

INSPECTION REPORT

ORLEANS INFANT SCHOOL

Twickenham

Richmond on Thames

Unique reference number: 102895

Headteacher: Dr John Loftus

Reporting inspector: Dr Brian Male
14906

Dates of inspection: 24-25 February 2003

Inspection number: 246249

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:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hartington Road Twickenham Middlesex
Postcode:	TW1 3EN
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Trevor Whittall
Date of previous inspection:	02/02/98

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This large community infant school takes children from three to seven years old, and is maintained by the Richmond on Thames local education authority. At the time of the inspection there were 232 full-time pupils in eight classes. A further 111 children attended the nursery and two of the three reception classes part time. Many children start school with standards of attainment well above those usually found. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is also well below the national average. There is a small proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority and for whom English is an additional language, but none at an early stage of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school providing a particularly stimulating environment for learning. There is a strong ethos within which children's attitudes to school are excellent, and standards of behaviour very good. There is a high standard of care for children within a very supportive community. There have been significant staff changes in the last year, but standards of attainment remain well above average. The quality of teaching is good, although the level of challenge could be still higher in some lessons. The headteacher has made a significant impact on the school in a relatively short time. The good progress that children make across the school is underpinned by: the quality of teaching and the learning environment, by the support children receive from parents, and from the children's own very positive attitudes to learning. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment are well above average, especially in mathematics and the reading, speaking and listening aspects of English.
- Standards of behaviour are very good and children have excellent attitudes to school.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school, with some very good and excellent teaching.
- The school provides a particularly stimulating environment for learning both indoors and out, and involves children in a wide range of learning opportunities.
- Parents are particularly supportive of the school, and this impacts very positively on learning.
- The headteacher's vigorous and enthusiastic leadership has made a significant impact on the school in a relatively short time.

What could be developed

- Standards of writing could be higher.
- The level of challenge for children could be higher in some lessons.

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

The school has already identified the need to raise standards of writing and to ensure that expectations are always sufficiently high.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998, and has made good progress since then. Standards of attainment continue to be generally well above average. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved, with behaviour now very good, and attitudes now excellent. The quality of teaching continues to be good with a similar proportion of very good teaching. All the key issues raised by the previous inspection have been addressed. The new

headteacher has introduced many improvements, especially in terms of the curriculum and the internal and external environment. The school has a good capacity to improve and is well placed to continue its trend of high standards.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A	A*	A	B
Writing	A*	A*	C	D
Mathematics	A*	A*	A	B

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

The school's scores in national tests for seven year olds in 2002 were well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. These scores were above the average of similar schools in reading and mathematics, and below that average in writing. These scores, particularly in writing, were not so high as in previous years when they had been in the top five per cent nationally. This is associated with a higher than usual proportion of children who had special educational needs.

Inspection evidence suggests that this year's standards are still well above average in reading and mathematics. Standards are higher than last year in writing, although not so high as they are in reading and mathematics. The overall standards represent good achievement for these pupils.

There is good progress through the Foundation Stage, with almost all children attaining the nationally expected Early Learning Goals long before they move into Year 1.

Most children enter the nursery with standards of attainment already well above those usually found, and they maintain these high standards across the school. There is good support for children with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language that enables them to make good progress. Very few children fail to attain the nationally expected levels by the time they are seven. There is a new programme for supporting children capable of very high attainment that is at too early a stage to evaluate.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have excellent attitudes to school. They take a great interest in their lessons, and are keen to learn. They are active and very confident learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are high across the school. Children have a good sense of ownership of the school. They understand the need for rules and respect the spirit of community.

Personal development and relationships	Children relate particularly well to each other. They are very aware of others, and are thoughtful and sensitive in their dealings with others. They are able to settle any disputes in sensible and positive ways.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good across the school, and is sometimes very good and excellent. This underpins the good progress that children make. Where teaching is best, there is very high challenge for children, and expectations of attainment are high. Children respond well to this challenge and the pace of learning is brisk. In these lessons, there is often a sense of excitement as children are stimulated by the ideas or the learning materials, and this helps promote good learning. A more precise focus in other lessons on the level of learning expected, would ensure that this level of challenge is consistently high.

Good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy ensures that children make good progress and that standards are high. The teaching of writing could ensure that children have more opportunities to develop their skills in extended pieces within the context of other subjects. In many lessons, children could be given more independence to choose their own materials and methods of learning, as required by the National Curriculum.

There is good support for children who have special educational needs, and for those for whom English is an additional language.

Teachers work very hard. They are thorough in their planning and preparation, and are concerned for their pupils as individuals. There is some good support for learning from teaching assistants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has worked hard to ensure that children are involved in a wide curriculum that gives emphasis to the whole range of expected learning experiences, and not just English and mathematics. The physical environment has recently been significantly improved and this has greatly enhanced the quality of learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good support for these pupils. Individual education plans set clear targets and pupils make good progress in terms of them. The requirements of the national 'Code of Practice' are met.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision in this area. The programme for personal, social and health education has been re-introduced and is working well, although expectations could sometimes be higher. The school has greatly increased its emphasis on multicultural education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a high standard of care for children within a very supportive community. The school is making extensive use of assessment information to track children's progress and set targets.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LEAD AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's vigorous and enthusiastic leadership has made a significant impact on the school in a relatively short time, and is very effective in his management. He has worked very hard indeed, has been very successful in instituting necessary changes particularly to the curriculum and the learning environment. The senior management team and main subject managers were new, and roles and responsibilities were still being developed at the time of the inspection. After a significant number of changes, the school will benefit from a period of consolidation.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good overview of the school and are well involved in its work. They play a full and active part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is particularly thorough in monitoring and evaluating its performance. This is one of many areas of recent improvement introduced by the headteacher. Data on progress and performance are analysed rigorously and targets are derived from the analysis.
The strategic use of resources	The school's budget is handled effectively and resources are allocated appropriately. There was a fairly large budget surplus from previous years, but much of this is already committed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress made by pupils and the standards attained. • The quality of teaching and support for pupils. • The standards of behaviour. • The way the school is open and approachable. • That children like going to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel they could be better informed about how their children are getting on.

In addition to the above points, some parents were naturally concerned whether the relatively high number of teachers who had left the school at the end of the previous

academic year would affect attainment and progress. The inspection agrees with all the positive comments made by parents, and finds that progress continues to be good and standards high despite the high number of staff changes. The quality of teaching is very similar to that found by the previous inspection. Although some parents feel they could be better informed about progress, the school already provides the usual range of information, and teachers are always willing to talk to parents about this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment are well above average, especially in mathematics and the reading, speaking and listening aspects of English.

1. The school's scores in national tests for seven year olds have been well above the national average, and often in the top five per cent of all schools over the last four years. In 2002, the school's scores were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. These scores were lower than in previous years because there was a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Inspection evidence indicates that standards continue to be well above average in reading and mathematics, and that they are higher than last year in writing, but they are not so high as in reading and mathematics.
2. Most children enter the nursery with standards of attainment well above those usually found. Good teaching, a rich learning environment, considerable support from parents and the children's own very positive attitudes to learning combine to promote good progress across the school. Good progress through the Foundation Stage ensures that most children attain the nationally expected Early Learning Goals for five year olds long before they enter Year 1.
3. Standards of reading are particularly high. Across the school, pupils read fluently and with interest and understanding. Younger children in the reception classes already have a good knowledge of letters and their sounds, and can read a good range of words. By the time they leave school, a significant proportion of pupils attains the higher level (Level 3) where they understand the main points of the stories they read, and are beginning to understand how authors create their effects. For example, in a very good Year 2 reading lesson, children were able to locate the words that had been used to describe character traits. They also meet the higher expectation in terms of retrieving information from books and knowing how to use devices such as the index.
4. Standards in mathematics are high in all aspects of the subject. Pupils have a good understanding of number from an early age, and build well on this as they move through the school. For example, some of the youngest children in the reception classes are already able to count confidently and can add and subtract; some are able to work out calculations such as ten more or less than a given number. By the end of Year 2, mathematical understanding is very well developed across the range of expectations. In one Year 2 lesson, the teacher was challenging the children to work out the pattern of a sequence of numbers by asking them a series of questions to which they gave the answers on their individual whiteboards. The children were not only able to work out the sequence of numbers, they were also able to work out the pattern of the teacher's series of questions, and wrote the answer to the fourth question before she had asked it! This showed particularly sophisticated understanding.

Standards of behaviour are very good and children have excellent attitudes to school.

5. Children have excellent attitudes to learning, and this is one of the factors underpinning their good progress and high standards. They are active and very confident learners who are keen to participate in their lessons and eager to find

things out. They become absorbed in their learning activities from a very early age, and sustain their concentration particularly well. For example, children in the nursery took great care when making clay masks, amending their work until they were satisfied with the outcome. Many were persistent in ensuring that they had included all the details of the faces, and one even included the spots left over from a recent attack of chicken-pox! Children in the reception classes continue this approach, and are prepared to give great time and effort to their work. This is continued through Key Stage 1, and by Year 2 pupils have developed very good work habits. For example, in a very good Year 1 art lesson, pupils were particularly industrious when creating pictures of changed materials; they were completely absorbed in their work and determined to get it just right. Very effective interventions from the teacher helped here, as she praised their efforts, but also helped them see ways in which their work could be improved.

6. Standards of behaviour are very good across the school, and children relate very well to one another. They have a good sense of ownership of the school, and a particularly well developed sense of community. They are thoughtful of others and polite in their approach. They co-operate very well from an early age. For example, a reception class child needing a particular coloured pencil noticed that someone else was using it. "Could I use that pencil when you have finished with it?" "Certainly," came the reply and, after a final flourish of colouring, the pencil was handed over with a smile.

The quality of teaching is good across the school.

7. The quality of teaching is good across the school, and is sometimes very good and excellent. This underpins the good progress that children make. Where teaching is best, there is very high challenge for children, and expectations of attainment are high. Children respond well to this challenge, and the pace of learning is brisk. For example, in an excellent reception class lesson, the teacher's particularly good organisation enabled her to ensure that all the different groups of children were well engaged on challenging tasks with clear learning objectives. The teacher herself was able to offer high quality teaching of reading to other groups where her very clear explanations and very high expectations ensured a very quick pace to learning.
8. In these lessons, there is often a sense of excitement as children are stimulated by the ideas or the learning materials, and this helps promote good learning. For example, in the Year 1 art lesson quoted above, the children were stimulated both by the opportunities and by the materials they used. Younger children are entranced by the use of the 'Crispin' puppet in lessons and this really helps them to focus their attention. For example, the use of Crispin to open his birthday presents changed an ordinary activity of recognising initial letter sounds into a special one. Some Year 2 English lessons were enhanced by pupils making jam sandwiches and 'pop-up' books when writing instructions, although it was a shame that not all pupils were actually able to eat the sandwiches at the end!
9. Where expectations are highest and children are put in practical situations where they can use skills and develop concepts, learning is best. For example, the teacher worked with nursery children in the 'shop', and her involvement enabled children to put price labels on the toys for sale, whilst other children counted out the correct number of pennies to make their purchases that were then recorded on the till. In some lessons, older children do not always have the access to the range of materials that would give the practical experiences necessary to underpin conceptual development. For example, one reception child was trying to work out a calculation

on her fingers, when access to practical materials would have enhanced the experience.

10. Teachers work very hard. They are thorough in their planning and preparation, and are concerned for their pupils as individuals. There is some good support for learning from teaching assistants.

The school provides a particularly stimulating environment for learning both indoors and out and involves children in a wide range of learning opportunities.

11. The internal and external environment of the school have been improved significantly in the last year, and this, together with widening the curriculum, has been one of the priorities for the new headteacher. He has been very successful in both ventures.
12. Significant changes have been made to the outside environment, with more playground space being created and individual outdoor areas for the reception classes. Extra play areas and lawned areas with plants have been created and the play equipment has been extended. The playground now provides a particularly attractive and stimulating range of recreational and learning activities. The new "Blue Gym" is an exceptional facility for physical education.
13. Staff have worked very hard to create a stimulating indoor environment to match the one outdoors. Work is displayed attractively and recognises children's achievements well. Other visual displays stimulate interest and promote learning. The libraries and computer suites have been well developed and provide good opportunities for learning. The role-play areas in Foundation Stage classrooms are generally well used, but could provide more opportunities for children's imagination to be developed.
14. The school's overall planning ensures that there is due attention paid to the whole curriculum and that children are given good access to the arts and humanities. A wide range of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum.

Parents are particularly supportive of the school, and this impacts very positively on learning.

15. Parents are very supportive indeed of the school. A large number of parents help in class, hearing children read, and working with groups in activities such as cooking and using computers. This makes a significant impact on children's learning. There is a very active 'Friends of Orleans Infants' group that raises a considerable amount of money for the school each year, and brings parents together. The way in which the group is organised by class greatly increases parental involvement and enhances its impact. Many playground improvements, the 'blue gym' and a great deal of equipment have been made possible by the work of the friends group, and their efforts are to be commended.
16. Parents also contribute significantly to learning in the support they give to their own children at home through homework and the wide range of learning and experiences that the children bring from home. All of this underpins the children's self-confidence and positive attitudes to learning.

The headteacher's vigorous and enthusiastic leadership has made a significant impact on the school in a relatively short time.

17. The headteacher's vigorous and enthusiastic leadership has made a significant impact on the school in a relatively short time. He has a clear view of what he wants to achieve, has worked very hard indeed to institute necessary changes and has been successful in doing so. The changes to the physical environment have already been mentioned. Other significant changes include the much more thorough approach to monitoring and evaluation and to planning. Many of these systems now need time to be consolidated and developed, especially as there have also been a significant number of staff changes in a fairly short time. The senior management team and main subject managers were new to the school, and roles and responsibilities were still being developed at the time of the inspection. However, the systems have now been created, and the school is well placed to maintain its high standards.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards of writing could be higher.

18. Standards of writing are above the national average, but are not as high as in reading or mathematics, and are not as high as they could be. Almost all pupils attain the expected level (Level 2) but many of these are at the lower stages of this level, and relatively few attain the higher level (Level 3).
19. The school has already identified the need to address this issue, and has made amendments to the timetable to allow more time for writing within the national literacy hour, by allocating time for reading outside the hour. The disadvantage of this is that it will reduce time available for other subjects, and the teaching of a wide curriculum is one of the school's aims. A slightly different approach would be to use other subjects more to create opportunities for children to practise the writing skills they are learning in English. At the moment, a great deal of the work in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education is done on worksheets which require simple answers to questions, or short answers in boxes. These do not give children the opportunities to develop and extend their writing into the forms expected at the higher levels of attainment. Similar use of 'frames' within English lessons also restricts children's writing. For example, the frame for writing instructions in the 'jam sandwich' lesson referred to above, contained only four lines when many children were capable of much more detail than that.
20. Pupils are often called upon to correct errors, but do not always have opportunities to amend and extend their work under the guidance of the teacher, or with other pupils; for instance, with direct feedback from one pupil trying to follow another's written instructions.

The level of challenge for children could be higher in some lessons.

21. In most lessons, there is good challenge for the whole range of pupils and expectations are high. These promote the good progress that pupils make and the high standards they attain. In some lessons the levels of attainment are not so high, and so there is less learning. For example, some Year 2 mathematics lessons required pupils to make a simple block graph illustrating the favourite fruit of

members of their group. This enabled pupils to work at the expected level (Level 2), but not at the higher level.

22. Planning needs to ensure that the learning objectives are linked more precisely to expected levels in terms of the National Curriculum so that the level of challenge in lessons is always sufficiently high. This is particularly important in a school where standards are well above average. Many lessons are based on the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's units of work. These were, of course, devised with children of average attainment in mind, and will need considerable amendment to be suitably challenging for Orleans pupils.
23. There is also a need for management to consider how plans are monitored in advance, and to ensure that responsibilities are clarified within the new senior management team between subject and year group leaders.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

In order to build on the high standards being attained, the school needs to:

- 1) Raise standards of writing by ensuring that:
 - children have more opportunities to practise their writing in extended pieces in the context of other subjects;
 - less use is made of writing frames and worksheet formats that restrict the amount and style of writing;
 - children have more opportunities to improve and extend writing they have done.
(paragraphs 18-20)
- 2) Ensure that the level of challenge for children is consistently high in lessons by:
 - relating the learning objectives of lessons more precisely to the levels of attainment expected from each age group;
 - clarifying the roles of subject managers in monitoring lesson plans in advance;
 - ensuring that pupils have sufficient independence in lessons to select methods and materials as required by the National Curriculum.
(paragraphs 21-23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
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	1	5	7	13	0	0	0
Percentage	4	20	27	50	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 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	316
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	16

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	59	50	109

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	55	49	57
	Girls	49	46	48
	Total	104	95	105
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (100)	87 (100)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	52	56	56
	Girls	48	45	48
	Total	100	101	104
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	93 (100)	95 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	97	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	90	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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5 : 1
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	171.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	803,849
Total expenditure	790,141
Expenditure per pupil	2461
Balance brought forward from previous year	111,594
Balance carried forward to next year	125,302

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	318
Number of questionnaires returned	136

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	45	6	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	35	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	46	7	1	7
The teaching is good.	48	42	7	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	46	18	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	36	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	39	4	2	3
The school works closely with parents.	46	43	8	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	36	52	7	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	47	13	2	13