

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY APOSTLES' CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115679

Headteacher: Mr. D. G. Davies

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: January 13th – 14th 2003

Inspection number: 247581

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Battledown Approach Charlton Kings Cheltenham
Postcode:	GL52 6QZ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. C. Brooker
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Apostles' Church of England Primary School is located in Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. Pupils are admitted between the ages of 4 and 11, and come from the local town. There are 180 pupils on roll, and they are taught in 7 classes, with one class for each year group. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and pupils come from largely favourable home backgrounds. A higher than usual number of pupils leave the school at times other than at the end of an academic year, with parents taking up places in the independent school sector. There are 20 pupils on the register of special educational needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below national averages. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school is above average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was on a part-time secondment to a neighbouring primary school. In his absence, the deputy headteacher was acting headteacher, with his class being taken by a temporary teacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Good quality teaching ensures that pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are very good, and all members of staff work hard to ensure that there is a friendly and happy atmosphere in school. The school is very well led, with the headteacher, acting headteacher, subject leaders and governors forming a very effective team. The school makes good use of available funds and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high scores in National Curriculum tests in their final year, where the quality of teaching is very good.
- Good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils develop good skills.
- The headteacher and acting headteacher provide very strong leadership for the work of the school and are well supported by other members of staff and the governing body.
- Parents support the school very well and are very pleased with the quality of education it provides.
- The school enriches the curriculum successfully by making very good use of the community and providing a very wide range of activities outside lessons.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave very well and work hard: members of staff are very good role models and set high standards for attitudes towards learning.

What could be improved

- There is not always sufficient challenge for more able pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in science in Years 1 – 4.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since its last inspection in 1997. Most of the key areas of weakness from that time have been addressed very effectively and standards of pupils' attainment have risen in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The role of subject leaders has been significantly developed and they have been an important factor in school improvement. Teaching has improved: there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and teaching is good or better in two-thirds of lessons. However, there continues to be some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in some Year 1 and 2 lessons. There is a strong, shared commitment to development, which means that the school is well placed to improve further.

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Inspection findings confirm the high standards achieved by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, with pupils' attainment being well above average in all three subjects. In English, reading is stronger than writing and pupils sometimes make careless spelling errors in their written work. Test results in 2002 showed that pupils in Year 6 made very good progress from the end of Year 2, with scores in mathematics and science placing the school amongst the top 5 per cent of all schools in the country. The number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) in science was exceptionally high.

Results in National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 are not as good. They show that, pupils' attainment in 2002 was well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics, where a lower than average number of pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3). In both mathematics and science, work is not always sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils and this slows their progress.

Test results at the end of Year 2 were low overall in 2001. These pupils who are now in Year 4, continue to work at lower levels than other year groups in the school.

In the reception year, children are making good progress and are on target to exceed the nationally recognised expectations for their age in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Again, though, there is not always sufficient challenge for higher attaining children, particularly in mathematics.

Standards of pupils' attainment are good in information and communication technology, with pupils benefiting from a well-resourced ICT suite which is used effectively by teachers to support learning. There are also some examples of good drawing skills in art displays around the school.

By the time they leave school, pupils are achieving well, with progress accelerating in Year 5 and especially in Year 6. The very effective teaching in Year 6 has a very good impact on pupils' learning in their final year at the school. Statutory targets for attainment at the end of Year 6 are realistically challenging and were exceeded in 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic in lessons. In most year groups, pupils listen carefully and participate well in activities both in and out of class. In Year 4, some pupils show lower levels of concentration when not supported by an adult.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and on the playground. They are very polite to visitors and have coped extremely well with the difficulties arising from ongoing building work.

Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are kind and considerate and support each other well in lessons. They are keen to take responsibility, although opportunities to do so are not extensive.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance rates are well above national averages.

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.

The quality of teaching is good overall, with teaching being very good in Year 6 where the teacher has very high expectations of what pupils should achieve and the pace of learning is often very fast.

Throughout the school, teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and manage their behaviour well. The teaching of basic skills in reading is particularly successful throughout the school and in numeracy in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are successful at using a wide range of good educational resources to support their teaching, adding interest to lessons. The provision of good homework and very good quality marking of work in literacy enables pupils to extend their learning.

In the reception year, the teacher and nursery nurse are particularly successful in developing the children's independence. They understand the needs of young children well and plan fun activities that engage their interest effectively.

The teaching of ICT is consistently good or better, enabling pupils to develop a wide range of effective skills. Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Whilst teaching is never less than satisfactory, it is less effective when too many objectives are planned for each lesson and when there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils. This is particularly evident in mathematics in the reception class and Years 1 and 2, and in science in Years 1 to 4. The small number of teaching assistants work effectively with groups of lower attaining pupils, although in some lessons, where there is no additional support, teachers do not always meet the needs of all pupils well.

Whilst most pupils are very keen to learn and concentrate very well, they are not given enough opportunities to take the initiative in investigative work in mathematics and science or in correcting careless spelling mistakes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, although the lack of a dedicated outdoor play area for children in the reception class limits their opportunities to work outside. A very good range of clubs, visits and visitors extends learning. The time allowed for the teaching of science in Years 1 and 2 is lower than usually found in most schools, and this means that some topics are not studied in sufficient detail.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Although provision is well managed, there are occasions when pupils' progress is limited by a lack of additional teaching assistant support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	Good. Teachers set clear values and promote them effectively. Circle time helps pupils to think about each other's needs. Visitors raise

moral, social and cultural development	pupils' awareness of different cultural traditions successfully. Pupils are involved in a number of charity-raising initiatives that help them understand that some people are less fortunate than they are.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. Assessment procedures are very good in English, mathematics and science and satisfactory in other subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher delegates responsibility very effectively and encourages staff to take the initiative in their roles. Very good professional development strategies mean that members of staff and governors are able to take responsibility well. The acting headteacher, who is normally the deputy headteacher, has stepped very ably into the role, maintaining school effectiveness and introducing new initiatives in consultation with the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body meets all statutory duties and provides good quality support to the headteacher. There are thorough monitoring procedures that are helping governors to develop a clear understanding of how the school could improve further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored, with very detailed analysis of test papers being used to identify areas for improvement. This is most effective in Years 2 – 6 where there is more test data available.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Budgeting is very systematic. Best value principles are in place and spending decisions have been made carefully on the basis of <i>'How will this help the school to improve?'</i> For example, current improvements to the building are more than cosmetic and will significantly improve accommodation, including the provision of teaching space for pupils with special educational needs.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching • Standards achieved by pupils • Behaviour in school • Children are expected to work hard and they become mature and responsible • The way that the school is led and managed • The friendly atmosphere in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Information about children's progress • Support for pupils with special educational needs

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Inspection findings are that the school gives parents good information about their children's progress. Annual reports include good information about pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, although the information on other subjects is not always specific enough. There are regular opportunities for parents to meet with teachers. Homework provision is good, making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, although there is less additional teaching assistant support than is found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve high scores in National Curriculum tests in their final year where the quality of teaching is very good.

1. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science has risen significantly since 1998 and has been consistently high for the last three years. Pupils are benefiting from the good quality of teaching, especially in Year 6, and they are prepared well for National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6.
2. The high standards that were evident during the inspection confirm the results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002. In mathematics and science, test results placed the school amongst the top 5 per cent of all schools throughout the country. In English, pupils' attainment was well above average, with reading being stronger than writing. Pupils' attainment was also high when compared with similar schools, being above average in English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science.
3. The school is particularly successful in helping more able pupils to achieve their potential in tests. In English and mathematics, the number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) is well above average. In science, 92 per cent of pupils achieved Level 5 in 2002. This is an exceptionally high figure.
4. At the time of the last inspection, although test scores were found to be high, there were weaknesses in pupils' ability to apply these skills. This weakness is no longer as evident in Year 6, although the school acknowledges that there could still be further improvement in the way that pupils devise investigations, record their explanations and take the initiative in mathematics and science.
5. A key factor in the high attainment evident by the end of Year 6 is the very high quality of teaching in this year group, with the very high expectations of the teacher evident in lessons observed and in samples of pupils' previous work. Parents are united in singing the praises of this teacher, and they feel that pupils make remarkable progress in their last year in school. Inspection findings support this positive view on the quality of teaching.
6. Teaching in Year 6 has a very good impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are very well planned and work is carefully matched to pupils' needs. The teacher's great enthusiasm communicates itself to the pupils and leads to a very good working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils show very high levels of motivation. They want to perform well for their teacher and are always striving to do their best.
7. The teacher achieves a good balance between preparing pupils for National Curriculum tests at the end of the year and introducing new concepts. For example, pupils are making very good progress in developing ICT skills, with the teacher acting as a good role model of how ICT can be used across the curriculum. The teacher is especially adept at linking ongoing work to test skills. This means that pupils continue to extend their learning, whilst at the same time being prepared for end-of-year tests.
8. In all of the lessons seen, explanations were clear and there was a very good pace to learning. Activities were challenging, with a particularly good feature of teaching being the way that tasks are placed into a practical context. In an ICT lesson, for example, pupils learnt how to use a spreadsheet to carry out different calculations by working out the largest area that could be fenced by a farmer using a 100 metre length of wire.
9. Learning is made fun and the teacher works hard to engage pupils in activities. This was seen to very good effect in a numeracy lesson when pupils were learning about different time zones.

In this lesson, pupils were actively involved by playing a game that required them to work out the time in different places and then match these times to various activities. Pupils respond well to this type of purposeful task, making consistently good or better progress.

Good provision for information and communication technology ensures that pupils develop good skills.

10. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) was identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection. 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 introduced a good quality scheme of work to support pupils' learning. Teachers have undertaken training courses in order to improve their confidence in teaching the subject. All of these factors have had a positive impact on standards. Pupils are now achieving well and standards of attainment are good.
11. The curriculum is carefully planned so that there is a clear progression in the development of skills as pupils get older. In the reception class, pupils use various art programmes to draw good self-portraits. Pupils in Year 2 confidently use the keyboard and mouse to draw different shapes and to produce tessellating patterns. They show good basic computing skills, being confident about solving problems as they arise. By Year 3, these skills have been extended significantly. In this year group, pupils produce interesting pieces of writing, using clip art and different styles of text to make their work attractive to the reader. For example, they produce good quality writing when reviewing films such as 'Shrek', using different images and text or when making 'Wanted' posters in a literacy lesson. This work is well presented and shows a good range of ICT skills. Pupils use various art programmes to make well-produced pictures and drawings. They produce graphs showing data that they have compiled, for example in Year 1 showing the different ways that children come to school. Pupils use good ICT skills to interpret this data in different ways. This is indicative of the high expectations of teachers, which help to ensure that work is challenging and meets the needs of all pupils.
12. By Years 5 and 6, pupils' word processing skills are particularly well developed. They present information in a variety of ways, showing a very good understanding of how they can use ICT to make their writing interesting to the reader. They confidently use images from the internet to make their writing more attractive. They use a good variety of word-processing skills, varying text size, font style and colour according to the intended audience. This is seen to good effect in their presentations about the dangers of drugs. In this work, pupils use a variety of skills to present their work in a dramatic way that effectively warns others about the need to remember that '*Some drugs can kill*'. Pupils have a good understanding of how computers can be used to present information in different ways. They present data in a range of formats using both data-handling programmes and spreadsheets. In Year 6, pupils are making very good progress in identifying how spreadsheets can be used to quickly present data or make calculations.
13. The school is fortunate in having a very well resourced ICT suite, and this is used effectively to develop skills. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum by carefully planning the use of the ICT suite and other resources.
14. The quality of teaching is good and pupils' progress is supported well throughout the school. Lessons in the ICT suite are well organised and teachers are beginning to make good use of ICT in other subjects. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and prepare well for lessons. Members of staff work hard to make learning purposeful by planning practical applications for ICT. As a result, pupils are very motivated and show very good levels of concentration. They are encouraged to work co-operatively and to support each other when necessary.
15. The development of ICT has had a high profile in the school since the last inspection and improvements have been well managed by the current and previous ICT co-ordinators. There is a well thought out 'action plan' which shows how improvement is to be taken further over the

next three years. This is based on a good understanding of what has been achieved so far and what could be developed further. For example, the co-ordinator has identified the benefits of developing assessment procedures.

The headteacher and acting headteacher provide very strong leadership for the work of the school and are well supported by other members of staff and the governing body.

16. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection when some improvements were required. This is no longer the case. There is now a very strong and effective management team that works hard to promote high standards and maintain school effectiveness. They do this successfully.
17. There are very clear systems for the day-to-day running of the school. This has meant that the absence of the headteacher for much of the last term has not had a negative impact. The acting headteacher, who is normally the deputy headteacher, has stepped very ably into the role, maintaining school effectiveness and introducing new initiatives in consultation with the staff. Parents have been very impressed with the seamless way in which the uncertainties of the last term have been handled, and they confirm that the absence of the headteacher has not been a cause of concern. They find the acting headteacher very approachable and willing to listen to their ideas.
18. The headteacher is very effective because he delegates very effectively and encourages members of staff to take responsibility. From the moment that they join the staff, teachers are encouraged to think about how they can develop professionally and contribute to improving the effectiveness of the school. The headteacher has termly interviews with members of staff to review their work. These interviews, alongside performance management procedures, help to identify a shared understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses. Members of staff are given very effective support by the headteacher in drawing up action plans for their subjects, but he then lets them get on with it. He stays in touch and up-to-date with progress through regular briefings and offers support when necessary, but he is not afraid of letting members of staff take the initiative and try out new ideas. This is a key strength of the headteacher's work. This can be seen to good effect in the way that the acting headteacher has been able to trial new procedures that enable subject leaders to monitor work in their curriculum area. This involves subject leaders teaching alongside colleagues. Written reports show that the approach has been highly effective in making monitoring a productive but non-threatening process that helps to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.
19. The headteacher has established a strong team of subject leaders, who have been empowered to take full responsibility for their curriculum areas. Training has been used effectively to develop skills, and subject leaders have then been given opportunities to apply these skills to key tasks. The monitoring of test data by the English and mathematics subject leaders is particularly impressive. Both leaders carry out a detailed audit of test results for pupils in Years 2 to 6, identifying where there are weaknesses. This information is then used very effectively to set specific targets for improvement. For example, after the school identified that the development of data-handling skills in numeracy was an aspect that could be improved, the subject leader drew up a detailed action plan, identifying strategies for improving provision. The implementation of the plan is being carefully monitored, with thorough records kept of pupils' progress, including samples of their work. Already, the impact of this work is evident in class, with pupils undertaking more data-handling tasks and making better progress in learning key skills. Impressively, these improvements have not been enough for the subject leader who has already identified how greater progress could be made by encouraging teachers to introduce pupils to a greater variety of graphs in their mathematical work.
20. Governors contribute substantially to overall school effectiveness. Since the last inspection, they have undertaken a thorough programme of training and reorganised their committees so that roles are more clearly defined and their expertise used to good effect. This has been very effective in helping them to take a more proactive role in school management and development. Each committee of the governing body participates fully in overseeing different aspects of the

implementation of the school improvement plan, liaising with the headteacher and members of staff to monitor progress towards targets. Governors regularly visit school to monitor teaching and learning, and they receive detailed feedback on test results from the headteacher. This is helping them to develop a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have been especially successful in taking steps to secure improved accommodation. The new building project has been successfully funded and the overall fabric of the school is being significantly improved.

Parents support the school very well and are very pleased with the quality of education it provides.

21. The views of parents are more positive than at the time of the last inspection in every aspect included in the survey. Very high percentages of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire showed strong satisfaction, in particular with the good quality teaching and the approachability of members of staff. They also found that their children like school and are expected to work hard. Parents approached during the inspection were full of praise for the school. They agree that it provides a happy and vibrant environment in which pupils can achieve well.
22. Very few parents expressed dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school's work, and over 95 per cent are pleased with most aspects. However, fourteen per cent of parents were unhappy with the information they received on their children's progress and twelve per cent did not feel that the school works closely with them. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were happy with the written reports on their children's progress but would appreciate more time for discussions at parents' consultation evenings. Inspection findings are that the school provides appropriate opportunities for parents to discuss pupils' progress and has suitable ways of consulting parents through questionnaires and informal discussions. However, the inspection team agrees that the prospectus provides very little information on the curriculum and acknowledges that some new parents would like more information when their children first start school. Written reports include good information about pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, but the information on other subjects is not always specific enough.
23. There is a very high level of parental involvement in the day-to-day life of the school. A large number of parents provide practical and financial support, with around fifty parents helping in class or with after-school clubs and visits. For example, parents help ferry pupils to hockey practices at the local secondary school and run a netball club after school. This support is greatly valued by members of staff and makes a strong contribution towards pupils' learning. An active parents and teachers' association provides a wide range of social events and raises considerable funds towards purchasing resources and supporting educational visits. A group of parents meets once a month to pray for the school and members of its community.
24. Some parents felt that the provision of homework is inconsistent from class to class. This was not evident during the inspection, with all members of staff providing well-planned tasks related to work in lessons. Parents support their children with this homework well and by hearing their children read regularly.
25. A good range of letters keeps parents informed of forthcoming events, and a notice board in the school provides additional helpful information. Most importantly, though, teachers are very approachable and parents report that they would feel very comfortable about coming to school if they had a concern or needed more information.

The school enriches the curriculum successfully by making very good use of the community and by providing a very wide range of activities outside lessons.

26. The school is rightly proud of the breadth of opportunities that pupils are given to extend their learning through educational visits, interesting visitors and well-attended after-school clubs and

sporting activities.

27. Visits and visitors are used effectively to teach pupils about their own and other cultures. They take part in an annual dance festival held in the town hall. Older pupils learn about another locality during an action-packed residential visit. Cultural development was enhanced by the recent visit of a dance troop from Africa. Pupils learnt new dances and were taught about some of the differences in culture between the United Kingdom and Africa. Both parents and pupils talk fondly of this event, recalling clearly some of the things that they learnt. Links with local business have been extended since the last inspection, with pupils involved, for instance, in a food technology project with a local supermarket.
28. The school works closely with other schools in the area to increase provision for the pupils. For example, in the last two years, the school has offered its facilities to other local schools for the annual '*Soundschool Music Festival*'. There are good links with the local secondary school, which offers, for instance, the use of its all-weather games area for hockey practices and gives helpful support for ICT. The school joins with other local primary schools for activities such as an annual service at the Cathedral for pupils in Year 6.
29. A higher percentage of parents than is usually found appreciates the range of activities provided outside lessons, although parents of younger pupils would like to see more of such opportunities for their children. The school provides older pupils with clubs for rugby, soccer, cricket, hockey, netball, rounders, chess and recorders. Younger pupils can take part in country dancing and French. Approximately 80 per cent of pupils in Years 3 to 6 take part in extra-curricular activities, which is a very high figure.
30. The school enjoys a close relationship with the parish and neighbouring churches. Members of clergy regularly lead acts of collective worship and the church is used as a venue for services, musical performances and some lessons. It is also noteworthy that some parishioners come to school to hear children read, even though they no longer have any direct link with the school.
31. Parents greatly appreciate the dedication of members of staff in enabling pupils to take part in additional activities, such as the musical productions presented by the school. They also speak very positively of the specific curriculum weeks that teachers organise. For example, pupils benefited from an 'arts week' when they worked with professional artists and musicians, improving their observational drawing and preparing for a performance of '*Swingin' Samson*'. The evidence of good quality drawing skills arising from this work is on display around the school.
32. All these activities enhance pupils' learning. The curriculum as a whole is good and has developed since the time of the last inspection when there were shortcomings in a number of subjects. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are successful, especially for older pupils. However, a low allocation of time for science in Years 1 and 2 means that learning is too superficial, especially for the more able pupils. The school is aware of the need to increase the opportunities for reception children to work outside to enhance their learning. Provision is hampered by the lack of a fenced area designated for this purpose.

Pupils enjoy school, behave very well and work hard: members of staff are very good role models and set high standards for positive attitudes towards learning.

33. High standards in the pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been maintained successfully since the time of the last inspection. A calm and purposeful working atmosphere is evident throughout the school. Most pupils, especially those in Year 6, show exemplary attitudes and behaviour. Pupils have very good attitudes towards learning and 98 per cent of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children like school. The rates of attendance are well above the national average and pupils arrive promptly at the start of the day, reflecting their enthusiasm for school. They enjoy learning and listen carefully in lessons. Pupils are keen to take part in the tasks they have been given and there is good attendance at after school clubs. When working in pairs or small groups most pupils co-operate with each other sensibly and even the youngest pupils share resources well. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour are

significant factors in the speed at which they learn. However, some pupils in Year 4 do not find it easy to work co-operatively and rely on adults to provide encouragement to work, which slows the pace of their progress. The school is aware of the specific needs of this year group and various strategies are being used to help improve their levels of co-operation.

34. Pupils' behaviour is very good overall. They are very polite and courteous and show respect for each other and resources in the school. Teachers and pupils agree a set of class rules at the beginning of the school year and these are understood and observed by the pupils. Members of staff provide very effective role models by being calm and friendly. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection, and parents report that minor cases are dealt with swiftly and successfully. Members of staff use stories effectively to demonstrate how pupils need to support one another and stand up to bullies.
35. It is very much to the school's credit that the pupils have maintained high standards of behaviour despite the considerable disruption caused by current building work. Pupils of all ages show great maturity when moving around the school and show a good awareness of health and safety needs. Pupils play together amicably at playtimes and return to class in an orderly fashion. All parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that behaviour in the school is good.
36. Overall, there are very good relationships in the school between pupils and members of staff. From the time children start school in the reception class, the teacher helps them to gain confidence by listening to their views and ideas and by praising them for good effort and achievement. For example, in one lesson when discussing the needs of different pets, the teacher asked the children to help her sort the objects and this made them feel important and valued. The quality of teachers' marking is particularly supportive in literacy, where encouraging comments and helpful suggestions show pupils what they do well and what they need to learn next.
37. Parents are impressed with the way pupils are taught to help each other and tolerate differences. Parents particularly like the way self-esteem develops and how "circle time" discussions are used to share ideas and feelings. For example, in one lesson in Year 1, pupils gave their views on why *'their fathers are brilliant'*. In assemblies, pupils are given some opportunity to reflect on the feelings of characters from the Bible, such as how King Saul might have felt after David killed Goliath. Pupils learn to respect the needs of others by collecting for charity on a regular basis and supporting an under-resourced school in Africa. Older pupils support younger pupils well. For example, an older pupil comforted a younger boy who felt unwell during the lunch break.
38. Pupils are keen to take responsibility when given the opportunity. Children in the reception year learn class routines quickly and help to tidy away resources at the end of sessions. Older pupils are given informal opportunities to contribute their ideas on ways of improving school life. The school has plans to develop these opportunities further by starting a school council and by encouraging pupils to show more independence when carrying out investigations in mathematics and science. Older pupils do not always use their initiative by checking spelling before handing in work to be marked, and teachers often correct work for them.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There is not always sufficient challenge for more able pupils in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in science in Years 1 – 4.

39. This is an area for improvement that has already been identified by the headteacher and acting headteacher in their own evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
40. Test results and inspection findings show that higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as

they should in mathematics in the reception year and Years 1 and 2. National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 show that there are some weaknesses in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. In 2002, pupils' attainment was average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Although all pupils achieve the expected level (Level 2), the number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) is below average. The results in 2001 were even lower, with overall attainment well below average when compared with all schools.

41. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work and observations in lessons show that there are missed opportunities to extend the learning of more able pupils. Too often, pupils do the same work whatever their previous learning. Teachers do not take enough account of their own assessments to help them plan what needs to be taught next. For example, a scrutiny of the previous work of a higher attaining Year 2 pupil, who had been identified in the annual report at the end of Year 1 as having very good numeracy skills, showed that this pupil still completed the same work as lower attaining pupils at the start of Year 2. Opportunities to extend his learning and build on what he already knew were not evident in much of his work, with activities often sticking too closely to the commercial work books used in class rather than more closely matching his needs. Similarly, in a Year 1 lesson, the work that was given to higher attaining pupils did not sufficiently extend their learning. They completed the recorded work in the commercial workbook in a matter of seconds, and the activities that followed merely reinforced previous learning rather than taking it further.
42. The same lack of differentiation is also evident in science work in Years 1 to 4. Again, there is little evidence of pupils working at different levels, although the science subject leader reports that this is more evident during practical activities. Nevertheless, the amount of recorded work is very low, with the brief time allowed for science in Years 1 and 2 (only one hour per week) meaning that some topics are not studied in sufficient depth. This has the greatest impact on higher attaining pupils who are not able to extend their learning to the higher levels. Most of the work that is recorded is the same for all pupils, whatever their previous learning. In recorded work, there is little evidence of pupils working at levels beyond the average.
43. Teachers show an awareness of the need to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils in their planning for both science and mathematics, but this is not always evident in practice. Nevertheless, in a good numeracy lesson in Year 2, the teacher planned practical activities that met fully the needs of higher attaining pupils. Teachers meet the needs of all pupils most effectively during whole-class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. For example, during the review session at the end of a Year 1 lesson, the teacher successfully varied questioning to challenge all pupils. In a reception lesson, there was good challenge during oral work at the start of the lesson, but the written task was the same for all pupils no matter what their previous learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. To improve the school further the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - Ensure that work is sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils in mathematics in the reception class and Years 1 to 2, and in science in Years 1 to 4.
 - Review the amount of time allowed for the teaching of science in Years 1 and 2.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	8	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	23	44	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	180
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20
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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	15	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	97 (89)	100 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	28	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	100 (85)	100 (85)
	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	15	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (81)	92 (70)	96 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	20	20	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (73)	83 (77)	100 (100)
	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	144	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	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)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	374343
Total expenditure	362966
Expenditure per pupil	1931
Balance brought forward from previous year	49069
Balance carried forward to next year	60446

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.3
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	180
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	44	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	47	5	2	0
The teaching is good.	65	33	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	35	12	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	33	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	39	10	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	52	44	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	42	0	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	32	7	3	6