

# INSPECTION REPORT

Final draft including proof reader and HT comments

## **SCARGILL INFANT SCHOOL**

Rainham, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102282

Headteacher: Mrs Kath Keeper

Reporting inspector: Ms Ruth Frith  
2490

Dates of inspection: 7 – 8 July 2003

Inspection number: 246190

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mungo Park Road Rainham Essex
Postcode:	RM13 7PL
Telephone number:	01708 555707
Fax number:	01708 558990
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert Ager
Date of previous inspection:	12 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Scargill Infant School is an average size community school for boys and girls aged four to seven years. It is a popular school and is now over-subscribed in an area of declining pupil numbers. There are 220 pupils on roll. The school serves families who live in privately owned, rented council and housing association properties. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, but a very small percentage of parents have experienced further or higher education. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is broadly average. On entry to school, overall, pupils show levels of attainment which are below those seen nationally for children of that age. Currently, six pupils are identified as having special educational needs with a further 26 pupils being monitored closely because of perceived difficulties with their learning. Those receiving additional support have speech, communication or moderate learning difficulties. Approximately five percent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and five pupils come from homes where it is believed that English is spoken as an additional language. The school has been designated as a 'Beacon of Excellence' and in 2002, its good practice was again recognised when the school received the national School Achievement Award.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an excellent school that is well deserving of its Beacon status. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and together with senior managers and governors has created a school with a happy and stimulating ethos where children flourish. Staff work very well together as a strong team and teaching is frequently excellent. Staff are particularly effective in developing the pupils' personal and social education, which provides a very good basis for learning across all subjects. This ensures that pupils achieve very well and in Year 2 most reach standards that are at least well above average. The school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- By the time they leave school, most pupils reach well above average standards in reading, writing and science and very high standards in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is frequently excellent and helps pupils to achieve well. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.
- Staff provide a rich, relevant curriculum which ensures that all pupils are fully included in a very good range of activities.
- The school's ethos of respect and co-operation promotes excellent attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships.
- Staff provide an excellent level of care for their pupils.
- The school has developed a very good partnership with parents who, in turn, have a high regard for the school.
- Excellent leadership and management have resulted in a culture of continuous improvement.

#### **What could be improved**

- Attendance

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has successfully addressed the key issues identified in the inspection report following the last inspection in 1998. The quality of teaching has improved and standards are now higher. Staff have developed new schemes of work and ways of assessing what pupils have learnt and use this information to plan appropriate activities for pupils of different ages and abilities. The headteacher and governors have established clearer roles and responsibilities in relation to curriculum and budget monitoring. They have also improved the prospectus and annual report for parents but recognise that there are a few minor omissions in the information required. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good and the school demonstrates a clear commitment to further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	B	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A*	A	A*	A*

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

Children achieve very well in the reception classes and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, most are likely to reach the national standards in all areas of learning and many will attain above this. Results of the 2002 standard assessment tests for seven-year-olds show that pupils attained well above average standards in reading and writing and very high standards in mathematics. The pupils' results in mathematics were amongst the highest in the country. These results show continued high standards in reading and writing from the previous year and an improvement in mathematics. Results of the teacher assessments in 2002 indicate that pupils attained well above average standards in science. More pupils than expected nationally reached above average levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science, indicating good challenge for pupils of higher attainment. Pupils in this year were well supported by their parents and had better levels of attendance than those in the current Year 2.

Evidence from this inspection indicates that pupils in Year 2 continue to achieve very well and are frequently working at well above average levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Any difference in attainment from the previous and current years' national tests reflects the varying nature of the pupils' prior attainment, rather than any deficiencies in the quality of teaching and educational provision. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve very well and reach standards in line with their capabilities and levels of English acquisition. This is because they are well supported and receive appropriately challenging work. No significant difference was noted in the progress and achievement of boys and girls during the inspection although, in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, girls did better than boys in reading and writing and boys did marginally better than girls in mathematics. The high standards are a result of high quality teaching, the interesting and stimulating curriculum and the pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are very enthusiastic and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations of staff. They behave exceptionally well because they are interested in what they do.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils become increasingly more responsible and show care and concern for each other as they move up the school. Relationships between all members of the school community, including those from different ethnic groups, are excellent.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The rate of attendance last year was below the national average. An increasing number of families are taking holidays in school time.

The pupils' excellent attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships help to create a caring and stimulating learning environment in which they are encouraged to achieve very well.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Excellent	Excellent

*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 has improved significantly since the last inspection, both in the percentage of very high quality teaching and in the absence of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers and support staff respond positively to the headteacher's high expectations and readily improve their practice through taking part in the excellent professional development programme, which develops their talents systematically. Teachers are valued and encouraged to give of their best. A very good programme of observing lessons and monitoring of other aspects of teaching, such as planning, and providing feedback to teachers also helps staff to improve their practice. All these features result in a staff who are hardworking and innovative, ready to take on new initiatives and share their expertise.

Staff meet the needs of all pupils very well and focus on developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy within a rich curriculum. They have adopted the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy very well and the teaching of English and mathematics is frequently excellent. Teachers ensure that pupils are able to experience high levels of success and consequently pupils enjoy their lessons. The school's valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs results in these pupils making very good progress and achieving very well. Higher-attainers and those with particular talents, for example in art and design, are well challenged and produce work of a high quality. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well met through high quality class teaching. Teachers manage pupils very well and have high expectations of work and behaviour. Consequently, no time is wasted and pupils try hard to do their best.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The quality and range of learning opportunities presented to pupils stimulate their interests and maintain their concentration very well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are given appropriately challenging work which helps them to make very good progress towards reaching their targets. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to the progress that these pupils make.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully involved and make similar progress to their peers. Their needs are well met through the good class teaching and no additional specialist support is required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. Provision for pupils' personal development can be seen throughout the school day. Assemblies, art and design, dance and music make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural education. Pupils' moral and social education is well developed by the staff establishing clear expectations and encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own actions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. Staff know their pupils very well and take very good account of individual needs. The care given to pupils is reflected well in the way that the pupils, in turn, respect and care for others.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has high expectations and a clear vision of how to improve the school. Her inspirational leadership has a profound effect on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. She has particularly good communication skills and delegates responsibilities very successfully so that 'everyone is the manager of their own job'. The deputy headteacher and other senior staff ably support her.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are fully involved in the school development planning process and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Very effective systems are in place to evaluate the school's performance and improve teaching and learning. Staff and governors have created a culture of monitoring and target setting that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are used well to support learning. Financial planning is very good and takes full account of the cost of implementing the school's plan for development. Some funds have been reserved to improve the accommodation and learning environment. Correct financial procedures are followed and the principles of best value are applied well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The right amount of homework is given.</li> <li>• Staff help pupils to develop a responsible attitude and behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching members of staff if they have a query or problem.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities, including those outside formal lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the questionnaire responses, five parents stated that they would like a closer working relationship with the school and more information about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse the very positive views held by parents and the high regard they have for the school. They believe that parents are given very good opportunities to visit the school, speak with staff and find out how their children are getting on.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**By the time they leave school, most pupils reach well above average standards in reading, writing and science and very high standards in mathematics.**

1. Over the last few years, children entering the reception classes have displayed a broad range of knowledge, skills and experiences but, overall, their attainment is below that seen nationally for children of this age. A significant minority of children use a restricted range of vocabulary and some have speech and communication difficulties. Staff recognise this and provide children with a rich environment where children are encouraged to speak, listen and develop very good attitudes to learning. Children make very good progress and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the large majority of children reach the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning, and a substantial minority achieve beyond this.
2. When compared with all schools, pupils from Scargill Infant School achieved well above average standards in reading, writing and science and very high standards in mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002. The results in mathematics were amongst the highest in the country with all pupils attaining at least the level expected for their age and over 80 per cent attaining above that. The percentage of pupils attaining this higher level was above average for writing and particularly high in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils' results were equally good when they were compared with those of children from similar backgrounds in other schools. Since 1999, when there was a dip in standards, the school's rate of improvement overall in reading, writing and mathematics has been above the national trend and reflects the focus that staff and governors place on maintaining high academic standards. Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection and the school received the Schools' Achievement Award this year in recognition of its improving standards.
3. Information provided by the school indicates that pupils in the current Year 2 have also achieved very well during their time in school. Results of the 2003 national tests were not validated but showed that the vast majority of pupils at least reached the targets set or achieved above these. It is anticipated that the overall attainment levels in the national tests for this year group will be a little lower than the previous year. This is due to specific differences in the two cohorts and not to any changes in the quality of teaching or provision. The attendance rate in the current Year 2, however, is below that of last year's group and may have had an impact on standards for the few pupils involved.
4. The school has implemented the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very successfully. Currently, pupils are making very good progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Teachers are particularly effective in improving pupils' speaking skills by extending their range of vocabulary and valuing what they say, not only in literacy lessons but, for example, in a Year 2 religious education lesson. Here, pupils were seen speaking confidently and sensitively about pupils in the class, listening to others and showing high regard for their feelings. Pupils' reading skills are also developed very well during literacy lessons, reading sessions with teachers and teaching assistants and during DEAR (Drop everything and read) time. In the latter, a Year 1 teacher was particularly effective in gaining the interest of the pupils and developing their reading skills when reading *Little Copy Cub* with enthusiasm and expression. By Year 2, most pupils read texts with fluency and accuracy. The high expectations of teachers also ensure that pupils are encouraged to work hard to develop their writing across many subjects of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils practise their skills well and see the relevance of writing for different purposes. The work on display and in their books indicates how the range of work helps to support the standards that they achieve.
5. Pupils make excellent progress in mathematics throughout the school. The introduction of the numeracy lessons has developed a very good framework for teachers to develop their teaching and the range of work presented. This is stimulating pupils' interest, particularly in mental calculations, and they are gaining in confidence and competence. The very good planning which covers all the elements of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good range of activities and teaching methods are key factors in developing pupils' mathematical thinking. In a Year 2 lesson, the high degree of pupil participation and brisk pace of learning resulted in them

making very good progress and reaching levels of attainment which were well above average for their age.

6. The school allocates valuable additional teaching support within each class and this is effectively used to help pupils with special educational needs, when appropriate. This results in these pupils making good progress towards their targets. Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations; they are positive and encourage the pupils to do their best. Consequently, the pupils are keen to work and develop confidence in their learning. Work is well focused and develops the pupils' learning at a good rate.
7. The school's provision for higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented has improved. These pupils are well challenged and reach levels of attainment which match their abilities. For example, the excellent teaching of mathematics and science in a Year 1 class resulted in work which systematically built on pupils' prior learning and resulted in a significant number of pupils working at well above average levels of attainment. The particularly high quality provision for art and design and the range of activities outside formal lessons supports pupils with a particular talent well.
8. In the 2002 national tests for Year 2 pupils, girls did better than boys in reading and writing and boys did marginally better than girls in mathematics. However, during the inspection, no significant differences were noted between the attainment and progress of boys and girls. This is mainly due to the high quality teaching which recognises the differing learning needs of all pupils and caters for them well. For example, a good range of books is available to encourage pupils to become interested in their reading and a wide range of activities is provided to stimulate pupils' responses to learning, such as encouraging boys to write, as was seen in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson.
9. There are insufficient numbers of pupils from different minority ethnic groups to make relevant comparisons but it is clear that individual pupils achieve very well and reach standards in line with their abilities and also with their peers. Those using English as an additional language also achieve very well because their needs are recognised and addressed well within lessons through the high quality teaching and support. The teaching assistant in a Year 1 class, for example, worked well with a pupil to ensure that he understood what was expected and could use the subject specific language correctly.
10. Although lesson observations were not possible for each year group in each area of the curriculum, it was clear from talking with pupils and looking at their work that the very good standards achieved in literacy and numeracy help them with their learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are achieving well in science throughout the school and reaching well above average standards in Year 2. Standards were usually above average and frequently well above in many of the lessons observed. For example, in information and communication technology children in a reception class reached particularly high standards when creating a picture in the style of Monet. Also, throughout the school, pupils attain very high standards in art and design. This is due to the high priority given to the subject, the effective use of associated additional funding and the quality of staff support, which result in a quality of provision seldom seen in similar schools.

**The quality of teaching is frequently excellent and helps pupils to achieve well. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.**

11. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection both in the amount of excellent teaching seen, and in the absence of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers' performance reflects the high expectations of the headteacher and the value that senior management and governors place on supporting staff to give of their best. A good programme of professional development is in place to support staff, and the regular monitoring of teaching and learning identifies teachers' strengths and areas for development. Teaching assistants are seen as valued members of the teaching team and make a significant contribution to the work of the school and pupils' progress. They are well trained and this results in a staff that is keen to do its best for pupils. All these features, together with the strong team spirit present in the school and the commitment of staff, result in excellent practice and improving standards.

12. Staff in the reception classes share a very good understanding of how young children learn and since the last inspection have worked hard to develop their practice in line with national guidance. Staff plan work together and have developed a positive, consistent approach to teaching and learning. Children make very good progress because they are interested in the activities provided and the work is set at a level which ensures they can experience success. Appropriate attention has been given to settling children into school and they develop excellent attitudes to learning and behaviour very quickly. A good balance is made between direct adult teaching and activities which allow children to make choices and work independently or with each other. For example, a group of children worked very well when using a range of screen tools to create a picture using the computer. They showed confidence and very high levels of skills and were clearly able to describe what they had done and why. Similarly, children showed good levels of knowledge and understanding when working together to investigate why some objects float and others sink. A particular strength in this lesson was the way the teacher and teaching assistant developed the children's thinking skills through posing interesting questions and providing tasks of a very practical nature. Teachers are always keen to challenge children further. For example, when a child stated that the bottle was floating because it has air in it, the teacher replied by asking 'How do you know?' Whilst valuing what the children said, the teacher encouraged them to speak more clearly using correct terminology. The end part of this lesson was also well used to develop the children's understanding and to celebrate their learning. Those working in a small group finding out about bubbles described them as 'transparent' and 'you can see through them'. They were also able to show that bubbles 'have air in them' and 'all bubbles are round', clearly describing how they had found this out.
13. Children's strengths are built upon successfully in Years 1 and 2, where the school focuses on developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy within a rich, broad and relevant curriculum. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is frequently very good or excellent. For example, in an excellent Year 1/2 literacy lesson, the teacher worked very hard to keep up the pace of learning by providing a range of activities which supported the pupils' understanding of writing fiction. Her very good subject knowledge and understanding were used well to plan work which challenged pupils at a variety of levels whilst focusing on the same task of writing story plans. She inspired confidence in the pupils by regularly commenting on their individual strengths, how they had improved and what they should do next. She was able to do this very effectively because she had a very clear understanding of the next stages in each pupil's learning. Her skill in encouraging children to write was particularly impressive as she built up the excitement and then produced a massive, old, wooden door and encouraged the pupils to imagine what was happening behind it. In addition, she developed the pupils' range and use of vocabulary by getting them to touch the door and then describe it. Further support was given by the use of printed sheets which were differentiated to meet the variety of needs in the class. The end of the lesson was used very well to consolidate learning by pupils talking to their partners about their work. Most of the pupils did not want this lesson to end and were pleased to find out that 'the door' would be used again in the afternoon drama session when they were to act out what went on in their imaginary places. Pupils' confidence was well raised during this session and contributed to many pupils saying that they liked writing. This had a particular impact on encouraging boys to write. As with many of her colleagues, this teacher's enthusiasm acted as a motivating force for learning.
14. Observations of high quality teaching in Year 1 and 2 mathematics lessons gave clear indications how the school has managed to achieve such high standards. Pupils enter Year 1 with a very good understanding in numeracy and many have reached a standard above that expected for their age. Their skills are systematically developed in small stages through a series of lessons with very clear objectives and a good range of interesting tasks and activities. Teachers are confident in what they know and do and spread this confidence to the pupils. The beginning of lessons are used well to develop pupils' mental mathematics and if pupils do not readily volunteer answers they are encouraged to do. Consequently all are involved. No time is wasted as lessons are very well planned and prepared with appropriate tasks set to match pupils' abilities, and a good range of resources is provided. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent because they are fully engrossed in what they are doing and want to succeed. Teachers have very high expectations and use mathematical language well. They also develop pupils' problem-solving skills well so that pupils are not discouraged when confronted with hard work but eagerly use their mathematical skills. Consequently, pupils make very good gains in their learning.

15. As well as recognising the need to provide pupils with a good grounding in literacy and numeracy, the school is keen to ensure that pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum which stimulates their interests and encourages a desire for learning. Teachers have developed their own knowledge and skills of information and communication technology since the last inspection and this, together with significant improvement in resourcing, has led to better teaching. A teaching assistant provides very good support to both staff and pupils and is instrumental in widening pupils' experiences and raising standards. Similarly, the expertise of a teaching assistant who is very skilled in teaching art and design is used very well so that all children experience additional opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. Pupils experience using a wide range of media and are inspired to develop their own artistic work after studying the work of a wide range of artists. They are encouraged to use the immediate outdoor area to develop their observational skills and a small group of pupils travelled to London to record some of their observations before interpreting their ideas in clay and paint. Overall, the art work in the school is of a very high standard. This quality is seldom seen for pupils of that age.
16. One of the most significant factors in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection has been the identification of clear learning objectives, through careful planning, and the sharing of these with the pupils. In the best lessons, this helps pupils to understand the relevance of what they are doing and encourages them to work towards set targets. Teachers mark the pupils' work well and use the information gained from this to correct any misunderstandings and indicate to pupils how they can improve their work.
17. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is excellent and has a significant influence on how staff successfully manage the pupils in their care. Teachers are encouraging and supportive and this results in pupils becoming confident, keen to answer questions and put forward their own points of view. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils appropriately in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good and the results of these assessments are used well to guide lesson planning. Provision of homework is good and supports the work done in school, particularly in English and mathematics.
18. The school allocates valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and this results in them making very good progress towards their targets. This area of the school's work is well managed and attention is focussed on recognising the different abilities and capabilities within each class and providing work that builds systematically on prior learning. Similarly, pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported and encouraged to do well. The high quality of support helps pupils to reach levels of attainment which match their abilities and levels of English acquisition. Higher-attainers are also encouraged to do their best. An excellent learning atmosphere had been established and pupils work hard throughout enjoying the challenge which they are presented with. Most pupils achieve very well as a result of the high expectations of staff, the provision of a broad and interesting curriculum, and their excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning.

**Staff provide a rich, relevant curriculum which ensures that all pupils are fully included in a very good range of activities.**

19. Since the last inspection, staff have developed the curriculum well. They have adapted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and developed provision for children in the reception classes in line with national guidance. This has ensured that pupils receive a curriculum which meets statutory requirements and is relevant to their needs. One of the most significant developments is the way in which subject managers have written schemes of work. These subject schemes of work reflect National Curriculum expectations and appropriate provision for religious education, but have also been adapted well to meet the priorities identified in the school. These include a broad and rich experience for children which develops their knowledge and understanding of, for example, art and design and drama. In addition, subject managers ensure that a good range of resources is available to support effective teaching and guidance is provided, when necessary.
20. Teachers use their collective expertise to plan work which matches the needs of a variety of pupils, as well as activities which stimulate the pupils' interests. An example of this was seen in a Year 1 science lesson where pupils were investigating materials. Pupils were supported to work in groups, developing a fair test to observe how materials can change when mixed with

others. This activity supported well the requirements of the science curriculum and due to good quality planning, pupils with a wide variety of needs were able to fully participate. Pupils were interested in the practical nature of the activity and consequently made good progress in understanding the scientific concepts.

21. There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion. All pupils are afforded full and equal access to the curriculum and boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of school life. This reflects the school's aims and guiding principles where all pupils are encouraged to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement and are given a range of activities and tasks which build systematically on their prior learning. The quality of support and teaching for pupils speaking English as an additional language also ensures that they, too, are fully included and progress well. Strategies to promote equality of opportunity are very effective and reflect the school's commitment to inclusive education. This is evident in the way that teachers direct questions to pupils and ensure their full participation and in the way that pupils have access to additional curricular activities. The school has a clear race equality policy which meets the current requirements, and pupils are appropriately prepared for life in a multicultural, diverse society. The school has also developed a clear and helpful accessibility policy and plan.
22. A very good range of activities is also provided outside formal school lessons. These help pupils to develop their skills, as in the dance and football clubs and their creative abilities through participating in the art and design club, the choir, dance and recorder clubs. Activities such as these and the nature club support the development of pupils' spiritual, social and cultural education well. The school is also involved in the Learning Freeway which encourages pupils and parents to work together using computers. Staff invite theatre and dance groups to the school to enrich the pupils' experiences and hold events such as science and arts weeks. The latter, in particular, supports gifted and talented pupils well. All these activities also enhance pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to achieve and become successful.
23. Staff are very effective in gaining grants to develop the curriculum, for example funds from the London Arts' Board, which are used very well to widen pupils' experiences and develop their learning. Staff also have the confidence to enter competitions. Recently, three pupils represented the school in Manchester and were praised on their work related to the environment. The prize of an interactive whiteboard will also enhance the teaching and learning in relation to information and communication and other subjects. The school has received a range of national awards related to curriculum development.

**The school's ethos of respect and co-operation promotes excellent attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships.**

24. The school's principles and mission statement can clearly be seen in practice through its positive and caring ethos where pupils are encouraged to value and respect others. Communication between adults and pupils is positive, friendly and supportive and this results in pupils who feel valued and, in turn, value others and their property. Relationships are excellent as staff constantly give clear messages in the way they interact with each other and the pupils about their regard for children and what they do. All this results in a good working atmosphere where pupils are encouraged to do their best. A key feature of successful practice is the way that staff set high standards of personal and social behaviour, alongside those for academic achievement.
25. Responses from the parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils indicate that the vast majority of pupils like school. Children settle quickly into the routines of the reception classes due to the effective induction programme and develop excellent attitudes to their learning. This is further developed throughout Years 1 and 2 where the interesting activities provided stimulate their learning and encourage them to do well. Tasks are set in such a way that pupils of varying abilities are able to feel successful and this, in turn, maintains their concentration and interest. Most pupils throughout the school are well motivated and respond positively to the teachers and the activities provided. Many are keen to talk about their work and have pride in their achievements. Pupils' work is displayed very well both in the classrooms and throughout the public areas, for example, on the excellence board. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem, as well as enhancing the environment.

26. In classrooms, around the school and in the playground, the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is excellent. This is because all staff have high expectations, are clear about the school's discipline policy and implement it well. Consequently, pupils know how they are expected to behave. Pupils do not distinguish between teaching and non-teaching staff who are all seen as having equal status within the school community and relate to them very well. The school's expectations regarding good behaviour towards others are clearly outlined by staff and demonstrated by their daily interactions with pupils. Pupils learn a good sense of personal and community responsibility, through participating in a variety of fund-raising activities. Assemblies and circle time are used effectively to confirm the school's expectations and to guide pupils in their understanding of the needs of others. Assemblies are also used well to praise pupils either for their academic or personal achievements or to recognise their efforts.
27. The school's expectations regarding good behaviour towards others are clearly outlined by staff and demonstrated by their daily interactions with pupils. Lunchtime at Scargill Infants is seen as an opportunity for pupils to sit together and develop their social and communication skills through talking in a calm and orderly manner. This is achieved not by constant reminders to behave but through the provision of a good environment and clear procedures which make sense to the children and can be easily followed from a young age. The Midday Administrator is particularly effective in developing this area of the school's work and, together with other staff, creates a very good environment. Because the pupils enjoy their lunchtime and have plenty of opportunities to talk and play with others, their behaviour is excellent and this prepares them well for the afternoon session.
28. A key feature of the success of the school is the consistent approach adopted by all who work there. Staff want the pupils to succeed and enjoy their learning and provide interesting activities. Pupils listen well to each other and to the teachers, and generally settle quickly to tasks when asked to do so. Consequently, pupils are clear about what they should be learning in lessons, work well on their own and have the confidence to ask for help when they need it. The pupils' excellent attitudes to school and to their learning are key features in ensuring that they work well and make very good progress.

### **Staff provide an excellent level of care for their pupils.**

29. The school is a very caring community which makes excellent provision overall to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The academic and personal needs of the pupils are met very well. Pupils spoke positively about the school, the activities they took part in and how staff helped them. The questionnaire completed by parents indicate that 97 per cent think that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. The high level of support shown by the headteacher to all staff is reflected in how they, in turn, support the pupils. They achieve this by providing a good range of learning experiences and encouraging pupils to succeed. Teachers and support staff have high expectations and a very positive atmosphere is evident in the school where pupils are encouraged to do their best. All staff show a very strong commitment to the pupils in their care.
30. All the staff know the pupils well and, consequently, are able to challenge pupils appropriately to do better, if they think that they can, and support them when they assess that they are finding learning difficult. They do this very effectively because their actions are based on knowledge gained from very good assessment. The adherence to regular and appropriate assessment procedures ensures that staff are aware of the progress pupils have made and the standards achieved. Teachers use this information well to plan work which builds upon pupils' learning in small stages but with appropriate challenge. The needs of pupils are identified early and those with special educational needs are given very effective support to help them make good progress. Staff also develop provision for pupils who are above average ability or show particular abilities or talents. These pupils are identified and given appropriately challenging work within school. The results of the 2002 national tests for Year 2 pupils indicate that pupils were well challenged; for example, over 50 per cent gained a level of attainment above that expected for their age in reading.
31. Throughout the school day, pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully developed and monitored. At the beginning of the day, they share their successes in assembly and congratulate each other on what they have achieved in lessons. During playtime, they are encouraged to develop good behaviour and recognise the needs of others. At playtime and lunchtime, adults supervise pupils very well. Staff know the pupils well and are aware of their

responsibilities regarding health and safety and child protection. A very wide range of activities is provided and these are particularly good in developing pupils' social education and confidence. Playtimes, which can be worrying and lonely times for pupils in some schools, turn into exciting social events at Scargill Infants, as children play together on the equipment, play formal games or dance to music under the trees. Pupils feel safe and secure at school and are very keen to participate in the activities provided.

**The school has developed a very good partnership with parents who, in turn, have a high regard for the school.**

32. The school has established very good links with the parents and these contacts are generally effective although a few parents still do not recognise the importance of sending their children to school regularly. The headteacher has developed a good range of opportunities to keep parents informed, gain their views and help them to support their children's learning at home and at school. Regular newsletters are sent home together with information about what the children will be learning in the weeks to come. Parents particularly like the latter as it helps them to give specific support. The school web-site is up-dated regularly and contains useful information. The pupils' annual report provides a good summary of information about their progress and attainment and most parents feel that they receive good information about how their child is getting on.
33. Very good opportunities for parents to see the teachers are provided and parents obviously feel comfortable coming into the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and links between home and school are constructive. Parents come to the formal meetings with teachers and high attendance is seen at school concerts and at assemblies where good work is shared. The grandparents' assembly is particularly popular. Many parents came to see a performance by the dance club during the inspection and expressed their pleasure in what their children could do. The children, in turn, were very pleased to each receive a certificate celebrating their attendance at the club over a period of time and their developing skills. Both parents and grandparents regularly help in school. The headteacher also invites groups of parents to her 'tea parties' where she answers any queries, explains developments in the school and gains their views within an informal setting. Through doing this she maintains an up-to-date understanding of parents' views of the school. Staff continue to work hard to maintain good relationships with parents and, with the parent working party, have developed a parent aid file and are planning a series of parenting sessions for the Autumn Term.
34. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are very pleased with all that the school does. Parents say that the school is well led and the teaching is good. Their children like coming to school, behave well and make good progress. The school expects pupils to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. Parents consider that their children receive the right amount of homework to do at home. Parents feel comfortable approaching staff with any questions. The school provides an interesting range of activities. Five parents stated that they would like a closer working relationship with the school and more information about how their children are getting on. Whilst agreeing with the many positive comments made about the school, the inspectors believe that parents are given very good opportunities to visit the school, speak with staff and find out how their children are getting on.
35. Most parents contribute well to the school and its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Discussion with pupils showed that many of their parents actively encourage and help them at home, for example with their reading, although a few remain who are unable to do so. Many parents also encourage their children to respect the school and education and this is reflected in the way that pupils are keen to learn and work hard. Though there is no parent staff association, parents support the fundraising and social events well. The school is held in high regard in the community and is currently oversubscribed.

**Excellent leadership and management have resulted in a culture of continuous improvement.**

36. The leadership and management of the school are excellent. One of the key factors in the school's success is the quality of the headteacher's leadership. She has a clear vision for the

school and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure excellent standards. This vision can easily be identified through the school's aims which are clear and specific and reviewed regularly, through the school's mission statement and statement of intent, and through her guiding principles. The headteacher is determined to create a school which can be seen as a centre of excellence and provides pupils with a stimulating and exciting first formal experience of education. Her clear goals include the need for pupils to experience something that they remember, that interests them and may encourage them to take up a hobby. The focus on art and design in the school is clearly successful in this respect, as pupils frequently say that art is their favourite subject and speak very knowledgeably about their own work and the work of famous artists. Also, the headteacher is keen to provide access to learning through the development of enquiring minds and specific skills.

37. Another key feature of her leadership is the very high importance placed on the professional development of staff and the support they are given to achieve as well as they can. She wants staff to enjoy their work and experience success. A well-structured programme of professional support and training results in staff remaining aware of new developments and keen to improve their own practice. As they develop in confidence and expertise, they become more willing to try out new methods or introduce new activities. This leads to a cycle of constant improvement. A key statement in school is, "It's good for my professional development" as staff challenge themselves to take on board new experiences and also pass on their knowledge and skills to others in the profession. A feature of the school's Beacon status is the dissemination of good practice to other staff and this is very well received. For example, the art and design courses run by two members of staff are seen as being very practical so staff from other schools readily use the new ideas and improve their own teaching.
38. Overall, the headteacher has very good communication skills which she uses to good effect when consulting with parents, staff, governors and children. She is very approachable and staff are keen to share their ideas or concerns and thereby develop a very innovative approach to their work. In particular, the headteacher is very effective in thinking ahead, recognising the needs of the staff and pupils and providing opportunities for all to develop.
39. The school's aims of raising standards and improving the quality of education are increasingly reflected in its work. A supportive atmosphere exists in the school where staff are willing to share their ideas and expertise, for example when planning their lessons or through observing others' work. Very good systems monitor pupils' progress, evaluate the quality of teaching and highlight the effectiveness of the school's work. The feedback given to teachers is aimed at identifying and extending good practice. The school's tracking system, which indicates the gains that pupils have made in their learning, highlights that pupils make very good progress, usually meet the targets set and frequently surpass them. Since the last inspection, a significant development is the successful programme of target setting where both staff and pupils are clear about what each pupil has achieved and what they can do next to improve.
40. Another key feature of the school's success relates to the high quality of management. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together sharing their expertise and experiences in order to improve the quality of education. The deputy headteacher is particularly effective in supporting pupils with a variety of needs and sets a very good example through her excellent teaching. Members of the senior management team are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and have complementary skills and experiences, which together ensure a good level of knowledge and understanding about all areas of the school. There is a clear management structure in place and teachers are encouraged to take a full part in improving the school and their own performance. All have an understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development and ably assist the headteacher. Subject leaders are well informed and very effective in promoting their subjects and raising standards. A key feature in their success is the way that they undertake subject audits, identify strengths and areas for development, and suggest strategies for improvement. This ensures that there is constant review and development leading to improvement.
41. The delegation of roles and responsibilities is very good. Throughout the school, each adult is encouraged to become the 'manager of their own job', have responsibility for its development and accountability for its success. The willingness of staff to undertake a range of roles is not seen frequently in other schools. For example, the Midday Administrator has full responsibility for how the dining hall is arranged, how pupils are expected to behave and the development of her role and the role of other assistants in achieving good practice. The success of her work

has been recognised and shared with other schools. Similarly, the art and design subject leader and teaching assistant together have developed an excellent range of activities which they share with others.

42. Overall, the headteacher and governors have developed a culture of continuous improvement in which both staff and pupils try to do their best. They have successfully addressed the key issues arising from the last inspection and very good improvement has been made. Governors are very supportive of the staff and frequently acknowledge the high quality of teaching and support given. They have very good levels of knowledge and are well informed, which helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently and fulfil their roles very well. All statutory requirements are met apart from a few minor omissions in the information sent to parents. Governors, headteacher and staff continue to show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. The School Improvement Plan sets a clear agenda and is the result of a good consultation process. Governors and senior staff have very good control over the budget and have spent a considerable amount of time ensuring the best value for their spending. Longer-term projects are well budgeted for and additional grants used effectively to improve the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. The school manages and uses its resources very well. This has resulted in the school providing very good value for money.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Attendance**

43. The pupils' rate of attendance in the academic year 2001/2002 was 93.3 per cent. This is slightly below that at the time of the last inspection and also below the national average for last year. Staff have developed a range of strategies to encourage better attendance through working with the education welfare officer but there are still a few parents who fail to bring their children to school regularly. Currently, the school sends letters to parents if their child's attendance falls below 85 per cent. Developments in the monitoring of attendance, with a greater focus on those pupils with attendance of 90 per cent and below, is now needed. Parents at the meeting knew about the importance of good attendance and indicated that the school encouraged them to ensure that holidays were not taken during term time. However, some parents are not clear about the discretionary rights of the school when granting leave of absence. Senior managers have realised that a more formal process is now needed as more parents are taking their holidays or visiting relatives abroad during term time. Staff have developed a system where parents are encouraged to telephone the school or contact the school office through electronic mail when their child is absent and most parents do this. Unlike some other schools, staff do not contact the parents of a child on his or her first day of absence if they have not received information from home. Although staff work hard to ensure that pupils 'catch up' after an absence, there is evidence in school that the progress over time of a minority of pupils is affected by unsatisfactory attendance.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

44. Staff and governors should work together on the following area to improve the quality of provision further and raise standards.
- (1) Raise levels of attendance by:
- ensuring that all parents are fully aware of the positive impact of good attendance on standards of attainment and progress;
  - systematically analysing attendance data on a regular basis and taking appropriate action for those pupils with attendance rates of 90 per cent and below;
  - reviewing the school's attendance procedures and ensuring first day absence is formally identified;
  - informing parents of the discretionary rights of the school when granting leave of absence.
- (Paragraphs 32, 43)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	10	12	3	0	0	0	0
Percentage	40	48	12	0	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 four percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	38
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	39	29	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	38	38
	Girls	28	29	29
	Total	60	67	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	99 (100)	99 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	38	38
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	62	67	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (97)	99 (97)	99 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
203	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
5	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– Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	247

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002/2003
	£
Total income	686,960
Total expenditure	628,978
Expenditure per pupil	2,872
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,566
Balance carried forward to next year	57,983

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	220
Number of questionnaires returned	111

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	25	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	76	24	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	23	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	61	34	2	2	1
The teaching is good.	86	11	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	32	5	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	13	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	87	13	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	69	25	5	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	86	13	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	22	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	25	1	0	7

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very positive about the school and identified recent improvements such as provision for information and communication technology and increased learning resources. Comments, such as, "I feel very privileged that my three children have attended such an excellent school" and "An excellent school headed by an exceptional headteacher and a truly wonderful staff" reflect the majority of parents' views of the school and its staff.