

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GERARD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hemlington

Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 111706

Headteacher: Mrs E Shovlin

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Soper
18148

Dates of inspection: 14th – 15th October 2002

Inspection number: 247139

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 aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Avalon Court
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Middlesbrough

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rt Rev Mgr R Morgan, VG

Date of previous inspection: 1st December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Gerard's is situated in Hemlington, a suburb just south of Middlesbrough, where the socio-economic circumstances are below average. The percentage of children in high social class households is well below the national average. The school is smaller than other primary schools, with 161 pupils on roll, including 21 part-time children who attend the nursery. There is a trend of mobility of the school's pupils, with approximately 20 per cent of pupil turnover between Years 2 and 6. Thirty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. The school is in a Small Education Action Zone. There are slightly more girls than boys in the school and most pupils are from white, British backgrounds. Four pupils are from mixed backgrounds. Twenty-five pupils, including one with a statement of special educational need, are on the school's special needs register. This represents 15 per cent of the pupils in the school and is below the national average. Ten of these pupils have learning difficulties, including two who have specific learning difficulties. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Standards are good in science and are satisfactory in English by Year 6. However, standards in mathematics are unsatisfactory by Year 6. Pupils make sound progress overall, with particularly good progress having been made this year in English. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive. The teaching is mostly sound and better, though there are some variations that lead to restricted progress, particularly for the more able pupils in some classes. The leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in science are good by the ages of seven and eleven.
- There is good teaching and a well-planned curriculum in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) and so children make good progress.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and so these pupils do well.
- There is good provision for music, which has improved standards since the last inspection.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics are not as good as they might be by Year 6, as progress varies in the school.
- Speaking skills and handwriting skills are below expected standards by the end of Year 6.
- The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching lack sufficient rigour, which means that some teaching is not fully effective in raising standards.
- There is inconsistent use of assessment to guide curricular planning and to ensure work meets the needs of average and higher attaining pupils.
- Attendance is well below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997. There has been a satisfactory improvement overall since then. Standards at the end of Year 6 remain satisfactory in English and good in science, though standards in mathematics are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. Resources are now accessible and stored efficiently, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. Good improvements have been made in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in raising standards in music. There has also been a good improvement in establishing effective strategies for assessment and for the recording of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, but the information gained is not yet used effectively in all classes to inform planning. The school has yet to develop assessment fully for other subjects of the curriculum. The senior management and curriculum co-ordinators are now involved in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, which

is a satisfactory improvement. However, there is still insufficient rigour in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching to ensure there is consistent practice across the school.

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	E	D	C	A
Mathematics	D	C	C	B
Science	E	A	A	A

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

The table shows that pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national tests was satisfactory and in line with the national averages in English and mathematics. It was very good and well above the national average in science. It was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics in comparison with schools in similar contexts. In the same year, at the end of Year 2, pupils' performance was in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with schools in similar contexts the pupils' performance was well above average in reading, above average in writing and satisfactory in mathematics.

Evidence from the inspection confirms that pupils attain higher standards in science than in other subjects, with standards that are good and above average in both Years 2 and 6. Standards in English are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. They are satisfactory and in line with what is expected nationally in mathematics in Year 2, but are below national expectations by Year 6, which differs from the results in the national tests in 2002. Apart from the results in 1998 and 2000, when performance overall was adversely affected by long periods of staff illness and a succession of different supply teachers, there has been a trend over time of higher performance in science than in the other core subjects. Generally, standards have been broadly satisfactory in mathematics but below average in English, though there has been a marked improvement in English between 2000 and 2002. The Small Education Action Zone support, which includes additional resources such as books and portable word processors, is helping to raise standards in English. There has not been a similar effect yet in mathematics by Year 6, as pupils are still working at levels below those expected for their age. There are inconsistencies in the use of assessment to ensure work meets the needs of all pupils, particularly in the early stages of Key Stage 2, which affect the rate of progress of average and more able pupils in both subjects between Years 3 and 6. In some cases, higher attaining pupils' achievement is also adversely affected by the lack of appropriate challenge. Handwriting standards and pupils' speaking skills are below expected standards for their age by Year 6.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive good help from experienced support staff, who work closely with teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure pupils' different needs are met.

Children enter the nursery with below average prior attainment. They make good progress and meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They continue to make steady progress overall in Years 1 and 2. Around 20 per cent of the original Year 2 pupils leave this school before Year 6, and this year only 50 per cent of the original Year 2 pupils remain in Year 6, making predictions of performance, target setting and comparisons in relation to pupils' prior attainment difficult and unreliable. The targets for 2002 were not reached and the current targets are too high, taking into account pupils' prior attainment and the number of pupils with special educational needs. The school is reviewing these targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, but a few in some classes lack self control.
Personal development and relationships	There are good relationships. Personal development is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to express their views are sometimes missed.
Attendance	Poor. Attendance is well below the national average, mainly due to holidays in term time.

Pupils show interest and enjoy coming to school. They willingly take responsibility. Attendance has declined this year and this has a detrimental effect on pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall. Particular strengths include teachers' secure subject knowledge, good lesson introductions and use of resources. These motivate pupils, who usually concentrate and work hard. Pupils are usually managed well. The main weaknesses in some teaching include the lack of suitably adapted tasks for pupils with differing attainment, such as where they all undertake the same mathematics and science tasks, and the less successful management of pupils and lesson organisation. In some cases, the pace of lessons is too slow. This leads to some restlessness and inappropriate behaviour, which restricts pupils' progress. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily. In the best lessons, teachers manage pupils well and provide work that is adapted carefully to their different needs. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. They are given carefully adapted work that meets their different needs and capabilities and they are supported effectively by teachers and experienced non-teaching staff. The teaching of higher attaining pupils is generally good in Years 1, 2 and 6. However, there is not enough adaptation of work to meet the needs of average and higher attaining pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, particularly in mathematics. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Activities are planned well in all six areas of learning and good use is made of assessment to build on what the children have learned.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good provision in the Foundation Stage, where children are given a wide range of experiences. Satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, where planning does not always identify work for pupils with differing prior attainment and where there is sometimes too much use of worksheets, such as in science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The provision is managed well by the co-ordinator. Teachers make good use of information to provide suitable work for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory overall for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Good provision for pupils' social development. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. There is a sound code of conduct and rewards and sanctions. However, there are too many different sets of rules to promote a consistent understanding by pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects.

The school provides a wealth of musical opportunities, including playing the recorder, handbells and other instruments, and singing in the choir. Pupils have many opportunities to perform in the local community. All pupils have equal opportunity and access. There are good procedures for child protection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are unsatisfactory. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is inconsistent and means that some average and higher attaining pupils do not always make good progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher is supported well by key staff. Management responsibilities are delegated appropriately and staff have a shared commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They take an active part in school life, but are not always fully informed about matters such as attendance and the quality of teaching and so have an insufficient overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching have been established, but as yet these procedures lack enough rigour to ensure consistency in teaching across the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of all available resources and funding to maintain small classes, provide adequate support staff and books and equipment.

Leadership places a strong emphasis on promoting the school's aims and values and in providing equality for all pupils. The leadership and management are focused on raising standards and have used funds provided through the Small Education Action Zone well to improve those in English. However, the monitoring of classroom teaching and learning does not sufficiently identify teaching strengths and weaknesses so that teaching can improve. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress. • The quality of teaching is good. • The school promotes good values. • Children are encouraged to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of information about their children's progress. • The amount of homework.

Inspectors agree that most teaching is good, but there are some inconsistencies in the quality. They agree that pupils are encouraged to work hard and to do their best and that good values are promoted. Inspectors disagree with some parents' concerns about homework, which is satisfactory. They agree that some information to parents could be improved. Some of the pupils' end of term reports are written in a complex way and information about attendance does not clearly explain that the rate is poor.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in science are good by the ages of seven and eleven.

1. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes by the time they are seven. For example, in studying life processes and living things, they understand that bodies need food and water to grow. They sort foods into different categories. They appreciate that exercise, such as swimming, is good for the body and also recognise that certain substances such as poison can be dangerous. Even at the start of Year 2, average and higher attaining pupils begin to talk about calcium in milk and vitamins. They already have a good knowledge and understanding of a fair test, through, for example, testing different kinds of soap. They recognise and know the uses of different materials such as wood, metal and plastic and know that some materials can be changed. For example, they understand that water changes when it is heated or cooled. Lower attaining pupils make good progress in testing, predicting and reaching conclusions. Most pupils understand that everyday appliances use electricity and know how a switch can be used to break a simple circuit. They recognise forces and explain different sources of light. The good work undertaken in music helps to consolidate pupils' understanding of sound, such as knowing that there are many sources and that sound travels away from these.
2. By the end of Year 6 pupils carry out tests confidently, such as when studying the force of gravity, where they weigh objects in air and water. They predict outcomes well and present data in different ways. More able pupils present their work very well, using precise statements, such as "The boat is floating because the upthrust is equal to the gravity" to accompany detailed diagrams. Lower attaining pupils are closely supported in learning to predict and present their work, though they do not yet have secure skills in these aspects. All of the pupils in the school use information and communication technology well to support their work in science, particularly to devise graphs, tables and diagrams.
3. The lessons include good, brief revisions of previous work to ensure there is a good progression in learning. There are good explanations and questions that encourage pupils to use scientific language, to discuss hypotheses and to make decisions about ways of recording their findings. Pupils collaborate well with each other and show enthusiasm when presenting their results. For example, in a Year 2 food tasting activity, most pupils had a good understanding of vitamins and showed great delight in talking about the impact of scurvy! Most pupils understood how to record information in tables and more able pupils knew how to input data to produce a block graph on the computer.

There is good teaching and a well-planned curriculum in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) and so children make good progress.

4. The quality of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage was good at the time of the last inspection and continues to be so. There has been a good improvement since 1997 in the provision for children in the reception class. Some of the limitations seen at that time were caused by the restricted opportunities provided in the mixed age class of reception children and Year 1 pupils. The children are now taught in the separate reception class and they have good opportunities for making choices within a well-devised curriculum.
5. Activities are planned effectively in all areas of learning. There is a wide range of interesting investigative tasks, which enables children to explore and experiment, ask and answer questions and make deductions. For example, in both the nursery and in the reception class, there are investigative tasks, such as studying shells, in various activities, including matching and comparing them with silhouettes and playing with them in dry and wet sand and in water. Teachers and other adults give good guidance, such as in encouraging children to focus on

aspects such as shape, size and position. As a result of this good provision, the children make good progress. There are many activities for promoting speaking and listening, reading and early writing skills, which are used well. For example, children use the telephones, computers, reading and home corners to develop imaginary conversations, recognise and match letters, tell their own versions of a story and develop creative scenarios. For example, when 'reading' a book, some children in the nursery used the illustrations well to create scenarios, such as one fish being sad because the others were ignoring it. They went on to resolve the 'problem' by inventing friends for the fish and creating a happy ending to the story!

6. In early mathematics, the good range of resources is used well to develop children's understanding of number, colour, shape, size and volume. Mathematics areas contain many resources, such as differently sized containers, shapes and number games. Numbers are clearly displayed to help with their recognition and some children in the nursery already recognise and match these to objects. There are good resources for developing children's creativity. For example, areas with percussion instruments encourage children to experiment and they compose a variety of sounds. They are encouraged in the reception class, for instance, to develop accompaniments to their favourite nursery rhymes. In all activities, adults interact sensitively with the children, encouraging them to express their ideas and to become increasingly independent.
7. In both classes, teachers and other adults encourage collaboration, dialogue and independence. For example, when putting on their coats for outdoor play, children are encouraged to fasten buttons themselves and to help each other. They are encouraged to share when using materials such as paints, crayons and paper. The children quickly develop self-confidence, with more able children talking fluently about their experiences. Children play increasingly with others, though some still play happily on their own. All show confidence in seeking help from an adult. Teachers monitor each child's progress, noting their achievements and future needs and use this information well when they plan the next activity. The nursery and reception staff work closely together and with parents. There are good plans in place to improve the nursery and home links, such as through improved liaison with, and information to, parents.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and so these pupils do well.

8. The school has a below average number of pupils with special educational needs, but some classes have a significant proportion of pupils with these needs. The co-ordinator leads and manages the provision effectively, which contributes well to the good teaching provided for these pupils.
9. The co-ordinator ensures that good plans for pupils' education are provided for individual pupils and teachers. Pupils, parents and the experienced support staff are all well informed about the targets that are set. Pupils make good progress towards achieving the targets, which are clearly written. The co-ordinator allocates good time for meeting all parents of pupils with special educational needs at the beginning of each term and close links are forged with outside specialists such as learning support staff and educational psychologists. Support staff are also included in review meetings. Where specific needs, such as behavioural support, are identified, the school suitably seeks the help of outside specialists. They work closely with the school, both in supporting these pupils in lessons and in providing training for staff. For example, the educational psychologist has explained specific difficulties such as dyslexia and has discussed language development with nursery staff.
10. The school has made good use of funds provided through the Small Education Action Zone to purchase additional resources for targeted pupils and those with special educational needs have benefited greatly from access to these resources. For example, these as well as other pupils in the school benefit from using the interactive white board, which enhances the information and communication technology provision in the suite. Activities such as reading,

matching words to pictures and sequencing pictures are undertaken with staff and also alongside recorded programmes. This supports pupils' listening, speaking and reading skills well. Portable word processing machines have been bought to support writing skills. They are used by pupils who need help with spelling and writing in their classrooms, in a range of lessons. This motivates pupils to write and enables them to practise, amend and produce work of a reasonable quality.

11. In the lessons observed, pupils with special educational needs received good support from teachers and non-teaching staff. For example, a small group of Year 2 pupils worked successfully on recognising and devising instructions. The support assistant was fully involved in the lesson and guided the pupils well, by asking open-ended questions to encourage them to think of a sequence of instructions. In a Year 6 literacy lesson about play scripts, pupils with special educational needs received carefully adapted worksheets with the introductory section already prepared for them to complete. They were encouraged to work collaboratively to share their ideas and to gain confidence. The pupils worked hard and succeeded in developing a script, which they then presented to others in the class. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson, there was very effective support from the assistant for pupils' development in understanding length. The assistant guided the pupils well as they used cubes as a means of measuring the length of objects.
12. There are close links between the school and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs and policies are regularly reviewed, paying particular attention to inclusion matters. These ensure that pupils' differing needs and their progress are monitored well.

There is good provision for music, which has improved standards since the last inspection

13. Since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6, considerable improvement has been made to the provision for music, particularly due to the headteacher's expertise in the subject. Although few lessons were seen, groups attending lunchtime practices performed well in playing the recorder and in singing. Recorder players played in harmony and in two parts. The pupils' singing in assembly was in tune and showed appropriate breathing, diction and rhythm. Reception children developed appropriate knowledge of percussion instruments and began to follow a beat. Nursery children sang enthusiastically. In Year 6, pupils composed rhythms to represent industrial sounds well. They showed a good sense of pulse and a good awareness of dynamics and effects, which were a result of the very good teaching.
14. There is now a good range of resources, unlike the situation at the time of the last inspection. Resources are stored well and are readily accessible to pupils and staff. There is now a clear focus on composition and recording. The headteacher leads lunchtime practices in singing, recorder playing and handbell ringing. These show a rich expertise and high expectations. A good proportion of pupils, both boys and girls, attend these sessions and show obvious enjoyment. There are two choirs and two handbell groups and all pupils have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Visiting teachers of violin and guitar are in school every week. A weekly dance club takes place and a music evening and talent show provide opportunities for pupils to perform. The pupils present a Nativity play at Christmas. The headteacher leads local school musical events, which involve pupils in performing to various sections of the community, including the local churches and music festivals. She has also contributed to a recording of local schools' music. These opportunities contribute well to pupils' social and cultural development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in mathematics are not as good as they might be by Year 6, as progress varies in the school.

15. Progress in mathematics is broadly satisfactory by the end of Year 2. In some work observed, pupils made very good progress. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, where the teaching was very good, pupils rapidly learned how to estimate and measure, using cubes. The teaching ensured that all pupils understood the work and excellent strategies were used to help them to understand the concept of length. These were done by explaining clearly and giving additional help to those who were initially unsure and by regularly asking questions. For example, the teacher helped the pupils to compare the lengths of paper with the number of cubes and caught the pupils' interest by using long strips of paper, which required the use of many cubes to match their lengths! By the end of Year 2 most pupils attain average standards, though there is sometimes not enough adaptation of work for average and higher attaining pupils, which restricts the rate of progress for the latter. Although there are targets in pupils' books, these are not specific to pupils' individual rates of progress and are essentially indicators of levels attained in the National Curriculum programmes of study.
16. In Year 3 there is insufficient adaptation of work for pupils with differing prior attainment. Expectations are not high enough. For example, more able pupils still work with simple addition, adding a single number to a two-digit number, such as $3+16$. They count forward and back in twos and threes, know the 2-times table and know the characteristics of three-dimensional shapes. Some work is not marked well. Assessment sheets are not completed and pupils' work is untidy. In an unsatisfactory Year 3 lesson, all pupils did the same task of making a multiplication square for the 6-times table. More able pupils completed this task and waited restlessly for others to finish. Lower attaining pupils struggled and required the help of the teaching assistant. The planning for this lesson was brief and did not show the learning objective, focusing rather on the learning activity, which was the same for all pupils. In Year 4 there is a satisfactory amount of work but there is not a good progression. Marking is not helpful as it fails to guide pupils towards improvement. In a lesson observed, there was not enough adaptation of work for the more able pupils.
17. By Year 5 there are improved expectations of work, which are generally good. Average and lower attaining pupils attain standards that are still below what is expected, though there is an improved rate of progress for pupils. By the time pupils are in Year 6, pupils are unsure of some aspects of number processes, such as division with remainders. More able pupils have secure understanding of tables, square numbers and problems.

Speaking skills and handwriting skills are below expected standards by the end of Year 6.

18. Although the youngest children and those in Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in both speaking and handwriting skills, this varies across the school. Opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons to encourage pupils to discuss their work, to make suggestions and to ask questions. In the best cases, such as in a Year 6 literacy lesson, good time is set aside to encourage pupils to use an increasingly complex vocabulary and to take part fully in discussions. This encourages pupils to express their ideas and to use a widening range of vocabulary. In contrast, in a Year 5 science lesson, lower attaining pupils had insufficient opportunity to join the discussion about the results of scientific investigations and they became restless. Handwriting is still in a printed form by the time pupils are in Year 6, which is below expectations for pupils of their age. This does not contribute well to pupils' fluency in writing and their presentation skills.

The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching lack sufficient rigour, which means that some teaching is not fully effective in raising standards.

19. Although there has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in providing co-ordinators with an increased role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, this is still not rigorous enough to improve the consistency of the teaching across the school. Some lesson observations have been carried out by senior managers and they have been given good support and guidance in these procedures from local education authority advisers. The headteacher and co-ordinators have undertaken some monitoring of lessons and have written reports on the lessons they have observed, but their evaluations do not focus on teaching and learning enough to provide effective advice for teachers to develop. In some cases, reports focus solely on learning, with no indication of teaching strengths and weaknesses.
20. Evidence from lessons observed during the inspection shows that there is still some variation in the quality of teaching in the school, as noted in the last inspection report. In the less successful lessons, there are still some weaknesses in teaching strategies, including those used for managing pupils. Work is not always devised well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. There is no recorded evidence of the monitoring, evaluation and development of the quality of the provision in these classes. Governors are not fully aware of the school's identified teaching strengths and weaknesses, which limits their role as a critical friend to the school.

There is inconsistent use of assessment to guide curricular planning and to ensure work meets the needs of average and higher attaining pupils.

21. Pupils' special educational needs are effectively identified through close observation and assessment procedures, which are used successfully to plan good support strategies. Pupils' individual plans show precise targets and their progress is closely monitored. In the Foundation Stage there is good practice, with children's progress being monitored and recorded as they develop in the different areas of learning. Regular examples of their achievement are recorded and explained in their books and subsequent learning activities clearly focus on building upon what the children have already learned.
22. The school has satisfactorily addressed the issue at the time of the last inspection regarding the establishment of assessment and recording procedures. In Years 1 to 6 there are appropriate assessment procedures in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science). Pupils' work is regularly assessed and ongoing progress is recorded. In the best cases, teachers use this information to plan work well for different pupils. This means that there is good attention paid to adapting the content of, for example, written activities, which ensures that all pupils understand the task.
23. In the weakest cases, all pupils undertake the same work, which means that more able pupils have insufficient challenge, whilst less able pupils become confused and find the work difficult. In these weaker cases, planning does not show what different groups of pupils are expected to achieve. Lesson objectives are not clear and are sometimes confused with the planned activities. All pupils carry out the same task, regardless of their prior attainment. In a numeracy lesson, for example, when pupils were reaching the end of the allocated lesson time, behaviour deteriorated when many had already completed the task and had no other work provided to extend their learning. Valuable teaching time was wasted in addressing the inattention of several pupils. In some other cases, such as in a Year 4 numeracy lesson, work was pitched at too high a level and there was insufficient time provided for discussing the concepts and objectives. The lack of discussion was a feature in several lessons, with missed opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills. Whilst the quality of pupils' work over time is generally satisfactory, the scrutiny of this work confirms that in some classes there is still insufficient adaptation of the content to meet the needs of all pupils. There is also evidence

that opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' writing skills across subjects. This restricts pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of writing purposes and formats. The quality of marking, particularly in mathematics, varies from being constructive and setting good future targets to providing minimal guidance, and so limits the rate of progress.

Attendance is well below average.

24. Attendance is poor. It is well below the national average. There was a pattern of lower than average attendance in previous years, with an improvement in 2000 – 2001, but there has been a decline over the last year. Attendance information at the time of the last inspection indicates a slightly below average attendance rate at that time. The scrutiny of registers shows that holiday taking during term time is the reason for most absences.
25. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are not satisfactory. Although statutory requirements are met, there are some aspects that are not monitored closely. The school has the regular support of an education welfare officer, who visits families when necessary. Unexplained absences are pursued well by the school. However, holiday taken for more than ten days is incorrectly marked as authorised absence in class registers. The school does not monitor the effect that longer-term absence has on pupils' attainment and progress. The information to parents does not make clear the school's attendance rate in relation to schools nationally, which means that parents are unaware of the poor attendance rate. The school and governors are not fully aware of the poor level of attendance last year and so they are not in a good position to help to improve this.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

26. In order to further improve the quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) raise pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring that between Years 3 to 6 work is carefully adapted to meet the needs of average and higher attaining pupils;
 - improving the precision of pupils' targets so that their progress can be monitored more effectively;
 - (2) improve standards in pupils' speaking skills and their handwriting skills by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring that pupils in all classes have regular opportunities for discussing their work;
 - ensuring that handwriting is systematically developed across the school;
 - (3) improve the rigour of the procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching to ensure there is consistently effective teaching across the school by:
 - establishing clear criteria for lesson observations, which focus on teaching strengths and weaknesses and their impact on learning;
 - rigorously following up identified areas for improvement with the appropriate support;
 - increasing governors' awareness of strengths and weaknesses so that they can contribute more effectively to the monitoring and evaluation process;
 - (4) improve the consistency of the use of assessment in Years 3 to 6 to ensure work meets the needs of average and higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics, so that they can make improved progress by:
 - ensuring planning is based on detailed knowledge of what pupils can do and are ready to do next;
 - planning clear objectives for different groups of pupils;
 - improving the quality of marking to ensure it provides constructive guidance for pupils to improve their work;
 - (5) improve the systems for monitoring and promoting good attendance to improve pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that clear differences are shown between authorised and unauthorised absence in the registers;
 - providing clearer information to parents about attendance rates and holiday entitlement;
 - finding ways to raise the profile of the need for good attendance and its impact on pupils' progress.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

17

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	4	7	2	0	0
Percentage	0	24	24	41	11	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	150
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

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	1	25

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.6

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)

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

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	23	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	88 (80)	92 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	23	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	88 (84)	96 (92)
	National	84 (85)	86 (89)	90 (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	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	14
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (84)	75 (72)	96 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (84)	79 (76)	87 (84)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

* Because fewer than ten girls took the tests in 2002 the numbers are omitted from the table in line with the governors reporting arrangements to parents.

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	146	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.8
Average class size	21.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	471,353
Total expenditure	458,580
Expenditure per pupil	2,388.44
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,119
Balance carried forward to next year	29,892

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	161
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	32	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	61	10	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	52	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	48	48	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	29	16	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	32	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	35	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	42	42	10	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	58	35	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	52	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	26	10	3	10

* Numbers may not total 100 due to rounding.