

INSPECTION REPORT

Welford Primary School

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103328

Headteacher: Chris Smith

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill
119623

Dates of inspection: 14 – 15 November 2000

Inspection number: 230845

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Welford Road
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Birmingham

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mary Vadaie

Date of previous inspection: December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a large inner city primary school situated in the heart of Handsworth, not far from the centre of Birmingham. There are 469 pupils on roll, 250 boys and 219 girls. These figures include 33 boys and 27 girls aged three and above in the nursery. Most pupils are either of black Caribbean or Indian or Pakistani heritage. Around 65 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language of whom 23 per cent (106 pupils) are at an early stage of their learning. There are 107 pupils on the school's register of special educational need. This figure includes 14 pupils with full statements, including nine for physical disability who are fully integrated into the life of the school. Almost 50 per cent of pupils (225) are entitled to free school meals, a figure which, like the proportion learning English as an additional language, is well above the national average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below national expectations.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school is very effective at improving its pupils' achievements due to outstanding leadership and the commitment of the staff to providing high quality teaching and opportunities for learning. Many pupils do not speak English fluently when they join the school but by the time that they leave their levels of attainment are well above the national average. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is extremely well led and managed.
- The quality of teaching is high and pupils make very good progress.
- The school is highly successful at promoting very good attitudes towards school and learning, good behaviour and very good personal development and relationships.
- The school provides an impressive range and quality of learning opportunities for all pupils.
- The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and well being of its pupils.
- The school has earned and keeps the confidence of parents and the local community.
- Pupils achieve very good standards throughout the school in English, mathematics and science.

What could be improved

In the context of its many strengths and its already agreed priorities for further development, the school recognises the need to improve:

- The use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning across the curriculum.
- The provision of wheelchair access and disabled toilet facilities where necessary.

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. There has been very good improvement with respect to the key issues that were identified at that time and the quality of teaching is now even better. The improvement in the school's national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 has been better than the national trend. The very positive partnership between the headteacher, governing body, staff and parents provides a very good foundation for further development.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	B	A	A*
Mathematics	D	B	B	A
Science	D	A	B	A

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

The school's results in English are in the top 5 per cent of similar schools across the country. Schools are described as similar when they fall in the same group with respect to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in this case between 35 and 50 per cent (the present figure is approximately 48 per cent). Over the period 1996 to 2000 the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved at a better rate than the national average. The school sets appropriate targets for pupils and has exceeded them in English and mathematics.

Children in the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and reception classes, receive a very good start to their education. Inspection evidence, including examination of work carried out last year as well as this, indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are close to the national average in reading, above the national average in writing and science and well above in mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, as the table shows, levels of attainment in mathematics and science are above the national average while in English, standards are well above it. The school performs at well above the national average in all three subjects in terms of the proportion of pupils who achieve a level above the national expectation (Level 5 rather than Level 4). During this short inspection there was evidence of work of above average quality in many of the other subjects of the National Curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; children clearly enjoy coming to school. They work with great interest and enthusiasm in their lessons. They are being skilfully helped to be, and to see themselves as, successful learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, in response to the clear expectations and support of the adults in the school community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; most pupils take pleasure in contributing fully to the life of the school. They work and play together well and the relationships in the school are a great strength.
Attendance	The attendance and punctuality of the vast majority of pupils are very good. Attendance statistics are depressed by pupils who make long visits to relatives abroad and by pupils who may be at the school for only a short time but stay on the school's register until they are known to have started somewhere else.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very 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.

In total, 97 per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory; only 3 per cent were unsatisfactory. In fact almost nine out of ten lessons were of at least good quality and one in three were judged to be very good or excellent. This is high quality teaching, well above what is typical of schools during inspection. It makes a major contribution to the pupils' development of very good attitudes towards their learning and to the very good progress that they make throughout the school.

The teaching of English, including literacy, is never less than good; one third of the lessons observed were very good and a further third were excellent. The resulting quality of pupils' learning and their progress are very good and lead to results in national tests that are well above the average. The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is also of a high standard, with more than three quarters of lessons throughout the school judged to be of good or better quality; more than 20 per cent were very good or excellent.

Particular strengths of the teaching throughout the school include very good planning and teamwork on the part of teachers and learning support assistants. In many of the best lessons seen these ingredients enabled all pupils, whatever their ability or particular learning need, to take a full part in the lesson and make good progress. Another very important factor is that the headteacher and other members of staff have high expectations of the standard of work and behaviour; pupils respond well to knowing what is expected of them.

Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and when they are encouraged to find things out on their own they do so well. They are interested in their work and concentrate for extended periods of time. All these aspects contribute to making the quality of learning very good; pupils develop the essential confidence in their ability to learn.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; the school provides a rich curriculum for all pupils. All National Curriculum requirements are met and the curriculum is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for residential experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; the provision is very well organised and support is very carefully targeted. Every effort is made, with success, to make sure that pupils with statements of special educational need have complete access to the full range of learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; this is a strength of the school. The school actively promotes pupils' development through assemblies, out-of-school activities and lessons, including weekly sessions specifically on personal, social, health education and citizenship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; all members of staff know their pupils well and are very committed to supporting their learning and personal development. The school is a safe, secure and happy place.

The school has a very good relationship with its parents, the vast majority of whom hold very positive views of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent; the headteacher provides outstanding leadership that is sharply focused on raising the levels of achievements of the pupils through improving the quality of education that the school provides. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the rest of the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and the other adults in the school community, including the office and caretaking staff
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; the governing body is knowledgeable and very committed to the development of the school. Financial planning based on the school's agenda for improvement is very strong. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent; the headteacher and senior management team keep all aspects of the school's performance under continuous review. The responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is shared well and effectively discharged.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent; the school makes very good use of its current resources and specific grants are targeted very well on raising standards. The school actively seeks to get best value for money.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are good although there are too few teaching spaces for the amount of small group work that the school seeks to provide.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 138 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 35 who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good and the school has high expectations. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school is approachable and well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount and regularity of homework.

The inspection team fully supports the positive views of parents. Homework is regularly set and is making an important contribution to raising standards.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is extremely well led and managed

The headteacher has transformed the school in terms of national test results and community links - a governor.

The headteacher leads by example and brings out the best in us - a member of staff.

1. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and has outstanding management skills. At the time of the last inspection, it was reported that *the school now has a complex system of management which has not yet fully bedded in and there are small omissions or overlaps in some areas or responsibility*. The management structure created by the headteacher has clear definitions of delegation, responsibility and accountability and matches very well the needs of a large inner city primary school. Senior posts are filled by people of considerable flair and expertise and one of the headteacher's impressive leadership skills is in facilitating teamwork so that the whole is greater even than the sum of the parts.
2. The headteacher has a vision, widely shared by staff and governors, that the school can significantly improve the life chances of its pupils. Detailed planning for improvement based on a perceptive strategic overview has already led to substantial improvements since the last inspection in terms both of national test results at 11 and the quality of education provided. Key ingredients of the school's strategy are the recognition of the importance of raising the self esteem of pupils, maintaining clear and consistently high expectations of work and behaviour and providing the sharply focused support that enables pupils to meet these expectations.
3. The deputy headteacher has been given leadership and management responsibility for major areas of the work of the school, including staff development and assessment. She discharges these and her other day-to-day duties very competently and provides invaluable direct support to the headteacher. In particular, she is leading the very thorough and effective revision of the school's assessment and recording procedures.
4. The senior management team individually and collectively provides very strong leadership. All aspects of the school's performance are subject to careful analysis and kept under continuous review. There is a considerable amount of very effective monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work and of classroom observation and support. This makes a very important contribution towards raising pupils' levels of achievement and valuing the work of colleagues.
5. Progress towards each key target in the school improvement plan (see paragraph 7 below) is monitored by a co-ordinator who reports in writing to the senior management team. The responsibility for raising levels of achievement and improving the quality of education provided is very effectively shared and staff are able to recognise the contribution that they and others are making. Subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and give very good leadership directed towards improving provision and raising standards. They use the time that they are allocated for monitoring and support very productively and the structure of the curriculum leader's handbook helps to maintain focus and thoroughness.
6. Governors are fully involved and committed to the development of the school. They show a keen awareness of the issues that the school faces, for example the need for monitoring to ensure that no pupils are excluded from any of the opportunities that the school offers because of their language or learning or physical needs. The chairperson is

a frequent and welcome visitor and other governors, too, give generously of their time in support of the school. Parent governors in particular have welcomed the opportunity to visit classes. The partnership between the governing body, headteacher and staff is very strong and effective in moving the school forward. Governors have been fully involved in dealing with the key issues from the last inspection. Progress has been very good but the governors recognise that there is more to do with respect to assessment.

7. The school improvement plan is the key working document for the school and is a very impressive and comprehensive document. An important ingredient of the process of school improvement is the review day in the first half of the summer term, at which staff and governors will check progress against targets. The intended outcome of the day is the identification of school improvement targets for the following academic year. This is a very well conceived process. Target areas for this year are assessment and target setting, information and communication technology, Curriculum 2000, lunchtime behaviour and performance management.
8. Financial planning is very strong. The finance committee, headteacher and office manager work together very effectively to keep spending under review and to set budgets in line with the objectives of the school improvement plan. Funds allocated to the school for a specific purpose, for example to raise the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language or to help the school to meet the needs of pupils with physical disabilities, are very well used. The school actively and successfully seeks to obtain best value for money.
9. The governing body is totally committed to the school's policy of including rather than excluding. In particular, it has voted to give as much support as possible to pupils who find behaving difficult rather than exclude them from school. Similarly the governing body is totally supportive of the integration of pupils with physical difficulties and of the support provided for pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special learning needs. Between them, these groups form the vast majority of pupils at the school.
10. The school uses its existing accommodation very well and the governing body has carefully considered plans for further improvement. These include the creation of more small group learning areas and a community area that would facilitate extending out-of-hours activities and courses for parents. In addition, the school has been seeking, in keeping with its commitment to inclusiveness, to improve wheelchair access and toilet facilities for the disabled.
11. At present, the governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are all members of the staff. While there are advantages to this, the disadvantage is that lay members of the governing body do not have an opportunity to monitor work in these important areas. The possibility of having shadow governors for these responsibilities is under discussion and has much to commend it.
12. The governing body is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and is kept well informed by subject co-ordinators. It meets all of its statutory obligations very well.

The quality of teaching is high and pupils make very good progress

13. Of the lessons observed, one-third were judged to be very good or excellent, a further 53 per cent were good, 10 per cent were satisfactory and only 3 per cent were unsatisfactory. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection. The high quality of teaching is one of the major reasons for pupils' very good attitudes towards

their learning and for the very good progress that they make. Responses to the questionnaire show that parents believe that the standard of teaching is good and that their children make good progress; inspection findings more than support this view.

14. Examples of teaching that was very good or excellent were observed in all three key stages; 33 per cent of lessons in the Foundation Stage, 44 per cent in Key Stage 1 and 27 per cent in Key Stage 2 fell into this category. In 83 per cent of lessons, pupils made progress that was good or very good. In 87 per cent of lessons, pupils' behaviour and their attitude to their work were at least good; in more than 50 per cent of lessons, they were very good. These figures speak for themselves.
15. The teaching of the literacy hour was never less than good; in two-thirds of lessons it was very good. In mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, more than three-quarters of lessons were at least good and 22 per cent were very good or excellent. This very good standard of teaching promotes very good progress throughout the school, resulting in above average results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2.
16. Teachers use a very good planning format through which they carefully identify what they intend the pupils to learn, what teaching methods and resources will be used, what the pupils will do and how they and the pupils will know to what extent the targets have been achieved. In a very good music lesson with pupils in Year 2, for example, the learning objectives in terms of using instrumental skills and developing an awareness of dynamics, tempo and timbre were very clear. The teacher skilfully helped pupils to revise what they had learned in previous lessons, stimulated their interest by playing catchy music from Cuba and drawing attention to some of the instruments that were being played and how. Pupils then spent a worthwhile amount of time working in pairs with a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments developing the skills of listening and playing through copying each other's rhythms. Both the music specialist and the class teacher gave good focused support, showing very good awareness of individual learning needs. The teacher gave very good feedback to the class at points during the lesson so that they knew what was good about what they were doing. They gained ideas about how they might improve through listening to each other's efforts. The lesson proceeded at a brisk pace in a very pleasant working atmosphere. Such lessons contribute enormously to very good quality learning through the achievement of very worthwhile success and to raising pupils' self esteem.
17. Two other striking features of the teaching seen were the very good working relationships between teachers, learning support assistants and pupils, and the very skilful use of questions to confirm and extend learning. In an excellent mathematics lesson with pupils in Year 2, the teacher and the learning support assistant maintained a very warm and encouraging relationship with all the pupils within a framework of sensible and clearly understood classroom routines. The teacher used questions very effectively in the early part of the lesson to help pupils to revise their skills at counting on and back in 5s and 10s, in preparation for the main focus of the lesson which was on adding 11. During this part of the lesson, the learning support assistant worked intensively with one pupil who needed extra specific help. During the main part of the lesson, both adults were very mobile around the room, continually checking and encouraging; each pupil's book was marked at least twice during the lesson. All pupils made very good progress in their learning and were also helped by the fact that the teacher had prepared tasks at different levels of difficulty to suit pupils of differing abilities.
18. Teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils with differing abilities in a variety of ways, including providing different tasks as described above. In other lessons, the thrust is on providing focused adult support so that all pupils have full access to what is being taught. A very good example of the success of this was observed in a very well planned and

taught practical science lesson on chemical reactions with Year 6 pupils. A teacher with specialist skills in teaching English as an additional language worked intensively with a group of four pupils throughout the lesson continually using, and requiring them to use, the correct language and helping to focus their observations and discussion. Because of this support, these pupils all made good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding as well as their experimental skills.

19. In a good session run by a learning support assistant for a small group of pupils from Year 6 who needed support with their acquisition of language, good progress was made as a result of carefully planned work, very good questioning and individual support. This is another good example of the care with which the school makes sure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and the support that they need to make the most of the opportunity.
20. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and this promotes good learning. Teachers and other adults treat each other and the pupils with respect and this very good example has obvious benefits on the working atmosphere in the school. Classroom routines based largely on common sense and consideration for others have been successfully established and pupils respond positively to the fairness and consistency with which they are treated. A very good start to this is made in the Foundation Stage where children, for example in the nursery, respond quickly to instructions to leave the play dough and 'put their hands away' so that they can listen to the teacher's explanation of the next task. At this stage, too, the basis is skilfully set for working with others or individually or with an adult.

The school is highly successful at promoting very good attitudes towards school and learning, good behaviour and very good personal development and relationships

21. Observations in lessons, in the playground, dining room and corridors confirm that pupils behave well. This supports the very positive view of parents on this matter. There are many reasons why behaviour is good. One of these is the example of the headteacher who knows every pupil in the school and makes clear that he expects and accepts only the best from them. He has a very visible presence in the playground at the beginning and end of the day, in the dining hall at lunchtime and around the school at break time. He is very well supported by the other adults in the school community in setting a very good example for pupils to follow and in fair and consistent application of the school's positive behaviour strategy.
22. The management of pupils' behaviour is firmly based on high expectations and there is a good emphasis on parental involvement. Rewards and sanctions are clearly specified and fairly applied. There are very clear and helpful classroom procedures specified for each key stage to help teachers to establish positive, consistent behaviour patterns. This considered thoroughness contributes substantially to the good behaviour of the pupils and to the very good relationships that are a strength of the school.
23. The displays in corridors and classrooms celebrate and value pupils and their work. They reflect the diverse community in the school through beautiful large colour photos of pupils, the multilingual captions and pupils' art and written work. These displays help to create and maintain the school's exciting and purposeful working atmosphere in which high standards are set and achievements are celebrated.
24. At the heart of the school's work is the improvement of pupils' self-esteem and creating a climate of success so that they become confident in their ability to learn and improve. As is made clear in the preceding section, teachers go to a lot of trouble to make their lessons interesting and set tasks that are well matched to pupils' learning needs. They

manage their pupils and their classrooms so effectively that pupils rarely have either the time or the inclination to misbehave.

25. Some pupils do find it difficult to behave themselves, often for reasons outside the school's control. In school, they benefit from skilled support that helps them to take more control of their reactions. In one session a pupil volunteers his mum's advice *to keep his bad fingers to himself* and says that helps him just to think things and not say them. Parents overwhelmingly recognise that the school helps their children to mature and become responsible. It is through special support like this and the consistent approval of good behaviour that the school achieves this.

The school provides an impressive range and quality of learning opportunities for all pupils

26. The school provides a rich curriculum for all pupils. There is a very appropriate emphasis on language development and on enabling all pupils to have full access to what is available. The national strategies for raising standards in literacy and numeracy have been carefully adapted to meet the needs of the pupils and are being successfully implemented. The school plans in detail to provide good learning opportunities in all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there are too few opportunities for using the skills of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
27. The arts, for example, are very important in the life of the school and make a major contribution to the quality of education provided. Through art, dance, drama and music, pupils not only achieve success in their own work but are also helped to appreciate the work of others, including those from other times and places. Talent shows, musical performances developed from the work in the classroom and pupils' own art making provide valuable opportunities for celebrating the life of the school community.
28. A striking feature of the arts provision is the way in which the arts themselves are often linked and also used to enhance learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils from Year 4 painted pictures after listening to the storm movement from Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*. Pupils from Year 6 drew images, wrote poems and their own openings to the music after listening to the original *War of the Worlds*. Pupils from Year 6 also made good pastel drawings based on Munch's *The Scream* and used clip art to illustrate their poems on the topic *fear*, which they had been exploring in their personal, social and health education lessons.
29. The topic weeks through which the school teaches a significant part of the curriculum are very well planned and organised. Through this means the school ensures that all pupils receive the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled. Educational visits and visitors add an important dimension to the quality of what is provided.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and very well organised. Individual education plans have clear, very relevant and individual targets. The administration is impeccable and the school makes considerable efforts to involve parents in the creation of individual education plans for their children. The teamwork between the co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants is very good and promotes very good progress for most pupils. The school also supports pupils who demonstrate high attainment or talent. Pupils are provided with extension work in lessons and are encouraged and assisted to attend classes on Saturdays, for example in mathematics and English, which stimulate and challenge them.

31. Support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, around 65 per cent of the school, is very good. There is a high level of staff skill in developing the accurate use of language for all pupils and a strong commitment to making sure that all pupils have full access to what is taught. As one teacher said, *Every lesson at Welford is an EAL (English as an additional language) lesson*. The school provides a wide range of support, well focused on meeting specific needs. For example, pupils who arrive at the school with very little English at all benefit from individual or very small group sessions designed to help them cope with basic classroom language. Pupils' home languages are valued and opportunities are created for them to be spoken in school, for example in performances.
32. Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship has a very high profile in the school and is one of its many strengths. It makes an essential contribution to the school's success in including all pupils, whatever their talents and needs, fully in all that it offers. As well as a weekly timetabled lesson, this area of the curriculum is developed well through assemblies and topic focus weeks. In addition, teachers are good at turning a playground incident, for example, into a valuable learning opportunity.
33. A whole school assembly was skilfully used to build pride in individuals and classes whose achievements were celebrated, in the school and in its teams as well as to provoke thought on how to protect the world. Regular class assemblies provide a further opportunity for pupils to reflect on issues, for example when a Year 5 class was encouraged to think about how they could help other people, even people that they don't know, in the context of water shortages or excesses. In other classes, pupils were encouraged to recognise that developing countries need the help of rich countries without conditions and that individuals should give help without thinking about what might be in it for them.
34. The school council of pupils provides a very valuable opportunity for developing understanding of democracy and for taking responsibility. It meets weekly and includes achieving the provision of more playground equipment among its successes. There was competition to be class representative and the pupils are proud to be part of it and feel it is important. It has demonstrated that it could conduct its business as usual when the deputy headteacher, who launched it, was unable to attend.
35. The school provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. There are at least 15 clubs, including sports, arts and homework and take-up is very good, for example over 100 pupils at athletics in the summer. Support from parents and staff is very good and increasing. Clubs are fun but they also have schemes of work. Pupils are targeted and the effectiveness of the provision is monitored. The further development of the out-of-hours programme of giving pupils opportunities to develop their talents and improve their skills is well considered and managed.

The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and well being of its pupils

36. There is an obvious deep concern and commitment to providing a caring and supportive structure within which pupils feel safe and secure. The headteacher knows every pupil by name and class teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils for whom they are directly responsible very well indeed. Pupils trust the adults in the school community and parents rightly value this aspect of the school.
37. The school has very good systems and procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress in terms of both their personal and their academic development. Arrangements for first aid and for child protection are also very good. The provision of a physiotherapy room

since the last inspection has greatly improved facilities for this aspect of the school's work.

38. Since the last inspection, the procedures for assessing pupils' progress and recording this information in a way that makes it easy to use it when planning subsequent work have been greatly improved. Assessment is now much more consistently built into teacher's planning. The school is well on the way towards achieving consistent use of assessment in ways that are appropriate to different subjects and ages of pupils. The use of assessment information to set further targets for pupils is particularly well developed in the case of pupils with special educational needs. Learning support assistants are playing an increasing and important role in the assessment and recording processes.
39. The school is a safe, secure and happy place in which the quality of pupils' learning is very good.

The school has earned and keeps the confidence of parents and the local community

40. The home-school partnership plays a vital role in gaining the confidence of parents from the diverse community that the school serves. Visits to families improve trust and positively help the school to make sure that all pupils enjoy equal access to all that it offers.
41. The partnership and the developing out-of-hours provision are already enabling parents to gain confidence in using computers and some subsequently provide support to pupils in information and communication technology lessons.
42. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or who attended the meeting hold very positive views of the school. They particularly appreciate the fact that their children like school and make good progress there. They recognise that the quality of teaching is good and that the school has high expectations of their children with respect to work and behaviour. They confirm that behaviour is good and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.
43. They greatly value the fact that the headteacher and staff are very approachable and they know that the school is well led and managed. They recognise that the school seeks to work closely with them and they feel well informed about their children's progress.

Pupils achieve very good standards throughout the school in English, mathematics and science

44. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a very good start to their full time education. They make good progress in their letter formation and most children write their name and the date on their work by the time they are five years of age. Higher attaining children write simple stories using capital letters and full stops correctly. In mathematics children correctly draw nine sweets in a jar and colour four blue, three yellow and two green. They extend their confidence with numbers to 15 and accurately carry out simple additions using counters. They also develop the mathematical language of shape and size, for example *empty, full, circle, triangle* and *square*.

Improvement since the last inspection

45. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 was judged to be in line with national expectations.
46. On the evidence of the lessons observed, examination of the work of a sample of pupils from across the school, discussion with pupils and consideration of national test results it

is judged that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are now in line with the national average in reading, above it in writing and science and well above it in mathematics, particularly the numerical aspects. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English is well above the national average; in mathematics and science it is above the national average.

English

Key Stage 1

47. Examination of pupils' work shows that pupils make very good progress in learning to write creatively and neatly and in improving their spelling. Higher attaining pupils in the present Year 2 write seven sentences about their friends with accurate use of capital letters, full stops and speech marks. An account of a visit to Hartlebury Castle includes complex sentences such as 'When they got off the bus they went into the school'. Careful marking of work promotes improvement and pride in its presentation.
48. In a very good lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils read a big book well together. They confidently gave extended answers when predicting the end of the story and read a familiar passage fluently and with good expression. The teacher was careful to provide good challenge for all, including exploring the meaning of 'anchored'. Good use of different tasks meant that pupils could all work well independently and complete suitably challenging tasks.
49. In another very good lesson in Year 2, aimed at *writing a story for the inspectors to read tonight*, the teacher very successfully promoted the dramatic use of key language, for example *shiver, shake, zooming*, and reinforced the importance of setting and of interesting beginnings. Thoughtful discussion stimulated by good open questions prepared pupils for their individual task. Pupils showed interest in the challenge, contributing readily to the spoken work and listening carefully to each other and the teacher. They worked hard and quietly when putting their ideas on paper. Letters were formed well and spelling, certainly of the higher attaining pupils, was usually correct. All pupils showed awareness of capital letters and full stops even if they didn't always use them.

Key Stage 2

50. Pupils at the end of the key stage write well for a wide range of different purposes including newspaper reports, mini-books, extended creative writing, geographical, historical, scientific, poems, imaginary evacuee memories, posters and book reviews. Work is correctly spelt with good punctuation and imaginative use of vocabulary. There is good use of appropriate style and language, for example stylistic short sentences: *Boris was a bully. He just loved bullying. It was his obsession.*
51. In an excellent lesson with a class of Year 6 pupils, the teacher provided pupils with an in-depth exploration of text that enriched their vocabulary and gave them practice in note taking and skim reading. The lesson also provided an excellent example of building up character through lively description. Pupils engaged enthusiastically in discussion about genre and character and showed good understanding of descriptive detail. The class text was read with fluency and expression; individual pupils were confident and expressive when reading in front of the whole class.
52. A small group of pupils from Year 6 benefited from the experience and skill of their teacher in another excellent lesson. Through very good and detailed preparation and well focused support, she enabled them to cover the same areas reading for information, skimming, identifying how characters are created and developed as others in the year

group. High expectations, very good relationships with the pupils and very good teaching skills led to clear gains in confidence and in learning.

53. Marking which helps pupils to see why what they have written is good, or not, and which points the way to further improvement is a strong and important feature of the teaching of English.

Mathematics

Key Stage 1

54. It is clear from the examination of work from the last school year that pupils make good progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding across the mathematics curriculum. Progress in the numerical aspects is particularly strong and is helped by teachers' insistence on accuracy and good presentation. Another feature that promotes good progress is the creation of many very clear worksheets. This helps pupils by breaking learning down into many achievable steps.
55. During the inspection, pupils in a Year 1 class used the language of two-dimensional shapes correctly. Pupils in the Year 2 lesson mentioned earlier offered sensible suggestions as to how they could add 11 to 4, including *counting on, using the number square, getting the cubes, put 11 in my head and count on 4, use a ruler as a number line*. The teacher easily moved them on to recognising that they could add 10 and then another one and all achieved success at the tasks set. Teaching for understanding and confidence has obviously paid dividends.

Key Stage 2

56. Pupils in Year 4 showed good understanding of the properties of equilateral and isosceles triangles. The lesson was well prepared and presented and pupils made good progress as a result. Drawings on the white board were particularly clear and helpful and the correct mathematical language was consistently used and expected. The mathematics co-ordinator effectively supported a targeted group of pupils and this effectively helped their progress.
57. The mathematics co-ordinator was again in evidence in a supportive role when a class of pupils of average ability from Year 5 were grappling with negative numbers. Good oral work led by the teacher helped pupils to improve their skills at extracting information from graphs and pupils were also able correctly to draw a bar graph which included negative temperatures. Most pupils correctly placed '-11' between '-10' and '-12'. The pupils were helped to relate their work to everyday life through the co-ordinator's illustration of the behaviour of diesel at low temperatures.
58. Pupils of average ability in Year 6 were also studying positive and negative numbers, in the context of adding and subtracting them using a number line. Progress compared with Year 5 pupils was very evident as most pupils confidently and quickly put a set of temperatures in order and transferred them to a grid.

Science

Key Stage 1

59. Examination of pupils' work from this year and last and of teachers' records, show that levels of attainment are above the national average. Pupils' work shows good progression in terms of their scientific knowledge about, for example, electricity and its uses and how sound is created and transmitted. Pupils also successfully carry out simple experiments to find out, for example, which materials would make the best umbrella. In this investigation, they made sensible predictions and tested them. They showed a good

understanding of what makes a test fair and improved their skills of recording what they had done, in their own words.

Key Stage 2

60. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress both in increasing their scientific knowledge and understanding and in improving their experimental skills. Examination of pupils' work from last year also shows good improvement in presentation and recording. This is helped by good marking, for example: *A really good write up, showing that you have done the experiment carefully, observing exactly what happens.* On another occasion: *You have told me parts of what you did, but what did you find out, what happened to the water and why?* This promotes good learning and progress and a culture of improvement.
61. During the inspection, in a very good lesson with pupils from a Year 6 class, an investigation into where a sherbert lemon gets its fizz was carried out in a disciplined and organised way. Pupils spoke the appropriate scientific language, such as *dissolve* and *solution*, correctly and explained clearly what they were trying to find out and how. Their approach showed clearly that they understood what a fair test was. They were animated and enthusiastic - motivated by the real challenge of finding out what ingredients put the fizz into sherbert lemons and liver salts. This was a pleasant and productive lesson that promoted good attitudes to science and good development of the experimental method as well as good learning related to chemical change. Higher attaining pupils confidently explained the difference between physical and chemical changes.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning across the curriculum

62. The provision for teaching information and communication technology is sound. All classes have immediate access to a computer. The teaching of skills is effectively carried out through good teamwork between the co-ordinator and class teachers. This is significantly contributing to raising levels of staff expertise and confidence. The co-ordinator is currently only able to spend two days per week on this work and this limitation is adversely affecting the development of the subject. The governing body and the senior management team strongly wish to return to the arrangement whereby the co-ordinator is able to focus entirely on his role as soon as the staffing situation allows. Plans for further increasing the number and use of computers are very sound. The school recognises that the remaining area of weakness is in the use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning across the curriculum in this large school.

Wheelchair access and disabled toilet provision where necessary

63. The school has for several years successfully integrated pupils and adults with a range of physical handicaps into its life and work. All members of the school community have benefited from this openness and inclusiveness. There are a few remaining obstacles to the school complying fully with the most recent legislation, notably with respect to wheelchair access and the provision of toilet facilities for the disabled. The school is fully aware of the need to deal with these issues as a matter of urgency.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. **In accordance with the existing agenda for improvement, the headteacher, with the governing body and staff should:**

- take steps to improve the provision for information and communication technology so that all pupils have regular opportunities to develop and practise their skills;
- arrange appropriate staff training in information and communication technology;
- plan and provide more opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning in the subjects of the National Curriculum;

(see paragraphs 26, 62)

- work with the appropriate agencies in order to comply with current legislation with respect to improving wheelchair access and toilet facilities for the disabled.

(see paragraphs 10, 63)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
10	23.3	53.3	10	3.3	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60	409
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	225	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20	87

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	309

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	72
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	64

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	22	38	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	21
	Girls	34	35	38
	Total	50	52	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (82)	86 (88)	98 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	88 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	18
	Girls	35	35	38
	Total	52	56	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (90)	97 (95)	97 (93)
	National	(82)	(86)	(87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	29
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	44	45	51
Percentage of pupils	School	79 (86)	79 (79)	91 (93)
	National	74 (70)	73 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	24	31
	Girls	22	22	21
	Total	45	46	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (84)	81 (77)	91 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	111
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	2
Indian	83
Pakistani	89
Bangladeshi	15
Chinese	4
White	15
Any other minority ethnic group	27

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	2	0
Pakistani	3	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	21.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11.3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	335

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30.0

Total number of education support staff	3.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1,080,294
Total expenditure	1,098,330
Expenditure per pupil	2,303
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,837
Balance carried forward to next year	27,801

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 29%

Number of questionnaires sent out	473
Number of questionnaires returned	138

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	37	1	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	36	13	8	5
The teaching is good.	61	36	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	35	5	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	23	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	36	4	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	72	24	0	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	24	2	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	31	7	1	12

Notes The numbers in some rows may not add up to 100 because of rounding.
The 'don't know' responses to the last question came almost entirely from parents whose children have not been at the school for very long.

Other issues raised by parents

Parents would like the school to have a bigger hall for assemblies and events.