

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG RIDINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brentwood

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114902

Headteacher: Mrs. G.M. Ashton

Reporting inspector: Alison M. Cartlidge
OIN 23609

Dates of inspection: 24th –25th March 2003

Inspection number: 247507

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 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Long Ridings Avenue
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Essex

Postcode: CM13 1DU

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. D. Johnson

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Long Ridings Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Brentwood in Essex. It has on roll 386 pupils between the ages of four and eleven. Pupils are taught in fourteen classes, each with one age group and in ability sets for numeracy in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils come from favourable home backgrounds with three quarters living in privately owned homes and the remaining quarter in rented accommodation. Pupils come to the school from the town and surrounding area. The school is in an area of high mobility and one in three pupils join the school after Year 2. Seven per cent of pupils take free school meals and this is below average for the country. Assessments carried out when children first start school in the reception classes show a wide range of ability with attainment being above average overall. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is eight per cent and four pupils have statements of special educational needs. These figures are below the national averages and include a range of needs. Seven per cent of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and whilst this figure is above average, only three of these pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The first languages of most of the EAL pupils are Bengali, Afrikaans, French and Arabic.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The headteacher provides very effective leadership, ensuring that the quality of teaching is good overall with a third of teaching being very good. For the last three years, pupils' attainment has been consistently well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, attainment has been well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. The cost per pupil is broadly average and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher enables all members of staff and governors to work together effectively.
- Very good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils develop good skills.
- Teachers use a wide range of strategies to make lessons interesting.
- The very good provision for social and moral development helps pupils to develop very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- There are very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school's work.

What could be improved

- There are insufficient opportunities for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 to extend their writing skills.
- Pupils are given too few opportunities to show independence or take the initiative in their learning and resources in the library are unsatisfactory.

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 good progress since the time of the last inspection in 1998 when it was judged to be good. Pupils' attainment has improved in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, very good provision for ICT means that pupils' attainment is rising rapidly in this subject. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is now effective and information about pupils' attainment taken from test data is used successfully to plan improvements in the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators are taking a more active role in monitoring the school's work. There have been very good improvements in educational

resources for the foundation stage (reception classes) and ICT.

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	B	B	B
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	B	A

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

Children in the foundation stage make good progress and most are on target to exceed the expectations of the nationally recognised early learning goals by the end of the year in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Test results have confirmed these high standards have been maintained over the last three years.

Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. High standards in test results in mathematics have been maintained over the last four years and have never been lower than above average in English and science. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) in the writing aspect of English is too low. In science, pupils have very good subject knowledge though their ability to devise and record their own investigations is underdeveloped.

Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. They make good progress overall, with very good progress being made in one in three lessons. An analysis of National Curriculum test data in 2002 shows that compared with other schools in the local education authority, pupils make very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from the reception year to Year 2 and in mathematics and science from Year 2 to Year 6. In English, progress from Year 3 to Year 6 was satisfactory in 2002, with reading being stronger than writing. Pupils make better progress in extending their factual knowledge than in improving their skills in subjects such as history and geography and do not show enough initiative and independence in their work.

In consultation with the local education authority, the school sets challenging targets in English and mathematics for the end of Year 6. These targets were exceeded in 2002 in mathematics but not reached in English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to come to school, are very attentive in lessons and concentrate very well. They are very enthusiastic about taking part in activities such as clubs and additional music lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. They are very polite and friendly and play together sensibly.
Personal development and	Good overall. Relationships are very good and pupils are exceptionally good at carrying out the wide range of responsibilities they are given.

relationships	However, they do not develop sufficient skills in taking the initiative in their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Rates of attendance are in line with the national averages. Some parents take their children on holiday during term time and this has a negative impact on their education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall, with one in three lessons being very good. The very good teaching occurs in various subjects across the school. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Throughout the school, teachers work together effectively, supporting each other in their lesson planning and ensuring that work is well organised and prepared. This enables them to maintain a good pace in lessons so that all pupils can concentrate well, work hard and learn quickly. The teachers are very good at managing pupils' behaviour and members of staff develop very good relationships with the pupils and each other. Teachers are skilled at making lessons interesting and use a good variety of methods to maintain pupils' attention. Effective use is made of educational resources, including ICT. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils with special educational needs enabling them to be included in all aspects of school life. Pupils with English as an additional language are given effective support in learning to speak English.

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics lessons is good overall with several examples of very good teaching. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment in mathematics enabling teachers to meet their needs more effectively and this has a good impact on attainment and progress. In Years 1 and 2, small class sizes help teachers to meet individual needs well and to teach basic skills effectively. However, in Years 3 to 6 pupils are given too few opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English, limiting progress in writing.

Throughout the school, teachers provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in their learning and to carry out independent work. When marking work teachers do not ensure that pupils take heed of their written comments.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Very good use is made of an attractive and well-resourced outdoor area for reception children and ICT is used very well across the curriculum. However, too much time is allocated to English at the expense of other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective procedures for identifying individual needs. Pupils are supported well, especially in literacy and numeracy, enabling them to make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The local authority helps the school to identify needs and pupils are given effective support in class enabling them to learn to speak English quickly and take a full part in school life.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for social and moral development is very good. Pupils are given very good opportunities for taking responsibility for tasks around the school and members of staff provide very good role models. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Members of staff know the pupils well and provide a high level of care. The school provides a safe and healthy working environment. As at the time of the last inspection, not all pupil absences are explained adequately.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very powerful and purposeful influence on the work of the school. Her vision for the school is shared with members of staff and governors and high standards are expected and maintained very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is enthusiastic and supports the work of the school well. There are several new governors who are developing their roles and responsibilities and are keen to become more involved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Members of staff monitor teaching closely and analyse test data to establish main areas for development. The school has identified the need to improve the provision for writing. However, the school does not monitor the way all groups of pupils learn to ensure even progress.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Spending is carefully planned to support areas for development and the principles of best value are applied effectively. However, a large contingency fund has been maintained when resources in the library are unsatisfactory and do not support learning.

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 like school, become mature and responsible and behave well. Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Members of staff are approachable and supply good information about the work of the school. The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework is seen to be either too much or too little. The range of activities outside lessons.

Most parents are very positive about all aspects of the school's work. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Inspection findings are that the school provides an appropriate range of activities outside lessons and the provision for homework is satisfactory overall. However, English homework is not always sufficiently challenging particularly for higher attaining pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve well in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

- (1) Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science has improved since the time of the last inspection by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment has improved in mathematics and been maintained successfully in English and science. Pupils benefit from good quality teaching and the high expectations of members of staff. For the last three years, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has been consistently higher than that found nationally. Test scores show that pupils make very good progress in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress in writing is very good in Years 1 and 2, but more able pupils make slower progress in developing writing skills in Years 3 to 6.
- (2) Tests taken at the start of reception year show children's attainment on starting school to be above average overall. Inspection findings show that pupils make at least good and often very good progress in lessons in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2, with teaching meeting the needs of all pupils effectively. This is confirmed by the results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, which show that pupils are achieving well in English, mathematics and science. In the tests in 2002, results in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the average for all and similar schools. In Year 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The local education authority carries out a detailed analysis of test data at the end of each year, comparing pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, with their attainment on starting school. This analysis shows that when compared with other schools in the local authority, pupils made very good progress in writing and mathematics and good progress in reading. When compared with similar schools in the local authority, pupils' progress was very good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- (3) Inspection findings confirm that pupils continue to learn well in Years 3 to 6. Test results at the end of Year 6 show that in 2002, pupils' attainment was well above average in mathematics when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In science, pupils' attainment was above average when compared with all schools but well above average when compared with similar schools. In English, writing is a comparative weakness of attainment with a below average number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) by the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, National Curriculum test results in English show that pupils' overall attainment was above average when compared with all and with similar schools.
- (4) The local education authority's analysis of test data at the end of each Year 6 compares results with pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2. This analysis shows that, when compared with all schools and with similar schools in the local education authority, pupils' progress was very good in mathematics and science, but only satisfactory in English. The satisfactory rate of progress in English reflects the lower levels of attainment in writing, especially amongst more able pupils.
- (5) The school has set challenging targets for pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6. The school's test data for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 confirm that the school is well placed to maintain high test results by the end of Year 6, with pupils in these year groups achieving well for their age.

The very good leadership of the headteacher enables all members of staff and governors to work together effectively.

- (6) The headteacher provides a very clear educational direction for the work of the school and has a very good understanding of its key strengths and weaknesses. The school's aim to develop the whole child is well known and supported by members of staff and governors and there is a very strong commitment to maintaining and further increasing pupils' academic and personal progress. Members of staff are very successful in maintaining high standards in English, mathematics and science at the same time as supporting pupils so that they develop into

mature and responsible citizens. Leadership and management are better than at the time of the last inspection, when the headteacher was new to the school.

- (7) The headteacher's high profile around the school makes her accessible to parents and all members of the school community and her keen enthusiasm helps to motivate others. Parents are supportive of the school and are very pleased with most aspects of its work, including the quality of leadership and management.
- (8) The headteacher has very high expectations of herself, members of staff and pupils and ensures that good momentum is maintained when carrying out school developments. Challenging targets are set for each year group and the school is constantly striving to improve further. Members of staff reflect critically on their own work and that of others within a supportive and caring framework. For example, teachers plan work in pairs enabling them to share ideas and to consider what works well and what could be improved next time.
- (9) There is a strong commitment to school development. All members of staff have clearly designated roles and are well trained in carrying out their leadership and management responsibilities. The deputy headteacher has a good understanding of her responsibilities and shares an overview of the school's work with the headteacher. The senior management team meets frequently and careful note is made of any action that needs to be taken prior to the next meeting.
- (10) Subject co-ordinators review their subjects effectively and share their findings with the rest of the staff. All members of staff and governors have good opportunities to take part in preparing parts of the annual school improvement plan. However, as a result the document is rather extensive making the main priorities unclear. Evaluations made about the previous year identify what action has taken place though there is little information about the impact of these changes on standards. Despite this, actions taken are successful and have a very good impact on the work of the school. For example, the recent development of the outdoor area for reception children has brought about a noticeable improvement in the balance of the curriculum with children showing good interest, concentration and enjoyment in lessons. The school has identified correctly the need to improve the quality of writing for higher attaining pupils.
- (11) Procedures for carrying out performance management are used effectively to identify whole school and individual needs and to target training where it is needed most. Good practise is shared by enabling members of staff to observe each other at work and new members of staff are supported well by members of the senior management team.
- (12) The headteacher and other members of staff share information on pupils' progress from annual tests and use the information collected to assess what further support is required for a whole class or for individual pupils. They consider how the curriculum can be altered to provide pupils with a better education. For example, an analysis of information in mathematics showed a relative weakness in pupils' attainment in 'space and measures'. The school has altered planning so that this topic is sometimes covered earlier in the term and not just when pupils are beginning to tire towards the end of term. The headteacher has identified the need to analyse test data in greater depth to ensure that the progress of different groups of pupils is even.
- (13) The school has thorough procedures for monitoring the curriculum, teaching and learning. There are rolling programmes for observing lessons, examining aspects of teachers' planning and examples of pupils' work. The information collected is shared with relevant members of staff and is used to help plan staff training and to develop subjects. The consistently good quality of teaching and very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils provide clear evidence for the effectiveness of this work.
- (14) Governors, many of whom are new to the school, are enthusiastic and well motivated. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and monitor specific aspects of its work thoroughly. Written reports by governors vary in quality, with the best providing valuable observations about the way the school works.

Very good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils

develop good skills.

- (15) Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) was identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection, with pupils making unsatisfactory progress. This is no longer the case. Very effective management of the subject by the ICT co-ordinator has ensured that provision has been significantly improved. Since the last inspection, the school has greatly improved resources and lesson planning so that they support pupils' learning more effectively. Teachers are confident about teaching the subject and they make very good use of computers in lessons. All these factors have had a very positive impact on standards. Pupils are now achieving well and have good basic skills. This is indicative of the high expectations of teachers, ensuring that work is challenging and meets the needs of all pupils.
- (16) There is now a broad and balanced curriculum and thorough planning by teachers ensures that there is a clear progression in the development of ICT skills as pupils get older. In the reception class, children use paint programmes confidently to colour pictures, controlling the mouse and using the icons to change the size of the 'paintbrush' and the colours that they are using. More able children save their work without adult support.
- (17) By Year 2, pupils show good keyboard skills when word processing their writing. They learn how to add a picture to their text, and type in words confidently, showing good skills in changing the colour, size and style of the print-faces that they are using. Most pupils work independently, saving and printing work by themselves.
- (18) In Year 6, pupils have a good range of skills. They present information in a variety of ways, showing a very good understanding of how they can use ICT to hold the attention of the reader. For example, they produce reports on different animal habitats incorporating graphs, pictures and text, using various presentation techniques such as altering the font, text size or colour to make the work interesting. Pupils use a range of techniques to produce multimedia presentations about their residential visit to the Isle of Wight. They scan in digital photographs that they have taken and use a commercial programme to add movement and sound to their presentations.
- (19) Throughout the school, pupils understand that ICT can be used as a method of investigation. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils learn these skills in a purposeful way. Internet access is carefully supervised and pupils use the internet confidently to carry out their own research. For example, pupils in Year 5 visited a web-site to find information about a village in India. Younger pupils identify uses of ICT in everyday life, for example explaining how supermarkets use bar codes to price food.
- (20) Pupils' progress is supported well throughout the school, with the very good use of ICT across the curriculum being a significant strength in teaching. Teachers take every opportunity to integrate ICT into different subject areas. This helps to make learning relevant and interesting. During the inspection, pupils were able to apply their ICT skills in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, geography, science and history. For example, in Year 3, pupils used the internet and CD-ROMs to find out about different aspects of life in Ancient Rome.
- (21) ICT is used very effectively to support learning in numeracy and literacy. There are regularly time-tabled literacy and numeracy lessons in the ICT suite. These are very effective in helping pupils to practise their ICT skills on purposeful and interesting tasks. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils consolidated key word-processing skills whilst learning about 'conditional phrases'. Similarly, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, pupils developed keyboard skills as they used a computer programme to draw shapes that had different areas.
- (22) The school is fortunate in having a very well resourced ICT suite and this is used very effectively to develop skills. Teachers also make very good use of an additional mini-suite located near the Years 5 and 6 classrooms. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and the use of the ICT suite and other resources is carefully planned.

- (23) Lessons in the ICT suite are well organised. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the class was shown how to use different icons to add a picture to their text. Explanations were very clear, with the laptop and projector ensuring that all pupils understood exactly what they were expected to do. In this lesson, pupils were clearly motivated by the task and showed good levels of concentration. Pupils were given good opportunities to try out the new skill for themselves, with the teacher giving additional support to less able pupils when it was required. The very good quality of teaching meant that by the end of the lesson all pupils could carry out the task confidently.
- (24) Improvements in provision have been very carefully managed by the subject leader, who has worked very hard to challenge and inspire teachers. Extensive training has had a good impact on teachers' skills. Monitoring is thorough and informative, and means that the subject leader has a clear vision of what she wants to achieve next.

Teachers use a wide range of strategies to make lessons interesting.

- (25) The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection, with teaching being good overall with about a third of lessons being very good. The very good teaching occurs in various subjects across the school. Inspection findings support parents' positive views about teaching. A key factor in the effectiveness of teaching is the way that teachers use a wide range of educational resources and teaching methods to capture and maintain the pupils' interest. Lessons are carefully organised and prepared ensuring that no time is wasted.
- (26) Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. There is a happy and purposeful atmosphere in lessons, with pupils being very clear about the teachers' expectations for them to work hard and behave responsibly.
- (27) In the reception classes, the teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistant plan a good balance of adult led and free choice activities. Most learning takes place through purposeful play. For example, during a very good lesson in mathematical development, the teacher used a large purse and magnetic coins to show children how to count out money accurately and then provided opportunities for pupils to use real money to buy and sell various foods. Children's interest was maintained in this practical task as they extended their learning from counting out money for one item, to using various strategies for adding money together when buying two items.
- (28) Members of staff in the reception classes are particularly good at making use of the newly developed outdoor area. This area is in constant use providing a greater choice of activities and more freedom for the children. For example, during a good creative development lesson, the teacher and a group of children were able to make plenty of noise outside when playing musical instruments, enabling the nursery nurse to work quietly with another group, rolling and shaping modelling material to make Mothers' Day gifts. The additional space provided by the outdoor area means that children can choose to work quietly when reading, writing or completing jigsaws or play more boisterously by riding bikes or climbing.
- (29) Throughout the school, teachers make attractive displays of pupils' work and this makes the classrooms bright and welcoming at the same time as valuing pupils' work effectively.
- (30) In Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught in groups for numeracy lessons. These are organised according to pupils' prior attainment so that work can be closely matched to individual needs. This approach contributes effectively towards the consistently high attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 6 because teachers are able to meet pupils' individual needs more effectively. In numeracy lessons, work is carefully planned and the teaching of strategies for mental mathematics is a strong and successful feature. For example, in a very good numeracy lesson in Year 5, the teacher showed very high expectations by asking the pupils to explain in

different ways how they had identified different patterns on a number square. Pupils did this successfully, using a wide range of strategies to solve the problem.

- (31) Throughout the school, teachers talk knowledgeably at the start of lessons providing pupils with interesting factual information and then give pupils opportunities to make and discuss their own observations. For example, in a very good science lesson in Year 6, the teacher used resources very effectively to demonstrate the difference between types of electrical circuits before asking pupils to make predictions from a series of circuit diagrams and to test their findings. In a good science lesson in Year 4, the teacher provided some fascinating information about types of soil before allowing pupils to use microscopes and the naked eye to compare six contrasting samples.
- (32) Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in literacy and numeracy lessons. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are very well thought out and are used effectively to support learning. Effective teaching assistants enable these pupils to gain full access to activities in class. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well, helping them to learn to speak English quickly.
- (33) Throughout the school, pupils achieve particularly well in lessons where learning is made purposeful by being linked to a practical activity. For example, in two good geography lessons in Year 5, pupils were successful in using photographs of an Indian village to draw conclusions about what sort of jobs might be found in that village. Similarly, in a good Year 3 history lesson, pupils made good gains in knowledge by using different resources and their previous learning to draw conclusions about Roman life.

The very good provision for social and moral development helps pupils to develop very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.

- (34) The school believes strongly in developing the whole child and pupils' personal and social skills are extended successfully. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils have very good attitudes to learning and consistently behave very well. Inspection findings confirm parents' very positive views about the way that the school develops personal skills and encourages their children to become mature and responsible.
- (35) Teachers work hard to make learning interesting and, as a result, pupils are keen to learn. They are well motivated and show good levels of concentration, staying on task even during over long literacy or numeracy lessons. Pupils work well together, whatever their age. For example, reception children co-operate well with each other when working together in the role-play 'florist' by sharing resources sensibly. They persevere with activities such as jigsaw puzzles and concentrate well when making pictures using geometric shapes. The children talk with each other and adults about what they are doing and do not exclude each other from their games. Older pupils continue to work together successfully. For example, in a Year 5 geography lesson, pupils worked together to identify the key features of an Indian village, sharing tasks sensibly and supporting each other if they had a problem.
- (36) Pupils are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. There is good participation in sporting competitions and musical events and a large number of pupils take part in the various clubs and additional music lessons that are provided at the school.
- (37) The school has an appropriate set of rules that were devised in consultation with the pupils. These are clearly understood by all members of the school community and they have a good impact on maintaining the very good standards of behaviour. Pupils behave very well at lunch times and at playtimes, as well as in lessons. Courtesy and good manners are emphasised and these are evident in all aspects of the school day. Pupils are keen to talk to visitors and are very polite to each other and adults. Pupils in Year 6 are given the task of acting as a 'receptionist' during lunch breaks and they carry out this job very diligently.

- (38) The school is very successful in encouraging pupils to become responsible. There is a clear structure to the development of responsibilities as pupils get older. All pupils are expected to help around the classroom, with some pupils in each class being given specific roles. Older pupils carry out additional tasks. For example, they act as 'play leaders' at lunch times, by organising games, and supporting pupils who need help. Parents are very appreciative of this provision, reporting that it helps make lunch times happy and caring occasions.
- (39) The school council makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development, giving them a voice and helping them to learn how they can contribute to the day to day life of the school. The school council is well organised. It involves pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 who carry out their responsibilities very maturely. Pupils are clear about the purpose of each meeting and find meetings to be valuable. For example, they were pleased with their contribution to the plans for the development of the new play area for pupils in Years 3 to 6. They meet regularly with their classmates, giving them an opportunity to share any ideas or concerns they might have. These meetings are well organised, with councillors reporting back on the last council meeting and providing time for pupils to give their views. For example, in a Year 4 class meeting, there was a good quality discussion on what information might be included in a proposed school newspaper.
- (40) Members of staff set very good examples for moral and social behaviour, and have very good relationships with other members of staff and the pupils. Pupils develop effective relationships with each other and grow in confidence. Teachers work hard to raise pupils' self esteem. There is a very effective reward system in place, with pupils striving to win 'flowers' for the achievement tree. These are awarded for hard work, being polite or behaving especially well. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to receive a 'flower'. There is a supportive atmosphere in assemblies when pupils are presented with 'flowers' and it is clear that even older pupils are motivated to work towards achieving these rewards.
- (41) There is an effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, which is carefully managed by the deputy headteacher. PSHE lessons and 'circle times' make a good contribution to learning, with pupils being able to talk about their feelings and to think about issues that concern them. This helps pupils to understand how they can care for and support each other. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils acted out a role-play of different situations that might arise in school such as having nobody to play with or not being able to find their PE kit. They then talked as a class about how they could help to solve the problem, showing a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Additional activities such as a visit by an artist to pupils in Year 3 working together making 'spirit of friendship' banners also make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- (42) The school is working towards a 'healthy schools' award and has developed visits by a nutritionist to help pupils understand what is meant by a healthy diet. The school is proud of its 'positive school community award' received recently from the local education authority. This acknowledges the very positive attitudes, values and behaviour of pupils that were also evident during the inspection.

There are very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school's work.

- (43) The headteacher and members of staff value parents' support very much and they work hard to foster and encourage it. They are very successful in achieving a very effective partnership between home and school. Parents are very interested in the school and support it well. This was demonstrated by the very positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- (44) Strong links with parents are encouraged as early as possible, and there is a very effective induction programme for new children. Children spend time in class in the term before they start school and parents are able to meet with teachers. This helps to establish home-school

links quickly, as well as ensuring that children settle well into school life.

- (45) The school welcomes the views of parents and this 'open-door' policy is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Parents report that they find all members of staff friendly and approachable. The opportunity in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 for parents to come into class with their children and to work alongside them for the first 15 minutes of each school day is especially valuable and helps to further strengthen home-school links.
- (46) Parents are provided with very good information about the school's work. The annual governors' report to parents and the school prospectus are both very attractively presented and give a clear picture of the work of the school. There are regular newsletters, as well as information about the curriculum. Parents are also invited to regular meetings about the curriculum, including a 'meet the teacher' session at the start of the academic year. There have also been recent workshops about numeracy and the teaching of reading.
- (47) Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress. There are termly parent/teacher consultation meetings, detailed annual written reports on children's attainment and progress and termly records of achievement. In addition, parents are told about the targets that have been set for their children. This very high level of information sharing ensures that parents are able to give their children good support at home.
- (48) The school is constantly seeking ways in which it can further improve home-school links. For example, a recent initiative, the 'Family Learning Project' is aimed at helping parents to understand how they can support their children with work at home. The headteacher ensures that parents are consulted regularly about different aspects of the school's work. Questionnaires enable parents to identify strengths and weaknesses and to put forward any suggestions for improving the school's work. The results of surveys are analysed in great detail and issues are followed up where necessary.
- (49) Homework makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. Some parents feel that they would like more homework for their children. Inspection findings show that whilst homework arrangements are satisfactory, the range of activities is not extensive, with insufficient opportunity for independent research and the expectations for more able pupils in English being sometimes too low.
- (50) Parents report that they are encouraged to help in and around the school and those who do make a valuable contribution to learning. In a science lesson in Year 4, for example, a parent supported pupils as they investigated the properties of various types of soil. Parents who cannot help in class often contribute in other valuable ways. For example, they prepare resources, including costumes and make covers for music stands. There is a very active and successful parent/teacher association that arranges a good number of social events. The funds raised by the association have a good impact on the work of the school, for example by paying for new playground equipment.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There are insufficient opportunities for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 to extend their writing skills.

- (51) National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 confirm that the number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) is lower than it should be. In 2002, eight per cent of pupils reached this level and this figure was below the national average. The school has identified this as an important area for development, and under the leadership of the headteacher and subject co-ordinator extensive additional strategies have been introduced to overcome this relative weakness. These have not yet had a significant impact on raising the standard of more able pupils' work and inspection evidence shows that too few pupils are on target to achieve Level 5

in 2003 National Curriculum tests.

- (52) In Years 3 to 6, pupils' writing is best when they are given opportunities to write purposefully and when their interest has been engaged imaginatively. For example, writing produced by pupils in Year 4 after a visit to a local windmill is of high quality. These accounts of the visit, which are written from a first person viewpoint, are well structured and well presented, and have been drafted, proof-read and edited in order to improve them. In contrast, at other times, pupils are not encouraged to write from personal experience or to draft and redraft their work.
- (53) Pupils do not get enough opportunity to write purposefully in subjects other than English. There is too much copy-writing and completion of work sheets in Years 3 to 6, and this means that pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to develop their writing skills. This high level of copy-writing is particularly evident in science, geography and history. It has the greatest impact on more able pupils who are not extending their skills at those times when they are merely copying out writing prepared by the teacher or filling in a few words. These pupils in particular, get too few opportunities to write at length, either in English or other subjects.
- (54) Specific literacy skills are taught carefully in lessons, but once a skill has been taught, there is often insufficient opportunity to put the new skill into practice, either in literacy lessons or when writing in other subjects. However, this is not always the case. For example, pupils in Year 6 produced interesting pieces of writing after being taught how to use dramatic effects to catch attention – one pupil wrote, *'Destroyed and broken to pieces, The Holbeck Hotel finally crashed down into the sea after 20 years of endless erosion'*. These pieces of work are good examples of the levels of work that can be achieved when skills are taught and then applied to a purposeful activity.
- (55) Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistent and does not have a significant impact on raising standards. Pupils' errors are not always identified by the teacher, leading to bad habits being reinforced. Marking of the work of more able pupils is often too positive and does not give enough encouragement for pupils to improve further. Even when teachers' marking identifies ways that work could be improved, the pace at which new skills are introduced means that pupils are not given time to practise previously learnt skills before moving on to learn new ones.

Pupils are given too few opportunities to show independence or take the initiative in their learning and resources in the library are unsatisfactory.

- (56) Throughout the school, there are missed opportunities for pupils to work independently or to take the initiative in their learning. In lessons, pupils often lack independence, seeking reassurance from an adult even when they understand fully what they are expected to do. Too much work is closely directed by the teacher, with pupils not being encouraged to think for themselves. In subjects such as science, geography and history, teachers do not plan enough occasions when pupils can use their knowledge in practical ways, for example by devising their own investigations, choosing resources for themselves or deciding how they are going to record their findings. This means that for more able pupils, in particular, their knowledge and understanding often develops at a faster pace than their skills and this is an important weakness in provision.
- (57) When pupils are given the opportunity to work independently, they do so with great enthusiasm. This is seen to good effect when pupils use the internet to find out about topics that they are studying. Similarly, in a Year 3 history lesson, pupils worked well using a variety of books on loan from the local education authority, finding out about life in the Roman Empire. However, pupils do not get enough opportunity to carry out research independently, other than on the internet and unsatisfactory resources in the library do not support the development of these skills effectively. The use of homework to develop independent research skills is not well developed. In lessons, the teacher generally supplies resources, and pupils get few chances to seek out their own information or resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise attainment further and improve the quality of provision the headteacher, members of staff and governors should,

- (1) Provide greater opportunities for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 to extend their writing skills.
- (2) Improve the resources in the library and enable all pupils to show more independence and to take the initiative in their learning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	17	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	28	68	4	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one three 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)	NA	386
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	44
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	94.1
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	22	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	30	30
	Girls	22	22	20
	Total	51	52	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	98 (96)	94 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	31
	Girls	22	20	21
	Total	50	50	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (92)	94 (100)	98 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	34	27	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	33	33
	Girls	24	23	25
	Total	50	56	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (90)	92 (97)	95 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	31	32
	Girls	24	22	23
	Total	51	53	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (83)	87 (95)	90 (98)
	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	267	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	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	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	38	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)	15.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	23
Total aggregate hours worked per week	317

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	NA
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	NA
Total number of education support staff	NA

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	800,353
Total expenditure	765,788
Expenditure per pupil	2,127
Balance brought forward from previous year	151,354
Balance carried forward to next year	185,919

Total aggregate hours worked per week	NA
Number of pupils per FTE adult	NA

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	386
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	41	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	53	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	54	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	63	11	2	1
The teaching is good.	54	44	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	44	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	36	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	44	47	6	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	48	42	3	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	49	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	54	12	3	11