

INSPECTION REPORT

LYNDON GREEN INFANT SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103229

Headteacher: Mrs Jackie McDowall

Reporting inspector: Elisabeth de Lancey
22272

Dates of inspection: 21 – 22 January 2003

Inspection number: 246274

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:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wychwood Crescent Sheldon Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Claire Findon
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lyndon Green Infant School has been a Beacon School for leadership and management, the curriculum and the provision for pupils with special educational needs since January 1999. It is a popular school for pupils between the ages of four and seven. It is situated in the Sheldon district of Birmingham about seven miles east of the city centre and is larger than the average size school. There are currently 276 pupils on roll, of whom 130 are girls and 146 are boys. Most of these pupils live in the surrounding area. The school is oversubscribed and there is a waiting list. The school also has a special speech and language unit for eight pupils. These pupils are integrated into the main school whenever possible. The pupils in this unit come from other areas of Birmingham in addition to the school's main catchment area. Whilst the whole range of abilities is represented in the school's intake, pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average. Almost all of the children have had pre-school experience. Parents are employed in a variety of manual, clerical and professional occupations, and there is a wide range of housing types in the locality. Approximately ten per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is around the national average. There are 34 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs which is also average. They have a variety of specific and moderate learning difficulties, behavioural problems and speech and communication needs. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is above the national average. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is small but the percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is believed not to be English is higher than in most schools (2.8%). No pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The school also maintains close links with Lyndon Green Junior School with which it shares a campus, and to which most pupils transfer at the age of seven, and Brays Special School, which is immediately opposite the main gate.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very successful school with many excellent features. It offers a rich and varied curriculum to all its pupils. It fosters their personal development very well and they become caring and responsible. They have excellent attitudes to their work, behave very well and attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is largely the result of the high quality teaching which they receive. The staff's strong commitment to continuous improvement and self-critical review has a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The very effective leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff, and the very good support from governors and parents ensure that the school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress and attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- The quality of teaching is very good, in some lessons it is excellent, and this is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is very well planned and the pupils respond very well to the rich and varied learning experiences they are offered.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the special unit and the main school is excellent.
- High quality leadership and management are provided by the headteacher, key staff and governing body.

What could be improved

- Inspectors agree with the priorities the school has identified in its development plan, in particular, the provision of outdoor facilities for children in the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998 and no major weaknesses were identified at that time. The few areas identified as needing enhancement have largely been addressed successfully. The school has introduced targets for writing and mathematics and is planning to extend this initiative to other areas. These help pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. There are some good examples of teachers' marking which show pupils what they have done well and what they could do better, but this is not consistent. Subject leaders are now more involved in monitoring the quality of work in all subjects, and they play a significant part in promoting pupils' personal and academic development and supporting school improvement. The school has responded well to recent initiatives. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been incorporated into the school's curriculum, which pays due regard to achieving high standards in English and mathematics, and challenges pupils in all subjects. The policy for pupils with special educational needs has been revised to reflect the new Code of Practice and the school takes account of the guidance for planning the curriculum of children in the Foundation Stage. Standards of attainment have improved at the end of Year 2, especially in mathematics, and a higher proportion of pupils now reach the higher than expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning has improved largely as a result of effective monitoring by the headteacher and key staff, and high quality training for all staff. Attendance has improved. Since the last inspection the school has been awarded Beacon status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school has made very good progress. Its capacity for further improvement is very good.

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	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	B	A	A

Key

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

Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to all schools nationally and schools who take pupils from similar backgrounds. These very good test results have been maintained over the past three years and standards have also risen during this time, keeping pace with the national upward trend. In particular there has been a significant rise in the proportion of pupils attaining levels higher than those expected of seven-year-olds. Standards in mathematics have risen significantly, with over one half of pupils attaining the higher than expected level. In comparison with all schools nationally and schools who take pupils from similar backgrounds, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) is well above average in all three subjects. Teachers' assessments in science indicate that their attainment is well above that of pupils in similar schools.

By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning, and many exceed them. The school is meeting the needs of different groups of pupils very well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, in both the main school and the special unit and those who are exceptionally able achieve very well. This is because they are provided with a broad and relevant curriculum. This enables pupils to undertake sustained work on carefully selected themes. These themes are very well planned and taught and enable pupils to apply their developing

skills across a range of subjects. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and tracked to ensure that each pupil has the opportunity to succeed. The high standards attained in the national tests are also seen in other areas. The school promotes the use and development of writing in other subjects and this makes a strong contribution to the high standards pupils attain in science, history and geography. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning. Their word processing skills are good and they use graphics programs imaginatively to reproduce work in the styles of famous artists, for example Miro. Displays reflect high quality work in art and design, and design and technology. The school's high expectations are evident in the challenging targets it sets and it is on course to meet them. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, and both boys and girls do better than boys and girls nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are happy to come to school and respond enthusiastically to all aspects of the school's work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils are friendly, polite and considerate. They behave very well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils thrive in the school's positive and supportive ethos and respond very well to the opportunities for personal responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. It is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Foundation Stage	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good and there are some examples of excellent teaching. This high quality teaching makes a significant contribution to the high standards the pupils attain. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Skilled teaching assistants work very well in partnership with teachers and make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, and throughout the school there are examples of high quality teaching in English, mathematics and art and design. The school has gained an award for the teaching of basic skills. They are taught well, and imaginatively reinforced through other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers' have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Their planning is very good, they are clear what they want pupils to learn, and different activities are planned to ensure that work is matched to pupils' varying needs. Teachers offer stimulating and imaginative activities which challenge the pupils to achieve high standards. They use questions well to help pupils to recall their previous work and to help them gain good knowledge of their own learning. Staff manage pupils very well and sustain excellent relationships with them. The school's emphasis on promoting pupils' independent learning successfully develops their self-esteem, especially those with special educational needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent; pupils benefit from sensitive support, and, as a result, make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Staff make effective use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There are well-planned, interesting learning opportunities which enable pupils to make very good progress in their work.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The school provides very high standards of support for these pupils and ensures that they are included in all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for all aspects of personal development is very good. It is evident in all areas of the school's work. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils' health, safety and welfare are given high priority. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are well established. Racial equality is promoted well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff provide strong leadership. They are a very effective team. All staff work together towards a common purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very Good. Governors are deeply committed and play an active part in providing a sense of direction for the school. They are well organised and well informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has a very wide range of effective arrangements for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of its provision.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The resources available to the school are very carefully deployed and educational priorities are appropriately funded. Spending decisions are made according to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • The school expects their children to work hard and they make good progress and attain high standards. • Their children are helped to become mature and responsible and their behaviour is good. • The school works closely with them, keeps them well informed and responds well to their suggestions and concerns. • The school is well led and managed. • Teaching and homework arrangements are very good and contribute well to pupils' learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like the school to provide more activities outside lessons.

The very positive comments made by parents are strongly supported by the inspection evidence. The

school provides a better range of activities outside lessons than those found in most infant schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make very good progress and attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.

1. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to all schools nationally and schools who take pupils from similar backgrounds. These very good test results have been maintained over the past three years and standards have also risen during this time, keeping pace with the national upward trend.
2. In particular, there has been a significant rise in the proportion of pupils attaining levels higher than those expected of seven-year-olds. A particular strength is that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in mathematics, over one half. In comparison with all schools nationally and schools who take pupils from similar backgrounds, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level is well above average in all three subjects.
3. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, and both boys and girls do better than boys and girls nationally.
4. Inspection evidence confirms that these high standards are being maintained and parents reflect this view. Pupils of all abilities are achieving very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very good quality support they are given. A key factor in the high standards attained in literacy is the school's decision to use some of its skilled teaching assistants to teach in small groups pupils who are not making sufficient progress in developing their reading and writing skills. This results in these pupils making very good gains in their learning and attaining results that match the nationally expected standards. In Year 2, more able pupils benefit enormously from being taught writing in a separate group. This teaching is very successful and is having a significant effect in ensuring that these pupils are further challenged in their learning and helped to reach their full potential.
5. In mathematics, the decision to teach pupils in groups according to their ability means that work is planned at the right level of difficulty and there is a good balance of challenge and support. More able pupils are set tasks that make a greater demand on them and appropriately extend their learning. This is a significant factor in such a high percentage of pupils attaining the higher level in the national tests. Pupils who have learning difficulties are enabled to make very good progress because of the very good help and encouragement they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Few pupils fail to meet the nationally expected standards.
6. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. They listen very attentively in lessons, develop a wide vocabulary and contribute actively to group and class discussions. They read accurately, fluently and with good expression. Their knowledge of letter sounds is good, largely because the school has a systematic approach to the teaching of letter sounds (phonics). They enjoy reading and explain their preferences for certain books and authors. Some prefer stories such as, 'The Iron Man', 'The Selfish Giant' and 'Gulliver's Travels' while others explain that they prefer non-fiction, especially books about space or the Victorians. Their written work is often linked to their reading of increasingly difficult texts such as 'Space Bat Angel' by Ted Hughes, and standards in writing are high. All pupils benefit from the many

opportunities given them to write for a range of purposes and for different audiences in their topic work. For example, they write well-constructed letters to their pen pals in America, vivid recounts of children's experiences in Victorian Britain, lively accounts of visits to places of interest such as The Black Country Museum, and imaginative stories based on their journeys to the moon. Their poems based on Victorians using the 'acrostic' style are very effective.

7. In mathematics, pupils cover a wide range of challenging work and standards in all aspects of mathematics are very good. Their mental arithmetic skills are good and pupils are eager to explain how they find their answers. There is a wide range of evidence indicating that many pupils are working at the higher than expected level. Underpinning the high standards in mathematics is the strong emphasis given to using and applying mathematics. In all year groups, pupils use simple mathematical investigations to solve problems relating to the current class theme. Many pupils are confident in working with numbers to a 1000 and beyond. They show a good understanding of addition and subtraction, multiplication and division and the equivalence of simple fractions. They develop a good knowledge of reflective symmetry, measure accurately to the nearest centimetre and read simple timetables to calculate the length of journeys. The skills learned in mathematics are used well in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, information and communication technology and history. In these lessons, for example, pupils use their data handling skills to present information, or to calculate quantities for recipes in design and technology.
8. Pupils make very good progress in developing their scientific skills and achieve standards which are above average by the end of Year 2. They learn to investigate, deduce, test answers and record in a scientific manner. They investigate their own predictions and tabulate their findings carefully. They have a good understanding of a fair test and the conditions necessary to achieve this. The development of pupils' experimental and investigational skills is a particularly strong feature of the curriculum.
9. Pupils have gained very good information and communication technology skills and use them effectively to support their learning in other subjects. There are notable strengths in pupils' work in history and art and design. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievement across a wide range of subjects. There are many varied examples of two- and three-dimensional art; for example, painting in the style of famous artists, observational drawings and clay masks.

The quality of teaching is very good, in some lessons it is excellent, and this is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.

10. The quality of teaching is very good. It has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. Teaching was assessed as excellent in three lessons, very good in seven lessons, and good in the remaining eight lessons. Examples of high quality teaching were observed in English and mathematics. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This high quality teaching makes a significant contribution to the very good progress pupils achieve and to the enthusiasm they have for learning.
11. Teaching assistants are an integral part of the school's effective teaching staff. They are involved at all levels of the teaching programme, from planning, through delivery, to assessment, recording and review. They undertake a complementary role to that of the teachers with whom they work. One of the strengths of such a close-knit staff is their shared approach to pupils and a joint belief in the importance of meeting their individual needs. There is consistency in teaching styles and effective exchanges of information.

As a result, pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those requiring additional support, make very good progress towards the appropriate targets set for them. A particular feature of this cohesive approach is the highly successful integration of all pupils, whatever their needs, to individual lessons and to the generality of school life and the rich curriculum it offers.

12. All staff are committed to promoting pupils' independence, and their teaching is directed at developing pupils' learning skills. The excellent relationships teachers and assistants have with their pupils are fundamental aspects of this. The gentle and sensitive manner through which the staff manage their pupils succeeds in helping them feel secure, and this is reflected in the excellent attitudes the pupils have to their work and the confidence with which they pursue set tasks. Their calm approach helps pupils with challenging behaviour settle to their work and supports them at time of need. These are strengths of the teaching which enhance the quality of education for all pupils by creating a climate which fosters their learning.
13. Staff are meticulous in their planning to ensure that there is a variety of activities to match the full range of pupils' abilities. They have clear and high expectations of what pupils can complete in given time and set work for them that is challenging and achievable. Lessons begin with staff explaining what they expect pupils to learn. They often write out these learning intentions and refer to them as the lesson progresses. Consequently, pupils know what is required of them and, because of this, they are highly motivated and eager to do their best to complete their work successfully. To reinforce this, staff encourage pupils to monitor their own work and look through it carefully before regarding it as completed. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher reminded a pupil to look at his current target and then read through his work; while in a Year 2 English lesson a pupil patiently reviewed her account against a checklist provided by her teacher at the start of the session.
14. Staff build their lesson introductions by posing searching questions that make pupils think very carefully about their responses to help them recall previous work and move into new learning areas. This helps pupils to recognise they are valued and that their contributions are welcome. As a result, pupils are not apprehensive about tackling new work or inhibited by over-concerns about making mistakes. A reception child, responding to her teacher's question, defined a traditional tale as one which is 'a very old story that your mummy and daddy tell you.' This active engagement by pupils helps them in consolidating their knowledge and refining their understanding. Teachers and assistants also help in this by asking pupils to explain how they have approached their work or arrived at a particular answer. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, a pupil explained, 'Eight and eight is a double, that's 16. Seven and eight is a near double, so that's 16 minus one, that's 15.'
15. Staff place stress upon basic skills, recognising their importance to pupils' independent learning. At every opportunity, staff ask pupils to read, calculate, spell and check what they are doing. They reinforce the importance of these skills through their own very good subject knowledge or written work. They are also consolidated through information and communication technology, which is used effectively to support pupils' learning. Monitoring of pupils' basic skills is an integral part of day-to-day assessment. Staff use the short session at the end of lessons very well to assess pupils' learning and to encourage pupils to think about how well they have done during the lesson and what they have learned. They give pupils ample time to respond to questions, to review their replies and correct or clarify their responses.

16. Staff use homework very effectively to support pupils' acquisition of knowledge, refine their understanding and develop their skills. By operating an established programme of appropriate activities they have been successful in engaging a large proportion of parents in supporting their own children's learning.
17. The school's policy on marking offers staff a unified approach in responding to pupils' work. It is appropriate and identifies the value of giving pupils written guidance on how they can improve their work. Although good examples of such marking were seen, inconsistencies remain.

The curriculum is very well planned and the pupils respond very well to the rich and varied learning experiences they are offered.

18. The school places a high priority on maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum which enables pupils to attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and gives them very good opportunities to produce work of a high quality in other subjects. The very good quality of the curriculum identified at the time of the last inspection has been sustained. It is rich, varied, and very well planned and a significant strength of the school. It fosters both pupils' academic achievement and their personal development. It is stimulating and relevant and provides a wide range of learning experiences which deepen and extend pupils' learning. It fully reflects the diverse community in which the pupils live and gives them a valuable insight into the wider world. A distinctive feature of the school is the high quality provision for topic work, in which subjects are grouped under the heading of a theme, such as 'Space' or 'The Victorians'. Links between subjects are found which enable pupils to make connections between different areas of learning and attain high standards in other subjects, and in writing in particular. Pupils are clearly inspired by this approach and talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their favourite topics.
19. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good and meets the needs of all children very well. It is based securely on the Early Learning Goals which children are expected to reach by the age of six in all areas of learning. It enables the children to make good progress in their development and ensures that they make a smooth transition into the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The daily programme of purposeful activities is well planned to develop children's enthusiasm for school and to promote their growing independence.
20. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum builds effectively on the extensive provision for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils are well prepared for transfer into the junior school. The school has successfully adapted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy whilst retaining the most effective components of its existing practice. The school's planned programme is designed to give pupils regular opportunities for reading and writing and has been carefully adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, many of whom attain standards higher than the national average.
21. The school also offers a very good range of additional learning opportunities which broaden pupils' understanding of the world. Among these are visits to Astorn Hall, Birmingham Art Gallery and the botanical gardens. Visitors to school also provide very good first-hand learning experiences for pupils and reflect the strong emphasis that the school places on the performing arts. For example, the school's music week when 'The Little Big Time Band' from the City of Birmingham's Symphony Orchestra perform at the school, book week when authors and poets visit the school, and occasionally when resident artists work with the pupils and demonstrate their skills. Parents value highly the excellent opportunities given to pupils to perform in assemblies, in Christmas

productions and end of year concerts. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are invited to join a dance club, which includes pupils from the Brays Special school and Lyndon Green Junior School. Musically gifted pupils receive regular viola and violin tuition. Older pupils benefit from swimming lessons in Brays Special School's pool. The daily lunchtime football club, organised by a lunchtime supervisor, is very popular and there are opportunities for pupils in Year 2 to join a science club in the summer term. A small number of pupils attend the before and after school club which is organised in partnership with the junior school. Parents applaud the wide variety of activities in which their children are involved.

22. Links with the local community provide even further learning opportunities for pupils, A good number of parents and some grandparents help regularly with school activities. Links with pre-school groups and with the adjoining junior school ensure that children entering and leaving the school enter confidently into the next phase of education.
23. Displays of pupils' art and design are of a high quality and reflect the way in which the school values the work of its pupils and celebrates their achievements. They show art techniques from a range of cultures and demonstrate pupils' skills in using a very good range of media to express their ideas. This includes the use of computers as artistic tools. Pupils respond very well to these opportunities to be creative, they are proud of their achievements and eager to point out and talk about their work.
24. The school promotes pupils' personal development very well. Its provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates the whole curriculum and continues to be a significant strength of the school. Assemblies are well planned and led and pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop reflective thinking. For example, they listen to stories with moral dilemmas and speak about their thoughts and feelings during circle time. There are many opportunities for pupils to be involved in the routines of the school and they love to help. The school makes good provision for pupils to consider others, and older pupils are encouraged to apply for jobs with greater responsibilities, such as preparing fruit, playground patrol, or helping at the 'friendship stops' where pupils can go if they feel lonely. They take their responsibilities seriously and talk knowledgeably about their duties. Staff provide good models of care and help pupils to develop an understanding of the differing needs of other groups in society and pupils show a strong desire to care for those with special needs and a keen desire to work for the benefit of others through charity events.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the special unit and the main school is excellent.

25. The excellent provision noted at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The special unit provides very high standards of support and care for a small number of pupils who have speech and communication difficulties. The unit is staffed by a full-time teacher-in-charge, a teaching assistant and a part-time speech therapist. It is well integrated into the mainstream life and work of the school. Pupils take part in all the daily routines such as assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes, when a midday supervisor gives additional assistance. The pupils follow the school's curriculum programme, which is effectively modified to meet their needs.
26. The staff are well qualified and they form a dedicated team who work effectively together to provide a loving, secure and stimulating environment which caters for the individual needs of each child. When they enter the unit most of the pupils find it difficult to relate to other pupils and adults and many exhibit emotional and behavioural problems. Great emphasis is placed on developing pupils' listening skills, following

instructions and improving their communication skills. Because of the outstanding care and patience shown by the adults and their high expectations of all pupils, they make very good progress. They learn to respond to instructions; for example, in a physical education lesson designed to improve their motor skills they watched the teacher carefully and followed her instructions promptly with very good attention to safety. They clearly enjoyed the lesson and were keen to show their developing skills, displaying good knowledge of their own learning. Their behaviour was excellent and all were eager to help put the apparatus away at the end of the session.

27. Pupils are beginning to share activities and communicate with others, but despite the very good encouragement given by the staff to speak at every opportunity, their language skills remain very limited.
28. The staff provide the pupils with very good role models and use praise and encouragement to motivate them and to raise their self-esteem. Their needs are continually assessed through informal observations, and detailed records of pupils' progress are kept. Portfolios of pupils' work show progression and are shared with parents, with whom the staff sustain very good relationships.
29. The integration of pupils from the unit into the main school is given a high priority and pupils join their peers for a wide range of lessons which include mathematics and science, art and design. This is very successful because all the staff are committed to including these pupils in all activities and they value the contribution that these pupils make to the school. They are very well supported in class by the unit's teaching assistant.
30. Pupils with special educational needs who attend the main school also receive excellent support. There are very good procedures for the early identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs that fully comply with the revised Code of Practice. Pupils' individual education plans closely reflect the provision identified in their statements; these clearly outline the action the school should take, and where appropriate the support other agencies should provide. Teachers, teaching assistants and parents regularly meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator to review the progress pupils are making towards meeting their targets.
31. To ensure that all pupils participate fully in the life of the school the special educational needs co-ordinator plans work together with the teachers and teaching assistants. They take care to plan work which is appropriate to the pupils and they are given very good support, particularly in English and mathematics, to enable them to achieve success. For example, they work individually or in small focused groups with the well-trained teaching assistants, and pupils who do not read frequently at home have a 'Buddy' in school who reads regularly with them and this helps them to make very good progress. The impact of this very effective team on pupils learning is evident in the very good progress they make and in the happy and confident way in which they join in all the activities.
32. The school has very good links with the local special school. Pupils integrate into the mainstream classes as appropriate each week and visit on special occasions.
33. The school values the contributions made by pupils with special educational needs and their inclusion benefits all pupils.

High quality leadership and management are provided by the headteacher, key staff and governing body.

34. Leadership and management are significant strengths of the school. The promotion of learning through a rich and varied curriculum is at the heart of the school's educational direction. This breadth of learning is the foundation for the school's drive to sustain high quality provision and maintain pupils' high achievement throughout their early years of education. The headteacher's clear-sighted leadership and her sensitive and perceptive management style have secured the school's success in each of these areas. This is well illustrated in the headteacher's direction of the school's Beacon activities. Here, she works in what she describes as 'mutual support groups' so that practice 'can be shared'. The headteacher reinforces this approach by engaging the local authority to undertake its monitoring and evaluation. By bringing together a staff of dedicated individuals who are committed to the raising of pupil attainment the headteacher has guided the school in shaping its shared purpose with the help of an innovative deputy and decisive senior management team.
35. Effective teamwork is the key feature of the school's organisational success. At all levels of the school, involvement, partnership, and mutual support are all in evidence. From the classroom collaboration of the teacher and teaching assistant, through year group practices, to the deliberations of the senior management team, everyone has a respected role to play including the office staff. As a result, the school has established reliable, supportive systems to which everyone is encouraged to contribute and through which everyone is kept fully informed. For example, teaching assistants attend weekly staff meetings and school training days, and the agendas for meetings of year groups and the senior management team are drawn up by all participants. Indeed, members of the latter team share the chairing and minuting on a rota basis.
36. Each partnership is sustained through the professional exchange and guidance inherent within it and also by the school's effective monitoring systems. Through many informal exchanges staff respond usefully to one another's queries and share ideas and resources. All key staff undertake monitoring, and the outcomes are used judiciously to identify relevant targets for individual pupils, groups and classes and for the school's practices. For example, the headteacher, deputy, and co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science observe teaching on a regular basis from which they compile formal records and give instant feedback to staff. In addition, appropriate key staff monitor teachers' planning, pupils' work and record keeping. This is to ensure that each element in this process informs the next so that individual pupils undertake work appropriate to their abilities and particular needs. These procedures are complemented by the professional support given to staff through the school's well-structured performance management system, and the headteacher's twice yearly discussions with each staff member. The targets identified through these processes complete those agreed through the monitoring systems undertaken by key staff.
37. Although the management of special educational needs is an integral part of all these systems there are specialist functions, too, which are carried out effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the special unit teacher. They both offer high quality management of special needs, the former to pupils within the main school, and the latter to pupils within the unit and, with the help of the unit's teaching assistant, to their appropriate, part-time integration within mainstream classes. As a result, individual needs are met, parents are active partners in their children's education, and these managers' close liaison with appropriate outside agencies secures high quality specialist provision for individuals when required.

38. The active and committed governors see themselves, rightly, as part of the whole school team. They recognise their special role in monitoring standards. Governors see effective strategic planning, their close examination of school policy and practice, and their effective participation in performance management as important elements in fulfilling that responsibility. Their regular visits to the school and classroom are a part of this duty. They bring a breadth of experience and expertise to the governing body and draw on them sensitively to support the school and to discharge their duties. For example, drawing on his health and safety background, one governor has helped the governing body compile a profile for risk management, and governors have included their own committees' development issues within the school's effective development plan. Individual governors have oversight of defined areas; for instance, special educational needs and literacy. Accepting their part in the school's accountability has informed their own accountability to parents. This has led to their introduction of a number of innovative practices. In addition to their annual report they issue a termly newsletter to keep parents informed about their work, the governors themselves, and to seek parent views about pending issues. For the latter, to encourage parental participation, governors provide appropriate reply slips. They are present at school occasions to meet parents and they have a 'suggestion box' in the school's entrance for parents' use. Governors' financial management is guided by the principles of best value and they are successful in enabling the school to reach its declared goals efficiently. For example, over time they have carefully built a premises fund to finance building development, including outdoor facilities for the youngest children. Their dedication to high quality provision and the raising of standards is summarised by the chair, 'We were welcome when we first came as parents. We want to be a part of that welcome for others. We want to put something into the school and something into the community.'

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

39. There is no aspect of the school which requires significant improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. The school is self-evaluative and committed to maintaining high standards. Its priorities are contained in the school development plan and give a clear agenda for further improvement. These include:
- the provision of a secure outside area for children in the Foundation Stage.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

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

8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	7	8	0	0	0	0
Percentage	17	39	44	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 more than four 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)	N/A	276
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	34

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	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	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	50	41	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	48	48	46
	Girls	40	41	39
	Total	88	89	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (90)	98 (96)	93 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	48	49	49
	Girls	41	41	41
	Total	89	90	90
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	99 (95)	99 (95)
	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	250	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	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	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	257

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	850,360
Total expenditure	871,675
Expenditure per pupil	3,136
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,703
Balance carried forward to next year	37,388

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	3
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Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
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	276
Number of questionnaires returned	174

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	23	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	30	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	39	5	1	2
The teaching is good.	74	23	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	37	13	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	59	35	6	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	20	0	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	29	0	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	26	17	2	18