

INSPECTION REPORT

MONTENEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107089

Acting Headteacher: Nicola Shipman

Reporting inspector: Fran Gillam
21498

Dates of inspection: 20th – 21st May 2002

Inspection number: 245957

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Montenev Crescent
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South Yorkshire

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Jenkins

Date of previous inspection: 3rd July 1995

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Monteney Primary School is larger than most other primary schools. There are 443 pupils on roll, including the Nursery, with 224 boys and 213 girls. Fifty-eight children attend the Nursery part-time and there are a further 51 children of Foundation Stage¹ age in the Reception Year. Attainment when children first start Nursery is well below that expected for their age. There are 14 classes including the Nursery and none of these have mixed ages in them. Almost all pupils are from a white British background. A small number come from ethnic minorities including other white ethnic groups, Black Caribbean and Pakistani. None of these pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 28 per cent and broadly average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is 37 per cent and above average. Nine pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is about two per cent and broadly average. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to staffing. There is an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. The school is part of the Excellence in Cities (EiC) initiative and also receives additional funding through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB5). This additional funding provides effective support for gifted and talented pupils, a learning mentor to encourage better attendance, and support for families and for developing links between school and the home.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Monteney Primary School is effective because pupils do well during their time in the school as a direct result of the teaching that is good. Standards in the present Year 6 are above average in mathematics and average in English. Importantly, the school does better than other schools of similar backgrounds. Pupils have good attitudes towards school and work hard because they enjoy school and most lessons are interesting. The acting headteacher gives good leadership because during a period of staff changes she has continued developments without interruption. The senior managers and governors provide effective support and work well as a team. Through the effective arrangements for monitoring and evaluating teaching, and its effect upon how pupils learn, the school has a clear view of its strengths and the areas for improvement. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils do well in English and mathematics because the teaching of the basic skills is good.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships are good.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are good.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive.

What could be improved

- The teaching of handwriting and the chances to use writing skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' personal development by taking more pride in presenting their work and responsibility for their own learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in July 1995 has been good. Standards have risen by Year 6 and the school has taken effective action to remedy the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. There are now better links between the Nursery and the Reception classes because planning ensures a smoother transition for children into the Reception Year; teaching in the Nursery is still effective and now better than it was in the Reception Year. There are now comprehensive teachers' records, which track pupils' progress effectively, and the school uses this and the information from test results to point the way forward and so make improvements. There is better guidance for teachers to help with their planning and, as a result, almost all pupils' needs are met effectively in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs do particularly well.

¹ The stage of learning for children from age three to the end of the Reception Year.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are higher than they were and achievements are now at a level expected for pupils of this age. There is a very good range of ICT resources; teachers are now more confident in teaching ICT and this is raising standards further.

STANDARDS

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

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

Standards by Year 6 in the tests in 2001 were below average in English compared with all schools but better than other similar schools. In mathematics and science, standards were above average compared with all schools and much better compared with similar schools. The rising trend in the schools results over the last five years has been faster than the trend nationally. Standards in the present Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics. The better standards in English compared with last year's reflect the success of the school in improving the skills of writing and the very effective support for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. This also shows in the narrowing gap between the performances of boys compared with girls by Year 6. The targets the school set are based upon accurate assessments of how well the pupils are doing; they are realistic and challenging.

During their time at Montenev Primary, pupils do well. When children start in the Nursery, their ability to talk with others, as well as the range of words they use, is well below that expected for their age. They make good progress because, by the time they move into the Reception Year, they talk more clearly about what they are doing. Nevertheless, standards are still below those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical development. In the present Year 2, standards are average in writing and mathematics and this mirrors the standards attained in the tests in 2001. Pupils have a secure grasp of the basic skills of reading, writing and number by Year 2 because of the good start they get in the Nursery and Reception Year. During their time in the school, pupils develop a clear understanding of how to organise their writing and use more powerful words to bring interest to the reader. However, they do not have enough chances to develop these skills further in other subjects. This shows particularly when teachers make suggestions to pupils about how they can improve, for example, their use of descriptive words. Because the pupils do not write more frequently and have chances to refine their skills, their work shows the same area for improvement some time later. Given more chances to write, for example, in history, religious education and geography, pupils could use the skills they have learned in literacy lessons to greater advantage. In addition, not enough is done to develop pupils' handwriting skills, and so by Year 6, standards in handwriting are below those expected for eleven year olds. Careless errors and not reading questions carefully sometimes slow pupils' progress in mathematics and generally they do not take enough pride in the quality of their work in both mathematics and English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – most pupils like school; they are interested in their work and enjoy the range of activities the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good – most lessons run smoothly; pupils are respectful of others and know the difference between right and wrong.
Personal development and	Satisfactory – whilst pupils have good relationships because they share

relationships	equipment sensibly, play together well and work constructively in pairs and groups, they need to take more pride in, and responsibility for, their work.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – the attendance rate is below the national average.

In spite of the pupils' attendance being much better than it was at the time of the last inspection it is still not as high as in most schools. The work of the learning mentor in improving attendance is proving successful but the school still needs parents to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Pupils' personal development could be better; they often make careless mistakes in their work and do not always follow the advice of teachers about how they can improve their work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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.

Teaching is good in English and mathematics because teachers give pupils a firm foundation upon which to build their skills, knowledge and understanding. In the Nursery, the rich and varied range of activities interests the children; they concentrate well and soon learn the classroom routines. In the Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2, pupils have good chances to develop their understanding, for example, of letter sounds and this gives them the confidence to tackle unfamiliar words in reading and make some good attempts at spelling. They develop a secure understanding of numbers because teachers provide plenty of chances for pupils to practise and improve their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding. In most lessons, pupils do well because teachers explain things clearly and pupils know exactly what they are going to learn. Pupils develop their ideas and increase their understanding because often teachers' questioning makes them think more clearly or draw upon earlier learning. Pupils behave well in lessons because teachers set out clearly what they expect and because pupils want to do well. They try hard because they know their efforts will be valued and their hard work rewarded. In most lessons, teachers have a good awareness of what pupils need to do next. In numeracy, lively mental warm-ups capture pupils' interest and increase concentration. Placing pupils in sets based on how well they are doing is particularly effective in meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, by Year 6, higher attaining pupils are attempting challenging activities at a level much higher than expected for their age. Average attaining and lower attaining pupils also have the chance to work at a level that is more suitably challenging to their needs; the small group work for pupils with special educational needs means that they can work at a pace fitting for them. This allows pupils to succeed at all levels, makes good use of teachers' time and builds self-esteem successfully. Whilst marking has improved since the last inspection and pupils have some clear pointers as to how they can do better, teachers do not check regularly enough to ensure that pupils are acting upon these points for improvement. The lack of chances for pupils to use their writing skills means that opportunities for pupils to redraft and refine their writing are too narrow and so the good work in literacy lessons is not used to the best advantage to help learning elsewhere. In addition, pupils often make careless errors in their work because they do not check their work carefully. Teaching could do more to reinforce the need for pupils to take pride and care in their work. The teaching of handwriting is not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils develop a clear joined style of writing by the time they are in the juniors.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good – the strategies for literacy and numeracy are used effectively to support teaching and learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good – during lessons and in the groups arranged for teaching literacy and numeracy, pupils receive very good support and so make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good – there are plenty of chances for pupils to work with partners or in groups and this allows them to develop a good understanding of the need to respect others' views and opinions. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong successfully.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good – there is a high level of care in the school; there are effective arrangements in place to track how well pupils are doing.
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There are some effective links made between ICT and other subjects, which help to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding further. By comparison, not enough chances are given for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The arrangements to promote good attendance are very good and have a positive impact upon the levels of attendance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good – the acting headteacher has maintained a coherent and hardworking team during the period of staff instability; the acting headteacher and senior managers have a clear and shared vision to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good – the governors are well informed. They know the strengths and areas for improvement in the school's work and carry out their responsibilities conscientiously.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good – there are good arrangements in place to check how well the school is doing and they take effective action to remedy any weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good – the school has a wide range of resources, some funded through the EiC; they make good use of these additional resources to help raise standards further.

The school regularly compares how well it is doing with other schools and uses this comparison to challenge the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching. Importantly, successful action is taken to remedy any areas that appear weaker. In addition, parents' views and those of the pupils are regularly sought, for example when devising the behaviour policy. This and other information helps to ensure that the governors and senior managers make careful decisions about how funds should be used to ensure they do the best for the pupils in their care.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The teaching is good and their children make good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best and the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed and they are kept well informed about how well their children are getting on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are generally very happy with the work of the school; they did not identify any areas of major concern.

The inspection team agrees with the majority of parents' views. However, more could be done to help pupils take additional responsibility for their own learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils do well in English and mathematics because the teaching of the basic skills is good.

1. From the time children start in the Nursery they are introduced to an exciting range of activities that draw upon their natural curiosity to explore and find out. This allows them to develop their language in meaningful and exciting ways. For example, in the Nursery, children talked enthusiastically about the mini-beasts they had found in the 'jungle'. They were developing a wider knowledge not only of how small creatures live but also of their names as well. Children also had the chance to practise counting, for example, the segments of a caterpillar they had modelled in clay. Most were able to count up to five correctly and the higher attaining children on to ten.
2. By the time the children start in the Reception Year, they are more confident in their interactions with adults and will start up conversations. In literacy and numeracy lessons, children receive a good grounding in learning letter sounds, numbers and shapes. This gives them the assurance to try out their ideas and tackle, for example, more unfamiliar words in reading and spelling. In one lesson, average attaining and lower attaining children became more accurate in spelling three-letter words; the higher attaining children were able to spell words such as *said* and *here* correctly because the adults gave the children useful methods to help them become more accurate. Because the teacher knew exactly how well the children were doing, the work challenged them and they did very well. Children also recognise many shapes around them and have a good understanding of what makes one shape different from another. Higher attaining children can explain the difference between squares and rectangles because they are encouraged to talk about what they see. Average attaining children sort shapes by the number of sides and order them in size. These groups of children, as well of those of lower attainment and with special educational needs, enjoy the chance to work practically, either drawing round shapes or spotting them in the classroom; this brings more interest to the task. ICT also supports children's mathematical development because it provides chances, for example, to identify shapes and complete patterns correctly, consolidating understanding successfully.
3. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils continue to build upon the firm base laid down in the Foundation Stage because most teachers accurately check how well pupils are doing. This ensures that the demand made upon pupils increases their skills, knowledge and understanding effectively and makes the best use of the time for learning. This was very evident in a Year 1 literacy lesson when pupils built on the knowledge of letter sounds and patterns such as that in *tool*, *cool* and *fool* to spell more complex words such as *whirlpool* correctly. Skilful use of a story containing the 'oo' sound ensured that pupils of all attainments grasped a clear understanding. Further work reinforced this effectively for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils made good use of ICT to develop their understanding of spelling patterns and the bright and attractive computer program maintained their interest and concentration throughout.
4. Teachers have a firm grasp of how to teach both literacy and numeracy and this shows in the often lively way they share information with the pupils. This interests them and helps develop their concentration in lessons. Because of this, Year 6 pupils are developing a good understanding of how writing should be organised, the impact of powerful language in their written accounts and of how to punctuate their work correctly so that it makes sense and is accurate. In mathematics, they are successfully developing different ways to solve problems. They share strategies with each other to increase their understanding and learn how to use what they know, such as their knowledge of multiplication facts to calculate, for example, the cost of 23 square metres of carpet at a cost of £1.23 per square metre.

5. Throughout the school, both boys and girls pay close attention to what they are doing because teachers are mindful of their different interests. Pupils settle quickly to their work because teachers explain to them what they are to learn and why. This is done clearly and often with good reference to what has been learned before. This is a strong feature of the teaching in Year 6 because here teachers use the correct language in either literacy or numeracy lessons, and set the learning within meaningful tasks such as finding the area of a room and then the cost of carpeting it. Pupils recognise the relevance of activities such as this to everyday life. In the older year groups, pupils work in sets based upon how well they are doing in English and mathematics. This is proving effective in helping to raise standards because it allows teachers to plan for a narrower band of attainment and so centre attention on those who need more help or challenge with their work so that they do their best. The small group support for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, either in these sets or in the younger classes where they have the support of teaching assistants, is very good because these pupils are able to access work at the right level of demand. They also receive timely help if they need it. This builds the pupils' confidence and reflects in the number who do well in the tests in Year 2 and Year 6 as well as in the rising trend in standards since the last inspection.

Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships are good.

6. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they take pleasure in their work; they feel well cared for and develop good relationships with their schoolmates.
7. Children in the Nursery are eager to explore the activities the staff prepare for them. They are curious and like to handle equipment and find things out for themselves. They are happy and want to share what they are doing with others. For example, they showed others how to play a colour game, asked other children if they wanted to join in and took turns sensibly. They are quickly picking up the Nursery routines because adults remind them, for example, to put things away after they use them, to put their coats on when they go outdoors and to organise themselves at milk time. This develops self-confidence in the children and helps them to become independent.
8. By the time children are in the Reception Year, they work well in small groups. They are interested in what they are doing and know they have to listen to others and not all speak at the same time. Children are polite and friendly and this reflects the way that adults treat them. They work hard for their teachers because activities are often interesting. They are praised for their efforts and they know what is expected of them. They behave well because adults make sure that the children understand what is acceptable and unacceptable and this is explained clearly so that they begin to develop a good understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others.
9. As pupils move through the school, the positive aspects of behaviour, their relationships with others and their attitudes towards work, support their learning successfully. Most pupils show a lively interest in what they are learning because activities are fun or set within a meaningful situation. Exciting ways to develop pupils' language, as in a Year 6 lesson when they devised clues for a crossword puzzle, capture their interest and the pupils do well. This is because the activity was challenging, making pupils think hard. For example, one pupil used the word *work* to describe *educate* but when asked what the word *work* might mean to different groups of people he came up with a more relevant meaning in *learn*.
10. Pupils' concentration and staying power are often focused more effectively in lessons where teachers provide a mixture of sharing information and giving pupils the chance to try out their new learning, for example, practising on whiteboards first to ensure that they know the methods to use to calculate the area of a compound shape.
11. Pupils like having targets to work to, in either literacy or numeracy. They appreciate knowing what they need to strive for because it helps them understand what they need to do to

improve. However, at present, not all pupils are taking close enough notice of their targets for them to really make a difference to how well they learn. Both boys and girls appreciate the rewards they receive for good behaviour, regular attendance and trying their best. These are effective incentives that help pupils develop positive attitudes towards school. This shows in the way that boys and girls get on well together and also in their involvement in lessons. Rewards for trying their best ensure that pupils of all abilities have the chance to succeed and do well. Small steps of success by pupils with special educational needs are just as important as giant leaps for the higher attaining pupils; pupils know this and feel their efforts are noted and valued.

12. Pupils with a particular gift, for example, in art enjoy the chance to develop their skills further. They work with unusual materials, such as withys, to make wild and wonderful creatures. Visits out of school to galleries and the support of local artists increase their understanding of art in the wider world and act as an inspiration to them.
13. During lessons, most pupils behave well because teachers ensure that they make their expectations of behaviour clear. Even when individual pupils are challenging, the calm and patient way that staff treat pupils sets a good example for others to copy. This helps pupils to become tolerant of others and it shows in the respect that pupils have for one another.
14. As pupils move about the school, and out on the playground, they show consideration for others. Most play together constructively and the younger pupils appreciate the help they get from older pupils who are part of the 'buddy scheme'. Pupils play a part in making decisions about, for example, how football at break times is managed so that all pupils get an equal chance to play.

The leadership and management of the school are good.

15. There have been considerable changes to the management structure of the school because of staff promotions. During the last year, the acting headteacher has managed the developments within the school with little disruption. The acting deputy headteacher and other senior managers work as an effective team to support the acting headteacher to bring about improvement. There is a shared view of what the school needs to do to improve further and this is brought about by the effective arrangements in place to check how well pupils are doing and to assess what is happening in the classrooms. The findings of the senior managers state clearly where the strengths and weaknesses lie. This information provides the basis, along with analysing pupils' test results, for investigation into identifying what is working successfully and what needs further attention to raise standards. It is shared with all staff and also governors; it informs the school's plan for improvement successfully.
16. From the investigation of what is working well and what needs more attention, the school focuses support for teachers either as a whole group or for individuals, as well as support for different groups of pupils. This support for teaching features as additional training, such as that undertaken for ICT which shows in the better standards and greater confidence there now is in teaching ICT, and in setting targets for improvement that staff work to achieve. In addition, help is directed at those groups of pupils who need it the most.
17. The acting headteacher keeps the governors fully informed and this ensures that they make decisions based upon accurate information. For example, it helped governors to decide upon the action suggested by senior managers to change the arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs. From the analysis of test results and the tracking of pupils' progress, it was evident that more needed to be done to improve this group of pupils' achievements. Rather than have a number of support assistants helping individual or small groups of pupils for perhaps an hour a day, the acting headteacher suggested forming a special educational needs team. This has proved very successful because the team ensures that each year group has at least one special educational needs support assistant who gives help either in the classroom or to groups of pupils to help them develop their literacy and

numeracy skills more effectively. This allows these pupils to be given timely and more focused help, to work at a rate suitable to their needs and so build their self-esteem and confidence. The governors know this arrangement gives them good value for money because of the rising trend in standards, which is quicker than that nationally, and because of the larger number of pupils reaching the expected levels for their age. It also helps where pupils are placed in sets based upon their ability because teachers can plan more effectively for a narrower band of attainment within the class. This shows in the Level 6 achievement in mathematics and the growing number of pupils reaching the higher level in English.

18. The school makes good use of the additional funding from initiatives such as EiC and SRB5 to develop its links with parents. For example, the appointment of the learning mentor is improving the level of attendance; the school provides greater opportunities for pupils who have a particular talent or gift, for example, in art, to increase their skills and do well. The increased resources for teaching ICT, as a result of additional funding from groups such as the parents association and EiC, are very good. Pupils benefit from having greater access to ICT equipment in the computer suite and using laptop computers in the classroom. The projector and interactive whiteboard are extremely good teaching aids and the technician provides good support for teachers in using these teaching tools. Pupils gain greater understanding and increase their skills because of the way teachers show pupils how to use programs. The benefits of the additional resources reflect in the better standards and quality of teaching than at the time of the last inspection. Funding from the EiC initiative is helping to raise standards because of the appointment of the learning mentor. The school makes very good use of the learning mentor to improve attendance and develop an enjoyment of learning. The learning mentor forges positive relationships with pupils, making them feel valued and bringing them back into school.
19. There is a strong feeling of togetherness in Montenev Primary School. The staff are hardworking, and have a strong desire to succeed and work well as a team; they care for and value their pupils' efforts. Through the careful analysis of the strengths and areas for improvement, the staff and governors know what they are aiming for. There is shared commitment to improve and the capacity to succeed is good.

Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are good.

20. The arrangements and systems for tracking pupils' progress are much better than at the time of the last inspection. The ways in which the school checks how well pupils are doing ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively. They make good progress during their time in the school and parents' views reflect this. Parents are regularly informed about how well their children are doing and annual reports point out how they can help their child to improve further.
21. The range of ways in which the school gathers information is effective in building up a picture of individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses and in devising targets for improvement. From the time children start in the Nursery, staff assess what they know, can do and understand. This provides a clear starting point from which to increase children's knowledge and understanding and to develop their skills, for example, in reading, writing and number. Ongoing and further assessments by the end of the Reception Year enable the school to quickly identify any children who are doing better or worse than expected. This prompts support from the special educational needs team who give help for teaching by supporting the children who are struggling and leaving more time for teachers to focus upon the average attaining and higher attaining children.
22. Careful analysis of the national test results by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 highlights any common strengths and weaknesses. From this analysis the school takes effective action such as grouping pupils so as to meet their needs more effectively and checking the effectiveness of the teaching by analysing pupils' work. Checking pupils' work also identifies whether enough progress is being made over the course of the year. Senior managers use this information and analysis of assessments and test results to set targets for each year

group to attain. This puts the responsibility on teachers to make sure that they plan work that challenges pupils of different attainments so that they do their best.

23. Most teachers use day-to-day assessments effectively to check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and to identify where they need to focus more attention. This means that activities place the right level of demand upon pupils. It also helps in setting the pupils in groups based upon how well they are doing and allows teachers to adapt their planning; accordingly pupils grasp new work more quickly than expected.
24. The arrangements provide reliable information for teachers, senior managers and governors and aid planning for improvement successfully.

Parents' views of the school are very positive.

25. Parents are very happy with the work of the school. They appreciate the way that the staff listen to them and take note of any concerns they might have. They receive very good information about what is happening in the school and there is clear information about how well their children are getting on in the pupils' annual progress reports. Parents are regularly consulted and their views taken into account. Parents and the children helped to redefine the behaviour policy; this gave the parents an active part to play and a say in how their children should be managed in school. This makes it easier for them to support the school when any problems arise.
26. This very good partnership with parents is securely built upon the fact that their children will be well cared for and do well during their time at Montenev Primary School. Parents are very happy with how well their children are doing. They are very pleased with the way the school is being led and managed and the quality of the teaching their children receive.
27. Parents recognise that the school wants the best for their children. They value the way staff encourage pupils to behave well. The ideals that parents hold important are supported and promoted effectively in the way staff encourage pupils to care for others. A good example of how the school promotes a sense of care and consideration is evident in the 'buddy scheme'. Older pupils learn to look after those younger than themselves and, in particular, look out for any child who seems lonely or unhappy. Younger children really like this system and parents feel that their children are treated as individuals.
28. Parents particularly appreciate the support they receive from the SRB5 funding because this has enabled them to become more involved with their children's learning and to develop a greater understanding of what is happening in the school. It has also provided an excellent chance for them to develop their own skills across a range of areas, some linked to their children's learning but others related to developing their own interests. Parental classes have included positive parenting, learning in the early years, literacy, numeracy and ICT, as well as local history and aromatherapy. These classes have boosted the parents' self-esteem, particularly in being able to use computers to extend their knowledge and also to help their children. Parents feel differently about schools and education; they are not worried about approaching staff or helping with their children's learning. They have greater confidence to meet other people and friendships have developed as a result of coming into the school. They feel more confident to become involved in groups such as the parent/teachers' association and in helping to develop other initiatives in school, such as the sensory garden. Parental links have been strengthened as a result of this work and it benefits the school as well because parents help in making resources like the story sacks that contain books and toys to encourage pupils to read.
29. Most parents appreciate how important it is for their children to attend school regularly. Although the attendance rate is below the national average it has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and pupils and parents are responding positively to the work of the home/school link worker and the learning mentor. Parents also have opportunities to come

into school to discuss their children's progress on a more formal level. The attendance at these meetings is above 90 per cent and reflects the involvement and interest that parents show in their children's learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The teaching of handwriting and the chances to use writing skills in other subjects.

30. The school does not have guidance about how handwriting should be taught. In some lessons, due emphasis was given to encouraging pupils to practise their letters carefully and, at times, useful phrases were used to help the pupils to develop the correct construction of individual letters. However, these positive features were not reflected in the pupils' written work. Too often, pupils start letters in the wrong place and this does not aid the joining of one letter to another. This encourages pupils to print, which can be laborious and is off-putting for pupils who wish to put their thoughts down on paper. Even some of the older pupils place capital letters in the middle of words and their writing deteriorates in style and presentation as they write at length and complete their work. By Year 6, pupils have not developed a neat joined style of handwriting. This is because throughout the school there is not enough emphasis upon teaching pupils how to:

- set out letters in the correct way;
- develop a consistent way of spacing letters and words;
- join letters.

This leads to older pupils not having a secure understanding of the importance of tidy presentation in communicating the meaning in their writing.

31. Throughout the school, pupils develop a clear understanding of how to organise their writing. They develop the basic skills well, particularly in Years 2, 5 and 6. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to punctuate their writing correctly and to use lively and imaginative words for effect in their English work. Even though pupils have chances to write more extended pieces of work in English, there are not enough opportunities for pupils in the juniors to develop their writing skills in other subjects. As a result, there is not enough practice for pupils, particularly the average attaining and lower attaining, to develop, for example, more complex sentences in their writing nor for pupils to redraft and refine their work. For the higher attaining pupils, there are not enough chances to try out their skills of persuasion, for example, writing in history about Henry VIII's argument for why he should be able to divorce his first wife and the church's opposing view. Opportunities are also missed in other subjects, such as geography, to provide information about different places and peoples, concentrating upon the main points and choosing language best suited for the type of writing. There is some recording of events in subjects such as science but only the higher attaining and older pupils consistently write explanations of what they have done and found out. In some classes there is an over-dependence upon worksheets that cuts down the chances for pupils to express their own thoughts and ideas.

32. Although pupils now have the writing skills to be able to communicate with others, standards could be higher in English. Pupils need more opportunities to explore their feelings, to provide explanations and to criticise and comment upon what they see, read or hear across a range of subjects.

Pupils' personal development by taking more pride in presenting their work and responsibility for their own learning.

33. Although pupils' attitudes are generally good they do not take enough care with their work. They make careless mistakes in both their writing and mathematics work that detract from the achievements they make and inhibit their rate of learning. Across the school, pupils make

basic errors in spelling and punctuation, for example, not using a capital letter at the start of a paragraph or missing out the commas when a character in the text finishes talking. These errors could be avoided if teachers encouraged pupils to check their work as they go along or to read it carefully before they hand it in to be marked. Errors in mathematics are also avoidable. Frequently, pupils show they know the methods to solve a problem or complete a calculation but are careless in subtracting, for example, four from six. The use of lined paper adds to pupils' errors because they do not always line numbers up when adding or subtracting in a column. This means that sometimes hundreds, tens and units become mixed and pupils' calculations are incorrect. Even though teachers remind pupils to be neat and present their work tidily, the same standard of work continues; pupils do not take enough notice of the advice teachers give in their marking and teachers do not always persist in making sure that pupils act upon their instructions.

34. During mathematics lessons, pupils in Year 6 made errors because they did not read the questions carefully or record their findings accurately. For example, some average attaining pupils calculated the perimeter of shapes rather than the areas and higher attaining pupils were unable to indicate the probability of heads or tails being turned up when spinning three coins. The pupils in both situations knew how to find the right answers because the teachers had explained it carefully but they did not check their work as they went along.
35. Teachers' marking has improved since the last inspection; work is usually marked and comments provide some useful points to help pupils improve. However, these points are not always acted upon and the same weaknesses persist in pupils' work at a later date. The pupils have targets for literacy and numeracy, which are helping them to realise how they should improve, for example, the structure of their writing. Teachers check how well pupils are doing more effectively in some classes than others. By the time pupils are in Year 6, some have developed bad habits in how they form their letters and generally they do not take enough pride in their work. Pupils are not taking responsibility for improving their work from an early enough age and teachers are not setting high enough expectations of presentation and handwriting. In addition, more rigorous checking, to ensure pupils follow the points for improvement identified in marking or in targets, is required to ensure that pupils' work reflects their efforts and the hard work of teachers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards further the governors, senior managers and staff should:

1. * Raise standards in writing by ensuring that:
 - Handwriting is taught systematically throughout the school and that teachers have high enough expectations of the handwriting standards pupils should attain;
 - Pupils have enough chances to develop their writing skills further in subjects other than English.
2. Improve pupils' personal development by ensuring that:
 - Pupils take more care in presenting their work;
 - Pupils check their work carefully to avoid careless errors;
 - They read carefully both instructions and questions before starting their work;
 - Teachers check and then persist in following through the advice given to pupils, so as to bring about lasting improvement and eliminate careless mistakes and untidy presentation.

*The school has identified this as an area for development in the school's plan for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

21

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	10	5	2	0	0
Percentage	5	14	48	24	10	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 almost five percentage points..

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	391
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	108

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	137

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	25	33	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	23
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	49	51	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84(96)	88(94)	93(98)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	23	24
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	50	54	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86(94)	93(93)	95(87)
	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	21	33	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	19	21
	Girls	26	29	32
	Total	42	48	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78(79)	89(79)	98(92)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	20	19
	Girls	27	31	32
	Total	43	51	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80(79)	94(81)	98(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	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	386
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	295

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	52
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111
Number of pupils per FTE adult	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	923930
Total expenditure	912598
Expenditure per pupil	2178
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2700
Balance carried forward to next year	8632

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.6
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	443
Number of questionnaires returned	120

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	1	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	66	34	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	39	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	42	11	1	2
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	39	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	21	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	42	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	57	38	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	41	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	31	11	1	12