

INSPECTION REPORT

EASTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Enfield, Middlesex

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102017

Headteacher: Mr Chris Luck

Reporting inspector: Mrs Joy Richardson
6676

Dates of inspection: 17 - 18 September 2002

Inspection number: 246174

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Eastfield Road Enfield Middlesex
Postcode:	EN3 5UX
Telephone number:	020 8804 5013
Fax number:	020 8292 8544
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gary Pinwill
Date of previous inspection:	2 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
6676	Joy Richardson	Registered inspector
9010	Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector
10851	John Laver	Team inspector
1963	Sibani Raychaudhuri	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 417 boys and girls aged from four to eleven, with two classes in each year group. In addition, 60 children attend part-time in the nursery, from the September following their third birthday. They join a reception class in September when they are four. The school is popular and oversubscribed, and gives priority to those living closest to the school. The local area of Enfield Wash is disadvantaged in social and economic terms. Few adults have experienced higher education and literacy levels are generally low. Thirty-three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, with higher figures in the younger years. The school's ethnic diversity is increasing. Almost half the pupils come from a minority ethnic background, including more than a quarter from families of Turkish origin. Forty per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, and eight per cent are at an early stage in learning English. Eight per cent of pupils are refugees. Mobility among pupils is above the national average, although lower than in the area as a whole. There are seventy-two pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and twelve have statements, including five with speech and communication difficulties. Children start in the nursery with skills which are generally well below the average for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school which does well by its pupils, whatever their background or individual needs. Because of high quality teaching, pupils make very good progress, reaching the standards expected of eleven year olds by the time they leave. This is a significant achievement, given the generally low attainment on entry. The school's leadership successfully harnesses the effort and commitment of all staff in pursuing the best for pupils. This creates a very good climate for learning and leads to high standards of behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and develop a wide range of skills. The school uses its resources well in helping pupils to learn. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress, broadly achieving national standards by the age of eleven.
- They do particularly well in mathematics.
- Children make a very good start in nursery and reception.
- High quality teaching helps pupils to succeed in their learning.
- The school's leadership cultivates effective teamwork by all staff.
- Close attention is given to pupils' individual needs.
- The school is orderly and pupils' behaviour is generally excellent.
- The school is very successful in fostering pupils' all-round personal development.

What could be improved

- Pupils are not achieving as much as they could by the age of seven.
- Some basic skills in reading and writing need more systematic practice.
- Homework is not being used to full effect to support pupils' learning.
- The school promotes good attendance but the rate remains well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then it has built on its strengths and improved in many areas. The standards achieved by the age of eleven have risen. The overall quality of teaching is now higher. The key issues raised in the last inspection report have been effectively addressed. The school has made strides in its provision for design and technology. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now supported by a fully networked computer suite allowing regular class teaching. The school has also developed its use of assessment, analysing strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and setting targets for pupils. The awards in 2001 of Investor in People, and the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, reflect strengths in staff development and the pursuit of high standards. The school is focused on further improvement and well placed to bring this about.

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	D	D	C	B
mathematics	C	C	C	A
science	D	D	D	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The evidence from inspection confirms that pupils achieve very well in relation to their attainment on entry. They make a good start in nursery and reception and progress rapidly in the older years, achieving in line with national standards by the time they leave.

National Curriculum test results for Year 6 in 2001 are shown in the table above. These were in line with the average for all schools nationally in English and mathematics, although they were below average in science. In comparison with similar schools, results were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science.

In 2002, the test results showed a continuing upward trend in the percentage of pupils reaching at least Level 4, the level expected of eleven year olds, in all three subjects. Results were particularly high in mathematics where 82 per cent achieved Level 4, and 37 per cent reached Level 5, the level expected of thirteen year olds. In English and in science, fewer pupils gained this high level than in 2001. Comparisons with all schools and with similar schools are not yet available for 2002.

The school analyses its results carefully to detect whether any groups are doing less well than others and takes action to remedy this. As a result of this analysis, it has identified the need to reinforce the use of subject vocabulary, for example in science, with pupils who are developing fluency in English. It is also working to raise boys' achievement in literacy, with some success.

Since the last inspection, overall results in the tests for eleven year olds have risen broadly in line with the national trend. The school has consistently exceeded its annual targets for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 in English and mathematics.

Pupils do not do as well for their age in National Curriculum tests at the age of seven. Results were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2001 and lower still in 2002. Taking their attainment on entry and their levels of language acquisition into account, pupils make sound progress between the ages of five and seven and they develop positive attitudes to learning. Recent improvements in the nursery and reception have raised standards so most children achieve the learning goals for this age. The school is now seeking to build on this in pursuing higher attainment by the age of seven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils take pride in the school and in themselves. They are very keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is generally excellent. They know the 'Golden Rules' and understand what is expected of them.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils from different ethnic groups work and play together harmoniously. They are interested in each other and they welcome newcomers. Relationships are excellent at every level and staff provide very good role models for pupils.
Attendance	Despite the school's efforts, the attendance rate remains well below the national average. Some pupils are frequently absent without good reason and their learning suffers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	very good	good	very 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.

Pupils learn well because of the high quality teaching the school provides. They are well taught across the curriculum and there is some exceptional teaching in mathematics and in music.

Teachers manage their classes very well and have an excellent rapport with pupils. They use a range of methods to help pupils learn, for example acting out a role as a character from the past, or asking pupils to 'brainstorm' ideas quickly in pairs. Teachers are skilled at keeping pupils interested and involved. They explain points effectively, as when demonstrating how the earth, the moon and the sun compare in size. Teachers foster speaking and listening skills. They encourage pupils to think and to put their ideas into words, sharing their own enthusiasm. This was evident when pupils talked excitedly about a poem: 'The words beat out a rhythm...' 'You can see it in your head...' Pupils, including those who are developing fluency in English, benefit from frequent opportunities to talk about their work.

Numeracy skills are taught very effectively and pupils become skilled at calculating mentally. Literacy is well taught, although there is not enough structured and systematic practice to reinforce basic skills in reading and writing. Teachers and support staff work very well together in support of pupils' learning during lessons. Pupils' special educational needs are well understood and taken into account in the planning of work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Lunchtime clubs, after school activities and educational visits broaden the range of opportunities for pupils. Music is an outstanding strength which enriches school life.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils' special educational needs are carefully identified. Plans of action are well drawn and regularly reviewed. Staff work closely together in helping pupils to achieve the targets set, and they liaise closely with parents.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils at an early stage in learning English benefit from the additional teaching support they receive. Teachers recognise that pupils who speak English with a degree of fluency may have gaps in their understanding of subject terminology. They encourage the discussion of word meanings and older pupils become confident in pinpointing what

	they do not understand.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school helps pupils to develop as well-rounded people. Pupils learn to distinguish between right and wrong, developing their own moral sense, and the ability to contribute as responsible members of the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a high quality of care for all pupils, attending closely to their health, welfare and academic progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school's leadership brings the best out of staff. This results in very effective teamwork and a high level of commitment in helping pupils to succeed. Subjects and aspects of the school's work are generally very well co-ordinated, although the school is currently lacking a literacy co-ordinator.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities and are well informed about the school, taking a close interest in its development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its results and reviews the way it works in order to build on what it does well and to pursue improvement. Action plans for school development focus on what should be done, but are less clear about how the impact on achievement will be measured or monitored.
The strategic use of resources	The school has carried forward a large surplus which is now being used to good effect in improving facilities and providing extra learning support. It makes good use of its resources, pursuing best value in its spending decisions. Although the school's expenditure per pupil is high, it gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school • They are expected to work hard and do their best • They behave well and learn to be responsible • The teaching is good • Staff are very approachable • The school is well led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements for homework

Parents are generally very well satisfied with the school, and the inspection team found their confidence to be well justified.

Forty per cent of parents returned the questionnaire before the inspection, and more than forty per cent of these responses expressed some dissatisfaction with arrangements for homework. While very happy with the work their children do in school, a significant minority of parents would like to see a more consistent and purposeful approach to homework. The inspection team considers that the school has taken some useful steps, for example in providing revision books in Year 6. However, it is not yet using homework effectively throughout the school to maximise pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make very good progress, generally achieving national standards by the age of eleven.

1. Children start school with attainment well below the national average. By the time they leave, standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally in English, and above average in mathematics. The school adds significant value, and many aspects of provision throughout the school contribute to this.
2. Positive attitudes towards learning, and encouragement to concentrate and try hard, run through the school. Building on these foundations, the pace of progress accelerates towards the top end of the school. Challenging teaching sets sights high in the older years. This was seen when Year 6 pupils re-wrote simplified passages from 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', to strengthen the impact on the reader. The class teacher and literacy support teacher worked together, generating an atmosphere of enthusiasm and shared endeavour. In highlighting a pupil's effective use of brackets, or the correct placing of a colon, they reinforced learning while supporting pupils in aiming high.
3. The school uses its resources to good effect in pursuing high standards. For example, generous staffing in the older years allows team teaching or setting, and provides an element of continuity from year to year. This is evident in literacy, where a support teacher works across Years 4 to 6, reinforcing pupils' progress very effectively in working alongside class teachers. 'Booster' work, with pupils who are falling short of the expectation for their age, helps them to catch up.
4. Pupils in the older years are helped to succeed by being given very clear guidance on what they should be able to do. For example, in Year 6, revision books in English, mathematics and science are provided for use in school and at home. This helps pupils to reinforce their knowledge and to fill any gaps.
5. Targets for attainment by the time pupils leave are based on a good knowledge of pupils' performance to date and a proper element of ambition. Almost all pupils make at least two levels of progress during Key Stage 2, and pupils often achieve more than this. The school's analysis of results shows that those who have been right through the school do better than those who have joined later. This demonstrates the value added over time.

Pupils do particularly well in mathematics.

6. Standards are high in mathematics and continuing to rise.
7. The school benefits from significant teaching expertise in mathematics. It has three designated leading numeracy teachers. The teaching of mathematics is well co-ordinated throughout the school and the deputy headteacher has a good overview of the subject. He teaches the subject in Years 4, 5 and 6, allowing the division of the two classes in each year group into three sets. Pupils have a clear view of how well they are doing and they say that they enjoy the subject: 'It's fun'. They take pride in their knowledge, for example of multiplication tables, and they strive to do as well as possible.
8. Lower attaining pupils benefit from focused work in a smaller group. There was a very high level of participation by pupils in the lowest set in Year 4, because of the encouragement given to individuals. Pupils' confidence grew as they worked on partitioning tens and ones, and doubling whole numbers up to 100, calculating and using mathematical vocabulary with increasing ease. Pupils in the highest sets relish the challenge of working to a level beyond the expectation for their age. For example, the pace was fast in a lesson for the top set in Year 6 and pupils found this exhilarating. They responded to quickfire questioning, confidently calculating mentally with numbers into the thousands. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves: 'Why did you make that mistake in your calculation?' and this increases their competence.

9. This emphasis on thinking and talking features throughout the school, and underpins pupils' mathematical learning. In Year 2, having added coins to make an 'exact total', pupils discussed the 'quickest way' of making 10p. Teachers reinforce mathematical language, for example when using the terms 'division' and 'sharing' in a lesson in Year 3.
10. The school reviews its results thoroughly in mathematics. Pupils' weaknesses in last year's tests for seven year olds have been identified, providing valuable guidance for future planning and teaching.

Children make a very good start in nursery and reception.

11. The nursery and reception lay strong foundations for learning throughout the school. Provision is very well planned and co-ordinated across these years as a result of effective leadership by the early years co-ordinator. Children broaden their experience and their mastery of skills in all the areas of learning. Their development is nurtured through well-structured activities and purposeful play, imaginatively tailored to their needs. The facilities are very good and include excellent provision for outdoor play.
12. The nursery is very well organised and managed by the nursery teacher, with a strong team of support staff. All new children are visited in their homes. This establishes trust and confidence from the start, and a shared understanding of the children's needs. The nursery provides a secure and happy environment where children explore and investigate and learn to be part of a group. Staff observe and record children's progress in the six areas of learning and they come to know the children extremely well. Parents have great confidence in the nursery and are delighted by the progress their children make.
13. At the time of the inspection, the new intake was being introduced for an hour each day, accompanied by parents or carers. Children's delight in the activities offered was very evident, as they were introduced to them by adults. Routines were gently established as children began to explore by themselves: 'Can you walk not run?' Parents quickly get to know each other and establish a good rapport with the nursery staff.
14. Many children start the nursery with poor skills in speech and communication, and little experience of books. They develop their speaking and listening skills and become interested in stories. They begin to pick out sounds within words and they enjoy counting and using numbers.
15. Children in reception continue to extend their skills through structured play. They become absorbed in the activities they choose, developing the capacity to concentrate and to solve problems. This was seen as children fixed together copper piping, poured water into the top through a funnel, and watched it re-appear: 'Look, it's all coming out!...It's going into the drain!' Resources are very well organised to stimulate interest and to provide challenge. Children become independent in pursuing their ideas, for example writing their own road signs to add to their traffic play.
16. Early steps in reading, writing and number are built upon in reception, providing continuity from the nursery. For example, a quarter of children can work with numbers to 10 by the time they start in reception, and this is reinforced through a range of activities, including the use of computers. When they start in reception, many children can distinguish sounds by ear, although few can recognise words or letters. A literacy lesson in reception built skilfully on what children could already do, using children's names to help identify letter sounds. Children read 'Where is Spot?' predicting the covered words and checking their guesses. Children learn to form letters, and they enjoy practising writing as part of their play.
17. By the end of reception children are very well settled in school, eager to learn and confident in doing so. Detailed assessment tracks their progress, for example in recognising letters and words. The standards achieved in the Foundation Stage have risen since reorganisation two years ago. This is now providing a springboard for higher attainment in Years 1 and 2.

High quality teaching helps pupils to succeed in their learning.

18. Teaching is of high quality overall and this is a major strength of the school, appreciated by parents and by the pupils themselves. The consistency of good or better teaching in most classes reflects well-established teamwork, effective monitoring and mentoring, and an interest in sharing good practice.
19. Teachers manage their classes very well. They are friendly and authoritative, encouraging and demanding. They have a good level of subject knowledge, and they share their enthusiasm with pupils. They make good use of time, as when Year 6 pupils were set swiftly to work in order to complete practical investigations and the recording of circuit diagrams in a short science lesson.
20. There is excellent teaching in music as seen, for example, in a lesson in Year 3. Pupils were taken rapidly through a sequence of activities to prepare an accompaniment involving simple part playing. The teacher set a brisk pace, and varied the activities to keep all pupils involved and attentive. She set high standards and enthused the pupils, using praise judiciously, with a touch of humour, and giving very clear explanations and instructions.
21. Teachers use a range of strategies to promote learning. Practical skills are valued, as shown in the development of work in design and technology. Teachers place work in a practical context, encouraging learning by doing. This was seen when the teacher in a reception class set children to search the grass for 'wiggly worms', made from wool threads in varying colours, in order to teach them about camouflage. In a history lesson, Year 6 pupils were taken out to investigate buildings in the locality, following up work on the use of census data.
22. Teaching is interesting and imaginative and holds pupils' attention. Throughout the school, teachers use questions well, checking understanding. For example, in Year 2, pupils eagerly responded to questions such as 'What does "melted" mean?' and 'What is "non-fiction"?' In Year 3, the teacher's questions challenged pupils to interpret what they had learned from a video about the Celts: 'How did they heat their water?' 'What did they need for fire?' 'Where did they get the wood from?' Teachers help pupils to learn from errors, as when pupils in Year 6 found that a bulb would not light because the batteries were wrongly aligned. The use of discussion and questioning throughout the school fosters speaking and listening skills and thoughtful enquiry by pupils.

The school's leadership cultivates effective teamwork by all staff.

23. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, harnesses the efforts of the whole staff to very good effect. The school's leadership team of five meets weekly, supported by a larger senior management team. The management structure reflects the newly instituted phase organisation of nursery, reception and Year 1; Years 2 and 3; and Years 4, 5 and 6. The school has a strong framework for curriculum development. All teachers contribute to 'focus curriculum teams' (currently literacy, mathematics and early years). This generates depth of thinking about best practice and contributes to teachers' professional development. The early years co-ordinator has nurtured the development of exemplary practice in the early years.
24. Subject co-ordinators take their role seriously, working to become expert in their subject and to provide guidance for others. The school's leadership supports this, for example freeing the co-ordinator for information and communication technology (ICT) for a year to develop the school's provision for the subject and the skills of teachers. The new computer suite is now well established and teachers and pupils are confident in their skills. Weaknesses in design and technology and in history, identified at the last inspection, have also been addressed through the enthusiastic leadership of co-ordinators. Some teachers contribute to local and national development of the curriculum, and this further enriches provision within the school.
25. Staff development is a strength, as seen in the school's recent 'Investor in People' award. The co-ordinator for staff development mentors new teachers, and works with all staff to identify training needs, and to share what has been learned. There is a climate of discussion about how pupils learn, and the teaching methods which work best. Staff training is currently focusing on learning styles and types of intelligence, and this interest is reflected in teaching which stimulates thinking, and engages pupils actively, through ears, eyes and hands.

26. The full-time special educational needs co-ordinator has a good overview of pupils' needs and manages the work of support staff. They are well-trained and valued members of the team, and the school benefits from their confidence in taking responsibility and contributing to new initiatives.
27. The headteacher observes teaching, monitoring its quality. He steers the school effectively, directing resources to where they are most needed and pursuing improvement. The deputy head plays a major role, leading by professional example in the upper part of the school, cultivating teamwork among all staff, and analysing results in order to set sights high.
28. The school is successful because its leadership creates a climate of optimistic endeavour. Teachers enjoy teaching and honing their skills, and the whole staff team is involved in developing the quality of education provided for pupils.

Close attention is given to pupils' individual needs.

29. The school is alert to the needs of individuals and groups, within and beyond the classroom. It is pro-active in seeking to meet these needs, to help pupils learn better.
30. The Early Years social inclusion project works with children and families before the children start in the nursery, and this is effective in giving children a good start. This project has led to the creation of a 'Sensory Room' to be used by the school and the community. The school also works with families, with the support of external agencies, through 'Family Literacy' and 'Dads and Lads' groups, through English classes for parents, and a mathematics project helping parents to help their children. These initiatives are overseen by the special educational needs co-ordinator who has a clear overview of pupils' individual needs throughout the school, and of the wider needs of the community.
31. Pupils' special educational needs are carefully identified. Individual education plans map out the targets to be worked towards, and the support needed to achieve the progress looked for. The school provides well for pupils with a range of difficulties, including speech and communication and emotional and behavioural problems, and physical disabilities. Staff are carefully deployed, so that there is additional support teaching in each phase, and classroom assistants in most classes. Although most classes are thirty in size, there is usually another adult, and often more, in the classroom, to support the work of individuals and groups.
32. A support teacher, funded through the Ethnic Minority Grant, works for three days a week, mainly in Years 1-3. She assesses pupils' use of English, works directly with pupils who are at an early stage of fluency, and supports teachers in adapting work for these pupils. She also helps the school to communicate effectively with parents from all ethnic and language backgrounds. Dual language books, and the translation of letters aid this communication. Bilingualism is valued as an aid to learning.
33. Information from assessment is used to form ability groups within classes, and sets in mathematics in the older years. Reading tests identify where pupils are falling behind. Classroom assistants implement structured programmes of Early Literacy Support in Year 1, and the Additional Literacy Strategy in Years 3 and 4, enabling pupils to catch up.
34. Teachers set targets for each pupil and these help to set the pace and direction for pupils' learning. For example, a lower attaining pupil in Year 1 had to match all the sounds to letters and learn numbers to 20, while a higher attaining pupil was expected to learn 15 'tricky words' and the pairs of numbers which add to 5 and 10. These targets are shared with parents and the pupils themselves at consultation meetings.

The school is orderly and pupils' behaviour is generally excellent.

35. The school is very effective in its management of pupils' behaviour. The whole community is governed by the 'Golden Rules', with which pupils become very familiar. They see these rules as a straightforward and reasonable guide to good behaviour, and pupils say that everyone tries to stick to them.

36. Good work and behaviour are recognised with 'well done' stickers, and these build towards a prized 'golden certificate'. Pupils are motivated to gain recognition of their efforts as an individual, and as a member of a team, or a class. A trophy is awarded weekly to the class with the best attendance, and the vast majority of pupils are very clear that good attendance matters.
37. Good standards of behaviour are consistently pursued so that pupils are secure in knowing what is expected of them. In consequence, little time is wasted in lessons in calling pupils to attention, or reiterating basic routines. These are well understood, and implicit in teachers' management of classes. For example, pupils know that they must put up a hand rather than call out, and that they must listen attentively to other pupils as well as to the teachers. As a result, class discussions are thoughtful, and pupils confidently have their say.
38. Pupils settle quickly to work and concentrate well, building on habits established in the early years. There have been no recent exclusions. The school is successful in helping pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to fit in and to develop self control. Support staff assist in this so that individuals rarely disrupt the learning of the class.
39. Playtimes are well organised and the same expectations of behaviour apply as at other times. For example, midday supervisory assistants often award slips for keeping the 'Golden Rules'. The pupils have played a part in improving the playground environment, and have a sense of ownership. For example, the brightly painted story characters on boards around the playground were chosen by each class.
40. Pupils going out on visits are reminded that they represent the school and they respond well to this. They have a strong sense of pride in the school, recognising that the teachers work hard on their behalf and that each pupil has a part to play in making the school a good place to be. The staff provide very good role models, backing each other up. The headteacher and senior staff, many with long experience, maintain a calm and orderly atmosphere which brings the best out of pupils.
41. The school's purposefulness, consistency and teamwork contribute to high standards of behaviour, thus allowing teaching and learning to flourish.

The school is very successful in fostering pupils' all-round personal development.

42. The school emphasises literacy and numeracy but has maintained breadth in its provision for all subjects of the National Curriculum. Pupils develop as learners because their education is well-balanced, providing breadth of first-hand experience and enquiry to aid the building of knowledge, understanding and skills.
43. Work in science provides frequent opportunity for investigation, as when pupils in Year 2 learned about the properties of materials in exploring the possibility of twisting, stretching, squashing or bending them. ICT is becoming a strong feature, with regular teaching provided in the fine new computer suite. Work in design and technology led last year to an award-winning entry in a local competition, and prize money for more equipment. Many pupils enjoy working with their hands and the challenge of designing and making extends their skills, helping them to think through problems. The school encourages pupils to be visually aware, for example in keeping sketchbooks. Pupils are exposed to the work of a wide range of artists, from Crivelli to Mondrian, through pictures on display around the school.
44. High quality provision for music is a major strength, adding zest to school life. Pupils participate with verve and enjoyment in response to knowledgeable and invigorating teaching. They reach a good standard, as seen when pupils in Year 6 improvised and combined rhythmic layers to accompany a melody. Class lessons are supplemented by lively singing assemblies, and pupils take pleasure from performance. Music club, choir and recorders are on offer for older pupils and tuition is available in a range of instruments.

45. The school is effective in helping pupils to develop personal and social skills. They learn, for example, to make eye contact when talking and listening to people. In conversation, pupils are confident, friendly and interested, for instance asking inspectors questions about their work. 'Circle Time' is used to explore themes such as, in Year 6, working in a team. The benefits of teamwork are underlined in lessons where pupils learn to work together productively and to value each other's contribution. Skills practised within the school community lay the foundations for learning about citizenship. Pupils learn to understand different viewpoints and this is helped by dramatic role play. For example in a history lesson in Year 6, pupils considered the dilemma of a German soldier carrying out orders during World War Two. Their questions showed a growing understanding of the moral conflict being faced.
46. Lunchtimes provide a pleasant social occasion. Story telling sessions, a chess club and the organisation of indoor games all add to the playtime opportunities. Year 6 pupils apply and are interviewed to be 'helpers' and they show confidence and maturity, for example in organising younger pupils to play games in the hall. There is a School Council and children freely express their views about how to make the school better. Pupils are consulted and this helps the school in its own evaluation. For example, in discussing the 'Golden Rules' in assembly, pupils considered the best kept rule was about working hard, and the worst kept was about being honest. This generated further consideration of honesty and its importance.
47. The school is alert to pupils' different styles of intelligence, and the implications for teaching and for the identification of gifted and talented pupils. The school is concerned with all the dimensions of pupils' personal growth, helping them to develop as well-rounded people. Teachers in the early years have a very good understanding of child development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils are not achieving as much as they could by the age of seven.

48. Many children, whether or not English is their home language, enter the school with very low levels of language and literacy. They take time to gain the breadth of experience needed to support progress in reading and writing. This is an important factor affecting achievement by the age of seven. However, it does not wholly account for attainment which is below the average in similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Although pupils make progress in all years and develop good attitudes to learning which are built on later, they are capable of achieving more by the age of seven.
49. The school has been aiming to increase the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2B by the age of seven, securely achieving the expectation for their age. However, in 2002, less than half the pupils reached this level in reading and a third fell short of Level 2C. Although four out of five reached 2C in writing, less than a quarter reached 2B, leaving much catching up to be done in order to reach the level expected at eleven. Attainment was higher in mathematics with seven out of ten pupils reaching 2B, but was still lower than in similar schools.
50. The school has compared pupils' baseline assessment in reception in 1999 with their results in the national tests for seven year olds in 2002. This showed higher attaining pupils making rather more progress on average than might be expected from their baseline results, while lower attaining pupils tended to fall further behind.
51. Target-setting for individual pupils does not yet take enough account of the ground to be covered in order to reach a secure Level 2 by the age of seven. The Early Literacy Strategy is proving effective in helping pupils in Year 1, but very low attaining pupils need more help to establish basic skills in literacy.
52. Planning, for example in literacy and numeracy, follows the programme expected at this age, but there is not enough ambition for the more able in terms of working towards Level 3 by the age of seven. Weekly lesson planning is thorough but lessons are not regularly adapted to give more practice where it is needed or to move pupils on more rapidly.

53. Parents and teachers report that pupils are now beginning to come through to Year 1 at a higher standard, because of improvements in the quality of provision in nursery and reception. The school is seeking to build on this in pursuing higher attainment at the end of Year 1, now included in the Early Years phase, and by the age of seven in the middle phase.

54. The school's leadership has helped to focus attention on standards at seven. The analysis of results in mathematics, for example, pinpointed areas of weakness, and indicated solid teaching directed at Level 2, although not beyond this. The moderation of writing has sharpened teachers' understanding of what is required at each level. However, the school development plan does not clearly relate actions to measurable outcomes in order to evaluate what makes a difference. Information from assessment is being used to illuminate areas of strength and weakness. However, the progress made from year to year, by individuals and by classes, is not yet being tracked by the school's leadership. A clearer overview is needed in order to articulate the school's ambitions for pupils by the age of seven and the means of achieving them.

Some basic skills in reading and writing need more systematic practice.

55. The school has implemented the literacy hour effectively and children enjoy reading and writing. Teaching is generally good and often very good. Older pupils make strides because of high expectations and the assistance of the literacy support teacher in Years 4-6. Although the school has teachers with significant expertise in literacy, it has been unable recently to recruit a literacy co-ordinator. This has constrained its efforts to improve basic skills in reading and writing, particularly in Years 1-3.
56. Pupils' guided reading is well planned. However, this is not backed up enough by individual reading to provide regular reinforcement of common words and practice of familiar phonemes. Pupils choose a book to take home, and change this three times a week, but the progress made in reading as a result is not closely monitored. The choice of books is not sufficiently structured to give the frequent, systematic practice which many pupils need. Teachers in the older years have instigated a reading record system to gain a fuller overview of what pupils are reading and this is proving valuable.
57. Literacy lessons have clear objectives, but there is insufficient focus, in teaching and in marking, on strengthening basic skills which are not yet well established. So for example, the use of phonic strategies to tackle unfamiliar words may not be routinely reinforced in the course of shared reading. In writing, basic errors in spelling and punctuation may be overlooked, and therefore perpetuated. Marking sometimes comments helpfully on the achievement of specific objectives, but does not ensure that pupils accurately apply what they have learned previously.
58. Spelling patterns are taught but there is an inconsistent approach to the learning and testing of spelling. More structure is needed to ensure that younger pupils draw on a growing bank of familiar words to support their independent writing, and that older pupils check their work and learn from their errors.
59. Handwriting is not currently given enough emphasis. Although pupils are taught to form letters correctly, and later to join, the standards expected at each age are unclear. Frequent errors, such as writing between rather than on the lines, are not recognised and remedied. Good handwriting habits are not well established, although some pupils achieve a fluent joined style in the older years.
60. The school has been working to improve standards in writing, with some success. There are strengths in the range of pupils' writing, and in their enjoyment of using words adventurously. Older pupils develop their skills well, in response to purposeful teaching. Overall, however, pupils are not making the progress which the school is looking for in writing, because they are not writing enough. Younger pupils sometimes spend more time talking about writing and watching the teacher write, than writing themselves. The structure of writing tasks in Years 2 and 3, though appropriate to the age group, is often too complex for pupils who are barely achieving level 2. Pupils need more frequent and regular practice in order to build their skills in writing accurately, fluently and speedily.

Homework is not being used to full effect to support pupils' learning.

61. There has been some ambivalence in the school's approach to homework. Staff and governors have been cautious about adding to teachers' workload or overburdening children and their families, and have found there has often been a poor response when homework has been set. However, a number of parents would like a more consistent approach to homework, and feel that the school should be clearer about its expectations in order to secure better parental support.
62. Currently all pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home. The school gives parents ideas about how to help their children learn. Holiday homework projects are set and a small minority of pupils complete these. Homework increases in the older years and pupils in Year 6 make regular use of revision books supplied by the school. However, there are no clear guidelines on the amount, frequency or purpose of homework or how it develops as pupils move through the school.

63. The school is not currently maximising pupils' learning through the planned use of homework, to prepare for work to come, to provide extra practice where it is needed, and to extend knowledge and skills. In particular, more focus is needed on reinforcing reading and writing skills in order to raise standards in the younger and middle years.

The school promotes good attendance but it remains well below average.

64. The school emphasises the importance of good attendance and provides clear guidelines for parents. Most pupils are keen to come to school and the weekly trophy for the class with the best attendance is keenly contested. However, the overall rate of attendance remains well below the national average and unauthorised absence, though lower than it was, remains high.
65. Holidays taken in termtime affect the attendance of around a quarter of all pupils. The figures are also affected by pupils remaining on the register after they have left and by the low attendance of a few pupils because of serious medical conditions. Despite steps taken to address the problem, irregular attendance and unexplained absence by a number of pupils remain a concern because of the impact on pupils' learning, and on their long-term educational opportunities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to raise standards further the school should:

(1) Pursue higher achievement by the age of seven by:

- tracking more closely the progress expected and made each year by individuals and classes;
- relating targets for pupils to challenging expectations by the age of seven;
- improving the planning and evaluation of lessons with reference to who needs more practice and who should move on;
- further supporting pupils where language comprehension is restricting learning;
- including measurable outcomes in the school development plan, in order to evaluate the impact of initiatives on pupils' achievement.

(paragraphs 48-54)

(2) Provide more systematic practice of basic skills in reading and writing by:

- developing a more structured approach to pupils' individual reading;
- reinforcing the use of phonic strategies in the course of pupils' reading;
- developing systems for learning, finding and checking spellings;
- teaching and monitoring handwriting more closely;
- giving more time to writing, to increase accuracy and fluency;
- using marking to identify errors and to secure improvement.

(paragraphs 55-60)

(3) Use homework to greater effect in support of pupils' learning by:

- identifying the purposes to be served by homework;
- developing a schoolwide homework policy so that parents know what to expect;
- establishing systems for setting, checking and providing feedback on homework;
- monitoring the impact of homework on pupils' achievement.

(paragraphs 61-63)

(4) Continue its efforts to improve attendance by:

- analysing absence, including analysis by ethnic group, to detect patterns and trends;
- identifying the impact of absence on attainment, and spelling out the effects on learning for individuals;
- reporting attendance more clearly in the governors' annual report, the school brochure and on pupils' individual reports.

(paragraphs 64-65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

31

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

16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	14	4	0	0	0
Percentage	7	35	45	13	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	417
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	133

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	72

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	165

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data (2000-01)	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.0
National comparative data (2000-01)	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	35	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	21
	Girls	29	32	29
	Total	50	52	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (76)	87 (74)	83 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	23
	Girls	29	29	31
	Total	49	49	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (71)	82 (87)	90 (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	27	35	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	20	24
	Girls	27	25	29
	Total	42	45	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (66)	73 (73)	85 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	41	44	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (61)	71 (69)	71 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
217	0	0
2	0	0
92	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
18	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
10	0	0
5	0	0
11	0	0
20	0	0
20	0	0
1	0	0
6	0	0
2	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	504

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	1,261,521
Total expenditure	1,294,317
Expenditure per pupil	2,736
Balance brought forward from previous year	125,011
Balance carried forward to next year	92,185

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	9.2

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	179

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	44	6	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	33	26	15	9
The teaching is good.	54	46	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	37	9	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	37	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	39	4	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	40	46	9	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	41	45	4	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	47	4	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	37	18	5	12