

INSPECTION REPORT

RIVINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Helens, Merseyside

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104761

Headteacher: Miss Glenys Chalk

Reporting inspector: Ms Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 11th – 12th November 2002

Inspection number: 246403

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tennis Street North St Helens
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Telephone number:	(01744) 678493
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Birchall
Date of previous inspection:	12 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rivington Primary School is an average sized school with 229 pupils on roll, 115 boys and 114 girls, including 25 full-time equivalent pupils who attend the nursery part-time. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic heritage; one per cent is from Chinese and black Caribbean backgrounds. No pupils are at the very early stages of language acquisition. Socio-economic circumstances of pupils are average, as is their attainment on entry, although a minority of children has underdeveloped speaking and listening skills. Twenty per cent of pupils have special educational needs, broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need (2.7 per cent) is above the national average. The range of pupils' special educational needs is very varied from speech and language difficulties, hearing impairment, learning difficulties to emotional and behavioural problems. The school has Beacon status for successful strategies in raising academic standards, especially in literacy through the use of role-play.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Rivington Primary School is a very good school with several excellent features. It offers its pupils a very good quality of education and enables them to reach standards which are well above national averages in English, mathematics and science by age seven and eleven. All groups of pupils are very well cared for and are very well prepared for secondary school because of the very good teaching, leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff and very good learning opportunities. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. Excellent self-evaluation, involving all staff and governors, ensures that the school's capacity for further improvement is very good. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieve standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Children in the Foundation Stage of learning receive a very good start to their education and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good gains in learning.
- The quality of teaching is very good with excellent features and is a contributory factor to pupils' very good attitudes to learning.
- The learning opportunities offered are very good. The curriculum is very well planned and related to pupils' needs and interest levels. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good. All staff execute their duties very well.

What could be improved

- Pupils' average standards in information and communication technology (Key Stage 1) and standards in speaking throughout the school.
- Attendance is below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has made very good improvement since. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science and are now well above average. The quality of teaching has improved and there is no unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school. The many strengths previously identified have been maintained and all key issues have been addressed very

successfully. Use of assessment is now very good, as is the role of the co-ordinators. Governors now fulfil their duties well and provision for pupils' multicultural development is very good. The school's Beacon status has contributed to very effective links with other schools and the community. The school is very well placed to continue improving.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	B	A
Science	B	B	A	A

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

Children start school with broadly average attainment. Approximately one-third have difficulties in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They make very good gains in learning and exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 6 inspection findings show that standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and above average in information and communication technology and religious education. All groups of pupils, including those who are above average attainers and those with special educational needs, achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. A similar picture is found in Year 2, but standards in information and communication technology are average because pupils do not have access to the specialist facilities in the secondary school, as do the older pupils. Standards in speaking are average in both key stages and it is very likely, with the implementation of the school's new policy, standards will rise quickly. 2002 national test results and teachers' assessments show that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average in comparison with all schools and were in the top five per cent nationally in writing and mathematics in comparison with similar schools. In reading standards were well above average in comparison with similar schools. In science pupils attained well above average standards in comparison with all schools. By the end of Year 6, in comparison with all schools and similar schools, standards were well above average in English and science. In mathematics standards were above average in comparison with all schools nationally and were well above average in comparison with similar schools. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils in literacy and numeracy and consistently meets them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love learning and several examples of excellent attitudes to learning were seen, especially when role-play was used.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils act sensibly and use their initiative well. They are responsible, trustworthy and execute their duties very well. Relationships are very good throughout the school.

Attendance	Attendance is below the national average as several families take extended holidays during term time. The school is doing everything it can to continue to raise attendance and has very good procedures in place.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good with many examples of excellent practice. During the week of inspection 22 lessons were seen, seven of which were excellent, ten very good, four good and one lesson was satisfactory with good features. Excellent teaching was seen in history and French (Key Stage 2) and literacy, history and mathematics (Key Stage 1). The basic skills of English and mathematics are excellently taught and pupils apply their knowledge confidently in a suitable range of contexts. Strengths of teaching include very good planning, marking and management of pupils and use of role-play to bring learning alive, resulting in very effective challenges, both intellectually and creatively. Support staff contribute very well to pupils' learning and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is very good with some excellent examples seen. This gives children a very good start to learning. All pupils are fully included in lessons and activities are very well matched to meet the needs of different attainment groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned and offers a very good range of learning opportunities for young children to learn, using their senses. In Years 1 to Year 6 the curriculum is very broad and balanced and staff have made an excellent start to developing tailor-made schemes of work to meet the needs of pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Specific and measurable targets recorded in their individual education plans are generally used very effectively to guide their work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Whilst these pupils can access the curriculum fully, the school ensures that their heritage is reflected in many aspects of school life. The school has a very good multicultural policy which is consistently applied in all aspects of curriculum planning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good, as is the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has a very positive effect on their very positive attitudes to learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils, both pastorally and academically. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good. Staff know the pupils very well, enhancing both their personal and academic progress.

All staff work very hard to develop links with home which are very good. Parents are very supportive of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The newly appointed headteacher has made a very effective start to leading the school to even greater success. She is very well supported by an extremely able group of key staff and subject co-ordinators who are meticulous in all of their undertakings, especially in evaluating the academic standards that pupils attain.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides very good support and meets all statutory requirements. They have very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are taking the opportunity of relevant training.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school uses local and national comparative information to evaluate its performance and set targets; it has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Very good monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to help the school identify what works and what is not so effective.
The strategic use of resources	The very good school development planning enables money to be spent wisely on educational priorities. All resources are very well managed and best value principles are applied effectively when making major spending decisions.

Whilst staff make every possible attempt to develop pupils' research and information and communication technology skills, the school does not have an information and communication technology suite and the library is very small for larger groups of pupils to carry out research. The two school administrators carry out their duties very well; this enables staff to get on with the job of teaching.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school. Homework is well organised. Parents feel that they are true partners in their children's learning. The quality of information received is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minority of parents would like more information on their children's progress. Several parents would like more extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, but disagree with their views on pupils' progress; pupils' reports are very detailed and informative. Extra-curricular provision is excellent and the school has plans to provide more clubs for younger pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieve standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and are very well prepared for secondary school.

1. The 2002 national tests and teacher assessments show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in reading and were very high and in the top five per cent nationally in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments indicate that, in science, pupils attained standards that were well above average. By the age of 11, standards in English and science, in comparison with all schools, were well above average. In mathematics they were above average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. All groups of pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment and make very good progress.
2. Higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged and have plenty of opportunities to deepen their learning through well structured extension activities. Over time, pupils exceeded the national average for their age in both key stages and there was no difference in attainment by gender. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have average speaking skills and good listening skills. They can make their needs known and are keen to answer questions. They have very good reading skills. In Year 2 they recognise familiar words accurately, use a wide range of techniques to work out unknown words and talk confidently about their favourite books. Pupils understand the difference between story and fact books and read with expression. By the end of Year 6, pupils are avid readers, they can compare authors, styles and techniques used and are able to skim and scan accurately for information. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils write very confidently. A contributory factor is that plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to “live through” the experiences they are asked to write about, due to the many opportunities pupils have for role-play. For example, in Year 3, pupils experienced a range of emotions, including solitude and fear, by reliving what it must have been like in an air raid shelter during the war. They experienced sound effects of bombs dropping and sirens sounding and thought of their loved ones at war. This heightened their emotional understanding and prepared them very well for writing about their experiences. Role-play is used throughout the school and in Year 5 pupils explore their understanding of C S Lewis’ story ‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’ through the very well set up area of the magic wardrobe.
3. In Year 1 pupils deepen their understanding of the Victorians by enacting scenes from everyday life, such as shopping and washday. This enables them to identify reasons for events in stories, develop their language of emotions and use language of time to sequence events in stories. Furthermore, pupils can identify with characters and see events from a variety of perspectives. By the time that pupils leave school, they are confident writers who choose words with skill and precision. Pupils’ written work is beautifully presented. Pupils take pride in their work and their exercise books are a joy to look at. Organisational devices in presenting a process are well used, clear drafts and edits are undertaken and a range of neatly presented charts and diagrams are used. Pupils’ writing in both key stages is interesting and used for a wide variety of purposes. Accurate use is made of punctuation, such as paragraphs, commas and apostrophes.
4. Inspection findings show that, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have a very good understanding of the four rules of number. This is evident by the way Year 6 pupils discuss their calculations of angles, areas, perimeters and the range of strategies they use to solve problems. Year 2 pupils confidently use odd and even numbers and understand that multiplication is repeated addition. A particular strength throughout the school is the speed with which pupils carry out their mental calculations. Brisk, quick firing questions used by the class teacher keep pupils focused and many opportunities are given to pupils to verbalise their thinking.

5. In science in both key stages pupils are given very good opportunities to set up their own experiments and record their results in a variety of ways. Pupils in Year 6 predict which substances will dissolve in water and which will not. They understand that some mixtures cannot be separated after dissolving in liquid. The pupils know about micro-organisms and discuss the impact bacteria have on them. They clearly describe the parts of plants, know how they grow and explain the importance of the food chain. Pupils also confidently and accurately apply their information and communication technology skills to finding out and presenting information in a variety of ways. Highly effective procedures for the identification of pupils with particular learning needs have been established. The school makes very good use of support staff when necessary to complement the work of class teachers.
6. By the end of Year 6 pupils are confident and competent learners who are ready to begin the next stage of their education in secondary school. The school consistently meets its challenging targets for literacy and numeracy. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved considerably in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and pupils' progress is now very good, whereas previously it was judged to be satisfactory.

Children in the Foundation Stage of learning receive a very good start to their education and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

7. Most children start school with average attainment. However, a significant minority have underdeveloped communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills and find it difficult to learn. Throughout the Foundation Stage they make very good gains in learning and exceed the expectations of all the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1, because of the very good teaching, curriculum planning, use of assessment and very good provision for their personal, social and emotional development. The provision for the Foundation Stage of learning is very good. All staff are highly reflective practitioners who continuously reassess and alter their ways of working and planning to meet the emerging needs of their pupils. They provide very good opportunities for these young children to learn using their senses in order to develop their linguistic and mathematical competencies. They understand the needs of young children very well. Both the nursery and reception class have plenty of areas for pupils to develop their natural curiosity. In the nursery, children delight in touching a range of dry fruit and flowers and exploring their qualities. Use of stories, such as 'Handa's Surprise', enables children to become familiar with a range of different types of fruit, such as mangoes and passion fruit. Every opportunity is used to develop children's language and mathematical skills and the outside area is used very well to enable pupils to maximise learning opportunities arising from outdoor play. Children love singing number rhymes and counting. They develop their mathematical language well through a range of appropriately structured activities. Children use their bicycles, prams and the climbing frame expertly and the role-play in the greengrocer's enables children to practise the names of fruits that they have learnt about in story sessions. Children are expertly observed by teachers, their interests forming the starting point for their learning. Children are regularly assessed according to the criteria underpinning the stepping-stones and this information is shared with parents. Children achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment because of the very secure learning routines established, very good resources and very well structured learning activities provided. In both the nursery and the reception class, very good teaching of basic skills is apparent, especially in the teaching of letter sounds and number awareness. Children love singing number rhymes and nursery rhymes and the displays in the Foundation Stage reflect positive racial role models.
8. Since the previous inspection, provision in the Foundation Stage has improved and pupils now make very good gains in learning and exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good gains in learning.

9. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and, as a result, these pupils make very good gains in learning. Those with hearing impairment are very effectively supported by both a teacher of the deaf and a nursery nurse, and have full access to the curriculum. The

special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) keeps meticulously updated records and ensures that all pupils have regular reviews of the targets in their IEPs and that parents are appropriately informed of the steps taken by the school to provide for pupils' needs. Support staff are very effectively deployed and are fully aware of the range of pupils' learning requirements. Resources are appropriately allocated to the needs of the pupils and these pupils have full access to the curriculum. Individual education plans are specific to pupils' needs and accurately reflect the small steps that need to be taken to help them overcome their difficulties. Questions in lessons are specifically addressed to these pupils and every effort is made to ensure that they experience success in their learning. For example, when teachers see that pupils might be struggling in giving answers, they offer them a choice of two alternatives. This raises pupils' confidence levels and very good gains are made in learning. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs which are now judged as very good.

The quality of teaching is very good with excellent features and is a contributory factor to pupils' very good attitudes to learning.

10. During the week of inspection, 22 lessons were seen, seven of which were excellent, ten very good, four good and one lesson was satisfactory with good features. Overall teachers in both key stages have very good subject knowledge and explain clearly to their pupils what new knowledge and skills they will acquire. Pupils see the purpose of learning because teachers link the objectives with real life problems. For example, in a very good religious education lesson in Year 5, the deputy headteacher wanted pupils to understand the meaning of the Ten Commandments. Prior to presenting them to the class, he discussed the need for class rules, school rules and rules for playing football and then linked these to rules for living. In this lesson all groups of pupils made very good gains in learning because they clearly understood the need for rules in society. This also had a very positive effect on their emerging skills of citizenship.
11. Teachers throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, plan very well and, as a result, pupils know where to focus their efforts during the lesson. Teachers skilfully remind pupils of their individual learning targets, so that they can overcome any particular barriers to learning that they might have. Younger pupils are very aware that they need to check their writing for capital letters, full stops and general sense of what they have written. Older pupils check for correct spelling, appropriate paragraphing and interesting choices of words that will grip the reader's attention. In a good science lesson in Year 3, the teacher made the pupils think about what constitutes a fair test. Pupils made good gains in learning because they worked out the details for themselves, especially in relation to the importance of keeping a record of any changed variables. Pupils were able to analyse the strengths and weaknesses on their own and this helped them develop very positive attitudes to their work.
12. Teaching throughout the school challenges and inspires pupils, expecting the most of them, so as to maximise learning. Teachers encourage high standards of effort, accuracy, presentation, thinking and conduct, whilst at the same time maintaining very good relationships and a keen sense of humour. Teachers make learning fun; they use a full range of exciting teaching methods, such as role-play, group and individual work. The use of an interactive whiteboard keeps pupils highly motivated because they are never quite sure what will happen next. This productive tension has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes; they are genuinely keen, interested and want to find out more. Teachers plan work that is challenging, but well matched to pupils' needs because information from assessments is used very well to highlight possible stumbling blocks that might hinder success. Pupils are challenged and inspired to make imaginative contributions. For example in an excellent history lesson, taken by the headteacher in Year 4, pupils had to research, using computers, what evidence could be found about Boudicca and how this would differ if given from a viewpoint of friend or foe. Pupils were engrossed in their work and made very significant gains in learning because they were interested in the content of the lesson due to the expert way in which the headteacher presented the knowledge to them. Her consistent emphasis on "How do we really know?" kept the pupils alert and motivated.

13. Pupils are very successful in learning and thrive on the encouragement given to them by their teachers. In an excellent literacy lesson in Year 2, the class teacher consistently pushed the pupils into writing very effective letters of application for work as a postman in the school's post office. Pupils wrote their letters from the point of view of characters from well known stories. This challenged pupils creatively and helped them write formal letters in a fun manner. Pupils made very good gains in learning because the teacher gave excellent explanations, modelled what was expected of them and intervened appropriately in their learning. The teacher, together with the support assistant, evaluated pupils' ongoing work and gave them clear guidance on what they needed to do to improve.
14. Teachers use methods and organise their classrooms in such a way that the learning needs of all pupils are met. Higher attaining pupils are provided with extension activities and plenary sessions are used well to provide pointers for improvement, to check pupils' understanding and to clarify any teaching points which will need to be repeated. Very good quality worksheets are provided which are appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils. Teachers clearly love their craft. They work very hard to find methods that will grip their pupils' attention. The use of information and communication technology is particularly good in both key stages and, throughout the school, teachers teach basic skills of literacy and numeracy very well; this is a contributory factor to the very good gains that pupils make in their learning. Homework is set regularly to both consolidate and extend coverage of work undertaken in lessons and some very effective examples of research were seen, especially in the oldest classes. Teachers have excellent behaviour management skills. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own and each other's behaviour. Pupils know and adhere to classroom systems and they have very good attitudes to each other, to the teacher and to their work. They genuinely want to do their best and show commitment to their work and learning and behave very well. Relationships are very good throughout the school; pupils respect their teachers and genuinely want to please them. Teachers mark pupils' work very well, offering clear guidance for improvement and using praise realistically. Classrooms are conducive to achievement and learning, and very good quality displays of pupils' work enhance learning. Pupils are proud of their work and are keen to talk to visitors about their achievements. Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching has improved and there is no unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school.

The learning opportunities offered are very good. The curriculum is very well planned and related to pupils' needs and interests. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.

15. As well as placing strong emphasis on developing key skills, the school has been very successful in retaining a very broad and balanced curriculum which offers a very rich variety of learning opportunities. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned and offers the youngest children a full range of opportunities to learn using their senses. All the requirements of the National Curriculum and locally agreed syllabus are met and provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. During the week of inspection, inspectors had the opportunity to attend 11 clubs ranging from dancing, gymnastics, football, gardening to modern foreign languages, information and communication technology and choir. Very good links with the local secondary school are particularly beneficial to the older pupils whose information and communication technology and French skills are extended by the use of specialist teachers and facilities. As part of its Beacon status, the school has very good links with many schools who avail themselves of the school's pioneering work of raising standards through very effective teaching, self-evaluation and management of data and excellent provision of extra-curricular activities, which include opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of art, gardening, sewing, netball and writing.
16. Annual residential visits to Yorkshire for the oldest pupils contribute positively to pupils' social and personal development. Throughout the school, strong emphasis is placed upon the development of pupils' skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, which are very effectively implemented through the majority of subjects, especially in Key Stage 2. Much thought is given to ensuring that information and communication technology enhances pupils' learning in other subjects, for example, younger pupils confidently use a paint program to illustrate

their individual tasks, older pupils access information on the Internet and create design pages for their topics. Valuable opportunities are created through writing about first hand experiences through role-play. Subject-specific skills are effectively taught and due consideration has been given to the concepts, skills, attitudes and values underpinning Curriculum 2000. Throughout the school, careful planning ensures that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils and their interest levels, irrespective of race, gender or background. All pupils are included and involved in all aspects of every subject.

17. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school holds an act of collective worship each day and time for reflection is appropriately provided. The spiritual content is very clear and pupils are actively encouraged to share their feelings and beliefs. The school has a very strong moral code that permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and the school operates as a well ordered community where pupils know what is expected of them. Class rules are consistently referred to in lessons and pupils are consistently reminded to respect themselves and others. Provision for social development is very good. A very good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities supports their understanding of the need for rules and fair play. Adults set very good examples in their relationships with each other and the pupils. The school provides a very well structured programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and this has a very positive effect on pupils' self-esteem.
18. This is reflected in the very good attitudes pupils have towards staff and one another. Adults value each child and work effectively towards developing high self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and belongings from an early age. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative; they take part in committees to improve their school environment, such as the hard work undertaken by the Eco Council (aimed at encouraging pupils to become environmentally aware) and the bully busters who help resolve potential conflicts. This enables pupils to participate in a worthwhile range of educational activities which provide and extend their experience in a range of social settings. The school makes very good provision for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures. The Comenius project, which develops links with Hungary and Germany, enables pupils to develop a clear understanding of how European pupils carry out a school day. French is expertly taught to Year 6 and pupils throughout the school study a wide range of different religions and festivals. The school has very recently made links with a multicultural school in Manchester with a view to deepening pupils' understanding of multicultural perspectives. It has an excellent multicultural policy, which covers opportunities for developing pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures in Britain in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Pupils collect money for a wide range of charities and they are very understanding of those who are less fortunate than themselves. The very good learning opportunities contribute very positively to pupils' personal development. Pupils relish responsibility and they are keen to help their teachers.
19. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved its provision for extra-curricular activities and has maintained a well-balanced curriculum.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good. All staff execute their duties very well.

20. The headteacher is newly appointed to the school. Already she is showing promise and leads by example because she is a very effective classroom practitioner. She is very well supported by a very experienced and dedicated team of key staff who are extremely hard working, professional, knowledgeable and totally dedicated to the pupils, parents and community. School self-evaluation is carried out very effectively and very good assessment procedures have been introduced. This is very good improvement since the last inspection when assessments were judged to be cumbersome. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who has very good people management skills. The literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology, special educational needs and early years co-ordinators are all experts in their fields and, together with the other very hard working co-ordinators, ensure that the curriculum is

monitored and that assessment outcomes are appropriately used in planning the next steps of pupils' learning. Resources are organised effectively and used very well and the budget is effectively targeted to support the school improvement plan in continuing to raise standards. Performance management has been effectively put in place and all staff work as a united team.

21. The headteacher has created a very effective school development plan which clearly states the criteria for success, detailing responsibilities and time scales; it is appropriately costed. This plan is based on very good communication with, and the contributions of, all concerned. The headteacher leads and manages the process of analysing the school's performance management data and is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and the school's link inspector. Staff and governors work very closely together and have a clear understanding of the school's many strengths and any areas for future development. Day-to-day management of the school and finances and administration is very good. The school accurately reflects its stated aims and values and statutory requirements are met. Staff are managed very well through clear job descriptions and a detailed staff handbook. Very good planning means that the management duties of co-ordinators are allocated appropriate allowances of time. Governors make a very good contribution to the management of the school. All committees have a good understanding of the budget and principles of best value are appropriately followed. The school's strategic planning is very good. Finance is clearly directed toward monitoring the needs of the curriculum and staff manage subject budgets well. Standards are very high, the quality of education provided is very good and pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Overall the school provides very good value for money and this is an improvement on the previous inspection when the school provided good value for money.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' average standards in information and communication technology (Key Stage 1) and standards in speaking throughout the school.

22. Staff in Key Stage 1 use computers effectively in the classrooms to support learning, but pupils' skills are only average, although their achievements overall are good in relation to their prior attainment. However, the school does not have an information and communication technology suite and, whilst the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 have access to the ICT suite at the local secondary school, this is not possible for the youngest children. The youngest pupils would benefit from having an ICT suite in school to improve their average skills further. Pupils in Key Stage 1 love using computers. They can word process, change font size, use a programmable toy and a paint program. They can save and print their work, but the skills that many pupils bring from home cannot always be built upon due to the lack of hardware.
23. Standards in speaking throughout the school are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, but many pupils have difficulty in explaining their thinking and not all speak sufficiently clearly in front of larger audiences. This was particularly the case with some pupils during assemblies. Whilst a minority of pupils can speak clearly, this is not consistent throughout the school. The majority of pupils struggle with persuasive language, especially in finding a range of descriptive vocabulary for characters', motives and feelings. The school has recognised this as an area for development and has produced a very good speaking and listening policy, which has not yet been fully implemented; it is very likely that standards will rise as a result of its implementation.

Attendance is below the national average.

24. Attendance is below the national average and has declined since the last academic year. Much of the authorised absence is attributable to family holidays taken during term time and, once pupils have returned, every opportunity to help pupils catch up is taken by staff setting homework in the areas of learning that have been missed. However, irregular attendance is having a detrimental effect on the continuity of a minority of pupils' learning. Pupils are given the attendance trophy each week for best class attendance and, at the end of the year, attendance prizes are given out to individual pupils with good attendance records. The school is doing everything it can to promote

good attendance, but needs support from parents to ensure that the rate of authorised absence is brought down.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

25. In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (i) as and when funds allow, seek ways to develop an ICT suite in order to raise standards in ICT, especially in Key Stage 1;

(Paragraph: 22)

- (ii) continue to raise standards in speaking throughout the school by:

- implementing the very good policy for speaking and listening and monitoring its effectiveness;
- ensuring that pupils are appropriately coached to speak up in front of large audiences;

(Paragraph: 23)

- (iii) raise attendance levels by:

- working more closely with parents who take their children out of school for extended holidays.

(Paragraph: 24)

All these issues have already been identified in the school's current, very good school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
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	7	10	4	1	0	0	0
Percentage	32	45	18	5	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	30

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	97 (100)	97 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	97 (96)	97 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	17	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	14
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	30	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (90)	87 (90)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	27	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (93)	87 (90)	84 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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	126	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	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	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	74	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.8
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	187.6

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53.6
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.3
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
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	£
Total income	558,385
Total expenditure	513,390
Expenditure per pupil	2,252
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,044
Balance carried forward to next year	92,039

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

255

Number of questionnaires returned

66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	27	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	35	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	42	9	0	5
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	33	11	5	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	15	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	12	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	56	41	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	36	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	29	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	33	11	3	9