

## INSPECTION REPORT

### WIDCOMBE INFANTS' SCHOOL

Bath

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109008

Headteacher: Miss Alison Watts

Reporting inspector: Mr M S Burghart  
20865

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 246849

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Archway St Bath
Postcode:	BA2 4JG
Telephone number:	01225 421998
Fax number:	01225 421998
Appropriate authority:	Bath and North East Somerset
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Leach
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Registered inspector
13911	Mrs J Gallichan	Lay inspector
22578	Mr D G Jones	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

MSB Education Ltd

Broomhill  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 7AR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Widcombe Infants' School is near the centre of Bath in the local education area of Bath and North East Somerset. The school is housed in 1970s buildings which provide very good accommodation for six classes, two per year group. The school has 163 pupils on roll aged from four to seven and is effectively full. All classes contain pupils from single age groups. There is an average of 27 children in each class. Pupils are drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, but overall their attainment on entry to the school, aged four, is slightly above the average for the local education authority. The school has received two awards for pupils' achievements in national tests and was recognised as having Beacon Status in 2002 on the basis of its success. It achieved the Artsmark silver award in the same year. Currently Widcombe is working towards the Healthy Schools Award and is an 'Investor in People'. The head has been in post for one and a half years, but previously was deputy and acting head. She is supported by six full time, and one part time, teachers. Four teachers are new since the last inspection. There are 17 pupils on the special educational needs register. This is in line with the national average. Two pupils have formal statements under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>, which is above the national picture. Only four children are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. Fourteen pupils have English as an additional language which is high for the local area. The school has a high proportion of pupils who join, or leave other than at the start of Year R and the end of Year 2, mainly due to families of students at local universities moving in and out of the area.

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

This is an excellent school which is very effective in helping pupils of all abilities to fulfil their potential. Standards are very high, notably in literacy and numeracy. Staff and pupils get on particularly well with each other and this contributes significantly to pupils' excellent attitudes and personal development. Through very good teaching and excellent management the school presents a very good, relevant curriculum, and an excellent learning environment. Widcombe Infants gives very good value for money.

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

- Standards, notably in literacy and numeracy, are consistently very high when pupils leave the school, because the quality of teaching throughout is very good. The school provides a very good curriculum as a result of very good planning, very effective assessment and thorough evaluation.
- The school takes excellent care of pupils and very successfully encourages particularly positive attitudes, very good behaviour, and excellent relationships and personal development.
- The leadership and management of the school are of high quality and these have created an excellent learning environment.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- Higher attaining pupils are supported very effectively and are helped to achieve their potential.

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

In the context of this excellent school this inspection raises no key issues for improvement.

---

<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1998, not only against the three key issues raised, but throughout its curriculum and in its management. Very good progress has been made in information and communication technology (ICT), where an excellent suite and resources, introduced two years ago, enable staff (now well trained) to promote skills and understanding which are then used to support other subjects. Assessment, tracking and recording systems are now used very effectively to confirm pupils' progress and this information is reported appropriately to parents. The good standards described in the last report have been built upon, particularly in English and mathematics, where the very successful introduction of the National Strategies results in pupils' achievement being very high. The quality of teaching, previously described as good, has been further improved with very positive effects on learning. A new library; completely renovated toilets throughout; and considerable improvements to the grounds to further develop their educational potential; have all enhanced what was already a good learning environment. The school is judged very well placed for future development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools <sup>2</sup>
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A*	A*	A*	A*
Mathematics	A	A	A	B

**Key**

very high                    A\*

well above average        A

above average              B

average                      C

below average              D

well below average        E

*A\* performance is consistent with the top 5 per cent of all primary schools.*

The table confirms inspection evidence which shows the school is doing very well in helping pupils to achieve very well and consistently reach high standards. Targeting pupils' specific needs and planning to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential is very successful. The school can demonstrate that it adds considerable value to pupils' education. Higher attainers do particularly well, with high proportions reaching above average levels in English and mathematics. In 2002 two children achieved levels in reading and writing usually associated with eleven year olds, and one of these did even better than this in reading. To the school's immense credit virtually all those with special educational needs have reached at least nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics over a period of years. The school continually seeks to raise standards even further, notably in writing and investigational and experimental work in science, mathematics and design and technology. Children in the Foundation Stage<sup>3</sup> consistently reach all the learning goals specified for this age, many of them well before they start Year 1. As a result the school is able to begin work on the National Curriculum early, but this enhances, rather than replaces, opportunities for young children to learn through play. In a short inspection it is neither intended nor possible to make judgements in all subjects. However, it is clear that standards are above national

<sup>2</sup> Schools with less than 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

<sup>3</sup> The Foundation Stage refers to children from entry up to and including age six when they complete the reception year.

expectations in many areas, particularly science, ICT, art and personal, social and health education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent: pupils are eager and enjoy learning at school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: notwithstanding those who could, and sometimes do, present problems.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent: pupils know right from wrong, show considerable maturity for their ages and are willing to take responsibility. Relationships are judged excellent.
Attendance	Good: better than the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good with excellent features	Very good with excellent features

*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 judged very good with excellent features throughout. All staff were observed unannounced on several occasions. No lessons were unsatisfactory and all but one lesson was at least good with almost three-fifths very good or better. Two lessons (a Year R session and a Year 1 ICT lesson) were judged excellent. This quality has significant effects on pupils' learning and is responsible for the school's high standards. There is an excellent balance between the consideration of both personal and academic development. Relationships are excellent and there is an excellent partnership between teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching and support for those with special educational needs is excellent, with very good provision for higher attaining pupils. Highlights in teaching are in very good questioning techniques, very effective planning and assessment, and high expectations. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are particularly well taught. Throughout the curriculum pupils are encouraged to show initiative, explore their own hypotheses, and evaluate their own efforts to make further improvements.

That most teaching assistants are actually qualified teachers makes a very strong contribution to the teaching profile. There is plenty of evidence that staff make a very good team and demonstrate high levels of commitment to raising and maintaining standards. Coupled with very successful care for pupils this is fundamental to the school's excellent ethos.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good: the curriculum on offer in all year groups is broad, balanced and relevant and enriched with many trips, visitors and events. Homework is used appropriately to enhance school work. Some aspects of time management still need further improvement.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent: teaching and support is very effective in helping pupils to do their best and often reach at least national average levels. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent: all such pupils are fully included in all activities and supported very effectively. The school makes particularly good use of their experiences of different languages and cultures to develop the understanding of others.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: with excellent provision designed to further pupils' multicultural awareness. The school balances its aim to promote high standards with careful consideration of the personal development needs of the individual.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent: the school provides a safe and excellent learning environment. Very good progress in terms of assessing pupils' performance and potential gives rise to very good target setting which has very positive effects on pupils' progress. Expectations are high.

The school has a high reputation and is well known for working very effectively with parents and the community.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent: head, governors and staff work as a very effective team to ensure that the school has very clear educational direction. Subject co-ordinators manage curriculum areas very effectively. The high quality of leadership and management makes a very strong contribution to pupils' education. Office procedures are very effective in supporting management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors support the school very effectively. There is an excellent partnership with staff and all statutory responsibilities are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent: the school analyses results and the success of priorities of the school development plan most effectively and has an excellent appreciation of its strengths and areas for further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent: finances, staffing, accommodation and resources are all used most efficiently and this results in an excellent learning environment which together with the school's excellent ethos and high standards means it gives very good value for money.

## 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>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Standards are high.</li> <li>• How the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The caring, family atmosphere.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like to see more extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>

Twelve parents attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector before the inspection and a further four met with the lay inspector during the inspection. Seventy-eight people returned the Ofsted questionnaire. Support for the school is very positive, especially about the quality of the learning environment and the approachability of the staff. Inspectors are very pleased to support these views. Extracurricular activities are judged satisfactory for an infant school, but when the very rich range and number of visits and visitors are considered then provision is very good and a strength of the school. A concern was expressed over the management of behaviour of pupils with special needs. Inspectors reviewed school policy and procedures and observed these in practice. Provision is judged effective. The school constantly and successfully reviews its systems in the light of experience.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**‘Standards, notably in literacy and numeracy, are consistently high when pupils leave the school, because the quality of teaching throughout is very good. The school provides a very good curriculum as a result of very good planning, very effective assessment and thorough evaluation.’**

1. Analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results in 2002 shows that:
  - In reading over half of the 57 Year 2 pupils achieved higher than the national average, with two reaching even higher. Most unusually one pupil attained Level 5 which is above even that expected of eleven year olds;
  - In writing the school's performance was in the top five per cent of all schools with an exceptionally high 37 per cent of its pupils achieving above average levels compared with only nine per cent across the country:
  - In mathematics 49 per cent of pupils reached the higher level, Level 3, whilst nationally only 31 per cent did so.
2. Teacher assessments made for science, validated through moderation, put the school in the top five per cent of all primary schools with particular success in terms of pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things and physical processes.
3. In all assessments and tests over the last four years extremely few pupils have failed to attain at least the national average levels in any elements. This means that nearly all pupils with special educational needs have achieved the national standard which indicates very good learning and consistently good progress. The school is able to demonstrate that it adds considerable value to pupils' education.
4. Inspection evidence from lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work past and present indicates that high standards are being maintained this year through high expectations, and that pupils continue to be very well challenged in all year groups whatever their ability. Parents expressed their confidence to inspectors that they think standards are high and those who have been associated with the school over several years feel that the situation, although good before, is even better now. The award of two commendations from the DfES<sup>4</sup> for the school's success in national tests over the last three years, and the recent accolade as a 'Beacon School' are testaments to standards being high. The school is currently working towards achieving a charter mark for the quality of its work in promoting basic skills and to be recognised as a 'Healthy School'.
5. The most significant influence over standards is the very good quality of teaching at this school. Teaching was described as good in the last inspection and has been systematically improved through better planning, use of assessment and detailed monitoring by the head and subject co-ordinators. Programmes of staff training in areas highlighted as relative weaknesses are proving very successful in developing provision. For example ongoing in-service work in ICT delivered by the subject co-ordinator (herself an advanced skills practitioner) is raising teachers' and teaching assistants' confidence, knowledge and understanding, and having very positive effects on the use of equipment and pupils' learning.
6. During the inspection all of the 22 lessons observed, which featured all teachers and teaching assistants, were at least satisfactory with all but one lesson good or better. All observations were unannounced. A very creditable six out of ten lessons were at least very

---

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education and Skills.

good, (with all teachers having work at this level) and two sessions (Year 1 ICT and Year R knowledge and understanding of the world) judged excellent. A variety of other lessons had excellent features across the whole school. Parents' and governors' confidence in the quality of teaching is very well founded.

7. Notable strengths of teaching are in:

- High quality questioning which prompts pupils to answer in full sentences on the basis of evaluation and reasoning. For example in a Year 1 religious education lesson the teacher held the pupils' interest, although pupils were tired at the end of the day, by using very good resources in the form of a christening gown and skilfully getting children to describe the texture of the material and what the effects of age had been on the garment;
- Very good planning which is clearly based on the National Curriculum and recommendations for Foundation Stage children. This is jointly constructed by staff working together to guarantee that skills, once learnt, are built upon year on year. Subject co-ordinators manage planning very well and this results in a very good curriculum, very effectively supported by a very good range of visits and visitors, together with extracurricular activities and homework. They are careful to ensure that pupils in different classes of the same age group cover similar work to equally good standards. Work is planned at a variety of ability levels to challenge pupils appropriately and the success of this is confirmed through very good use of assessment and tracking of pupils' performance in order not only to set individual targets, but to modify the curriculum where necessary;
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They reward what pupils do well and give sensitive support where things are inappropriate. The quality of teachers' management of pupils and resources is high. Inspectors found the quality of teachers' marking to be very good and often excellent. For example teachers evaluating Year 2 work on the Great Fire of London commented positively on pupils' efforts whilst giving pointers as to how to further improve research skills and factual sentence construction;
- Excellent relationships which are common to all classes and between all staff and pupils. Pupils know they can trust staff and are not afraid to make mistakes, frequently learning as much from getting things wrong as right. For example pupils in a Year 1 ICT lesson failed to find the right icon to generate a change in the colours of a block graph they had constructed on screen, but discovered that they could alter the organisation of the columns, with very positive effects on their ability to interpret data. The high quality of relationships, obvious in staff's care for children, ensures that staff continually seek to promote pupils' personal as well as academic development;
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning. They work very effectively with teachers and give very good support to pupils of all abilities.

8. In the 'big picture' of the school, it can be said that standards are high because the quality of teaching and curriculum planning is high and this plays a major part in terms of the motivation of pupils and staff, who clearly enjoy success.

**'The school takes excellent care of pupils and very successfully encourages particularly positive attitudes, very good behaviour, and excellent relationships and personal development.'**

9. With the secure, safe site and excellent consideration of pupils' health and welfare the school demonstrates it is true to its aims to care for its children. There are excellent procedures for first aid and to communicate with parents as and when necessary. All required health and safety checks are carried out very effectively, with governors and staff taking their responsibilities very seriously. An excellent example of such care is in the recent moves, particularly well managed, to renovate the toilets throughout the school. Children and parents much appreciate the much improved hygiene and absence of smell!

10. Parents in their response to the inspection team indicated their absolute confidence in the ability of the school to look after their children. This appears entirely justified. However, care for children transcends the obvious physical aspects. The school demonstrates that it intends that children should reach their full potential and has significantly improved assessment techniques and the subsequent use of data since the last inspection. Very good analysis and evaluation of pupils' performance results in targets which enable and encourage pupils to make progress. Such targets are well communicated to staff, pupils and parents, being especially effective in support for those with special educational needs. The school keeps very good records of pupils' participation and performance: for example levelling work against National Curriculum level descriptors in pupils' 'once a term' books to gauge progress; and developing portfolio examples of what can be expected of pupils of this age in a variety of subjects.

11. Pupils respond extremely positively to the school's excellent levels of care and concern. In all lessons observed behaviour was at least very good and frequently better. Pupils' attitudes, judged both from evidence in lessons and the care and attention with which work is completed, are excellent. Pupils obviously feel valued and are appropriately challenged. They clearly enjoy the opportunity to take responsibility, as seen in the workings of the school council, and to show initiative. For example, pupils are keen to support those less fortunate than themselves and have planned and organised a variety of events for charity. In lessons pupils are eager to participate and keen to learn. They respond extremely well to opportunities to speculate and investigate: for example in science and mathematics, working very well as part of groups to solve problems and devise ways of working.

12. Pupils' personal development is very effectively nurtured by the school and overall is judged very good with excellent features. The school makes very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development. There are excellent examples of children in Year R sharing and taking turns in 'ride on' and 'climb on' type activities using large equipment; of Year 1 pupils discussing aspects of right and wrong in the way Victorian children were treated; and Year 2 pupils' appreciation of the beauty of sunsets.

13. Planning to promote pupils' cultural development is very good, giving pupils valuable opportunities to learn about how society in the United Kingdom has developed. There are very good links with both history and personal, social and health education, and pupils' understanding is very good for an infant school. Opportunities to gain an understanding of, and consideration for, the ways in which other people live are excellent. Pupils have very well developed knowledge and understanding of life in other cultures. This is cultivated in a variety of ways:

- French teaching for all Reception children, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils each week;
- A study of different faiths and customs in religious education: for example Year 2 working on Judaism, and school celebrations of festivals such as Christmas, Divali and the Chinese New Year;
- Excellent use of the experiences of the high proportion (for the local education authority) of pupils for whom English is an additional language to enrich the work of the majority, raise pupils' self esteem, and fully include everyone in all activities. For example, pupils from Indonesia and Germany were asked to describe different currencies and shopping habits as part of a Year 1 mathematics lesson on money and giving change. These pupils clearly enjoyed being consulted and their literacy skills were enhanced as a result of talking about what they knew. Other pupils listened attentively and showed very keen interest;
- The school's participation in the 'Comenius' project which promotes links between cities in different parts of Europe (notably France and Italy). Pupils exchange letters and experiences and are beginning to develop their use of the Internet to explore this further.

14. Throughout the school relationships at all times are judged excellent. Pupils respond extremely well to the fine example of staff working very effectively together. This is an integral part in the school's excellent ethos.

**'The leadership and management of the school are of high quality and these have created an excellent learning environment.'**

15. The head leads the staff and the school particularly well. There is an excellent team spirit and high levels of commitment. The head ensures that there is shared educational direction and her infectious enthusiasm maintains momentum. Teachers, teaching assistants, governors and parents demonstrate high expectations and are very good at managing change. For example, although the decision to abolish school meals and use the kitchen as an ICT suite and library was not popular with a minority of parents, the outcomes are substantial. Information and communication technology skills and their application, and reading levels, have improved dramatically.

16. Forward planning in the form of a school improvement and development plan is very effective, making the most of excellent analysis, and review of strengths and relative weaknesses to target what could be better. Co-ordinators maintain very clear plans for their subjects and aspects, and priorities from these are used to determine whole school policy.

17. The school is very good at managing change: for example the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy were introduced very effectively with marked benefits to standards and pupils' progress. New requirements for the Foundation Stage since the last inspection have been very successfully planned for, resourced and implemented, and the major review of the requirements and the Code of Practice for special educational needs has been managed especially well. The school makes very good provision for higher attainers and now needs to develop procedures formally to identify gifted and talented children.

18. Behaviour is managed very well throughout the school. School policy makes expectations clear and there are very good procedures in place. These are followed consistently in all classes and by all staff. These are designed to reward the positive and discourage negative behaviour. The outcome is that standards are very good in and out of class. Beyond these very effective systems the school ensures that work is planned and presented at different ability levels to keep pupils well challenged and interested. A concern was raised through the Ofsted parent questionnaire that the school did not manage behaviour well enough for pupils with special needs. Inspectors have reviewed the school's practice and find that it is effective and that the school is well supported by the local education authority in continually developing techniques to support pupils' personal development and learning.

19. Excellent management of display in all classes and around the school makes very good use of a balance between pupils' work and information and support material. Standards are outstanding and this plays a significant part in stimulating pupils and contributing to the quality of the learning environment.

20. Communications with parents are managed very well with the result that the school's reputation is high and Widcombe Infants is effectively full.

21. There are excellent links between the school's educational targets and finance. Initiatives are well planned for and funds are used very efficiently. Money is spent wisely and the school seeks best value for all expenditure. This results in an excellent learning environment. Under the very effective guidance of head and governors staff have used subject budgets well to ensure the school is very well resourced. Particularly good management of new initiatives to develop the educational value of the school site contributes

to the excellent learning environment. Spending is very effectively monitored by the school secretary. On the face of it the school spends more than the national average per pupil for primary schools. However, when additional funds designed to support 'Beacon School' status initiatives are set aside, costs per child are broadly average. With high standards both personal and academic, and the very good all round quality of provision, it is clear that the school now gives very good value for money.

**'Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.'**

22. The school's very strong commitment to supporting those with special educational needs is entirely consistent with its stated aim to provide the best possible education for all children.

23. Careful and efficient management of finances ensures that the school has well above average hours of support staff in terms of teaching assistants. There are immense benefits in that most of these assistants are qualified teachers and that the quality of their involvement in pupils' learning is very good. Taking into account all teachers whatever their formal terms of employment the ratio of pupils to teachers is eleven to one for much of the time rather than twenty-two to one based on seven and a half staff.

24. Although the school's profile of special educational needs is in line with the national average (representing a wide range of concerns) virtually all pupils every year reach nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. This is a significant achievement and a testament to the quality of provision and the success of management. There is an excellent balance between in-class support, where work is very effectively pitched at different ability levels, and withdrawal work in small groups very effectively taught.

25. The excellent quality of relationships throughout the school and between staff and special educational needs pupils in particular means pupils rightfully trust adults and are not afraid to make mistakes. Consequently pupils frequently learn better as a result.

26. Special educational needs are managed very effectively by the co-ordinator who works half the week exclusively with individuals and groups. She is able to pursue targets identified with class teachers and the head to enable pupils to make progress. Such targets are planned and recorded in very good individual education plans which are well communicated to staff, parents and pupils. These plans set success criteria to judge progress by and show how these are to be achieved.

27. Support for special educational needs is very effectively based on staff knowing pupils well, and very good assessment and evaluation. There are regular and meaningful reviews of pupils' progress and needs, making very good use of information gained from excellent tracking of individuals' success in performance and participation.

28. The special educational needs governor constantly monitors and evaluates provision, working closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator and head. Together they have ensured that all funds designated for special educational needs and more are well spent for the benefit of pupils. This results in high staffing levels and excellent facilities and resources. For example, there is a classroom sized special educational needs room which is very well equipped.

29. Not all the outcomes of this excellent provision for special educational needs can be measured, but they are nevertheless valuable. For example:

- Pupils show confidence and initiative and are ready to take responsibility. This is a direct result of the school's aim to raise and maintain pupils' self esteem;

- Relationships are excellent with pupils of all abilities benefiting from working together. Children are very considerate of the differing needs of others especially where physical needs are considered;
- Pupils' personal development is excellent. All pupils are fully included whatever their ability.

30. There is tangible evidence of the success of special educational needs support in the school's National Curriculum test results. Over a period of four years virtually all pupils have reached at least national average levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that nearly all of those with special educational needs have reached such standards, making very good and sometimes excellent progress in their learning to achieve this.

**'Higher attaining pupils are supported very effectively and are helped to achieve their potential.'**

31. Results of the National Curriculum tests show high proportions of pupils achieving above average levels. This has been the case for at least four years. Expectations are high, but realistic and translated into appropriately challenging learning opportunities through very effective assessment, tracking and target setting. Pupils are made very aware of learning objectives and these are often planned to provide extension activities for the most able. For example, in English where Year 2 pupils have written part of Shakespeare's *Tempest* in their own words, higher attainers were challenged to explore the nature of the characters before word processing their work and detailing stage directions. In a Year R literacy session the teacher through very skilled questioning extended higher attainers. In response children answered expressing their opinions coherently and explaining 'digraphs'<sup>5</sup> very clearly. In their subsequent writing these children showed very good awareness of correct sequence and the ability to write in complex sentences. This is beyond what is expected of the Foundation Stage and lays a very good basis for the high quality of writing achieved in Year 1 and Year 2.

32. For much of the week pupils are taught in groups smaller than class sizes. Because most teaching assistants are in reality qualified teachers the benefits of this are even greater than might be expected. Higher attaining pupils (and indeed all pupils) have higher rates of direct contact with teachers than they would otherwise, and this has an excellent effect on their learning. For example pupils are taught in half classes for ICT (timetabled in Reception, Years 1 and 2 against French) with high levels of hands-on experience producing rapid progress and above expected standards.

33. Particularly effective in support for higher attainers is the targeting of pupils who are assessed as close to borderlines between National Curriculum attainment levels, teaching them in small groups. This complements other group work designed to accelerate pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. This has been extremely successful in:

- Improving the quality of pupils' writing, where in 2002 37 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieved higher than average National Curriculum levels compared with only nine per cent nationally;
- Developing pupils' capacity to experiment and investigate mathematical problems. For example this was evident in a Year 2 numeracy lesson on money where pupils hypothesised on different ways of giving change; and in Year 1 where pupils spontaneously used their initiative to devise their own methods to solve problems.

34. Almost half the 57 pupils in Year 2 in 2002 attained Level 3 (the higher level) in mathematics compared with less than one in three nationally. Higher skills of using and applying mathematics are transferred very effectively into other subjects: for example with

---

<sup>5</sup> Digraphs are the combinations of letters to make sounds.



higher attainers doing very well in science investigations, and in testing theories in design and technology.

35. It is clear from the avid response of pupils (especially the more able) and the buzz that surrounds many activities, that the school is very good at stimulating and sustaining pupils' interest. It is not surprising that all the 78 parents who returned the Ofsted questionnaire report their children like school.

#### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

36. The school is very successful in analysing and identifying its own needs. Its planning already determines how it will continue to make improvements. Consequently this inspection raises no key issues for further development.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

37. There are no key issues for the school to address.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	8	1	0	0	0
Percentage	9.1	50	36.4	4.5	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	163
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	36	21	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	34
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	56	56	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (94)	98 (92)	96 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	33	36
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	55	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (98)	95 (98)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	136	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0

Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

0
1
1
1

0	0
0	0
0	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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	27

#### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	393389
Total expenditure	405717
Expenditure per pupil	2459
Balance brought forward from previous year	42011
Balance carried forward to next year	29683

### 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.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	163
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	83	17	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	35	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	40	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	36	4	1	0
The teaching is good.	78	21	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	51	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	12	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	60	36	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	37	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	38	13	1	17

*Due to rounding percentages may not total 100.*