

INSPECTION REPORT

CURZON C of E COMBINED SCHOOL

Penn Street Village, Amersham

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110429

Headteacher: Miss Caroline Kay

Reporting inspector: Mr RWG Thelwell
20977

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 3rd December 2002

Inspection number: 247002

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Curzon C of E Combined School Penn Street Village Amersham Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP7 OQL
Telephone number:	01494 712251
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Susan Everson
Date of previous inspection:	10 th – 13 th February 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

When last inspected in February 1997, Curzon C of E Combined School had 176 pupils on roll, ranging from Reception to Year 7. Following reorganisation of schools in the authority, pupils now leave at the end of Year 6. Currently, 122 pupils attend, including seven children in Reception. Pupils are drawn from a cross section of socio-economic backgrounds. Less than a quarter of pupils currently attending Curzon live in the school's designated catchment area, the greater majority travel in from further afield. Children enter Reception at the start of the term in which they become five. Nearly all attend pre-school groups before joining the school. Informal assessment on entry shows attainment to be broadly in line with that expected for this age group. There are five classes with an average size of 24. The turnover of pupils in and out of the school at times other than those usual for admissions or leaving, is very high relative to other schools. From time to time, throughout the year, the school receives traveller children whose families have moved onto a nearby official site. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is broadly average. No pupils have statements of special needs allocated under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice¹, and all pupils have English as their first language. With the exception of the headteacher, all full time teachers currently in post have been appointed within the last two years. The quality of acts of worship is inspected by a representative of the diocese. This report appears under a separate cover.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that serves its pupils well. It has a number of very good features and no major weaknesses. It benefits from outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher, staff and governors work very well as a team, and have established a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning. Excellent relationships and behaviour are the norm. Good, and often very good, teaching results in pupils' very good attitudes to learning. Pupils' personal development is very good. Standards for pupils now in Year 6 are above nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement when considering pupils' average attainment on entry to the school. Efficient use is made of time, money and resources. Although the unit cost per pupil is much above average, this is an effective school that gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school achieves standards for pupils currently in Year 6 that are above nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good across the school. A third of lessons observed were very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour and relationships are excellent.
- The school's very inclusive provision ensures all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and the opportunity to achieve well.
- Leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

¹ The Department for Education and Skills' Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools about their responsibilities to ensure that all 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.

What could be improved

In the context of this good school, there are no key issues regarding improvements. Aspects for ongoing development include:

- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in mathematics and science between Years 3 and 6.
- Information given in the school prospectus.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has successfully addressed the issues arising from the last inspection. A major programme of 'self-help' building projects has resulted in a marked improvement in accommodation. Temporary hatted classrooms have been replaced by permanent teaching areas, and the school now benefits from office accommodation and a well resourced library and computer suite. Resources have been improved where weaknesses were identified. A common approach to assessment has been implemented successfully across the school, and, notwithstanding the high turnover in teaching staff within the last two years, the school has maintained the good quality of teaching identified in the last report. Standards in mathematics for pupils currently in Year 6 are above those reported at the time of the last inspection. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, together with that for the performance management of teachers. The school is well placed to continue its development and improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores² in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	C	C
Mathematics	B	B	D	E
Science	A	A	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Although results of the end of Year 6 assessments for 2002 were less positive than the previous year, pupils achieved well when taking into account nearly a third of the year group had special educational needs. Results for pupils assessed at the end of Year 2 showed attainment in reading was well above the national average. It was average in writing and mathematics. Results were the same when compared with similar schools³. All pupils gained at least the expected levels in mathematics and science⁴. For pupils currently in Year 6,

² Average points scores refer to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

³ 'Similar schools' is a comparison based on the results of other schools who have the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. For Curzon Combined school, this is 'more than 8 and up to 20 per cent' eligibility for free school meals.

⁴ The national expectation is that, when assessed at the end of Year 2, pupils should achieve Level 2. The higher level is Level 3. When assessed at the end of Year 6, the expectation is that pupils achieve Level 4, with the higher level being Level 5.

where the size of the group and the proportion with special educational needs is smaller than last year, attainment in English, mathematics and science is above nationally expected levels. Inspection evidence confirms attainment for pupils at present in Year 2, where the number is less than half that of last year, but with an above average proportion of special educational needs, attainment is in line with nationally expected levels. Foundation Stage⁵ children now in Reception are on course to reach the officially recommended levels by the end of the school year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and respond well to good teaching. This has a positive effect on the progress they make in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' excellent behaviour allows maximum time to be spent on teaching and learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' very good personal development is underpinned by excellent relationships. Pupils listen well to what others have to say, show confidence when explaining ideas, and are considerate to others. Pupils show a growing maturity in their work and play.
Attendance	Overall attendance is well above the national average. Pupils are punctual and keen to attend.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good with very good features	Good with very good 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 good quality of teaching across the school has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In lessons observed, teaching was never less than satisfactory. It was judged good in over three-quarters of lessons seen; a third was very good. Strengths lie in thorough planning, together with effective, ongoing assessment to help determine what is to be taught next, and set pupils individual targets for learning. As such, teachers successfully meet the needs of pupils at different stages of learning, ranging from those with special educational needs, to higher attaining pupils. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them because teachers explain learning objectives clearly at the start of lessons. In literacy, where teaching is very good overall, teachers' enthusiasm, skilled questioning and interesting activities, are underpinned by good subject knowledge. Good teaching in mathematics is characterised by enjoyable tasks that reinforce pupils' understanding of concepts taught. Pupils are challenged regularly through mental arithmetic sessions, and are given many opportunities to explain how they arrive at their answers.

⁵ The term 'Foundation Stage' refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of the Reception year.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision for children in Reception is good overall. The curriculum for all pupils between Years 1 and 6 is broad and balanced, and comprises of all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education and French. Pupils benefit from a good range of extracurricular activities and educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils receive very good provision that is equally well managed. They make good progress in relation to prior attainment and to targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for pupils' cultural development, which includes supporting an understanding and appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures, is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's provision for the health, safety and general welfare of pupils is very good. Good procedures are in place for assessing the academic development of children in Reception and for pupils between Years 1 and 6. The identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for assessing and monitoring pupils' performance in English and mathematics is very good.

The school maintains a very good partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and manages the school well. The very good support she receives from the staff and governors results in the school having a very positive ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body carries out its responsibilities very well. Governors are closely involved in strategic and financial planning, monitoring and evaluation. They have a clear understanding of the school's provision for the National Curriculum and standards pupils achieve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate all aspects of performance. Data is analysed well to help determine what needs to be done next. Very good provision is made for monitoring the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of	Very good. The school makes efficient use of all resources to support learning. The principles of 'best value' are applied

resources

rigorously at each stage of planning and evaluation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are taught well and make good progress.• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.• The school helps pupils become mature and responsible, and behaviour is good.• The school is well led and managed; it works closely with parents.• Parents feel confident about approaching the school with a question or a problem.	<p>No significant concerns were expressed either by parents attending the Ofsted pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector, or by those who returned the parents' questionnaire.</p>

Thirty-nine parents returned the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, and thirty-six parents attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views expressed by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

'The school achieves standards for pupils currently in Year 6 that are above nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science.'

1. For each of the last three years prior to 2002, end of Year 6 National Curriculum assessments showed standards in English, mathematics and science to be either above or well above national averages. Whilst results for 2002 were above average in science, and average for English, they were below average in mathematics. However, results were noteworthy when taking into account nearly a third of pupils assessed had special educational needs. Although the school failed to meet targets set by the local authority for the proportion of Year 6 pupils to achieve the expected levels in English and mathematics, by the time pupils were assessed, the targets were no longer realistic. A turnover of pupils subsequent to the targets being set resulted in a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs than that originally planned for.

2. Inspection evidence confirms the school is successful in its quest to develop and realise the full potential of each and every pupil in its care. Detailed analysis of end of year assessments to modify curriculum provision, together with the setting of individual pupil targets, ensure pupils build well on prior learning. As a result, pupils now in Year 6 (where the proportion with special educational needs is significantly less than last year) attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above nationally expected levels.

3. In English standards of listening and speaking are high. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and those in their class. They make thoughtful contributions to discussions, use a good breadth of vocabulary, including subject specific terms, well. In a religious education lesson, pupils discussed their current beliefs in God, based on talks from visitors, lessons, and their 'life experiences' to date. Showing a very mature attitude, pupils spoke confidently

and sensitively on issues they found perplexing. These ranged from discussions about 'God the creator' as opposed to the evolutionist theory of creation, and of how a 'God of love' can allow suffering in the world. Pupils listened intently to their friends and spoke in support of colleagues: for example using structures such as, "Following on from whatsaid, I would like to add..." Pupils explain themselves well, whether it be defining and giving examples of metaphorical or onomatopoeic language, or as when in a physical education lesson they gave constructive evaluations of friends' performances.

4. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards reading. Standards are above average. In discussions, pupils spoke readily of favourite stories and authors, giving well expressed reasons for their choices. When reading fiction aloud pupils bring passages alive through expressive reading. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of punctuation and how this dictates the way text should be read. They recount aspects of stories very well, showing good comprehension of what they have read. Pupils use their higher order reading skills to good advantage, as when they skim and scan passages to elicit information. They have a good understanding of implicit and inferred meaning within text, as opposed to those that are explicit and clearly stated. Regular use of the school library supports the development of pupils' independent research skills. Pupils make effective use of the school's impressive computerised system to check the availability of texts, and to withdraw and return books.

5. Work reviewed during the inspection confirms pupils write successfully for a range of audiences, using a variety of genres. Overall, performance is above that expected for pupils' ages. Well crafted poems are written on various subjects. Pupils draft and edit interesting reviews and synopses of books, and undertake work on play scripts. In lessons observed, pupils showed good understanding of the development of character and plot. In general writing, pupils make effective use of paragraphs, and correctly use a wide range of punctuation, including speech conventions. In stories and persuasive writing, pupils commence with a clear introduction, followed by a series of logically ordered points that lead to a considered conclusion. When writing letters, pupils use an appropriate range of vocabulary and degree of formality, according to the purpose and persons to whom they are writing.

6. Inspection evidence confirms attainment in mathematics for pupils currently in Year 6 to be above average. Pupils' performance in mental activities is impressive, and they thrive on the tasks given them. Pupils choose the number operations required and carry out their calculations and activities at speed. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding are demonstrated by the clear and thoughtful explanations of how they arrive at their answers. Pupils are encouraged to explore more than one way of tackling tasks. They participate in activities with much enthusiasm. A good example was the way in which pupils became engrossed in their work related to the mean, mode and range of data relating to rainfall in different countries. They then considered the way in which interpretation of data can be affected by countries which experience monsoon seasons. The ethos of mathematics lessons is one where pupils are encouraged to 'have a go', without fear of failure, knowing their attempt will be valued. Pupils' learning and good achievement are supported well by homework and individual targets, which pupils carry out with enthusiasm.

7. In science, pupils build well on what they have learnt earlier. Attainment of pupils now in Year 6 is above that expected nationally for their age. The emphasis placed on scientific enquiry gives pupils good opportunities to work both individually and collaboratively. Inspection evidence confirms pupils develop a good capacity to plan and organise their own work. Many interesting investigations, including those relating to plant life, materials and forces, give pupils a clear understanding of what makes a test 'fair'. In each activity, pupils thoughtfully devise a number of ways to ensure their investigations are undertaken in a fair manner. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils observe, experiment, speculate and use the skills of scientific enquiry well.

‘Teaching is good across the school. A third of lessons observed were very good.’

8. The good quality of teaching has a very positive effect on pupils’ responses and the progress they make. Overall, teaching was judged to be good in over three-quarters of lessons observed, including a third very good. The remainder was satisfactory. As such, the school has maintained the quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection. This is a significant achievement considering that, with the exception of the headteacher, all other full time teachers now in post have been appointed within the last two years; two newly qualified teachers began this term. All teachers and support staff work very well as a team, sharing knowledge and experience. Across the school, expectations of pupils’ performance are high; teachers create a very positive classroom ethos that supports pupils’ learning.

9. Children in Reception are provided with a good range of relevant and interesting activities that focus on learning objectives. Thorough planning, based on the Early Learning Goals⁶, covers all areas of learning for children of this age, and links very well with the early stages of the National Curriculum. Good knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of the age group are reflected in the preparation and delivery of lessons. The many opportunities created to develop and extend children’s language are a marked feature of the good practice observed. For example, when learning to use a programmable toy on the playground, children developed language and understanding of distance, position and number correspondence as well as enjoying entering a simple string of commands to make the toy move in the required direction.

10. Throughout the school, teachers use the structures of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very well to support their thorough lesson plans. In all subjects, pupils are provided with challenging work, well matched to their stages of learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support. This is the case whether pupils are given support in class, or withdrawn for individual tuition. Individual education plans relate well to the specific needs of pupils for whom they are written, and staff use the plans well to meet those needs. As a result of very effective support, pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment and to targets in their education plans.

11. Across the school, classrooms are very well organised to promote learning. Effective use is made of support assistants and volunteer adults to assist pupils’ learning. Teachers ensure those working with them have a thorough understanding of the objectives of lessons; the methods and resources to be used, and the appropriate levels of expectation for pupils with whom they work. Staff build excellent relationships with pupils, whose behaviour is equally good. Inspection evidence confirms parents’ views that teachers know pupils and their needs well, and plan for them accordingly.

12. Good use is made of time and resources to advance pupils’ learning. Lessons have a brisk start with a review of what pupils have learnt earlier, and clear expectations are given on how this, together with new learning objectives, will be developed within the lesson. For instance, in a science lesson, pupils were questioned and reminded of their work on how sound travels, prior to carrying out an investigation on the most appropriate materials to use for insulating against sound and noise. At the start of a numeracy lesson, pupils in Class 2 responded enthusiastically to the mental and oral arithmetic challenges as they played ‘Shoot Out’. Older pupils are given every opportunity to explain how they arrive at their answers, as

⁶ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of ‘Early Learning Goals’, comprising a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of Reception year. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development.

when pupils in Year 6 mentally calculated the average of a set of numbers. Throughout lessons pupils are reminded of what is expected of them. For example, during an ICT lesson, pupils in Year 6 were reminded, "These are your lesson objectives. Focus on them at all times!"

13. Teachers are enthusiastic, and this contributes to positive, well managed classes. In all lessons observed, teachers demonstrated a high level of subject expertise which they used to good advantage with pupils. The use of questioning techniques by staff is very effective and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Particularly successful is the use of open ended questions that require pupils to consider and organise their thoughts before giving an explanation by way of response. For example, in discussing the planning of narrative texts and plots, pupils gave full and well structured replies when asked by the teacher, "What types of metaphorical journeys might you go on?" On many occasions, pupils' understanding is enhanced significantly by teachers' clear explanations and their effective demonstrations. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher made good use of computer technology to give pupils clear step-by-step guidance on how to use a program to interpret data. In a literacy session, the teacher, with the aid of a bag of props, gave those in Years 4 and 5 a clear explanation of the construction of play scripts and the difference between direct and reported speech.

14. Day-to-day planning is very effective, and teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to help plan what is to be taught next. Marking is constructive and very helpful; pupils are given clear guidance, either orally or in writing, as to what they must do to improve. Homework is used well to support learning. In addition to reading, spelling and mathematical activities, during the inspection, pupils were given research and practical activities relating to their work in science and geography.

15. The quality of teaching, together with its impact on pupils' learning, is encapsulated well by a Year 6 pupil who stated, "The teaching's good here. It's fun to learn."

'Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour and relationships are excellent.'

16. Throughout the school, pupils are highly motivated learners who respond well to the many good learning opportunities given them. They bustle into school in the morning, full of eagerness to get on with the day. This reflects the findings of the Ofsted pre-inspection, questionnaire, in which all forms returned by parents stated their children enjoyed coming to school. Reception children settle quickly into the life of the school. They adapt happily to the day-to-day routines, and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They form effective friendships, help each other and treat one another with warmth and respect. For example, each morning as they arrive, children show real pleasure in greeting one another as they settle to an activity before lessons begin. Children follow instructions willingly, share and take turns, and respond well to the adults with whom they work.

17. The school has successfully developed very good attitudes and work habits in pupils. Pupils arrive at lessons prepared to work, and involve themselves readily in tasks. This positive attitude has a beneficial effect on their learning. The setting of individual targets, which pupils take seriously, provides them with constant reminders of what they are trying to achieve, and the standards expected of them. In order to raise further their individual performance, older pupils set themselves learning targets. They work with 'response partners' to assess how well they have done. Pupils work well either by themselves, as when pupils in Year 2 enjoyed writing 'time problems' to challenge their teacher, or in collaboration with others, as when pupils in Year 3 investigated the absorbency of different papers. Pupils set about their tasks with enthusiasm and sustain concentration until work is completed.

Across the school, pupils demonstrate independence by choosing their own resources, and attempt to overcome and solve difficulties for themselves, before requesting assistance from adults. Pupils work hard and take pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils of all ages take on the many responsibilities given them with great enthusiasm; none more so than the executive committee of the school council together with the representatives from each class. They meet regularly to give their considered view, and make proposals as to how the school, together with its environment, can develop further.

18. Within classrooms and around the school, behaviour is excellent. During the inspection, there was no evidence of adults needing to speak to pupils regarding behaviour. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner. They are quiet and respectful in assemblies recognising the reverence of the occasion. They listen attentively to those who talk to them in assembly, and join in readily with the responses to prayers that are offered either by adults or fellow pupils. In class, pupils listen equally attentively and politely to explanations and instructions.

19. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults are excellent, and a real strength of the school. Pupils know they can rely on adults within the school community to listen to them courteously and to treat their comments with respect. In class discussions, pupils show a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. During lunch, taken in classrooms, the atmosphere is congenial and characterised by courtesy and good manners. At other times, pupils are helpful, polite and welcoming to visitors. During playtime, pupils play very well with each other. They keep a close watch on their friends, and are seen to befriend those who are playing alone. This is particularly so for the 'Blue Banders' from Year 6, whose role is to help maintain the good quality of playtimes, especially for younger pupils. Such activities not only support pupils' own personal development, but make the playground, like the rest of the school, a happy place to be in.

'The school's very inclusive provision ensures all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and the opportunity to achieve well.'

20. The school successfully meets the needs of all pupils in its care, ranging from those with special educational needs, to higher attaining and potentially gifted and talented pupils. This is due to the school's wholehearted commitment to inclusion for all aspects of school life, and the way in which this has been applied successfully in practice.

21. A discussion with a representative of the local authority's 'Minority Ethnic and Traveller Achievement Service' (METAS), confirmed the high regard in which the school is held by members of the travelling community. This is the direct result of the school's concerted efforts to ensure that for however long or short a time traveller children attend Curzon, they will be given every chance to participate fully in the life of the school. This resulted in one Year 6 traveller pupil being allowed by his parents to accompany the school's residential trip. Further discussions with the METAS representative highlighted the appreciation of several families who were visited on site by the headteacher to discuss behavioural issues, together with celebrating pupils' achievements.

22. The special needs co-ordinator has ensured the school has very effective systems in place for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. Such pupils play a full part in all school activities, and, along with others, have equal opportunities to take responsibilities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. This is true whether pupils receive support in class, or are withdrawn to work individually within the 'Cosy Corner'. Individual education plans relate very well to the needs of those for whom they are written. At regular intervals, parents, teachers and individual pupils are involved in their review and in the drawing up of new plans. As a result of very good support, such pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment and to targets in their education plans. The school

provides well for higher attaining pupils. In lessons observed, such pupils were given tasks well matched to their levels of attainment. Promoting pupils' self-esteem is a high priority. Irrespective of their stages of learning, pupils are given a high level of support and reassurance. For example, before embarking on a piece of extended writing, pupils in Year 6 discussed techniques they could use to make their writing more effective. Before starting on the written activity, the teacher told them, "You've all thought of some great ideas. Go for it!"

'Leadership and management of the school are outstanding.'

23. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school has successfully developed a culture of self-evaluation, where all members of staff, together with the governing body play their part. Through this process, all aspects of performance are analysed in detail, with a view to improvement. The headteacher sets a very clear direction for the work of the school, based on her vision for the school's ongoing development and on a thorough understanding of the needs of its pupils. She receives very good support from the senior management team and a hard working staff, who, along with the governing body, share an impressive commitment to providing quality education. This has resulted in a clear set of aims, values and a mission statement that are at the heart of the school's day-to-day life. Staff and governors have established a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes learning, with pupils having no fear of failure. A good example of this was observed in a Year 6 lesson. Having been set a challenging task related to their multimedia presentation, one pupil said to her partner, "How can we do that?" Her friend replied, "I'm not sure, but I've got an idea. Let's have a go!"

24. Together with the governing body, the headteacher manages the school very well. Day-to-day management and organisation of the school are of the highest order. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and members of staff have specific management roles that support the work of the school well. Management of the curriculum is delegated effectively to teaching staff who take responsibility for co-ordinating a number of subjects and aspects of school life. Both newly qualified teachers are in the process of taking responsibility for a subject. The school has put in place a rigorous programme for monitoring the quality of teaching. Each term, every teacher is observed teaching English, mathematics and science. 'Key Stage' and subject co-ordinators support the headteacher in this aspect of management.

25. Results of statutory and optional end of year assessments are analysed in detail to determine where further improvements can be made regarding content and delivery of the curriculum. Findings are discussed fully with governors. Staff make further use of assessment data to monitor and record pupils' knowledge and skills, and set targets for learning in order to raise standards.

26. The governing body contributes substantially to the management of the school. Governors have been the driving force behind a major 'self help' building programme that has resulted in a transformation of the school's accommodation. New classrooms have replaced hatted classes, and the school now benefits from a new library/computer suite, entrance and office accommodation. In addition to regular and productive communication between headteacher and chair of governors, committees covering a wide range of management areas meet regularly. As well as work related to strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, governors visit, observe and work alongside pupils. In so doing, they gain a clear understanding of the school's provision for the National Curriculum and the standards pupils achieve. Governors are committed to raising standards, including their own. As such they undertake self-evaluation activities to determine how they too can improve performance. The governing body meets its statutory obligations well and ensures all pupils have equality of opportunities regarding access to the curriculum. The school complies fully with requirements relating to the Code of Practice for the identification of pupils with special

educational needs. Provision for such pupils is managed very well. The school meets the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

27. The preparation of the 'School Improvement Plan' which is designed to bring about school development is managed well, with governors and staff successfully involved. Through questionnaires, parents and pupils have opportunities to contribute towards the plan. The resulting document, which is underpinned by action plans, is very detailed, clear and well structured. It establishes relevant priorities, responsibilities and resource requirements, together with criteria that will be used to evaluate success. The provision for staff training associated with the plan's targets, together with agreed personal development resulting from the performance management of teachers, and courses associated with the induction of newly qualified teachers, is managed well by the headteacher in her capacity as staff development co-ordinator.

28. Findings of the last audit of the school's financial management systems, undertaken on behalf of the local authority, found standards of financial planning, management and control to be excellent. Governors are closely involved in budgetary matters; all expenditure is carefully targeted and used appropriately. In keeping with the school's application of the principles of 'best value', all spending decisions are evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of their impact on the quality of education provided.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

'The use of information and communication technology in mathematics and science between Years 3 and 6.'

29. Since the last inspection, the school has enhanced significantly its provision for ICT by establishing a well equipped computer suite. To support the school's capability to deliver the full requirements of the National Curriculum for ICT, which has become more demanding since the last inspection, staff have undergone nationally funded training. Pupils successfully apply their developing computer skills to the electronic interchange of information through e-mails and approved Internet sites. They present texts and graphics in a variety of interesting ways to illustrate effectively their learning in many areas of the curriculum. However, pupils' skills have yet to be applied sufficiently to mathematics and science, where, in direct contrast to excellent computer generated work, such as multimedia presentations regarding holiday resorts, pupils write accounts of findings and investigations, and draw graphs and tables of results by hand.

'Information given in the school prospectus.'

30. Although the school prospectus is a helpful and informative document, it contains no information relating to the curriculum to be followed by children in the Reception year of the Foundation Stage. The prospectus gives parents no guidance regarding complaints procedures, nor does it make a statement as to the school's policy on charging. However, in its pursuit of Voluntary Aided status, the school is set to review required contents of the prospectus and make appropriate changes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. There are no key issues for the school to address. However, in the context of its strengths, the following points for improvement should be considered:

- **Extend** opportunities for pupils between Years 3 and 6 to apply their developing information and communication technology skills when presenting and illustrating findings of investigations undertaken in mathematics and science.
- **Improve** further the quality of information in the school prospectus by including information relating to the curriculum followed by children in the Reception year of the Foundation Stage, together with statements regarding the school's complaints procedures and charging policy.

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	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	8	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33	44	23	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	122
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	21

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	24	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	88 (88)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (100)	100 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	16	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	11
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	20	20	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (88)	71 (79)	89 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	15	13	13
	Total	22	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (63)	71 (67)	79 (75)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	107	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	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	1	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	1	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	4	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)	6.23
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 / 2002
	£
Total income	376561
Total expenditure	345389
Expenditure per pupil	2558
Balance brought forward from previous year	35233
Balance carried forward to next year	66405*

*This figure contains funds held for 'one-off' buildings and improvements expenditure.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Information above does not take into account temporary staff.

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	136
Number of questionnaires returned	39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	44	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	23	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	46	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	26	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	13	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	41	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	44	8	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	39	3	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	33	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	55	8	3	5

Figures may not total 100 per cent due to rounding.