

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY TREE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lymm

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111150

Headteacher: Irene Twine

Reporting inspector: Lynne Wright
22398

Dates of inspection: 20-22 January 2003

Inspection number: 247087

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hardy Road, Lymm Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chairman of governors:	Cty Cllr Sheila Woodyatt MBE
Date of previous inspection:	8 th December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This average sized primary school is situated in the village of Lymm, to the east of Warrington. The school has grown since the previous inspection and, currently, there are 208 boys and girls on roll. The pupils, aged between four and eleven, are organised in seven classes. The school is a popular choice. Almost half the pupils travel from outside its immediate area. Pupils come from diverse social backgrounds but home circumstances are generally favourable. This is reflected in the lower than national average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils having a mother tongue other than English. All these pupils speak, read and write English fluently and so need no special support. The percentage of pupils with identified special educational needs is below the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. This reflects the school's very good support so that pupils are taken off the register as they make sufficient progress. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is just above average, overall, although there is a wide spread of ability. Almost all have had pre-school experience. At the time of the inspection there were 28 children in the Reception class, all attending full-time. Since the previous inspection there have been significant improvements to the building and grounds. The school was awarded a School Achievement Award in 2002, for substantially improved results in national tests from 1998 - 2001. It is now working towards the Primary Quality Mark.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with many excellent features. The ethos is warm, supportive and very caring. The school's very strong partnership with parents results in the pupils' excellent attitudes to school and their very good behaviour. The overall very good teaching enables the pupils to achieve high standards in many curriculum areas. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and is very well supported by the governing body and all staff. Financial management is extremely efficient and the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's strong and caring leadership and excellent management enable all staff, and governors, to work as a highly effective team.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by the end of Year 6, and they are good in many other subjects.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well because of very good teaching, which challenges, motivates and supports them.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, rich and relevant, successfully promoting the pupils' enjoyment in learning.
- The school's very good partnership with parents helps to create a very successful learning environment.

What could be improved

- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and does not always fully involve the pupils in assessing their own progress and in setting personal targets for the next step in their learning.

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 made very good improvement since it was inspected in December 1997. The headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard to maintain the many good features noted then, and to address the issues raised quickly and fully. The role of the deputy headteacher is now clearly defined and has real purpose in moving the school forward. The percentage of very good and excellent teaching has increased significantly. Pupils' attainment, as measured by national tests has steadily improved at Key Stage 2. There has been good improvement in the number of qualified and committed classroom assistants. Subject co-ordinators now have good opportunities to fulfil their leadership and support roles very well. Teaching plans routinely provide for the identified learning needs of all pupils through well-chosen activities and

support. The use of assessment to guide further curriculum planning is now firmly in place. Standards in writing of the infant pupils are improving, due to the continued focus on writing across the curriculum. Standards in science in the infants are improving due to the increased emphasis on scientific investigation. Curriculum information is freely available to parents. The accommodation has been substantially improved to offer increased opportunities for pupils' independent research. One result is that the use of ICT¹ in lessons is developing well. The outside play area has been extended and improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	A	A	A
mathematics	B	B	A	A
science	B	A	A*	A

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

In the national tests of 2002, pupils at Key Stage 1 attained standards that were well above average, nationally, in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Teacher assessments in science showed attainment at the expected level was also above average. Compared to similar schools,² attainment was well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing and science. These results show a continued overall improvement over the last four years. The school was very successful in getting pupils to the higher levels in reading and mathematics, but no pupils attained the higher level in writing or in science. The school is now taking vigorous action to remedy this.

Results of Key Stage 2 tests show a steady improvement since 1999. In 2002 standards were well above the national average in English and mathematics and in the top five per cent in science. Compared to similar schools, attainment in all three subjects was well above the national average. Test results show that pupils in Year 6 in 2002 made exceptionally good progress, overall, from age seven to eleven. It was in the top five percent, nationally in English and science, and well above the average in mathematics. The school is particularly successful in getting pupils to the higher levels, due to the teachers' very high expectations and very good teaching. The school met challenging targets for English and mathematics, and surpassed those for the higher levels of attainment. In 2002, boys did significantly better than girls in national tests at Key Stage 2, but in lesson observations and a scrutiny of work there was no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

Inspection findings indicate that most children attain the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1, and many exceed them. They achieve very well and become confident, eager and independent learners. Currently, pupils of all abilities continue to achieve very well as they move through the school and make good progress at each key stage in all areas of the curriculum. Standards are above national expectations in all curriculum areas except ICT in Years 5 and 6, where they broadly match them. These pupils have not had the full benefit of the improved facilities until late on in their primary school life. Standards in art are particularly high. Test targets for Key Stage 2 in 2003 are as high as they were in 2002, and are on course to be met.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are very involved in all aspects of school life. They have

¹ ICT is an abbreviation for Information and Communication Technology, and is a subject of the National Curriculum.

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

	extremely positive attitudes to work and are often excited by what they have learnt.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Most pupils behave very well in all school situations. A very few try, unsuccessfully, to 'test the boundaries'. Pupils are spontaneously courteous to each other, and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play very well together. They support each other well, and enjoy taking on responsibility. They take pride in their achievements and are pleased when others do well. Relationships throughout the school are excellent.
Attendance	The pupils' enjoyment of school results in attendance levels that are very high compared to schools nationally. Almost every pupil arrives on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good, overall. There is some excellent teaching. High quality teaching results from the teachers' commitment, hard work, skill and willingness to reflect and develop. Their high expectations of themselves and their pupils lead them to provide high levels of challenge, which pupils relish and work hard to meet. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together and practice is consistent. English, mathematics and science are taught very well and careful attention is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Literacy skills are developed particularly well across the curriculum. The teaching of writing is a high priority, especially in the infants. Pupils are learning to write for an increased range of purposes and audiences and to use more adventurous vocabulary. The teaching of other curriculum subjects is also very good and makes a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. Teaching in art is particularly strong. The teaching of ICT is improving rapidly as teachers grow in confidence and expertise, due to recent training. This has enabled the pupils to make rapid gains in their learning and in the increased use of ICT across the curriculum. Teachers' knowledge of all pupils' individual learning needs enables them to provide well-focused learning activities so that all groups achieve very well. Those with special educational needs are supported very effectively towards meeting their targets. More able pupils are set challenging tasks, which require them to act as independent and experienced learners. Homework is well matched to pupils' needs and extends their learning effectively. Teachers' marking is supportive, but is not consistent enough in pointing out to pupils what they need to do to improve, and in setting targets to bring this improvement about.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The interesting and varied content is designed to offer all pupils, at all stages, the opportunity to succeed. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, which offers pupils chances to try out new activities. Links with the local community enrich the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The co-ordinator and additional support staff work very effectively with teachers, classroom assistants and parents to ensure that pupils receive high quality support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	Pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue are fluent in English and need no extra help. Their progress matches that of their peers.

language	
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The ethos of care and valuing each individual offers very good opportunities and challenges for pupils' personal development. Excellent provision for their social and moral development gives pupils a strong sense of pride in the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has excellent care arrangements for all its boys and girls because it has an excellent understanding of their personal, learning and emotional needs.

Very good communications with parents about all aspects of school life has led to very effective and supportive relationships between school and home. This enables parents to make a significant contribution to the work of the school, and support their children very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives an excellent steer to the school's work. She successfully enables all staff to play a full part in the school's development. The senior management team and subject co-ordinators provide very well-informed leadership. All staff have a high level of commitment to professional development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive of all the school does. They are well informed and have a good understanding of the school's strengths. They are beginning to ask searching questions in order to promote the school's development at a good rate.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has excellent systems for monitoring and evaluating how it is doing at every level, as part of a shared commitment to continuous improvement. The headteacher has established a reflective learning community through firmly established systems of self review and action.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Grants are used very well to target areas for development. The rather cramped accommodation is being extended to offer better opportunities for independent research. Teachers and support staff are very effectively deployed. Principles of best value are applied stringently and the school is always looking to do things better.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy coming to school and the school is approachable and willing to discuss any concerns that parents have. Their children are expected to work hard and they make good progress. The school fosters their children's personal development well, and the children are well-behaved. The school is led and managed well and teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information they receive about their child's progress. The amount of homework set. The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team fully supports parents' positive views. The school is led and managed extremely well, and teaching is very good. The amount of homework set is now suitable, and makes a very good contribution to the children's learning. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. The team

agrees that the annual written reports to parents could be improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher's strong and caring leadership and excellent management enable all staff and governors to work as a highly effective team.

1. The headteacher, staff and governors have succeeded in shaping a school community which values learning as a life long process. The school is totally committed to helping each child to develop as a confident, self-reliant and well-rounded person and achieving the best they can. To this end, nothing is taken for granted and nothing is left to chance. The school always celebrates its successes, whether it is winning first prize in the Lymm Dickensian Day Christmas festivities or receiving a School Achievement Award, but there is no complacency in the drive for excellence. In this, the Headteacher plays a pivotal role. She has excellent knowledge of every facet of the school, and is energetic, efficient and resourceful in promoting and developing it. She works hard to ensure and maintain excellent relationships throughout the school.
2. The headteacher encourages a warm working relationship with the governors and they, in turn, are very supportive of all the school does. She encourages them to ask searching questions that challenge and extend her thinking and keep her on her toes. The headteacher is an excellent communicator and this, and very effective organisation, enable the governors to play a full part in determining school priorities and helping to bring them about successfully in order to give the pupils the best education they can. The headteacher has excellent systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, and this gives her an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. These are addressed through the school's very clear and well-structured development plans.
3. The headteacher is an excellent role model for the school staff. The staff handbook shows that she understands how the school works and even the usual 'unwritten rules' are clearly explained so that new staff fit in quickly. The tone of this document is highly professional, but humour and the human touch are evident in appropriate places. She has very high expectations of the staff, but also of herself. These factors ensure that everyone works hard to contribute to the continued positive development of the school as part of a happy and united team. The headteacher is a constant presence around the school; she doesn't miss much. She asks probing questions, but always offers support, and praise where it is merited. She cares for, and values, the staff within a democratic environment. The results are few absences or staff changes, and this continuity benefits the pupils' learning.
4. The senior management team gives a high degree of mutual support and each individual complements the others' strengths. As a consequence of the headteacher's excellent management, there is a unity of purpose and shared commitment to help the school do even better for its pupils. The headteacher delegates very effectively, showing her complete trust in her colleagues, but is always there to support where necessary.
5. The role of the co-ordinators has grown considerably in recent years. The headteacher has provided training, sometimes herself, that has increased their knowledge and confidence in their subjects and their management roles. They are increasingly instrumental in analysing how well things are going, and what needs to be improved to raise standards still further. As a result, the school is successfully addressing, for example, writing as a whole school issue, and identified weaknesses in science at the higher levels in the infants.
6. Self-evaluation is well embedded and all staff have very good quality performance management reviews. Individual targets are set for teachers and classroom assistants alike, and they find these helpful. They all know where the school is going, how it is getting there and what their part is. They are very well supported by training, but also by each other. That is the ethos of the school.

Classroom assistants are managed very well so that they are very well-informed and skilled in supporting the pupils' learning.

7. The headteacher sets high standards in managing change and improvement. The committed team of governors, teachers and classroom assistants works very hard, and always puts the pupils first.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by the end of Year 6, and they are good in many other subjects.

8. Overall standards, as measured by end of key stage test and task results, have improved steadily over the last three years in both the infants and the juniors. This is largely due to the beneficial effects of national literacy and numeracy strategies, which have provided a good structure for teaching English and mathematics, and improved monitoring by the school. Very good teaching across the curriculum is supported by more structured teaching schemes, which suit the pupils' experiences and interests very well. There is also increased support in lessons from well-trained classroom assistants working in very close partnership with class teachers. Support for different groups across the ability range is of very good quality and gives pupils the extra 'push' they need to do better. Consequently, the most recent test results for pupils in Year 6 showed well above average attainment, overall. The inspection findings show that very high standards are maintained in English, mathematics and science at Year 6 in all class work. Standards are at least above average in all other subjects seen, except for ICT. Here, the great majority of the pupils match national expectations. This shows good progress, as the computer suite and other resources necessary to attain more highly have only recently been available. High standards and very good pupils' achievements are due to the school's constant evaluations of how well it is doing by all its pupils, and the initiatives it introduces to bring about still further improvement.
9. Pupils write with confidence and with more sophisticated and adventurous vocabulary, in a very good range of forms and activities, as they move through the school. The school has focused on writing, particularly in the infants, as an area for improvement, and here all elements of literacy are showing sustained improvement, both by individuals and groups of pupils. By the end of Year 2 pupils' spelling is good and the lower attaining pupils make good attempts at spelling phonetically. They understand the structure of different forms of writing, such as story, diaries and letters and use this to very good effect. One pupil wrote, as Florence Nightingale, 'The hospital is filthy dirty - I don't know how to describe it'. Pupils take a lively interest in reading and express their preferences with fluent enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 6 attain very highly in all aspects of English, as a result of outstanding teaching. It is difficult to identify the lower attaining pupils in a class set of books. Pupils read avidly, with enjoyment and deep understanding. Their handwriting is fluid and fluent with personal style. A short written study of a fictional character showed a very good understanding of their personality traits. Pupils express personal views with confidence, and appropriate humour, as when Hercules' great strength was contrasted with his lesser intellectual powers.
10. In mathematics, rigorous monitoring of the school's increased attention to what it provides has paid off. Pupils develop good mental skills and a good understanding of mathematical terms and processes that they use effectively to solve problems. Pupils in Year 2 are confident in their use of big numbers in accurate calculations. By the time they leave the juniors, the pupils are confident in applying their mathematical knowledge across an even greater range, such as transferring their understanding of number to the solving of problems having two, or more, stages. They identify equal angles along parallel lines, and use their knowledge of angles to plot positions accurately using three digit bearings.
11. The science co-ordinator's very good understanding of what each level of attainment requires promotes very high standards in science. Pupils in Year 2 begin to express their own observations and methods independently in words, pictures and tables. They understand what a fair test is and can plan one with help. Most can interpret the results of investigations, checking their predictions in the process. Higher attaining pupils can make general conclusions using correct science terms, such as 'upthrust'. By the end of Year 6 many pupils give clear and detailed explanations of investigations, using fully labelled diagrams, text and measurements. They use their science

knowledge and vocabulary well in conclusions to investigations. 'I think the water which is dirty can be cleaned when it has been filtered but it cannot be drunk until it has been boiled to kill all the microbes'. They use their understanding of concepts, such as Forces, to explain effects in different situations.

12. Work seen during the inspection in dance, art and design, history, and geography was above national expectations. Pupils talk about their work with confidence using the correct vocabulary. They are increasingly skilled at asking questions, comparing and contrasting information, inference and deduction, and these thinking skills are applied successfully across the curriculum. Very high standards are achieved through the school's commitment that all pupils should have the best opportunities for learning.

Pupils of all abilities achieve very well because of very good teaching, which challenges, motivates and supports them.

13. Since the previous inspection the school has made very good progress in its monitoring of pupils' learning so that teachers have a clearer idea of each individual's achievements. Excellent tracking systems enable the headteacher and co-ordinators to set targets as the pupils move through the juniors and take vigorous steps to ensure these are met. This has helped teachers to raise their expectations still higher and be even more effective in meeting the learning needs of all their pupils. Extra support is given to pupils who need it in a range of Booster classes so that they can keep pace with other pupils. As a result, boys and girls of all abilities achieve very well during their time in school. Results of end of Key Stage 2 tests for 2002 showed that the pupils made exceptionally good progress, overall, from seven to eleven.
14. Very good teaching at every stage is based upon the teachers' skill in planning activities that match the needs of all ability groups in every aspect of the curriculum. They use assessment very well to offer work at the right level, and to let the pupils know what the challenges are. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show how much they enjoy this when they say that 'Teachers are very kind. They don't give you impossible work, but it makes you think.' Pupils in Year 6 have a more mature and confident approach still. They say they sometimes find they 'can do the impossible, and then we feel pleased.' Teachers have equally high expectations of themselves. In an excellent dance lesson in the Reception Class, the teacher used lively and interesting Irish folk music well to teach a complex sequence of partner-to-partner sequences before including movements suggested by the children. Excellent relationships, evident in every aspect of the school's work, give the pupils confidence to try out new things because they know that their efforts will always be valued, and built upon.
15. Teachers plan lessons that are exciting and interesting. Pupils in Year 1 added a series of two numbers, mentally, with a high degree of accuracy. The pace of the lesson showed that the teacher expected them to work hard, but his supportive approach ensured that they all wanted to be involved throughout. Although the teaching and learning were rigorous, this was a happy and sociable occasion. The buzz of excitement in learning is evident in many lessons, and shows that the pupils are actively involved in learning, working with maximum effort and concentration. This is maintained by the teachers' very good use of a range of teaching skills.
16. Some children come into the Reception class with low levels of independence. From the start they are encouraged to work things out for themselves. As the pupils move through the school, teachers have increasingly high expectations of their pupils' independent approach to learning. With younger children this can take the form of a simple question; 'Do you want to check your answer with real children, or fingers?' Older pupils are expected to work things out for themselves wherever possible, rather than wait to be told how. Two girls in a Year 5 ICT lesson successfully had a go at aligning an imported paragraph with a previously imported image, and were rightly proud of their achievement.
17. Pupils identified by the school as gifted and talented are offered further learning opportunities that

are both challenging and enriching. Several strands of learning are explored and linked together so that the pupils can then develop their own ideas and themes. Those pupils with special educational needs are given excellent levels of support so that they, also, achieve very well. All staff are totally committed to helping each pupil to do their best. To this end they constantly review their own practice and search for more effective ways of doing things. They work very hard and support each other well.

The curriculum is broad, balanced, rich and relevant, successfully promoting the pupils' enjoyment in learning.

18. The range, depth, quality and variety of the planned and taught curriculum provides very well for the pupils' all-round development. This richness is strikingly illustrated by the quality and range of the work on display throughout the school. The National Curriculum for all subjects is covered fully. The curriculum is well balanced so that there is enough time for pupils to work in depth, for example the Cubist art produced by the Year 6 pupils, rather than skim, and this adds to their enjoyment in their learning. Subjects are linked together sensibly, such as art and history in the study of Ancient Egypt, so that the learning is given greater meaning and relevance to the pupils' experiences and interests. The curriculum planned for the Reception Year children goes far beyond that often found and encourages high levels of independence.
19. The school's aim of 'Establishing patterns for life-long learning' underpins every aspect of the curriculum. It is designed to develop successful learners and thinkers and to provide the pupils with the life skills essential for good citizenship in modern life. The pupils say they 'like school a lot' because 'there's lots to do, it's fun'. They are rarely bored, but resent having to go out to play when they want to get on with something interesting! They relish the challenge that the curriculum offers.
20. The pupils' communication skills are developed very effectively through drama and role play. They are required to organise, summarise and convey information in many different forms. They are taught to find relevant information, comparing and contrasting it in order to begin to link cause and effect. They are also taught to give balanced opinions and make informed judgements. Pupils in Year 2 used these communication skills to very good effect when assuming the character of Florence Nightingale to write home about conditions in Scutari hospital.
21. The curriculum fosters very good personal development. Provision for social development is excellent, with many planned opportunities, such as those in a Year 6 science lesson, for groups to plan, work and review how they got on. Very good spiritual development is promoted in many areas so that pupils have a good awareness of different beliefs and meanings, which leads them to be tolerant of others. This helps them to work in a secure environment where it is safe to take risks in their learning. Religious Education is addressed very well in a variety of festivals celebrated by different faith groups. The pupils are helped to develop a very good understanding of what it means to be part of a multi-cultural society and the work is wide ranging, very well balanced, and often fun, such as the celebration of American Independence Day. Visits to local places, such as Styal Mill, bring the curriculum alive. Younger pupils have afternoon tea in the village to widen their social experiences. Visitors, such as a granddad who talked about his World War II experiences, strengthen links with the local community, as do activities such as planting spring bulbs at Lymm Dam.

The school's very good partnership with parents helps to create a very successful learning environment.

22. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the meeting, as well as their comments on their children's reports, show that they are very strongly supportive of the school, and happy with what it offers their children. They feel that the school helps their children to make good progress and that the teaching is good. Parents are pleased that the school shares their high expectations of their children. The parents appreciate the way in which the school takes note of their comments and suggestions and say that 'Teachers take time to listen'. All this signals to the parents that the school values them and recognises them as important partners in their children's education.
23. The school works closely with the parents right from the beginning. Children starting in the Reception class, and their parents, are given a very good introduction to school life. This helps the

children to settle quickly and happily. The very good levels of communication, through such channels as the excellent half-termly newsletter, give parents a full picture of what is happening, not only within the school, but also in the school's relationship with the wider school community. Other communications, and regular parents' evenings, help the parents understand how their children are progressing as learners, and as people. The parents' high levels of attendance at parents' meetings show their very good support of their children. Communication is a two-way process; the school consults with parents when drawing up the next steps in the school development plan. It also seeks parents' views on new initiatives, as, most recently, whether pupils in Year 3 were having too much homework. There are many informal opportunities to talk at the beginning and end of the day.

24. Parents recognise that the school offers their children appropriate individual learning challenges. They like the fact that the school takes a holistic approach to academic and moral standards. They are well informed of homework arrangements and know what it is and when it has to be completed. They ensure that homework is done on time and help their children in many ways, such as with computer research. One five year old picked out the Dog Star and Orion in a picture of the night sky in a science lesson because her parents had taken her to Jodrell Bank and she had remembered it. Parents also have a clear understanding of the school's methods for promoting good behaviour. They feel school expectations are high and that home values are well-supported. The Social Development Books, recently introduced in Years 3 to 6, create a dialogue between parents, school and pupils and raise awareness of concerns or praise due. Additional dialogue is encouraged through the Homework Books, which enable the parents to see how well their children are doing, and where they need help. Parents know what their children's termly targets are, and when they have been achieved. Parents contribute to the high standards of reading by hearing their children read regularly and commenting on strengths and weaknesses, in the reading diaries. This illustrates to pupils the very good partnership between home and school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved very closely from the start. If any child is struggling with something at school, the teacher will ring home, or catch the parent in the playground, in order to get to the bottom of the problem and sort it out.
25. Parents support the school in many other ways to make it an even more successful learning environment. They raise money enthusiastically for new equipment, including books for the new library. They give their time freely, and some help run after school activities, such as a music ensemble, which widens the experiences available to the pupils. The parents who help in classes feel they are very well prepared by the teachers, and feel valued in true partnership. This means that they are effective in supporting pupils' learning, and in helping them to make good progress.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and does not always fully involve the pupils in assessing their own progress and in setting personal targets for the next step in their learning.

26. Lesson plans are based upon clear purposes for learning, and the teachers are very good at sharing these objectives with their pupils so that the pupils know what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Throughout the lesson, teachers intervene at suitable moments to check the pupils are coping with the work, generally by commenting, or asking questions designed to find out how much they understand. In an art and design lesson in Year 2, this was done very effectively as the pupils' collage designs were shared and the high quality of their work celebrated. Through very good questioning, the teacher led a short discussion on why pupils had chosen particular materials, enabling them to reflect upon their choices, and the effect on the overall design.
27. Teachers comments on ongoing work are often accurate and measured so that the pupils know how they are doing and what more they need to do. Pupils are reminded of what it is they are

finding out, and helped to use their learning from previous lessons to ensure they make good progress. There is good practice in every class. Teachers are supportive of their pupils' efforts and praise them to give them further encouragement, sometimes by using words such as 'fantastic' and 'brilliant', even when the answer, or the written work, is no more than satisfactory. Since these remarks are not always expanded on the pupils do not know what is 'fantastic' about it. This gives pupils a false idea of how well they are doing and makes it difficult for them to see how to improve.

28. Teachers' marking is satisfactory overall, and there are many examples of good, and very good practice throughout the school. However, it is not consistent. At its best, strengths and weaknesses are identified. This leaves pupils of all abilities with a clear idea of what they are doing well, and where they need to improve. Questions are asked, such as 'What does authentic mean? Please come and tell me', in order to build up a learning dialogue. This is done particularly well in the Homework Books of the Year 5 class, where there are some extended written dialogues. In the infants, the emphasis tends to be on praise, again using superlatives such as 'super sentences' and 'fabulous work', when the quality of the work does not merit such emphatic statements. Many written comments focus on presentation only, such as 'Please use your ruler'. Even accurate comments, such as 'Excellent' do not say what, exactly, is excellent about the work so that this can be built on in further lessons. Weaknesses in the work are identified through such comments as 'Set words out in columns, please, and do check your words', but this is less usual than praise, and often does not explain how.
29. Specific targets are not consistently set at the end of pieces of written work as the focus for the next piece of work. This does not help the pupils to analyse their own successes or enable them, or their teachers, to track progress in detail, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Pupils' annual reports often give good, and sometimes very good, indications of standards and progress in English, mathematics and science, but do not consistently set clear enough targets for improvement. In other curriculum subjects, comments are too frequently general and descriptive. The school has recently focused on marking as an aspect of development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards and to improve the quality of educational provision still further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve the consistency and quality of teachers marking by:
 - giving the pupils information about what they need to do to improve;
 - setting clear and specific targets for the next piece of work;
 - using this information to write annual reports for parents which contain clearer information on the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work across the curriculum, and set targets for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	13	2	2	0	0	0
Percentage	15	65	10	10	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	14	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (97)	96 (100)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	96 (100)	96 (100)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (100)	93 (83)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	19	17	19
	Total	29	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (87)	93 (83)	100 (87)
	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	199	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	425067
Total expenditure	429278
Expenditure per pupil	2146
Balance brought forward from previous year	21499
Balance carried forward to next year	17288

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5

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	204
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	36	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	42	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	48	15	2	0
The teaching is good.	45	48	2	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	64	12	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	38	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	61	6	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	56	35	3	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	41	6	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	47	14	6	7

The 'don't know' responses were mostly from parents whose children had recently joined the school.