

INSPECTION REPORT

MILTON ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106234

Headteacher: Mr T Mullin

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 20 – 21 January 2003

Inspection number: 246579

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 category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mill Lane Mossley Ashton-under-Lyne
Postcode:	OL5 0BN
Telephone number:	01457 832572
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr G Jones
Date of previous inspection:	2 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Milton St John's Church of England Primary School caters for pupils aged three to eleven. It is located in the small town of Mossley, about ten miles east of Manchester. Former cotton mills stand along the River Tame and there is a variety of housing, including owner-occupied and rented homes. Most pupils live locally, and many parents now commute to Manchester, Oldham and other surrounding towns. There are 216 pupils on roll, 60 of whom are in the Foundation Stage. Of these, 30 attend the Nursery part-time. There is a broad range of attainment when children enter the Nursery but overall, attainment is average. Nearly nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, and this is below the national average. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority groups and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Just over seven per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical needs. This is below the national average and includes the designated provision for two pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need. The school benefits from participation in a number of local initiatives, including 'Healthy Living'.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school where pupils achieve well and are set to reach above average standards in English and well above average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes and behave very well. The quality of teaching is good, and teachers provide a stimulating range of experiences that promote good levels of learning so that pupils make good progress throughout the school. Parents value the school's work and support their children's learning very well. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the governors manage the school very well to get the very best for the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils in Year 6 attain high standards. They achieve well because the school community believes in them and what they can do.
- Teachers work very well as a team to plan and teach lessons that help pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' very good behaviour is the result of a concerted effort by the staff, governors and parents.
- The headteacher provides very good educational direction for the school and the governors carry out their duties very effectively. The school's work is underpinned by commonly held aims that lead to pupils' good achievement.

What could be improved

- Pupils' handwriting in Years 3 to 6 is not as good as it should be. They do not consistently use joined handwriting, even though it has been taught.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The issues raised for improvement at the last inspection in March 1998 have been dealt with very effectively. Standards in ICT were criticised but are now high by the end of Year 6, due to the improved equipment, effective professional training of staff, very good technical support and the very good leadership of the subject co-ordinator. The curriculum is now well organised and ICT is used regularly and effectively in other subjects. Annual reports to parents have been improved and parents say that they are well pleased with the information in the reports. In addition, standards in geography, which were unsatisfactory, are now in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils are set to achieve higher standards than in 1998 in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6. Teaching of good quality has been maintained since the last inspection. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve.

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	C	B	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	C	B	A	A

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

As indicated in the above table, the school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 was very good overall in 2002 in comparison with all schools nationally and compared with similar schools. Current standards reflect these results, and pupils are on course to do well by the end of the year. Targets set with the local education authority were exceeded last year and challenging targets have been set for 2003.

In the 2002 tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance was well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Current standards in Year 2 are not as high as they were last year, but pupils are achieving well and are on course to exceed national expectations for the age group.

In ICT, pupils throughout the school achieve well, and standards are on course to be above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and well above national expectations by the end of Year 6.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress and achieve the nationally set goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils' positive attitudes help them to achieve well and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This has a beneficial effect on the rate at which pupils learn, because teachers are able to get on with lessons without interruption.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils become increasingly responsible and relate very well to their peers and to adults.
Attendance	Very good, and well above the national average. This supports pupils' good progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The good quality of teaching is a strength of the school. There were examples of very good teaching at all of the above three stages of education. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teachers' planning and preparation is very good throughout the school. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and teachers promote the use of numeracy and most aspects of literacy effectively in other subjects. Teachers' secure subject knowledge helps them to set appropriate tasks for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. As a result, pupils achieve well and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Teachers make effective use of resources, including computers, and organise the time well in lessons. They relate very well to the pupils so that there is a happy working atmosphere in the classrooms. Occasionally, when lessons, though satisfactory, are less successful, pupils sit for too long or the teacher does not use interesting resources to stimulate pupils' interest. Throughout the school, teachers work well as a team with the teaching assistants, who play a significant role in the teaching programme as they work with groups of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The National Curriculum is enhanced through extra-curricular activities, visits, visitors and residential trips.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers follow pupils' Individual Education Plans carefully. There is good support for pupils' individual needs and the results of regular assessments are shared with parents.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The Christian background of the school pervades all its work. All pupils are valued and service to others is promoted as pupils learn to contribute to society. Clear, firm and fair rules help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' cultural development is promoted and supported effectively. Pupils are prepared effectively for life in contemporary British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are clear guidelines for all staff in matters of child protection and the governors deal with health and safety issues promptly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good educational direction and the deputy headteacher and senior staff play a significant role in the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governors work very well through a committee system. Governors use their wide-ranging expertise and experience generously in the service of the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The governors and staff are actively involved in improvement planning and evaluation. The views of parents and pupils are considered. This gives the governors a picture of the strengths of the school and a clear view of where improvements need to be made.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of its resources, including specific funds for pupils who have special educational needs. Very good financial planning supports the school's priorities and is informed by up-to-date financial statements. 'Best value' is considered well as governors judge how the pupils benefit, in terms of attainment and welfare, from the school's spending.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good and the children make good progress. • The children behave well and the school expects them to work hard and do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. 	<p>A few parents think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home.

Only 34 questionnaires were returned of the 200 sent out. The inspectors agree wholeheartedly with the positive views of parents. The amount of homework set is reasonable, and the evidence of large numbers of parents coming into school each day indicates that the staff are approachable. The school regularly sends out its own questionnaires, and there is a good response to these.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils in Year 6 attain high standards. They achieve well because the school community believes in them and what they can do.

- 1 In the 2002 tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's results in English, mathematics and science were well above average in comparison with similar schools nationally. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to achieve standards that are above national expectations in English and well above national expectations in mathematics and science by the end of the school year, and standards in ICT are also on course to be well above national expectations. A number of factors lead to the pupils' good achievement, not least, their very good attitudes and behaviour. The good quality of teaching is a crucial factor, and the careful organisation of the curriculum ensures that all pupils receive their entitlement at levels appropriate to their needs. These factors alone, however, do not fully account for the school's success in achieving high standards. It is the driving force of the whole community and the way it values its children of all abilities which give them the confidence to believe in themselves and what they can do.
- 2 Pupils make good progress in numeracy and almost all aspects of literacy throughout the school. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children gain confidence in expressing their ideas and exploring valuable skills in speaking and listening as teachers help them to extend and enrich their vocabulary. In mathematics, children gradually develop ideas of sequence, pattern and order as they sort, match and count objects. The teachers use everyday situations to bring relevance to the children's learning; for example, when children take on roles as they play in the class 'café'. Parents feel that the Nursery gives their children a good start to their education, and they are right.
- 3 By the end of Year 2, most pupils read very well for their age and use their reading effectively to enhance learning in other subjects. Parents say that the teaching of reading is particularly good, and the involvement of parents in hearing their children read at home helps to keep up high standards. Older pupils help, too, by listening to younger ones read. The cumulative effect of good teaching and valuable support from the school community ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 get off to a good start. All pupils make effective use of their knowledge of letter sounds to decipher words, and older pupils confidently break words into syllables. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 read very well indeed, and lower-attaining pupils, though their reading is less fluent, have a sound understanding of how to decipher words, use dictionaries and consider how the plot might help them to guess at meanings.
- 4 The school has placed great emphasis on improving the content of pupils' written work, and pupils write well for a wide range of purposes. Teachers use an interesting range of strategies in order to introduce new ideas and reinforce pupils' learning. Pupils do well because teachers link one subject with another. For example, pupils in Year 3 honed their writing skills as they wrote Viking diaries in history – 'On Tuesday, I went hunting deer. I went catching fish. When I got back, I was carving bowls for my family.' As they learned about persuasive language in a very good literacy lesson in Year 6, pupils expressed their views on drinking and driving very clearly and used persuasive words to deter people from doing so. The content of pupils' written work is often good, and higher-attaining pupils write very well indeed. Pupils in Year 6 have a sure grasp of the idea of similes and metaphors. The teacher reinforced pupils' understanding by getting them to write imaginative and sensitive poetry – 'The monkey's black fur is like a great black rug' and, 'I am war / Laughing at wound and sore.' Pupils' handwriting, however, does not always match up with the quality of the content of the work.
- 5 In mathematics, a major feature in lessons is the pupils' quick response to questions. Secure routines in mental arithmetic sessions ensure that there is a brisk pace and pupils recognise that they are expected to come up with the answers. As a result, they learn their multiplication tables

and acquire a good range of strategies to help them to solve problems. In Year 4, pupils enthusiastically broke numbers into tens and units in order to solve problems such as 83 minus 45. They knew that instead of $80+3$ they could use $70+13$ to help with the subtraction, and did so confidently. Pupils also solve problems in their own ways and then share their solutions with the rest of the class. This helps them to make sense of mathematics and develop a deeper understanding of the subject. In Year 2, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they learn systematically and make good progress. They already have a sound 'feel' for mathematics. They recognise the relationship between addition and subtraction, use doubling and halving to find quick answers to problems and calculate periods of time to the quarter hour. Pupils in Year 6 work confidently with problems that include the understanding of mathematical terms such as 'mode', 'median', 'ratio', 'proportion' and 'percentage'. They have a secure understanding of the measurement of angles in degrees and, with their increasing skills in ICT, use a data-handling package to present a range of interesting graphs.

- 6 In science, a high proportion of current work in Year 6 is already of a standard well above that expected for this age group. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to be young scientists, and their work increasingly demonstrates interest and good scientific method. Pupils in Year 1 already talk about tests being fair. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to investigate and find things out for themselves. As a result of some good research from books, CD ROMs and the Internet to support work on habitats, pupils in Year 6 produced some interesting facts, such as the way the eyes and noses of otters have adapted to help them to search for prey under the water. The teachers have high expectations of pupils and there is a strong emphasis on specific subject vocabulary and systematic scientific investigation. Skills of observation and measurement develop very well so that pupils gain increasing awareness of fair testing. In Year 5, pupils were totally involved in a lesson in which they explored the volume of air trapped in different types of granular material such as topsoil, peat and sand.
- 7 There have been significant improvements in standards in ICT since the last inspection, and pupils' attainment is on course to be above national expectations by the end of Year 2, and well above national expectations by the end of Year 6. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils logged on to the computers and worked in pairs to practise making quarter and half turns as one pupil gave instructions and the other moved the cursor across the screen to draw shapes. The teacher's high expectations and confidence in the pupils resulted in good levels of work. In Year 6, pupils prepare presentations that are shown to the whole school; for example, when they researched the lives of famous people such as Marilyn Monroe and included text, images and music. Pupils use ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects; for instance, when they used databases to extend their study of classification in science. The skilled technician makes a significant contribution to the very good teaching and learning of ICT. The computers are always prepared meticulously for lessons, with appropriate programs and the network set up, and pupils' snags are soon sorted out.

Teachers work very well as a team to plan and teach lessons that help pupils to make good progress and achieve well.

- 8 Pupils learn at a good rate because the teachers ensure that each day the children know more, understand more and can do more than the day before. Teachers have high but realistic expectations, plan tasks that engage with pupils' developing abilities and make very clear what each lesson is about. In creating challenge, teachers suggest that they believe pupils are capable of responding to it. In a lesson in Year 5, the teacher continually offered opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. She asked questions such as, 'Does anyone know what an imperative verb is?' Teachers build effectively on the understanding that the children bring to new ideas, and encourage pupils to use their imagination and power of problem solving. In a very good mathematics lesson for the higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher got pupils to explain their various methods of calculation - they had solved problems such as 60 per cent of 420. He then moved on to new material and gave a succinct explanation of how a remainder could be expressed as a fraction. As a result, pupils made very good progress in the lesson. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4, pupils with special educational needs made good progress in their

reading when they were paired with higher-attaining pupils so that they could follow the text at a good pace.

- 9 Pupils benefit from the way teachers plan together regularly and formally. Because of strong leadership by co-ordinators who have a confident command of their subjects, teachers produce well-structured lessons that result in the effective step-by-step increase in pupils' knowledge. Teachers have ambitious expectations for pupils. Corporate planning, recorded on computers, ensures that pupils learn systematically and make consistently good progress as they move from class to class. Because of the very good relationships in the school, there is also frequent informal discussion of planning between colleagues, both teaching and non-teaching. Within the whole-school planning, teachers show individuality, flair and humour in the classroom. In the Nursery, the teacher's enthusiasm brought life and excitement to a music lesson when she used a scarf, imagining it to be a cloud and creating a breeze that blew on the children's faces. The children were enthralled. In the Reception class, the teacher organises exciting displays of pupils' work, especially in art and design, to reinforce the children's learning and raise their self-esteem.
- 10 Pupils contribute to each other's learning. They willingly show their classmates what they have learnt; for example, when a pupil in Year 1 demonstrated how he had found out about the north and south poles of a bar magnet. Teachers use effective questioning to assess pupils' knowledge and challenge their thinking. The marking of work helps pupils to see how they can improve their efforts. The pupils' books are marked regularly, and helpful comments enable pupils to understand ideas more clearly. The teachers use information gained from marking to help with planning the next stage of learning for the pupils. All pupils are encouraged to do their best in meeting the requirements of tasks. However, teachers do not insist that pupils consistently join their writing once they have learned to do so, and this results in work that is not always well presented.
- 11 Teachers expect pupils to knuckle down and get on with their work. Pupils take independent control over the tasks they are completing, and the teachers give them reinforcement and beneficial feedback. For example, in a very good literacy lesson in Year 3, the teacher ensured that the purpose of the lesson was well understood, and as she worked with individual pupils, she reinforced the message, 'You're getting really good at looking for information in texts and at finding adjectives and nouns.' As a result, the pupils were sure about the task and did well in the lesson. Teachers are not indiscriminate with their praise, so that pupils value their comments. Pupils are keen to show their work and point to positive remarks from the teachers.
- 12 Good management of lessons ensures that pupils have time to acquire knowledge and skills, explore and practise new ideas and share their work with their classmates. Lessons are well prepared, with resources and materials available so that pupils can get on with their work promptly. Because of this, teachers spend all of the time in lessons communicating with the pupils, as a whole class, in groups or as individuals. This constant vigilance by teachers is a major factor in the school's success. Pupils are given opportunities to work independently, but they are not allowed to drift away from the task in hand. There is not a lot of walking about by pupils during lessons – pupils have what they need and are able to concentrate and be productive. The noise level is low and the time teachers spend on establishing discipline is minimal in nearly all lessons. Teachers move from group to group and to individuals, encouraging pupils to work hard, asking probing questions, eliciting pupils' understanding and extending their learning. Occasionally, teaching, though satisfactory, is less successful when there is little visual stimulus or pupils spend too much time sitting on the carpet. However, pupils make sound progress in these lessons because there are clear learning objectives that are met.
- 13 Teachers deploy other adults effectively in the classroom so that pupils are appropriately supported and challenged. Teaching assistants play a significant role in supporting the teaching of individuals and groups of pupils. Because they are well trained, involved in the planning and know the pupils well, teaching assistants ensure that pupils concentrate well and complete tasks. This support for pupils is a significant factor in ensuring the success of lessons. Pupils from groups of lower-attaining pupils are able to contribute confidently to class discussions because

they have a clear understanding of new work. Teachers are sensitive to the learning needs of individual children and use regular assessments, including the marking of work, to ensure that every pupil progresses well. For example, in Year 2, the examination of pupils' work shows that the teacher's provision of well-chosen tasks, including well-chosen resources and interesting practical activities to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, has resulted in good progress in mathematics.

Pupils' very good behaviour is the result of a concerted effort by the staff, governors and parents.

- 14 The very good behaviour of the pupils does not happen by accident. It is the result of a number of sensible measures implemented by the school. First, the headteacher ensures that parents know what the school expects of their children. He listens to parents and welcomes their views. They want their children to behave well. All pupils are valued and, at the same time, the school has high expectations of them. High standards of good behaviour are expected and fostered in lessons so that the teachers are able to focus on teaching and learning. The governors have ensured that staff are trained properly to manage pupils in the varied range of circumstances that occur during the school day. Pupils with behavioural difficulties concentrate for longer because teachers carefully follow their clear Individual Education Plans. Lunchtime staff are trained to manage and engage with pupils at lunchtime to make this period of the day enjoyable.
- 15 The warm, friendly atmosphere, which pervades the corridors as parents chat with the staff and pupils before school, continues throughout the day. When parents have left, the staff maintain a sense of community and purpose in which the main focus is on learning and productivity. During the inspection, there were very few occasions when teachers had to reprimand pupils, and these were for minor offences. Relationships are very good, and pupils accept justified criticism because the idea of justice and fairness is promoted from the earliest days in the Nursery. Christian values reinforce the teaching of good behaviour in the school. There are firm and fair general school rules, and each class also sets up its own rules at the beginning of the school year. Early training in citizenship takes place as pupils are encouraged to put ideas forward to the School Council, which is composed of pupils from Years 5 and 6. Council members take into account the views of pupils in the younger classes and feed back to them after the council meetings. The sense of community is fostered here, as pupils begin to take on responsibility for creating a harmonious society, where everyone has a role to play. Older pupils are thoughtful for younger ones; for example, when they care for them in the playground or hear them read.
- 16 Daily assemblies are used as a forum for exploring how pupils respond in everyday situations. The school's involvement in the local 'Healthy Living' initiative has enabled the school to extend its work on pupils' personal development. 'Circle time', when pupils sit in a circle and discuss social issues, provides opportunities for discussion of problems such as bullying, loneliness or worry about work. Pupils value this time and say that it often allays their fears and makes them realise that other people worry about similar things to themselves. When pupils behave well, try their best and are helpful, they are rewarded in front of the whole school.
- 17 At the pre-inspection meeting for parents, they expressed the view that behaviour is generally very good, and those who 'get out of line' are soon reminded of the school's expectations. The staff are very good role models, and the very good behaviour of most pupils acts as an example to any who stray. The school has a policy of 'catching pupils when they're good', recognising good behaviour and providing incentives through praise, stickers and certificates. The emphasis on good behaviour, rather than preoccupation with wrongdoing, adds to the general positive atmosphere in the school. Parents support the school's home-school agreement and believe that teachers do a good job in managing the pupils and keeping them on track with their learning.

The headteacher provides very good educational direction for the school and the governors carry out their duties very effectively. The school's work is underpinned by commonly held aims that lead to pupils' good achievement.

- 18 The very effective leadership of the headteacher provides the school with strong curricular leadership and clear goals for improvement. He understands the needs of the school and is actively involved in its work, without exerting total control over the rest of the staff. He works closely with the deputy headteacher on policy decisions and everyday management of the school. Together, they delegate duties to all staff with the prime purpose of providing high quality teaching and support for all pupils. The governing body, through regular consultation, involves the whole school community on issues affecting school policy. For example, questionnaires are sent out each year to canvass the opinions of staff and parents on aspects of school life. The governors act on this information and, as a result, this is a school with clearly understood and common aims and very good levels of parental and community involvement and support. A set of values and beliefs, shared by the parents, pupils, staff and governors, underpins all of its work and creates a climate that is conducive to pupils' learning.
- 19 Teachers are motivated and they work well in teams, and the pupils are well motivated too. The headteacher influences the teaching style of the teachers by organising appropriate professional training for staff, setting out agreed ways of working in the classroom and then monitoring teachers' work to ensure consistency throughout the school. The regular monitoring of classroom teaching and learning ensures that teaching strategies and classroom organisation are consistent throughout the school. The headteacher is meticulous in the organisation of regular and systematic monitoring of pupils' progress, so that teachers have a clear knowledge of the progress of individual pupils, groups of pupils and year groups. High expectations of pupils and frequent monitoring of their progress ensures that appropriate work is set for them to make good progress. Subject co-ordinators are closely involved with curricular planning and play a major role in developing their own curricular guidelines. As the number of pupils has risen during the past few years, the organisation of pupils into mixed-age classes and then classes for each year group has required a flexible approach from staff. The teachers have adapted their planning to ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to the National Curriculum and religious education.
- 20 The governors ensure that there is a supporting framework within which the headteacher and his staff can work to promote pupils' progress and development. Job descriptions and performance management procedures are firmly in place, and there are clear and well understood policies for all aspects of school life and all subjects. The high level of mutual trust between the governors and the staff makes it possible to deal openly and effectively with the school's weaknesses. Although overall standards are high, teachers and governors recognise that improvements can be made, for example in writing, to lift pupils' attainment further. The governors link with subject co-ordinators to learn about the curriculum and to monitor standards, and this dialogue informs decision-making.
- 21 There are formal procedures for ensuring that governors review and decide on major items of expenditure, or changes to the budget. The governors base their financial projections on current trends, possible changes in pupil numbers, the cost of staff salaries and patterns of essential spending on fuel, buildings and equipment. This prudent approach to possible change helps the school to introduce associated curricular organisation and staffing changes smoothly. The unavoidable change of teachers during the school year is managed effectively to ensure an easy transition and minimise disruption to the pupils. The governors have their 'ear to the ground', and they consult teachers about decisions on spending, so that funding actually gets into the classroom to support pupils' learning. The large balance at the end of the last financial year has already almost halved as the governors have taken on extra staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The governors recognise the importance of providing a pleasant and safe working environment, and the school has been improved since the last inspection. It is now bright and cheerful, with interesting displays of work that reinforce learning and raise pupils' self-esteem.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' handwriting is not as good as it should be in Years 3 to 6. They do not consistently use joined handwriting, even though it has been taught.

- 22 Teachers are not sufficiently vigilant in insisting on joined handwriting, and pupils seem to choose whether they write with pens or pencils. This lack of consistency detracts from the quality of the content of pupils' written work. The school's guidelines for the teaching of handwriting are not followed with sufficient rigour. Teachers do not write in the school's agreed style on the board, so that pupils have a good model to copy. Pupils practise the letters and joins and then do not use them for everyday writing. In the marking of work seen during the inspection, teachers made little reference to the fact that pupils should be using a cursive style. Although pupils should be using pens in Years 5 and 6, they do so at will.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 23 In the context of its many strengths, the following issue for improvement should be addressed by the governors and staff:

- (1) In Years 3 to 6, pupils' joined handwriting should be improved through
- the renewed provision of clear guidelines for staff and pupils on the school's approach to handwriting
 - regular focused teaching of handwriting
 - the teachers' use of the school's adopted style when writing on the board
(Paragraphs 4, 10, 22)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	5	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	50	25	25	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 five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	186
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	15

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	7	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (89)	100 (85)	100 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (95)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Separate figures for boys and girls are not included as so few girls took the tests.

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	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	18
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	24	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (77)	83 (88)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	17
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	24	24	27
Percentage of pupils	School	83 (85)	83 (88)	93 (92)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)
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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	181	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	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	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	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

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
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	£
Total income	460,430
Total expenditure	459,464
Expenditure per pupil	2,286
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,000
Balance carried forward to next year	41,966

Number of pupils per FTE adult	26
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	76	21	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	29	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	24	18	0	3
The teaching is good.	76	21	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	29	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	12	12	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	15	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	24	9	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	70	24	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	24	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	21	9	3	0