pupils and good use was made of practical apparatus to help them develop a better understanding of number patterns and place value. Teaching in Year 2 was particularly effective when the correct technical vocabulary was used to help pupils to describe the properties of objects such as pentagons, hexagons, cubes and spheres. Lower-attaining pupils became particularly skilled in identifying flat and solid objects when playing a version of Kim's Game. Very well planned and carefully structured lessons helped pupils in Year 4 to make very good progress in understanding and applying a range of methods to add and subtract two- and three-digit numbers mentally. In Year 5, the teachers' good use of humour encouraged and motivated lower-attaining pupils to successfully find the size of a mystery angle by first estimating and then measuring it using a protractor with care. In Year 6, teachers have very good subject knowledge of problem solving in mathematics. This is used well to diagnose pupils' difficulties and take corrective action quickly. They combine good questioning techniques with high expectations and this helps to extend pupils' knowledge and promotes high standards by challenging their thinking. Higher-attaining pupils achieved exceptionally high standards and pupils with special educational needs achieved nearly national average standards.

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and key members of staff.

14. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He is supported well by the governors and key members of staff. Working together, they expect the pupils to achieve high standards because of very good teaching they receive. Their evaluation of the school's performance is very good and identifies accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher has a clear view of how he wants the school to develop. This is conveyed to staff and they share his commitment to provide a high quality education for pupils. The school's aims are met well. The staff are hard working and operate effectively as a team. There is a high level of collaboration between class teachers and learning support staff in planning and delivering the work. Co-ordinators recognise the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and give effective advice, support and guidance to their colleagues, such as in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology; this is helping to raise standards.
15. The school development plan is constructed well and clearly identifies costs, training needs and success criteria to bring about continuous improvement. The governing body is well informed and effective as a critical friend, particularly in monitoring the school's performance. The budget is managed very well and carefully monitored, and the planned use of the current surplus meets the school priorities well, for example, to provide improvements to the school building and extra resources for information and communication technology.
16. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning. This good level of quality control is effective in planning for improvement and in helping to maintain the overall ethos of the school. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to sample pupils' work across the school in order to gain a better understanding of their levels of attainment and what needs to be improved. Together with the headteacher, they have set realistic and challenging targets for improvement for their areas of responsibility. They have good opportunities to develop their monitoring and evaluating skills and, when appropriate, undertake lesson observations. Co-ordinators have regular opportunities to share with staff the insights gained and to share effective practice with colleagues. As a consequence, morale is high and pupils receive a very good education.
17. Overall, the monitoring and evaluation of school performance are satisfactory and have many good features. Teachers carefully analyse pupils' strengths and weaknesses and identify what they need to work on to make further improvements. Very good analyses of test results and an appropriate system of tracking the attainment of individual pupils are being devised and developed by the headteacher and key members of staff. Challenging targets have been set for cohorts of pupils, and teachers set class and individual targets, for example, in English and mathematics. Teachers are constantly striving to raise pupils' levels of achievement. However, there are weaknesses in monitoring the work of the special needs department; this lacks co-ordination and its administration is not of the same high quality as reported in the last inspection report. Variations in pupils' progress towards their targets are not identified quickly enough for effective action to be taken. The school is aware of these weaknesses and is in the process of interviewing candidates to lead and manage this important work.
18. There are good procedures in place for introducing new staff to the policies and routines of the school. The newly-qualified teacher receives appropriate professional support from an experienced teacher colleague in addition to the training provided by the local education authority. Very good systems are in place for appraisal and performance management. Overall, the professional development of staff is very good, but not all staff have received sufficient training in identifying pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties. National funds for this purpose are used well. Teachers and support staff receive training regularly together and share a strong commitment to continuous improvement and a capacity to succeed, for example, the training for information and communication technology, which has not yet been completed but is already having a significant impact on raising standards.
19. Teachers are well qualified and sufficient in number to provide a good education for the pupils. The learning support staff are experienced and knowledgeable; they have a very good level of expertise and give the pupils in their care good support and guidance. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. The school buildings are in an unsatisfactory condition but are currently being modernised as part of an extensive building programme. Some current health and safety issues, therefore, have not been fully addressed, such as the storage of equipment, the cleaning of the school and lunchtime eating arrangements. However, these are likely to be resolved when the new building is fully in use. The supervision of the pupils at the beginning and end of the school day needs to be more rigorously and carefully monitored by senior staff. The school has a very good range of learning resources. The computer area is developing well and is used effectively, and pupils' achievements are improving rapidly.

20. Financial control and administration are very good. The school has effective and efficient working practices for planning, managing and monitoring its finances. The budget is firmly linked to the school development plan and reflects well the educational needs of the pupils. The school successfully applies the principles of best value. It analyses its performance using national and local data to evaluate the standards that pupils are achieving and to identify areas for improvement. The school makes good use of information and communication technology to improve its administration. Appropriate records are computerised and kept well. The school continues to seek good value for money when purchasing resources and services.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted; as a result, pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships are excellent.

21. Pupils' personal development and relationships with others are excellent. They have respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. The oldest pupils conduct themselves with high levels of self-discipline and set a very good example to their peers. They take responsibility for helping other pupils, particularly younger children, for example, helping them to make friends in the playground. Pupils are keen to be involved in all activities offered by the school. They work together well, sharing ideas and materials in a mature way. Older pupils have well-established work habits and their work-rate in lessons is consistently high. Many pupils are becoming independent, confident learners.
22. The commitment of the school to continuous improvement contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development. Lessons are often exciting and pupils experience the awe and wonder of learning in English, mathematics, science and history. Collective acts of worship capture pupils' interest, giving rise to questions that require more careful thought. They show concern and compassion when helping children less fortunate than themselves, such as when helping provide clothing and learning materials for children in war zones around the world. Pupils are becoming increasingly aware of their own values and beliefs and those of others when discussing the school's participation in a project to provide water-sterilising equipment for children living in areas of the world affected by famine. They experience the spiritual nature of their faith through stories and music. The curriculum encourages pupils to develop an appreciation of intangibles such as beauty and mystery through art, drama, literature and scientific enquiry.
23. All adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and give clear, consistent messages about what is right and wrong. A strong moral code of conduct, which grows from the Christian faith of the school, is well established in the day-to-day habits of all the pupils. Pupils understand fully the school's systems of rewards and sanctions, and the action to be taken if anti-social behaviour occurs. They conduct themselves with mutual respect and self-discipline. The pupils are encouraged to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions, such as in Circle Time, and by participating in the work of the school's council. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and well mannered to each other and to adults and visitors, and show a considerate style of life.
24. Strong role models and good teamwork amongst teachers and support staff promote excellent relationships between adults and pupils, which are warm and friendly. Pupils relate very well to each other. For example, pupils with particular physical needs say they are well accepted by others who offer appropriate help and support when they are needed. Throughout the school, equipment and books are used carefully and shared fairly, and pupils respect the school surroundings. Older pupils exercise responsibility by helping with the smooth daily running of the school in various ways, such as assisting in the library, serving on the school's council, acting as stewards around the school and helping younger children in the reception classes. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to work together in small groups, and relationships within these are very good, such as when using the computers and undertaking investigative work in science. Pupils benefit from the advice offered by their teachers, particularly when trying to resolve disagreements in the playground or when others have different values and beliefs. The many extra-curricular activities further enhance pupils' excellent social development.
25. Pupils are becoming more culturally aware. They are beginning to appreciate diversity through displays around the school that celebrate a range of cultural traditions. Corresponding with children in other countries such as Bosnia extends pupils' experiences. Older pupils show an openness to new ideas and a willingness to change their beliefs about people from other countries. They are able to share with each other their personal experiences of life in different countries as part of the planned curriculum. In mathematics, pupils from ethnic minority groups explained the different methods used for counting money in their countries of origin. Pupils participate with enthusiasm in musical workshops and drama productions. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to understand the images used and gestures made that have a significance and meaning in

other cultures, such as when discussing African, Caribbean, jazz and blues music. They sing in choirs, and participate with enthusiasm in drama, French and computer clubs and sporting activities.

26. Staff are very aware of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional needs and, as a result, pupils' behaviour is very good. The headteacher knows the children by name and constantly mixes with them, giving words of encouragement, setting high expectations and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust that permeates the daily life of the school.

Pupils are eager to come to school; their attitudes to learning are very good, they are enthusiastic about the broad range of interesting curricular activities provided and are supported well by their parents.

27. The school provides a very good range of exciting and interesting activities that takes advantage of pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The oldest pupils spoke enthusiastically about the variety of practical learning opportunities provided, such as the residential visits, musical workshops and drama productions. They value the time that teachers give to listening to their interests and personal concerns. It is clear that pupils understand why they are in school. They work hard and are determined to take advantage of what the school has to offer. They enjoy the challenges set by the teachers, particularly in scientific enquiry, problem solving in mathematics and writing for a wide range of purposes in English. Many pupils attend the good range of after-school and lunchtime clubs; they participate willingly in musical concerts and sporting activities.
28. In nearly nine out of ten lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning are good and in five out of ten lessons very good or excellent, particularly in English, mathematics, science, history, music, and information and communication technology. Teachers encourage pupils to ask questions, work things out together, and have a go at new ideas. In response, pupils are highly motivated and receptive learners. They work productively with sustained concentration and have a strong desire to improve. Pupils are attentive to teachers and their peers during whole-class sessions and group discussions. Relationships between pupils are very good. They work together well, sharing ideas and materials in a mature way. Older pupils have well-established work habits and their work rate in lessons is consistently high. Many pupils are becoming independent, confident learners. Year 6 pupils show an especially mature attitude to learning. They are self-assured and confident in their ability to achieve well, but are also thoughtful and reflective about what they need to learn in order to improve.
29. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum that caters well for the differing needs of the majority. They have equal opportunities to participate fully in all learning experiences. The provision for citizenship and personal, social and health education is very good. Year 6 pupils worked successfully and with enthusiasm on projects associated with drugs and health education and enjoyed the opportunity of presenting their work to an audience of parents and pupils from the school.
30. The parents' support for their children's learning at home and in school is very good. The school values highly the partnership with parents and their active support in its daily life. Home-school agreements are supported well by parents. The majority of parents value the homework arrangements, and pupils find that the tasks set help them to improve. Parents value the good quality school reports and the opportunity to discuss regularly their children's progress. Together with the teachers, they share a strong commitment to help the school improve. They have recently raised considerable funds to improve provision for information and communication technology; this has had a significant impact on pupils' education.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The provision for pupils with special educational needs.

31. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs reported in the last inspection report has not been maintained. The co-ordination of the different aspects of the provision and administration of the special needs register is unsatisfactory. The special needs register is not reviewed with sufficient regularity to be kept up to date. Similarly, some pupils' individual education plans are not always reviewed annually and parents are not sufficiently involved in this process. Communications between the school and parents of other pupils on the register of special needs are not effective. These parents appear not to know at what stage of the code of conduct their children have been placed or the progress they are making towards being removed from the register. This is unsatisfactory and means that there is an unnecessary loss of good will between these parents and the school.

32. In spite of these shortcomings, many of these pupils receive good teaching in lessons and make good progress. Skilled learning support assistants support pupils with statements of special educational need very well. Pupils with disabilities are cared for very well and make very good progress within the inclusive ethos of the school. However, some pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties such as in reading and pattern recognition do not always receive appropriate support. Not all teachers are sufficiently aware of the nature of these difficulties and they lack training in the methods that can help these pupils to make better progress. The writing of individual education plans is often too general, which makes the monitoring of progress towards the targets set more difficult to achieve. The headteacher and governors are aware of these weaknesses and are in the process of interviewing candidates to lead and manage this important work.

The standards of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work.

33. The school has identified pupils' writing skills as an area of relative weakness when compared with reading. Good attention is paid to teaching the structure of writing and improving spelling skills, particularly for middle and lower-attaining pupils. However, the standards of handwriting of most pupils could be better. The school reports that the lower standards of handwriting compared with other aspects of English have had a detrimental effect on the results of National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds. Inspection evidence supports this judgement.
34. The recently introduced policy for teaching handwriting is not being implemented consistently throughout the school. Not all teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable or confident to teach with the methods suggested in the new scheme of work. This limits the effectiveness of the presentation of pupils' work and makes it more difficult for the different people who read the material to appreciate its merit and worth. Displays of work around the school are often presented in a flat and unimaginative manner and this detracts from the creation of a stimulating learning environment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school is pursuing the correct priorities in order to raise standards. It should now:

(a) improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:

- improving the co-ordination of provision, its administration and communications with parents; and
- providing more staff training, particularly in writing individual educational plans and identifying pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties and, where appropriate, the methods used to help them make better progress.

(Paragraphs 31 and 32)

(b) improve the standards of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work by:

- implementing and monitoring rigorously the school's handwriting policy; and
- improving teachers' knowledge of how to teach handwriting and different ways of presenting pupils' work.

(Paragraphs 33 and 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	18	14	7	0	0	0
Percentage	7	43	33	17	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 two 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)	379
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.6

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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	23	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	38	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (97)	97 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	22	21	23
	Total	37	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	95 (100)	100 (100)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	33	26	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	31
	Girls	21	21	24
	Total	48	49	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (87)	83 (84)	93 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	31	32
	Girls	23	22	24
	Total	51	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (90)	90 (87)	95 (95)
	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	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	318
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	260

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
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	£
Total income	633110
Total expenditure	642236
Expenditure per pupil	1722
Balance brought forward from previous year	52438
Balance carried forward to next year	43312

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	379
Number of questionnaires returned	211

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	43	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	48	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	49	15	1	1
The teaching is good.	57	40	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	46	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	48	3	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	36	3	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	41	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	53	9	3	4

Other issues raised by parents

All significant issues raised by parents are included in the parents' summary earlier in the report.