

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WHITEHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

North Shields

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108577

Headteacher: Mr J Maxwell

Reporting inspector: Mrs R J Andrew  
21460

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 246804

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whitehouse Lane  
North Shields

Postcode: NE29 8PE

Telephone number: 0191 2006346

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Gordon

Date of previous inspection: January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Whitehouse Primary school is a smaller than average community school situated on the edge of North Shields. There are currently 176 boys and girls on the school roll, which is falling. This number includes 34 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school houses a unit for 13 pupils of the Glebe Special School who have moderate learning difficulties. The unit was not included in the current inspection. All these pupils have statements outlining their special needs and are taught separately for English and mathematics but join the main school pupils for some other lessons. The school serves an area where many families experience significant hardship and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (47 per cent) is well above the national average. Almost all of the pupils come from white British backgrounds and there is only one whose home language is not English. The number of pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the normal times is quite high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the main school (29 per cent) is above average. These pupils experience a range of difficulties including moderate learning, speech and communication and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The children's attainments on entry to the school vary considerably. Overall the level of attainment is low and many children have a narrow vocabulary and poor speaking skills.

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

The school is doing a good job in difficult circumstances. The headteacher and senior team lead and manage the school well and place a strong and successful emphasis on raising standards. In spite of low attainment when pupils start, the school helps pupils to catch up with those in most other schools. By the time they leave, pupils do better than pupils in similar schools. The teaching is good and enables pupils to do their best and achieve well. Pupils develop good attitudes to school and behave well because the school promotes good relationships and co-operation and keeps a close eye on pupils' personal development. All members of the senior team make regular checks on how the school is doing but governors are not playing a sufficiently prominent part in this. Nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics because of good teaching overall and very good teaching in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils develop very good attitudes to school and behave very well because of the emphasis the school gives to their personal development.
- The headteacher has built an effective senior team, whose members provide a strong steer to the school's work and have succeeded in raising standards.
- Work undertaken in school is brought to life and enriched by good quality visits outside school and links with the secondary sports college.

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

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough.
- Older pupils' handwriting is not good enough and their work is often carelessly presented.
- Pupil records do not enable all teachers to identify quickly individuals or groups of pupils who are not doing as well as they should.
- Although there is a nucleus of effective and supportive governors, the governing body as a whole is not sufficiently involved in checking how well the school is doing.

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

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

Since the last inspection in January 1998, the overall performance of the school has improved significantly. Improvements in teaching have been substantial, pupils behave much better and higher standards have been achieved as a result. The number of exclusions has fallen dramatically. The school keeps a more careful watch on the quality of teaching and learning. It has worked hard at improving the quality of what is taught so that it

interests pupils and provides a breadth of learning. The school has successfully addressed many of the areas identified in the last inspection in, including management, although improvements to standards in ICT have not been good enough and the governing body still does not play a sufficiently active part in checking the work of the school. The school now teaches all the subjects it should. There have been improvements to the school grounds and buildings, which have successfully addressed safety concerns and reduced vandalism.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. (The test results do not include pupils in the unit.)

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |   |
|                 | 2000          | 2001 | 2002 | 2002            |   |
| English         | C             | C    | C    | A               | well above average A<br>above average B<br>average C<br>below average D<br>well below average E |
| Mathematics     | D             | C    | B    | A               |   |
| Science         | C             | B    | C    | A               |   |

The table above shows that, compared with all schools, standards in English and science are average and in mathematics they are above average. In all three subjects pupils do much better than pupils in similar schools. The improving trend is broadly in line with the national trend. The school has set challenging targets in English, mathematics and science for the current year. It is likely to achieve them in mathematics and science but might fall short in English. Five new pupils have entered Year 6 and this has changed the predictions for the year group. Pupils of all abilities, both boys and girls, achieve well and the standards they achieve are high enough. Last year's results for seven year old pupils in reading and writing were well below average. The results were affected by an unusual number of pupils in the year group with special educational needs. This year's pupils in Year 2 are doing much better. Standards are now broadly average in reading and writing. Average standards have been maintained in mathematics. Pupils of all abilities are now doing as well as can be expected and boys have caught up with girls. Provisional results from this year's national tests confirm this. The school has concentrated its efforts on improving teaching and raising standards in the lower school because of its concerns that standards were not rising as they have been in the upper school. It has been successful. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets because these are well focused on their difficulties and set in small steps to build confidence. In physical education able pupils reach high standards because of expert teaching in Year 6 and the links the school has established with the secondary sports college, where pupils receive extra coaching. Standards of handwriting are not good enough and pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not developing a fluent joined style. With the exception of pupils in Year 5, these pupils do not always take sufficient care with the presentation of their work and this is particularly evident in Year 6. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of attainment. Overall attainment is below average and there are particular weaknesses in language and communication. Children make satisfactory progress in nursery and reception but most of them do not reach the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils are keen to do well and work hard. By the time they leave the school they are confident about their transfer to secondary school.             |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils know what is expected and respond well to the rewards and sanctions. They play sensibly and move around the school calmly.                    |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Relationships are very good. Pupils show respect for their teachers and co-operate well with each other. They form lasting friendships. Older pupils help |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
|            | younger ones but they are capable of taking on more substantial responsibilities. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection and is now average.       |

Pupils' attitudes and concentration in lessons contribute well to good learning. There have been no exclusions for three years. Pupils who have failed to thrive or been permanently excluded from other schools grow in self-confidence and self-control. Pupils have a positive approach to newcomers and accept differences in backgrounds and capabilities. When they work alongside pupils from the Glebe School, all pupils benefit socially.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching    | satisfactory          | good        | good        |

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. It ensures that pupils of different ability all make good progress. It has improved substantially since the last inspection and has contributed strongly to rising standards. English is taught well. There is a strong and successful emphasis on reading and writing and good links are made between the two that enable pupils to achieve well. There are good opportunities for pupils to write for a wide range of purposes. In mathematics, teachers expect pupils to explain their thinking and teach them a range of strategies to calculate and solve problems in their heads. Science is taught very well in Year 6 and helps pupils to develop a wide range of skills. Teaching is very good in Years 2 and 6 and demands the best from all pupils. In the best lessons the teaching is inspiring; teachers question pupils closely, set challenging tasks and keep up a brisk pace so that pupils make rapid gains in learning. Pupils are often exhilarated by what they learn and show real enthusiasm for their work. Older pupils learn well from each other in carefully prepared group activities. They learn to think for themselves and check their work as they go along. All teachers plan and prepare lessons carefully and manage pupils well so that lessons run smoothly and no time is wasted. Independent work is set at appropriate levels for different groups and teachers give close attention to teaching new skills, to particular groups in rotation, so that new learning is consolidated well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants, who are well informed about pupils' needs and goals. Teachers in Year 3 to 6 do not ensure that pupils develop a fluent joined handwriting style and, especially in Year 6, are not sufficiently demanding of neat presentation. Teaching in the nursery and reception is satisfactory and children make steady progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy although there are too few opportunities for children to practise their developing writing skills in play activities. Teachers do not give sufficient emphasis to children taking turns, especially when talking. Many children still shout out when others are speaking so that it is difficult to hear what is being said. Knowledge and understanding of the world are taught well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum  | Good. All subjects are included in the curriculum and follow national or, in the case of religious education, local guidance. A wide range of carefully chosen visits enrich pupils' learning, stimulate their thinking and writing, and develop new skills.  |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs  | Good. Pupils have clear achievable targets and receive good support. Some pupils with behavioural difficulties have made significant progress, so that their former inappropriate behaviour and poor concentration are no longer a barrier to learning.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                  | There is only one pupil whose mother tongue is not English. The pupil benefits, as do many other children in the nursery, from the teachers' careful explanation of unfamiliar words, opportunities for sharing stories, joining in word games and class talk, and role-play, especially when teachers or assistants take part.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | Good. Teachers show respect for pupils and value their ideas. Pupils learn from their example. The school's taught programme of personal, social and health education contributes to social skills and responsibilities. The school code of conduct and clear expectations of behaviour help pupils to understand the effect of their actions on others and on their environment. |



|  |  |
|--|--|
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. Child protection procedures are followed carefully. The school keeps a careful watch on pupils' personal development and welfare. The school could do more to make sure that the system for checking progress is easily accessible so that underachievement can be spotted and appropriate action taken quickly. |
|--|--|

The work in religious education helps pupils to understand how belief affects people's lives and attitudes. The work in geography, religious education, art and music contribute to pupils' understanding of different lifestyles and cultures. History and work in the immediate locality give pupils an insight into their own cultural heritage. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to work together, to collaborate on tasks and to take part in residential visits, all of which develop personal and social skills and lead to growing independence. Some aspects of the work in ICT are not planned and taught in sufficient depth to enable pupils to reach the expected standards.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher has set out clearly the aims of the school and built an effective senior team that has succeeded in improving teaching and raising standards. He has been very successful in improving pupils' attitudes to school, relationships, and behaviour and in dealing with pupils with behavioural problems. Upper and lower school leaders provide very good examples of high quality teaching. The work of the deputy headteacher has been pivotal, for example, in guiding and supporting new staff and improving teaching |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Unsatisfactory. Although there is a small core of effective and supportive governors, the governing body does not fulfil its responsibilities in terms of financial management, checking how well the school is doing and in health and safety matters. They rely too heavily on the headteacher to ensure that the school's management is effective.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Good. The way that the school checks teaching and learning is good and the action taken to improve them has been prompt and effective. The school works well, including with the local education authority, to evaluate other aspects of its work but the actions taken to remedy weaknesses are not always moved forward with sufficient rigour.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Satisfactory. Specific grants, for example to support pupils with special educational needs, are used well. Better use could be made of the school day to maximise teaching time, especially in Years 3 to 6. This is currently under consideration. The computer suite could be used more often to give pupils opportunities to put their skills into practice in other subjects.  |

The headteacher applies the principles of best value well when making spending decisions but governors are not sufficiently active in judging whether these decisions are cost effective in terms of improvement. The school has made a conscious decision to keep single-age classes in spite of small numbers in some years. This leads to high staffing costs. It is not clear that governors have taken a long-term view about whether or not this is sustainable when funding for other areas of the school is affected. There remain barriers to improvement because of staff absence.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and do their best.</li><li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities provided outside lesson time.</li></ul> |

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the schools. The school provides a good range of interesting activities such as visits and sports coaching outside normal lesson time. Older pupils are also able to use the computer suite for homework and revision during the lunch hour. In this area of concern inspectors disagree with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics because of good teaching overall and very good teaching in Years 2 and 6.**

- 1) Children make steady progress in nursery and reception and basic skills are taught well. This continues through Year 1, giving pupils a firm grounding for later work. The quality of teaching in Year 2 is high and pupils come on rapidly. They reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is an improvement on recent years and represents good levels of achievement when compared to their below average attainments when they started school. The school has concentrated its efforts on improving teaching and learning, especially in the lower school, in response to its concerns about standards, especially of reading and writing. There is now more challenging work for higher attaining pupils, enabling them to reach their potential.
- 2) Most pupils read with reasonable fluency and many read well for their age. They find information from reference books and read well enough to make use of it. Pupils know how to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words and do this with confidence, breaking longer words into component parts. The teacher makes it clear what the pupils are going to learn and continually builds their confidence by encouraging comments such as, "You will be able to do that by the end of the week". This results in pupils who believe in themselves and strive to fulfil her expectations. She provides well-focused activities to build on new learning, concentrates her teaching on particular groups and moves on their learning rapidly during independent work. Pupils' writing in their books shows that there is a strong emphasis on spelling accurately. High attainers have made rapid progress during the year and can now write in complex sentences, for example, "He purposely led the wolf down to the river where the crocodile was waiting". Other pupils are beginning to adapt their writing to different forms so that they write lists, stories and reports of visits and of their work in other subjects. Lower attainers can express themselves in writing clearly but do not yet use punctuation to break up their work into sentences.
- 3) The work in pupils' mathematics books in Year 2 shows that they do challenging work. They have completed a large amount during the year and have made good progress. Pupils are encouraged to show working methods and the teachers' comments help them to improve. There is a good emphasis on mathematical terms so pupils are able to use them accurately. Pupils cover a wide range of work including real-life problems that bring the subject alive.
- 4) Pupils in the upper school make good progress overall in writing because basic skills continue to be taught well and thorough marking shows pupils how to improve. The teachers choose texts well to exemplify different styles of writing and pupils learn from them how to adapt their writing for different purposes. They put their writing skills into practice in many subjects. By the time they are eleven pupils write competently to record their work such as in science reports, descriptions of visits, evaluations of design work and geographical surveys. Progress in handwriting is more erratic. Pupils are taught a joined style but are not expected to use it for all their work so it rarely becomes firmly established. Pupils' vocabulary is extended well because teachers emphasise the importance of technical vocabulary and encourage pupils to use it so that their explanations are more precise. There are good opportunities for constructive talk in many lessons. Pupils read well enough to gather information from a range of sources, including the Internet. They enjoy reading a range of literature including poetry and use expression well when reading aloud. The teaching in Year 6 is very good and pupils make rapid progress in this class. They gain confidence from challenging work, questions that deepen their understanding and lessons that proceed at pace to keep them on their toes. Nevertheless the teacher ensures that she carries pupils of lower ability with her by checking their understanding, providing time for consolidation of new work and skilful direct teaching of group work at the right level. This is exemplified by a mathematics lesson on adding and subtracting decimals, where a cracking

pace was maintained, pupils were competing with each other to solve problems of different complexity and all of them were on the edge of their seats. Pupils used a range of strategies to solve problems and explained their methods well. By the end of the lesson there was a palpable sense of satisfaction from the pupils although tired from their mental exertion.

**Pupils develop very good attitudes to school and behave well because of the emphasis the school gives to their personal development.**

- 5) Pupils behave very well both in classrooms and around the school. They are keen to do well, respond quickly to their teachers and concentrate hard. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when there were many interruptions to lessons. Teachers' consistent approach to implementing the school's behaviour policy and the clearly understood system of sanctions and rewards have contributed to this improvement. Better teaching and more interesting lessons have also played their part. The improved learning environment leads to better learning and progress.
- 6) Relationships in the school are very good. The school's personal and social education programme contributes to pupils' understanding of how their actions affect others. Teachers show respect for the pupils' ideas and value their work. Pupils learn from their example. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together, for example in science and physical education. Teachers explain the need to take turns with tasks, and to collaborate by sharing ideas and helping each other with difficulties. The success of this approach is well demonstrated by a science lesson where pupils in Year 6 worked together in a question and answer session to define scientific terms, and when they created and performed dance routines in a physical education lesson. The pupils showed great trust as they supported each other's body weight. Boys and girls worked well together in both lessons.
- 7) Pupils who have failed to thrive or who have been excluded from other schools do well here. They gain confidence through a firm but understanding approach and because pupils are taught to befriend newcomers. Pupils with special emotional and behavioural needs show growing self-esteem and confidence and their difficulties are not often evident in lessons.
- 8) Pupils carry out routine classroom and school duties responsibly. For example, even young pupils move about the big building confidently to carry registers and messages. Older pupils are trustworthy but they are not given sufficiently weighty responsibilities to develop their initiative and leadership skills.
- 9) The headteacher has a strong pastoral involvement with pupils and monitors their personal development. He keeps a close eye on behaviour on a daily basis especially during break and dinner times. He works closely with social services, the local education authority and other external agencies to support 'looked after' pupils and those at risk. With strong support from his staff, he has been instrumental in reducing the number of excluded pupils from the previously high level that he considered unacceptable. There have been no exclusions for three years.

**The headteacher has built an effective senior team, whose members provide a strong steer to the school's work and have succeeded in raising standards.**

- 10) The headteacher has steered the school with a steady hand since the last inspection. School development planning highlights the most important priorities for the school and concentrates on those most likely to raise standards. He makes sure that there are sufficient funds to achieve them and has built effective systems for checking the work of the school including the formal monitoring of teaching and learning. The headteacher works effectively with the local education authority to gain a better view of the school's performance and compares the school's performance with what pupils achieve in most schools and in similar schools. He has established an effective system for the continuing professional development of staff and

performance management that is closely tied to the needs of the school. He has established clear aims for the work of the schools that are communicated well to staff and governors.

- 11) The senior management team includes members from each key stage so that all age groups are represented. Members of the team also have responsibility for leading core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Key staff are well placed to influence the work of others. For example, the upper school team leader sets a high standard by the quality of her teaching, for younger colleagues in Years 3-5 to follow. Good relationships are apparent amongst the staff. They share ideas and support each other well. There is an atmosphere of wanting to improve and teachers are open about their own shortcomings, and seek and receive advice and guidance from team leaders. Teachers new to the profession are enthusiastic about the support they received when they began their careers here.
- 12) The deputy headteacher is pivotal to the school's success in raising standards. Following the last inspection, an analysis of teaching strengths was carried out; the headteacher re-deployed staff including the deputy so that she was well placed to influence the quality of teaching where it was most needed. A more rigorous system of monitoring was introduced. Team leaders now check the work of colleagues regularly and report back formally. As a result whole school and individual areas for improvement have been identified and effective action has been taken. The resulting rise in standards, first in the upper school and then in the lower school are a result of this approach and the teaching and leadership skills of the deputy head.

**Work undertaken in school is brought to life and enriched by good quality visits outside school and links with the secondary sports college.**

- 13) Pupils in the school undertake many visits. These include work in the local area, visits to places of interest further afield, annual residential visits and work with the local secondary sports college. Pupils in all years benefit from these. Older pupils are the main beneficiaries of residential visits and links with the sports college.
- 14) Children in the Foundation Stage, for example, have visited the local pet shop and teachers make good use of this to stimulate children's talk and to extend their vocabulary. A useful photographic record of the visit helps the children to remember what they saw and did. The teacher has set up a 'pet shop' in the classroom to explore further the opportunities for talk and role-play. Other successful activities spring from the visit, such as art work and sorting pictures of the animals.
- 15) Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited a local farm and wetland centre. Work on display indicates that pupils' knowledge and understanding of science (aspects of living things and materials) have increased as a result. The quality of the display of information and pupils' work about the visits show that pupils have broadened their vocabulary and put it to good use in their writing. Effective work on alphabetical order, as a follow up to the visit, has improved pupils' dictionary skills. The visits have also stimulated imaginative drawing and painting.
- 16) Younger pupils and their teachers have taken 'Barnaby Bear' on their holidays, sent back post cards of their visits and collected souvenirs and mementoes. The display of these and other authentic craft objects add to pupils' knowledge of the world beyond the classroom and outside the United Kingdom. Pupils have visited Whitley Bay Library and met authors during book week. This has broadened pupils' interest in reading and encouraged them to hunt out particular titles on their return.
- 17) Visits associated with history, for example to the Hancock Museum, have enabled older pupils to study Egyptian artefacts at first hand. Pupils in Year 5 have taken part in a detailed survey of Front Street in Tynemouth that involved mapping skills, data handling, interviewing visitors, analysing results and presenting their work carefully for others to read. They have added to their geographical knowledge of how human intervention can change the nature of the environment

and affect people's lives. They have also learnt valuable English skills, for example, how to put both sides of an argument. Other work in the immediate area has developed scientific enquiry skills well. It has involved pupils in Year 4 identifying different habitats in the school grounds, and searching for and classifying minibeasts.

- 18) Partnerships with local businesses and councils have involved pupils in real-life mathematics activities in local supermarkets and food outlets, and the Fish Quay Festival has generated art and design work. Pupils, mostly in Years 5 and 6, benefit from regular sporting activities and coaching provided through their links with the local secondary sports college. They have learned tactics and teamwork skills, improved their games and gymnastic skills and got to know staff. They are enthusiastic about their transfer into Year 7.
- 19) The residential visits to Langdon Beck and Powburn Adventure Centre provided for pupils in Years 4 and 6 are anticipated with excitement. They provide pupils with opportunities to sample a range of outdoor activities. Living away from home is carefully organised by staff to allow pupils to gain independence and to develop confidence and a sense of responsibility. Pupils know what is expected of them and appreciate the benefits.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Standards in ICT are not high enough.**

- 20) Since the last inspection the school has adapted national guidelines to support teachers' planning in ICT. A computer suite has been equipped providing eight computers where whole classes can be taught. Although this sometimes means that three pupils are working at a single computer, it is a big improvement on the previous arrangements.
- 21) The teaching is at least satisfactory and concentrates on teaching the skills pupils need in different aspects of ICT. Teachers have the skills they need to teach the subject to the required standards. There is evidence in pupils' completed work that pupils successfully find information on the Internet and share that information, for example about mountains, with others by producing attractive folders using both text and graphics. There are a few good examples of pupils using computers to support the work in other subjects but this way of working is not yet widespread enough.
- 22) Pupils use the keyboard to word process their work but find this difficult because they are still learning basic keyboard skills and need a lot of help. There is a deficit in many skills because the school has been slow to get to grips with the planning of the ICT curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 are learning how to control a screen turtle and to write simple programs to draw shapes. This is appropriate for their age but progress is slow because some of the basic steps are shaky and need to be revised.
- 23) In most areas the work is well established and beginning to raise standards substantially, but there are weaker elements where skills are not yet firmly embedded, for example in using models and simulations, monitoring events and control technology. Standards at seven and eleven are well below average in these areas and below average in all other aspects of the work.
- 24) The computer suite and computers in classrooms are often not in use and opportunities are missed to support current work in other subjects and, for example, to allow pupils to practise keyboard skills and to use simple programs to consolidate reading and mathematics skills.
- 25) There is a comprehensive action plan, which shows clearly what the school needs to do to raise standards further. Costs have been calculated, and funding sought and received from a number of sources. Much of the initial work has been completed, somewhat slowly though successfully, but much remains to be done and is not being pursued with sufficient urgency.

The school has not checked the implementation of the curriculum thoroughly enough to ensure that the best use is made of teaching time, the suite and classroom computers so that pupils can catch up with those in most other schools.

**Older pupils' handwriting is not good enough and their work is often carelessly presented.**

- 26) Handwriting skills are not taught systematically enough in Years 3 to 6. Although pupils learn how to join letters, most do not go on to develop a fluent joined handwriting style, which they can use at speed.
- 27) Good use is made of whiteboards and drafting books for pupils to try out ideas but not all teachers make their expectations of standards of handwriting and neatness in final drafts and permanent records clear enough. Pupils' work in books is often carelessly presented. Completed work does not encourage pupils to take pride in their achievements and occasionally leads to misconceptions and inaccuracies, for example in mathematics. Particularly in Year 6, it does not provide an accurate record of the scope of the work undertaken or of the very good quality of the teaching and learning in the class. As a result, it has the potential to mislead parents and visitors, and hinder pupils when they refer to earlier work.

**Pupil records do not enable all teachers to identify quickly individuals or groups of pupils who are not doing as well as they should.**

- 28) The school has a good range of information about the standards pupils reach in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Other information is also held about children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs, which gives a clear picture of their achievements in additional aspects. This information is added to at regular intervals so that progress over time can be measured. The school is beginning to make good use of this information, for example to predict pupils' likely achievement in national tests at seven.
- 29) The information is currently held in a format that does not make for easy reference. It is time consuming to track the progress of a particular pupil or groups of pupils to ensure they are making the expected progress and to assess the overall value added to pupils' achievements by the school. It is not easy enough to identify potential underachievement so that possible causes can be determined and prompt and effective action can be taken to put it right. For example, the school should have been able to intervene at an earlier stage to raise the achievement of particular groups of pupils in the lower school whose results at the end of Year 2 were well below average. Changing the format would make it easier to continue to track their progress more closely through Year 3.
- 30) Teachers have the skills they need to make accurate assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do to add to this picture of progress. Further work is planned to improve their skills in the most difficult area of assessing pupils' writing but this is not yet off the ground.

**Although there is a nucleus of effective and supportive governors, the governing body as a whole is not sufficiently involved in checking how well the school is doing.**

- 31) The new chair of governors is well informed about the work of the school and a small group of other governors visit the school, take part in lessons and attend meetings regularly. Others, because of their various commitments, are not able to fulfil their duties adequately. Meetings are not always quorate and so business has to be deferred. The level of absences from meetings is unacceptable and hampers the work.
- 32) The governing body as a whole does not do all it should to evaluate how well the school is doing, to inform parents, to ensure that all the necessary policies and procedures are in place and to plan and monitor the budget. Currently they provide insufficient support for the

headteacher and are not sufficiently rigorous in challenging decisions. There is an opportunity to remedy this unsatisfactory situation when a new body is constituted in September.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33) In order to build on the improvements already made, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in ICT by:
  - ensuring that all aspects of the curriculum are taught in sufficient depth, particularly monitoring and controlling events, employing simulations, and exploring models;
  - developing pupils' skills further by using computers in the suite and in classrooms more regularly to support the work in other subjects;
  - getting to grips with the remainder of the action plan;
  - keeping a more careful check on how well planned developments are being put into practice.
  
- (2) Improve the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work by:
  - teaching joined handwriting more systematically and ensuring that pupils use it for all their work;
  - making high expectations of both handwriting and presentation clear to pupils;
  - accepting only careful work.
  
- (3) Improve the way pupils' academic progress is monitored and supported by:
  - presenting existing information from tests and assessments in a format that is readily accessible to teachers;
  - using the information to identify underachievement in individual and groups of pupils so that prompt action can be taken.
  
- (4) Grasp the opportunity provided by the reconstitution of the governing body in September to:
  - seek out additional expertise to strengthen the existing nucleus of effective governors;
  - make clear governors' roles and responsibilities, and the remit of committees;
  - encourage governors to improve their effectiveness by taking up training;
  - provide better information about the work of the school to support governors' judgements and decision making.

## 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

12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 1         | 5         | 5    | 7            | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 6         | 28        | 28   | 39           | 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 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)      | 17      | 159     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0       | 72      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 0       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 3       | 52      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1            |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 13           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 13           |

### Attendance

| Authorised absence        | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 4.4 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence      | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.9 |
| 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 | 14   | 10    | 24    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | *       | *       | *           |
|   | Girls    | *       | *       | *           |
|   | Total    | 14      | 18      | 20          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 58 (83) | 75 (94) | 83 (78)     |
|   | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Girls    | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Total    | 16      | 18          | 21      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 67 (61) | 75 (67)     | 88 (67) |
|   | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89)     | 89 (89) |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Information about the results of boys and girls is not given separately because of the small number of girls in Year 2.

### 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 | 10   | 14    | 24    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Girls    | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Total    | 21      | 19          | 23      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 88 (73) | 79 (73)     | 96 (96) |
|   | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71)     | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Girls    | *       | *           | *       |
|   | Total    | 23      | 20          | 23      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 96 (69) | 91 (69)     | 96 (96) |
|   | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74)     | 82 (82) |

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

\* Information about the results of boys and girls is not given separately because of the small number of boys in Year 4.



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

| <b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>  | <b>No of pupils on roll</b> | <b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b> | <b>Number of permanent exclusions</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| White – British                                     | 152                         | 0  | 0                                     |
| White – Irish                                       | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| White – any other White background                  | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 1                           | 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 | 3                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Chinese   | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 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) | 8    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21.5 |
| Average class size                       | 24.5 |

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 3    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 76.5 |

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 17   |
| Total number of education support staff  | 1    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | 25.5 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult           | 8    |

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Financial information

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Financial year                             | 2002/3 |
|  |        |
|  | £      |
| Total income                               | 464994 |
| Total expenditure                          | 459967 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2613   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 15011  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 20038  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 176 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 42  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 79             | 19            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 62             | 33            | 2                | 0                 | 2          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 48             | 38            | 5                | 0                 | 10         |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 57             | 31            | 2                | 2                 | 7          |
| The teaching is good.  | 79             | 14            | 5                | 0                 | 2          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 60             | 33            | 2                | 2                 | 2          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 74             | 24            | 0                | 2                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 79             | 14            | 0                | 0                 | 7          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 50             | 31            | 10               | 2                 | 7          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 69             | 17            | 10               | 0                 | 5          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 81             | 12            | 2                | 2                 | 2          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 38             | 33            | 12               | 10                | 7          |

\* Figures may not equate to 100% due to 'rounding up'