

INSPECTION REPORT

BAMPTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bampton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123114

Headteacher: Mrs J Evans

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th April 2002

Inspection number: 244689

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 Controlled Church of England
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bowling Green Close Bampton Oxfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	The Rev D Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	1 st – 4 th June 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school, which is situated in the small market town of Bampton, is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England primary school. With 139 boys and girls on roll, the school is smaller than many other primary schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (13 per cent) is broadly average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupil has English as an additional language. There are a few pupils from traveller backgrounds. The percentage of pupils on the school's special educational needs register (29 per cent) is above average. Most pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties. Less than one per cent of pupils has a statement of special educational need. Children begin school in the term in which they will be five. There is a wide range of attainment of individual children when they start school and some are attaining highly at this age. Taking the intake as a whole, however, three out of the last five year groups of children entering the school have been below average in relation to the expectations for their age. This includes the present group of children in the reception year. The groups now in Years 1 and 2 were both average overall when they started at the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bampton C E Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and has some very good features. It is by no means complacent and is striving to be even better. With its many significant strengths, it is well placed to achieve this. There is very effective development of pupils as individuals. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all very good. Pupils are making good progress in science and in the basics of literacy and numeracy as they move up through the school. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The leadership and management are good overall and the headteacher provides a very clear educational direction for the work of the school. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils get off to a good start in English and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in these key areas.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in science as they move up through the school.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They work and play very amicably together and have very positive relationships with the adults in school.
- Teachers focus strongly in lessons on what they want pupils to learn. They take good account of the full range of pupils' needs.
- There is very good attention to the all-round development of pupils as individuals, helping them to become thoughtful and responsible citizens.
- The headteacher provides very clear leadership. The staff team gives good support and is committed to the improvement of the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils are not making as much progress in developing skills in story writing and using language creatively as in other aspects of writing.
- Although pupils make good progress in numeracy in Years 3 to 6, overall progress in the wider aspects of mathematics is not as strong in these years.
- Teachers do not always make enough use of additional adults in lessons.

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 made good progress since its last inspection in June 1998. The significant strengths found at that time have been maintained and many have been built on further. Two key issues for action were given to the school in 1998. The school has successfully rectified both the areas in which

improvement was found to be needed. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 now have experience of all the areas of information and communication technology (ICT) required by the National Curriculum at this age. Assessment procedures for ICT are now in place. Staff have had training in teaching ICT and resources have improved. Work is continuing in this area to strengthen it further. Children in the reception class now have suitable equipment for physical development and a safe place to use it daily. As a result of these improvements, pupils' progress and the standards they achieve are also better in the specific areas concerned.

Pupils' overall achievements in their school work continue to be good. There has been considerable improvement in the standards in English in Year 6. At the last inspection, the National Curriculum test results in English were well below the national average and they are now close to the national average. The above average standards in mathematics, and well above average standards in science achieved in 1998, are mirrored in the present standards. Standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are even better now and are very good. Attendance is still very good and well above the national average. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is better now and is good, with very good provision made for pupils' overall personal development. The partnership with parents has been strengthened and is now very good.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	C	C
mathematics	D	C	B	B
science	C	C	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 2001, compared with results in all schools and with those in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 was well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English. The evidence of pupils' work shows that standards are much the same now in Year 6. In 1998, standards were equally high in science in relation to the national picture and in mathematics they were also above average. English results are much better now than when the school was last inspected. In the intervening years there has been a fluctuation in results because of the small year groups of pupils, especially in mathematics. The improvement in the school's results since the last inspection has been above the national trend, largely because of the improvement in the English results. The school's targets for further improvement in the English and mathematics results are appropriately ambitious and progress towards them is satisfactory.

Pupils achieve well in Year 2 in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Since the last inspection, the results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average in reading and mathematics. In several years, they have been well above average in mathematics. Writing standards have been average for the last two years, although they were above average at the last inspection. The evidence of pupils' work shows that standards now in Year 2 are above average in reading and mathematics and average overall in writing. In some elements of writing, such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting, they are above average.

In information and communication technology, standards are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. In singing, as an aspect of music, standards are very good. Not enough evidence was gathered to make judgements on standards in other subjects in Years 2 and 6.

Children in the reception class make good progress overall. Most now in the reception class are on course to achieve the nationally expected standards for their age in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have a tremendous enthusiasm for all that the school offers them. They try hard in lessons and appreciate the many extra activities offered to them. Older pupils are keenly aware of the school aim, 'Only our best is good enough'.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school is a very pleasant, calm and orderly community because pupils behave consistently very well. They have a particularly clear awareness of how their actions affect others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships at all levels are very positive. Pupils work co-operatively together, willingly offering each other help. They get on very well with adults, relating to them in a friendly but also respectful manner.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average. There was no unauthorised absence last school year. Punctuality is good.

Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, together with their very good attendance, do much to create an atmosphere helpful to learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

During the inspection, 17 lessons were observed. About three-fifths of the lessons seen were at least good, including instances of very good and even excellent teaching in the reception and combined Year 1 and 2 classes. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good in the reception year and Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. However, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout the school, including Years 3 to 6. Science is also well taught throughout the school and pupils' learning is good. In information and communication technology, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Not enough evidence was gathered to make firm judgements on teaching and learning in other subjects.

Teaching and learning are effective in giving children a good start in the reception year in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical, personal, social and emotional development. This helps children to understand from an early age the school's expectations of their attitudes, behaviour and relationships with others.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school gives effective coverage to the required areas of learning for children in the reception year and the subjects of the National Curriculum in Years 1 to 6. This is enriched by a very good range of additional activities, including visits and clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school identifies pupils' special educational needs well and ensures that they are given the support they need to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. A high priority is given to the development of each pupil as an individual person. Pupils are given challenges that develop their inner resourcefulness. They are helped to understand their responsibilities towards others, to recognise the diversity within society and to express their personal thoughts and feelings.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The pastoral care and attention given to pupils' personal wellbeing are very good. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress.

The school works very well with parents and gives them very good information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher gives a very good educational direction to the school. She is well supported by the deputy and other teachers, for instance in their roles as subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors work purposefully with the headteacher and staff. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are keen to help in its further improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is effective evaluation of how well the school provides for its pupils academically and more widely. As a result of analysis of data and the work in classrooms, appropriate priorities are identified for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Specific grant is spent on the purposes for which it is intended. The school has accumulated a significant budget surplus for which there is now a clearly planned use.

The internal and external accommodation is good and well used. The school has sufficient teachers, support staff and other resources to deliver the curriculum.

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 make good progress because teachers meet their needs.• The attention given to the all-round development of their children as individuals.• The care and guidance given to their children.• Pupils behave well and get on well together and with adults.• The school is approachable.• Their children like school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents see homework as being erratic for older pupils.• A few parents would like the school to work more closely with them.

Overall, parents are very pleased with all that the school does for their children. Inspection evidence shows that the provision of homework is satisfactory and that the school works very well with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils get off to a good start in English and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in these key areas.

1. The year group of pupils that took the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 entered the school with overall attainment below that expected for their age. Their results in the National Curriculum tests were well above the national average in mathematics, above it in reading and close to it in writing. Compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance in the tests was also well above average in mathematics and average in writing. In reading, the results were well above average compared with those in similar schools.
2. The evidence of pupils' school work shows that standards now in Year 2 are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The lower mathematics standards now, compared with the 2001 results, reflect the natural variation that is found in small year groups of pupils. They do not indicate any change in the quality of the school's provision. Pupils now in Years 1 and 2, including the most able and those with special educational needs, are making good progress in English and mathematics. Although girls tend to do better than boys in the tests, there is no evidence in pupils' school work that boys and girls do not progress equally well.
3. By Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other in whole-class situations, in one-to-one conversations and in larger gatherings such as assemblies involving the whole school. Many listen carefully for long periods of time as they work together as a class, for example when exchanging ideas for the development of an adventure story. In one-to-one situations, average and higher attaining pupils give well thought-through answers and explanations, for example about their choice of reading material. One average attaining pupil, for instance, gave a careful and detailed explanation of why snow melts when brought indoors as she discussed an event in a story. Pupils with special educational needs give much more simple answers to questions, for example about what they like in school and who their friends are.
4. Reading standards are above average in Year 2 because most pupils are fluent and accurate readers. They have a good knowledge of letter sounds, which they use well to work out what an unfamiliar word might be. The highest attaining pupils, and many who are average attaining, do this well in their heads, quickly deciphering the word. Lower attaining pupils also make competent use of letter sounds, but sometimes need more adult support. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy stories but rely heavily on adult guidance, for instance to use the pictures to tell the stories. They know some frequently used words by sight.
5. Overall standards in reading comprehension are good. Most pupils talk confidently about the narratives in the stories they read and also about the characters and how events might make them feel. Many pupils have favourite authors, including Quentin Blake, J K Rowling and Roald Dahl. A few higher attaining pupils read particularly challenging texts, such as 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' by C S Lewis. Other pupils, who do not have favourite authors, express preferences for particular types of fiction, such as mystery stories. Most have good skills in using books to find information, for instance as part of their work in history.
6. While overall standards in writing are average in Year 2, there are elements in which standards are good. Pupils achieve a good standard in handwriting. Most Year 2 pupils have neat, evenly formed and joined writing. Higher attaining pupils have a particularly mature and fluent style for their age. Standards of spelling and basic punctuation are good. The higher attaining pupils use a wide range of punctuation correctly, including speech marks. Pupils are aware that the form and style of writing vary for different purposes. This is seen, for instance, as they label diagrams in science, write instructions for how to wash a car, write letters and communicate ideas through poetry.

7. The understanding and use of numbers are a particular strength in pupils' work in mathematics in Year 2. Almost all pupils are confident in using numbers to 100 and understand place value in tens and units. Higher attaining pupils work with numbers up to 1000. Pupils have a good understanding for their age of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The lowest attaining pupils successfully carry out multiplication in practical or pictorial activities. Many pupils rise to challenges, such as working out the answer to 875 minus 491. Many also competently divide numbers up to 20 by two, five and ten. Numbers up to 50 and 100 are used for subtraction.
8. Pupils have good skills in practical problem solving in mathematics. They understand and use mathematical language well. This is seen, for instance, in work with money. The highest attaining pupils confidently work with amount in pounds. The lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs use smaller amounts successfully in solving simple problems. Many pupils are confident in using standard units of measurement. The highest attaining pupils work with fractions in tenths, while those who are lower attaining work with halves and quarters. Pupils' overall knowledge of shape and symmetry is as expected at this age. Average and higher attaining pupils collect and record data as tally charts, pictograms and block graphs.
9. Pupils get off to a good start in English and mathematics, because teaching and the learning opportunities provided are good in these key areas. Teachers are effective in developing pupils' basic skills. Not only does work in one lesson build well on that undertaken in the last lesson, but also the close teamwork in the school ensures that work in one year extends that in the previous year. The instances of excellent teaching seen during the inspection were in the development of literacy skills in the reception class and in mathematics in the combined Year 1 and 2 class.
10. There are very good procedures in place for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Targets are set for year groups and individual pupils. Year group targets reflect high expectations of the standards that all pupils are capable of achieving. They set teachers challenges to get a particular percentage of pupils to the level above that normally expected for their age. The school identifies pupils who are not doing as well as they should be in relation to their prior attainment, for instance on entry to the school. The school then looks to see why these pupils are not doing well enough and takes action to support them. If necessary, pupils are placed on the school's special educational needs register and are given individual education plans with specific targets to accelerate their progress.

Pupils make consistently good progress in science as they move up through the school.

11. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001, standards in science were well above the national average. They were also well above average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. This mirrors the picture at the time of the last inspection, although standards have not been as high in the intervening years. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work is that standards in the present Year 6 are also well above average. Pupils throughout Years 1 to 6 are making consistently good progress as they move up through the school, building effectively on the start provided in the reception year. This includes the most able pupils and those with special educational needs. While boys have done a little better than girls for the last three years in the science tests, there is no evidence that boys and girls do not progress equally well over time.
12. Although teachers assessed pupils' performance in science as below average in Year 2 in 2001, the school now recognises that these particular assessments were inaccurate. The evidence of pupils' school work is that the present Year 2 are achieving above average standards. Those now in Year 3, who were the subject of the 2001 teacher assessments, are also attaining standards that are above average.
13. By Year 2, most pupils have a good basic understanding of the process of scientific investigation.

They make sensible predictions - for example, about how quickly an ice cube will melt in different conditions. Results of investigations are recorded well and higher attaining pupils are particularly effective in using their own words to record the outcomes of investigations as well as the process used.

Good basic literacy skills support pupils' understanding of scientific concepts. Their knowledge and understanding of scientific vocabulary are well developed. In their work on forces and the speed at which toy cars will travel down various ramps, pupils very competently use terms such as 'gravity' and 'friction'. Diagrams are neat and carefully labelled.

14. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge and understanding for their age of all the areas of study of science required by the National Curriculum. They are secure in their understanding of pushes and pulls as forces; of a simple electrical circuit; and of some of the key factors in a healthy lifestyle, including diet and exercise. Higher attaining pupils have greater depth of knowledge of a healthy diet and refer, for example, to the importance of vitamins and minerals. Almost all pupils confidently sort materials according to their properties, such as whether they are smooth or rough. Pupils with special educational needs have a more basic understanding of the work covered. Their recording is less detailed, sometimes involving pictures rather than writing.
15. The very good level of understanding of Year 6 pupils is evident in their beautifully presented diagrams and writing. This is seen, for instance, in detailed labelled drawings of the parts of a flowering plant. Studies of details, such as the root systems, show that pupils are aware of the functions of different parts of the roots, not only of the roots overall. Much of the depth of knowledge is greater than normally found at this age. Through their work on life processes and living things, for example, most pupils have a very clear understanding of photosynthesis and pollination, and also of the main systems of the human body, such as respiration. Overall knowledge and understanding of forces, physical processes and materials and their properties are good. In their work on the Earth and beyond, pupils show secure understanding of the reasons for the seasons.
16. Year 6 pupils have a good level of independence for their age in devising and carrying out scientific investigations. They record their investigations into changing states of materials in booklets called 'My Investigation'. Imaginative methods of recording information are used, such as presenting the life cycle of a flowering plant as a wheel that turns. Pupils use a variety of charts and graphs very competently, drawing on and using their good numeracy skills. Knowledge and understanding of scientific terminology are very well developed by this age, as seen for example in pupils' work on electricity and forces. Terms such as 'upthrust' are used with confidence. With very few exceptions, the relatively lower attaining pupils are achieving the standard expected for their age in scientific knowledge and understanding. Their recording is not as sophisticated as that of many other pupils, especially those who are higher attaining.
17. Progress is consistently good because teaching is successful in motivating pupils. Teachers have high expectations of the standards pupils are capable of attaining in understanding scientific language and developing knowledge across the science curriculum. They set high standards for the recording and presentation of work, allowing a good variety of approaches. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and show initiative in devising and carrying out investigations. Teachers have particularly good subject knowledge and this ensures that they pose challenging questions in lessons. This was seen, for instance, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson in which pupils were required to identify for themselves the process of dissolving and articulate this clearly. Teachers revisit and develop pupils' understanding of topics as they move up through the school. This is particularly effective in reinforcing knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide an effective balance between activities that provide pupils with knowledge and those that require them to find out information for themselves. Visits out of school are well selected to support the science curriculum and to motivate both boys and girls, such as a visit to Didcot power station linked to work on electricity.

Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They work and play very amicably together and have very positive

relationships with the adults in school.

18. Children in the reception class settle very quickly into school life. They soon learn the routines and understand what is expected in different situations. Those who have been in school for at least a term know how to sit and listen at story time and are aware of the need to move sensibly in a line to the hall for assembly.

When at play with older pupils during break and lunch times, they freeze still when the hand bell is rung to mark the end of playtime. They know the convention of moving in an orderly way straight to their class line when the bell is rung for a second time. Children showed a good level of independence and sustained involvement as, for example, they made 'giants' and 'Jacks' from paper and scrap materials, in response to the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Children focused well on the task they had been set of using two and three-dimensional shapes for their 'giants' and 'Jacks'. They share toys and take turns during indoor and outdoor play, and also share resources such as paints and glue spreaders.

19. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 have very good attitudes to learning. They know that the school aim is that 'Only our best is good enough' and older pupils make regular reference to this. They appreciate that the school expects them to always try hard to live up to these high expectations. They rise well to challenges and persevere in lessons, such as when making careful drawings of the roots of a variety of plants in a Year 1 and 2 science lesson. Pupils appreciate the many additional activities that the school provides for them. They respond with enthusiasm to the demands placed on them in building shelters and cooking in Foxcombe Woods or when participating in outdoor and adventurous pursuits on their residential visit to Yenworthy. They recognise the efforts their teachers make for them. They enjoy school and see it as a place where everyone is happy and well cared for. Pupils take a great pride in their academic and personal achievements.
20. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils have a well-developed awareness of how their actions affect others. They are keen to maintain the calm and orderly atmosphere of the school. Pupils show very good care for the school environment and respect the property of the school and other pupils' belongings. No instances of untoward behaviour were seen during the inspection. Teachers, parents and pupils all report that such incidents are rare. There were no exclusions in the last reporting year.
21. Relationships are very good among pupils and between pupils and adults, as they were at the last inspection. Boys and girls and pupils of all ages and levels of prior attainment mix well. This is seen as pupils chat on the field at lunchtime or play games such as skipping on the playground. In lessons, pupils co-operate well and help each other, especially those with special educational needs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked well together in a music lesson exploring 'ostinato' using tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Lunch times are pleasant social occasions. Older pupils care for younger ones, including when at play. Pupils relate to adults in a relaxed and friendly manner, but also show appropriate respect. They are courteous and polite.
22. Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships all contribute to an atmosphere that is supportive of learning. The strengths in pupils' attitudes and behaviour found at the last inspection have been maintained and built on further. Pupils' enjoyment of all that school offers them is reflected in attendance levels that are well above the national average. Attendance was also very good at the last inspection. Pupils are punctual to school in the morning. Those who have 'booster' classes are ready and eager to begin more than half an hour before the official start of school. Some are in school even earlier to use the computers to support their work in areas such as mathematics.

Teachers focus strongly in lessons on what they want pupils to learn. They take good account of the full range of pupils' needs.

23. A distinguishing feature of the good quality of teaching is the way in which teachers focus clearly in lessons on what they want pupils to learn. They are keenly aware of the full range of pupils'

needs in the mixed ability and mixed age classes. Even in lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, this clear focus is one of the stronger features. Teachers plan carefully what they intend the specific outcomes of a lesson to be. They then match activities to these intended outcomes, with each activity building successfully on the previous one. This aspect of teaching is a significant factor in pupils' good overall achievements. All the strengths in teaching found at the last inspection have been maintained.

24. In a Year 4 and 5 English lesson, the teacher successfully developed pupils' awareness of metaphors and how they might use them in their own writing. This was achieved through careful analysis of examples of metaphors as the teacher worked with the whole class, revisiting work done in an earlier lesson. In a Year 3 and 4 science lesson, the teacher used a good balance of questions of different types to reinforce existing understanding of materials. She then built on this well as she got pupils to make hypotheses about what might happen when a specific range of solids, such as sand and sugar, are each mixed with water. This sharp focus to the start of the lesson set pupils thinking carefully so that they began to consider the process of dissolving and what is meant by the term 'solution'. Pupils were then given the chance to explore the matter for themselves through practical investigation. A final class discussion returned pupils to the questions set at the start of the lesson. This well-linked sequence of activities, each with a clear purpose, successfully developed pupils' understanding as the teacher had set out to do. Effective support was provided for individuals and groups through questions posed by the teacher and the teaching assistant. This helped the pupils with special educational needs to complete the work successfully and also required the higher attaining pupils to think at a deeper level.
25. In a lesson in the reception class focusing on developing children's knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, the teacher explored familiar two-dimensional shapes with the whole class. The activity that successfully achieved this, and which captured children's interest and imagination, involved the teacher in gradually revealing shapes that had been hidden behind a board. The children were required not only to name the shapes but also to talk about their sides and whether they were straight or curved. This developed children's knowledge and understanding of mathematical language well. Higher attaining children were asked to consider the number of faces and edges of three-dimensional shapes such as a cuboid. In this lesson, the teacher not only had a clear focus for the class but also for groups within the class. As a result, those children ready to do so, increased their knowledge of more complex two-dimensional shapes such as hexagons. Those needing reinforcement to gain basic understanding were set practical activities to achieve this, with effective input from the learning support assistant.
26. In an information and communication technology lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils, there had been good preparation for the activity of sorting information and using graphs. Pupils had already collected a wide range of data and had entered it on the computers. This effective preparation in previous lessons, together with the provision of clear printed instructions to guide pupils, ensured that the purpose of this particular lesson was achieved. The teacher used questioning to recap effectively on previous learning and then move on to focus on the new areas to be covered. As a result of these features of the teaching, pupils covered a good amount of new ground. They developed new computer skills and also extended their knowledge of data handling linked to mathematics.
27. In lessons that are very good or even excellent, the sharpness of focus is even more precise. In an excellent activity with five reception children, the teacher helped them to make rapid gains in the development of their literacy skills. Intense teaching, matched to each child's individual needs, resulted in a high level of involvement from the children as they tackled some demanding work. This covered speech marks, the word 'said', and knowledge of letter sounds and names. This sharpness of purpose was continued as the teacher then worked with the whole class on the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Children of all levels of attainment on entry to the school made very effective progress in reading comprehension. The teacher did not miss an opportunity to promote children's learning. Throughout the lesson, she held their rapt attention.

28. An excellent mathematics lesson in Years 1 and 2 was meticulously prepared. Several flip charts were available from the outset with sums shown. Resources such as 'number squares' and 'number lines' were readily to hand as well as sheets set out on tables with work matched to the wide range of pupils' needs. All these preparations ensured that the lesson ran smoothly. The teacher's extremely well focused and dynamic presentation, together with her own clear enjoyment, resulted in pupils responding with a high level of interest and enthusiasm. Because the work provided the right level of challenge for all, pupils were well motivated and worked very hard. The time at the end of the lesson was used very effectively to reinforce learning. In this lesson, pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress in subtracting two digit numbers and in checking their answers.

There is very good attention to the all-round development of pupils as individuals, helping them to become thoughtful and responsible citizens.

29. The headteacher and staff give great emphasis to the development of each pupil as an individual person. This is central to the school's aims that include the provision of a balanced education to prepare pupils for life-long learning. Much consideration is given to making pupils aware of their responsibilities towards others. A number of strengths were found in this area at the last inspection, particularly in the moral and social development of pupils. These have been maintained and built on further, so that the overall provision for pupils' personal development is now very good. A very good range of activities enhances the learning that takes place in lessons, even more than at the time of the last inspection. This includes visits out of school, the use of visitors to school and the provision of a broad curriculum. Strong emphasis is given to the arts, giving pupils good opportunities to express their ideas and feelings through art and design, music and drama.
30. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on matters of importance to themselves and more widely. Significant events in the world are discussed, such as those of September 11th. Pupils have reflected on this in letters sent to children at the United Nations School in New York. Conflicts such as that in Afghanistan are explored from a variety of perspectives, helping pupils to develop an awareness of their complexity. Recently, sensitive opportunities were given to pupils to consider the life of the Queen Mother, through displays that promoted personal reflection on her life. Since the last inspection, the links with the Church have increased. The parish church is used for worship, the celebration of festivals, as a venue for concerts and for study. The church provided the focus for a Year 5 and 6 project on trigonometry. The Vicar and representatives of other denominations regularly visit the school, for instance to lead collective worship. Short sessions of collective worship, with a candle as a focal point, often provide a calm and peaceful end to the school day.
31. Events such as the residential visit to Yenworthy in Devon make a particularly strong contribution to character building. Through the challenging activities provided, pupils discover their inner resourcefulness. They learn to overcome fears and difficulties. They also learn to live, work and play together in a situation very different from that of normal school lessons. Through writing their diaries of 'The Yenworthy Experience' pupils reflect on what they have come to know about themselves. They write very honestly of how, for instance, they have seen their classmates in a different light. Pupils have considered the importance of working closely with others that they may not like. Shelter building and cooking in Foxcombe Woods is another activity that contributes to the character development of older pupils. The very good extra-curricular activities, including clubs, also encourage pupils to work and play together outside lessons and to develop confidence and self-esteem. Football, netball and swimming develop team spirit. All staff in the school provide very good role models for behaviour towards others. Through discussion and reflection on personal experience, pupils gain a real awareness of the difference between right and wrong and their responsibilities as citizens. Pupils willingly raise funds for charities and, through this, develop awareness of the needs of others.
32. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Older pupils have a voice in decision-making through the Year 5 and 6 council. They are encouraged to care for the younger pupils and do so spontaneously when at play. Younger pupils are given the chance to undertake routine duties within the classroom. Pupils develop an appreciation of cultures other than their own

through the religious education curriculum, which involves study of the major world faiths. At the time of the inspection, preparations were taking place for an arts project with an African dimension. The school has won an award from the British Council for extending the international dimension of the curriculum through a number of subjects, including the arts, geography and information and communication technology.

33. The rich variety of learning opportunities offered to pupils, together with the very good pastoral care and very positive relationships between the adults and pupils, do much to develop pupils as responsible and thoughtful citizens. This is reflected in their very good attitudes to school, including the emphasis on doing their best, and in their very good behaviour and relationships. All this is further extended and reinforced in the emphasis the school gives to its role within the local community, which has also been strengthened since the last inspection.

The headteacher provides very clear leadership. The staff team gives good support and is committed to the further improvement of the school.

34. The school is a good one with many very good features because of the teamwork and commitment of all the staff. They are very well led by the headteacher who is successful in creating a shared vision and common purpose. As a result, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has maintained strengths and built on them further. The school is well placed to achieve further improvement. All staff in the school, like the pupils, are committed to the principle that, 'Only our best is good enough'. The outcomes are seen in the good quality of teaching and the range of learning opportunities offered by the school, as well as in the very good pastoral care for pupils and all-round development of them as individuals.
35. Although teachers have specific areas of responsibility, there is a whole-team approach to the review and development of provision. Co-ordinators take the lead, for instance, in updating policies and school planning for their subjects, but all the staff work together to ensure this is successful. Since the last inspection, co-ordinators have increased their role in checking what happens in the provision for their subjects, such as through observing colleagues teaching. Teachers welcome this and appreciate the developmental feedback that they receive when one of their lessons is observed. They also recognise that watching other teachers helps them to reflect on and review their own practice.
36. When areas for development are identified, there is a cohesive staff approach in bringing about improvement. This has been seen recently in the standards of pupils' handwriting and in the improvements in information and communication technology since the last inspection. There is consistent implementation of policies, such as for behaviour management and equality of opportunity for all pupils. This means that pupils are very clear about what is expected of them and know that the school is fair to them.
37. The governing body has confidence in the headteacher and staff. Governors are effective in fulfilling their role as 'critical friend' to the school and have a good understanding of its main strengths and weaknesses. They too form part of a team committed to the objective review and improvement of the school's provision.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils are not making as much progress in developing skills in story writing and using language creatively as in other aspects of writing.

38. While pupils make good progress in handwriting and in the basics of literacy, such as spelling and punctuation, there is a key element of writing in which progress is not as good. This prevents pupils from achieving higher standards in writing than at present. Standards are average in writing in Year 2, although they are above average in speaking and listening and reading, the other major aspects of English. Standards in speaking and listening and reading remain stronger than those in writing when pupils reach Year 6. Pupils are not sufficiently developing skills in story writing and the creative use of language to get writing standards up to above average in Year 2 and to then

sustain this until Year 6.

39. By Year 2, pupils know that stories have beginnings, middles and ends, but they are not showing this well enough in their writing. Often their stories start well, with description to set the scene, but they are often not extended well, for example, to inject tension and keep an atmosphere as the stories progress. Pupils are aware of the importance of adjectives, but their understanding of how the creative and imaginative use of language alters the impression given to the reader is not as well developed. While a few higher attaining pupils are starting to give consideration to the effect their writing will have on the reader, many average pupils are not focusing clearly enough on this. Although pupils have some experience of planning stories, this is another area in which skills need development to raise standards.
40. The same areas are relative weaknesses in the writing of Year 6 pupils. Although there are some good examples of language to describe and create atmosphere, pupils at this age are not sufficiently drafting and redrafting their writing, particularly for choice of language. They are not reflecting well enough on how the choice of language affects the impression given to the reader. Some average pupils do not get enough variety into their sentence structure on occasions, for example using only short sentences when this might not be the most effective approach. Although pupils are much better at structuring a story when they reach Year 6, they are not gaining sufficient breadth of experience in using different narrative styles in their writing. Marking provides positive feedback to Year 6 pupils but it does not tell them clearly enough what they need to do to improve.

Although pupils make good progress in numeracy in Years 3 to 6, overall progress in the wider aspects of mathematics is not as strong in these years.

41. From starting in the reception year to the end of Year 2, pupils make good progress in all aspects of mathematics. As a result, standards in the present Year 2 are above average. Although standards are also above average in Year 6 in mathematics, pupils' overall progress has been satisfactory rather than good in relation to the standards they achieved in Year 2. The pupils now in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress in numeracy. This is because numeracy is well taught and there is a strong emphasis on this aspect of mathematics. The mental mathematics sessions of numeracy lessons are well paced and focus on the full range of pupils' needs. In other aspects of mathematics, however, progress is only satisfactory.
42. Pupils do not do as much work in the areas of shape, space and measures or in handling data as they do in number. There are some good projects to develop pupils' understanding, such as that undertaken by higher attaining pupils who explored trigonometry in a study linked to the church. Overall, however, it is the relatively small amount of time and weaker emphasis given to areas other than numeracy that prevent pupils' progress from being better. As with the writing, the marking of pupils' mathematics work in Year 6 tells them if they have got the work right, but it does not tell pupils what they have to do to improve.

Teachers do not always make enough use of additional adults in lessons.

43. Throughout the school, the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning is strong. There are times, however, when additional adults in lessons are not used well enough. During the inspection, two music lessons were observed. These lessons were very competently taught by a part-time specialist music teacher. During the lessons, the class teachers were also present and, in one, a teaching assistant also attended. However, there was not enough planned use of these additional adults, who were a potentially valuable resource, to support pupils' learning. They did not, for instance, give specific support to groups, which would have allowed an even greater variety of practical activities to take place.
44. In the first part of literacy hour lessons, teaching assistants sometimes observe the whole-class

before later continuing with a group of pupils. They are not always used fully, for example to take notes of pupils' responses to be picked up later. Occasionally, the task that the teaching assistant is asked to work on with a group is not well enough adapted to the pupils' specific needs. This reduces the effectiveness of the support they provide.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To rectify the weaknesses, while maintaining the many strengths of the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- a) improve pupils' progress in story writing and in using language creatively in writing. This should include: increasing pupils' awareness of the structure of stories; developing their competence in using language to create atmosphere; giving greater attention to drafting and redrafting; and providing opportunities for writing in a wider variety of narrative styles.

(Paragraphs 38 - 40)

- b) improve pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by giving greater time and emphasis to work in shape, space, measure and data handling.

(Paragraphs 41 and 42)

- c) ensure that additional adults in lessons are always effectively deployed.

(Paragraphs 43 and 44)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	2	7	6	0	0	0
Percentage	12	12	41	35	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 five 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)	139
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	15	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	20	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (100)	87 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	20	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (100)	87 (100)	87 (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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	8	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	6	8
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	14	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (75)	89 (64)	100 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	7	8
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	14	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (64)	89 (64)	100 (96)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	130
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.4
Average class size	23.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	133

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	364441
Total expenditure	319355
Expenditure per pupil	2298
Balance brought forward from previous year	22714
Balance carried forward to next year	67800

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
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	139
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	52	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	58	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	48	6	3	0
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	35	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	0	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	26	13	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	77	19	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	35	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	26	0	3	0