

INSPECTION REPORT

ORCHARD INFANT SCHOOL

Dibden Purlieu

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115977

Headteacher: Mrs A Jones

Reporting inspector: Elizabeth Camplin

3586

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th March 2003

Inspection number: 247605

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Water Lane Dibden Purlieu Southampton Hampshire
Postcode:	SO45 4SB
Telephone number:	023 8084 3705
Fax number:	023 8084 0922
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. A. Winnik
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
3586	E. Camplin	Registered inspector
8937	H. Allen	Lay inspector
29378	K. Watson	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections
'Grasshoppers'
1 Anglesey Close
Chasetown
Burntwood
Staffordshire
WS7 8XA

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Orchard Infant School is large for its type by national standards. It has 263 pupils on roll, including 83 children in reception. Pupils come from relatively advantaged backgrounds and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. When children enter reception their social and emotional, language and mathematical development are above average compared with most children of their age. The school population is entirely English speaking, and almost all pupils are British and white. A very small minority of pupils comes from mixed-heritage families or other white backgrounds, including Irish and Dutch. Altogether, 50 pupils have special educational needs, including two with statements. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average but the proportion with statements of need is below average. The nature of pupils' special educational needs is wide. There are pupils with hearing and physical impairment, speech or communication difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate and severe learning needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This high-performing school is very ably led and managed. Its pupils achieve high standards in much of their work. Most pupils enjoy school, are very keen to learn, form very good relationships and conduct themselves well. Teaching is good because of its emphasis on enabling pupils to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills and on helping pupils to apply them in a variety of interesting ways. The school commands the respect and appreciation of most parents for providing a curriculum that caters very well for pupils' diverse needs. Governors ensure good value for money despite relatively high unit costs.

What the school does well

- The school benefits from having a headteacher with excellent leadership qualities and management skills. A dedicated team of staff and a strong governing body support her very effectively in striving for the highest standards in all that the school does.
- Pupils achieve very good results in national tests, compared with similar schools, because teachers are strongly committed to raising standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Provision for personal development is excellent. It enables pupils to develop very positive relationships, caring and responsible attitudes and behaviour, and the ability to plan, manage and review much of their work independently.
- The curriculum is very imaginatively planned and taught to provide many exciting and stimulating opportunities for pupils to achieve well.

What could be improved

- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not fully match learning activities to all pupils' needs, nor do they manage pupils, teaching time and resources quite well enough to ensure that pupils consistently work hard and meet their learning targets.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection in March 1998. It has successfully addressed all its key issues from the inspection report, because the action plan was implemented with rigour. There is now a much higher percentage of good or better teaching. This has resulted in writing improving from an average to a well above average standard and, in music, pupils also making good progress to reach an above average standard. The curriculum is now comprehensively planned for reception and Years 1 and 2.

Governors are much better informed about the school's performance and fully meet statutory requirements in reporting about provision for pupils with special educational needs. Since the headteacher was appointed three years ago, the school has set ambitious targets for improvement every year. It has a record of exceeding them, due to the determination and skill of its workforce. Orchard Infant School has the capacity to be in the top 5 per cent of high performing schools in national tests in 2003.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	B	B	A	A*
writing	D	B	A	A
mathematics	D	B	A	A

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

Standards attained are high at the end of Year 2, having risen steeply overall since 2000. Pupils excel in reading and their achievement is in the top five per cent of schools with a similar intake. Pupils also achieve well in writing and mathematics. The results of teacher assessment in science are average overall, though they are above average compared with similar schools and a high percentage reach the above average standard. Pupils in the current Year 2 communicate very effectively and are working at advanced levels in English, mathematics and science. They are likely to meet the school's targets for improvement in all the national tests, including 12 per cent to be above average in writing. Compared with individual attainment when they started in reception, every pupil achieves well. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as higher-attaining pupils. This includes those that the school has identified as gifted and talented. Children in reception also make equally good progress. They are likely to exceed expectations in all six areas of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic in most lessons. They often become fully absorbed in their learning activities. Sometimes, a few pupils in Year 1 lose interest when required to listen and concentrate for a sustained period of time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Behaviour is very good, and sometimes exemplary, in over 50 per cent of lessons. A minority of pupils finds it difficult to conform to teachers' high expectations of them. That is why the school authorised two temporary exclusions during 2002 for serious breach of the Code of Conduct.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Most pupils get along together happily, are adept at using their initiative and organising their own learning.
Attendance	Good. It has been above average for the past three years and there is very little unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	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.

Teachers throughout the school have a very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They ensure a smooth transition from teaching the new curriculum for children under six to teaching pupils in Year 2 many of the National Curriculum targets for pupils in Year 3 or beyond. Teachers plan an exciting and broad range of tasks that help pupils of all aptitudes and backgrounds to learn effectively. They adopt a judicious blend of formal and informal ways of teaching that enable pupils to work together harmoniously and to make particularly good progress in expressing themselves orally. They systematically follow clear guidelines for teaching phonics, reading, spelling and writing, number, and simple mathematical and scientific ideas in many different contexts. This accounts for pupils' rapid acquisition of literacy, numeracy, creative and practical skills, and aesthetic awareness. Children thrive on the many opportunities they receive to learn independently. They eagerly explore new ideas and ways of working to discover a wealth of information about the world in which they live. In about three out of ten lessons learning objectives are not fully met. This is sometimes because tasks are too easy for higher-attaining pupils or because the teaching method confuses slower learners. Occasionally, teachers' expectations are unrealistic and they try to cover too much. Then, either pupils do not have enough time to practise skills, or time runs out before teachers and pupils can adequately discuss the outcomes of the lesson. This prevents pupils from gaining a clear understanding of how hard they worked and whether they made the best possible progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The approach to curriculum planning is thorough and innovative. Its breadth, depth and balance are impressive.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The curriculum is adapted very well for pupils with special educational needs and those who the school has identified as gifted or talented. All have very relevant targets for the next steps in learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. Fostering pupils' personal development lies at the heart of the school's philosophy for education. Teachers' efforts to promote all these features are outstanding. Pupils are prepared very well for living in a multi-racial society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of pupils. Child protection procedures, and those for ensuring pupils' health and welfare, are implemented carefully. Accidents or mishaps are very rare.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is an outstanding leader and inspirational manager who very capably communicates the school's vision for excellent standards. The deputy headteacher and other senior managers share this vision. Their contribution to the management of the school is very good because they receive excellent guidance from the headteacher and have a well-planned programme of professional development that is improving their skills as teachers and managers. The school values its partnership with parents. It has recently started to seek their ideas for improvement through formal consultation so that they can be taken into account when revising the School Improvement Plan.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. They keep up-to-date with information about how well the school is performing with the specific requirements of local and national initiatives, and changes in legislation.
The school's evaluation of its performance.	Very good. It has robust procedures for monitoring standards and is quick to identify and address weaknesses in provision. Staff and governors then refine and improve school policy and practice to ensure that standards continue to rise.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Human, financial and new technology resources are deployed very well. The programme of renovation and refurbishment has improved facilities for learning significantly, for all groups of pupils. The principles of best value are applied well. Governors constantly challenge themselves to use resources wisely so that all pupils have every opportunity to succeed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school is well managed and led. • Teaching is good. • Teachers listen when parents want to ask questions or share concerns. • The emphasis on enabling pupils to work independently and to take responsibility. • The curriculum is broad and stimulating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They want to know whether the standards their children achieve are high enough. • Some want the school to provide more opportunities for learning outside of lessons. • Some want to know more about how teachers foster good behaviour and want to be alerted early if their children cause problems. • Site security and supervision at lunch-time.

Inspectors agree with parents about the school's many strengths. They found that the school provides a good range of opportunities for learning outside normal lessons. There are many opportunities for parents to find out about how behaviour is managed and how well pupils achieve. They found that the school has already taken steps to improve the quality of annual reports so that they describe progress and effort in all subjects. The site is safe and the school employs an adequate number of supervisors to ensure pupils' safety in the playground.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school benefits from having a headteacher with excellent leadership qualities and management skills. A dedicated team of staff and a strong governing body support her very effectively in striving for the highest standards in all that the school does.

1. The headteacher was appointed three years ago. Soon afterwards, a comprehensive School Strategic Plan was produced for the period April 2000 to July 2003. It consisted of three distinct sections; a School Improvement Plan, a Development and Maintenance Plan and a Management Plan. All three plans are working very well. That is why the school has made such very good improvement since the previous inspection and is continuing to set its sights on even higher standards in the years ahead. The school is developing into a highly efficient and effective provider of primary education.

2. Governors recruited a headteacher with exemplary leadership qualities. The headteacher is the first to set the tone in making everyone in the school feel welcome and involved. She exudes a sense of purpose, dedication and a tremendous faith in pupils' capacity to develop to their full potential. The headteacher inspires the loyalty, confidence and respect of every member of staff, the governing body and the vast majority of parents so that they all pursue the same aims and objectives. She is clear-sighted and focused on translating into practice the school's vision statement for excellence in all that it does.

3. The headteacher sets a very good example in promoting teaching of high quality. She regularly takes small groups of the school's most gifted and talented pupils to extend their thinking skills. She challenges these pupils to find different ways of solving real-life mathematical problems, such as to make up and write a story about division. One pupil, for instance, explained how four shops equally divided the sale of 200 bicycles. Such opportunities are contributing to the rapid rise in standards in mathematics.

4. Communication in the school is so good and management responsibilities are delegated so effectively that every member of the workforce knows where they fit in the school family and what their team roles and responsibilities are. They also share a good understanding of how to fulfil them because they have access to an excellent programme of professional development. For example, one closure day was dedicated to finding out about a very specific programme for teaching phonics and spelling. Having made the decision to adopt the programme, all teachers ensure that it is taught effectively. This shared target is having the desired impact. Pupils in every year group are achieving a higher standard in writing and spelling now than they were a year ago.

5. At the time of the previous inspection, the way that the school planned and managed lessons so that initiative and independence were promoted, was identified as an area for further improvement. The deputy headteacher has very capably led the initiative to manage this change in the teaching culture. A training day was organised with an educational consultant with relevant expertise, so that teachers could debate the management issues involved. The initiative is constantly being reviewed and evaluated. As a result, teachers are improving pupils' capacity to plan and discuss the quality of their own learning. Teachers are developing flexible and effective teaching methods that foster choice and taking decisions. Staff know that the seeds they have planted are growing but have yet to fully mature. Nonetheless, it is very evident that all pupils are far better able to learn independently than they were at the time of the previous inspection.

6. The three co-hort leaders, one of whom is the deputy headteacher, manage their groups well. They are very effective in bringing their team members together to plan the curriculum so that all pupils share common experiences. They devise activities to match the diverse needs of children in reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Now that systems for planning the curriculum are firmly established, these teachers, and others who manage different subjects, are moving to the next objectives in their action plans. They support teachers in planning lessons that enable all pupils to make good progress towards individual targets for improvement. Their combined efforts have enabled the school to meet its aim for a quarter of teaching and learning to be very good or better. Now, everyone with a management role is aiming to raise that percentage closer to 50 per cent by 2004. Their capacity to succeed is very good.

7. Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well because they keep abreast of progress with the School Improvement Plan. They do not set aside funds at a whim. They expect the school to justify new expenditure and demonstrate the value of costly new initiatives by providing evidence of their impact on standards. For example, they provided a new music and drama room, after deficiencies were identified in the teaching of music at the time of the previous inspection. Governors have reliable evidence that standards have improved as a result. They made significant improvements to the library, employed a part-time librarian and encouraged professional development for teachers and teaching assistants in teaching reading. Again, governors have been rewarded by a sharp rise in standards. The investment in computers has given all pupils, including children in reception, very good access to new technology resources. Pupils use information and communication technology well in many lessons. The improvements to the school's reception area and office have made administration easier and more efficient.

8. The governing body has very successfully supported the school in meeting its original targets to raise standards in writing, reading comprehension and standards across the curriculum. The school is now spending more time and energy on improving children's ability to learn independently and this is a very appropriate focus for future improvement. Parents share the school's aspirations for high standards but not all understand the school's strategy to realise them. That is why the headteacher and governors are determined to consult parents more formally. They are now planning ways to ensure that parents understand and support the new initiatives for teaching and learning and are involved in evaluating their success.

Pupils achieve very good results in national tests compared with similar schools because teachers are strongly committed to raising standards in literacy and numeracy.

9. Compared with all schools nationally, pupils in Year 2 have attained continually improving results over the last three years in all compulsory tests. The high standard of the results reflects the rigorous assessment skills that teachers have developed over that period. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully from the time that they enter reception through to Year 2. Teachers then use the outcomes of tests in reception to forecast pupils' potential from the age of five and to set challenging targets for attainment at the end of Year 2. They also analyse the performance of boys compared with girls within the school, and compared with the same gender in schools nationally and within their own local education authority. They then set small, achievable targets for pupils to work towards. Teachers tell pupils about their targets, which are then displayed, on classroom walls. Pupils are highly motivated to meet them and consequently the targets are updated frequently. In this way, boys' achievement has been raised, girls' achievement has been sustained, and the gap between boys and girls' achievement in writing has been reduced to a very small margin.

10. Standards in reading have improved since the previous inspection. They are now in the top five per cent compared with schools with a similar intake. It is noticeable that in 2002 boys and girls obtained exactly the same average scores, the first time they had done so since results have been recorded in this way. Boys were about a year ahead of boys nationally whilst girls also maintained a clear gap of approximately two terms between the school's results and girls in all other schools. The school attributes this success to the purchase of 'boy-friendly literature' and a greater element of choice in the books they read, both with the teacher and at home. This has indeed helped, as was graphically confirmed by several pupils in Year 2. These pupils read competently from, for example, a story written by a favourite British author and from an information book about the Sun, Moon and Planets. One showed a good understanding of character and plot when summing up the best features of the story. Another demonstrated how well significant information had been absorbed, by picking out key phrases from a passage about the moon. One of these pupils had special educational needs but no longer needs additional help because such good progress has been made.

11. Regular access to the extensive school library is another major reason for pupils' knowledge of a wide range and variety of reading material. Pupils really look forward to regular sessions with the school librarian who guides them as they make a choice of books to share as a group at school, or borrow to read at home. A few pupils from Year 1, for example, talked animatedly about a humorous new story concerning a small child who did all sorts of gruesome things that they found fascinating. They also explained clearly how to use the reference system to quickly find an atlas.

12. Standards in spelling and writing are continuing to rise as the school is determined to exceed the national averages in the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 in 2003. This has been partly due to teachers spending more time modelling different kinds of writing for pupils, such as how to lay out a formal letter. Pupils in Year 2 have written some very good examples, such as pretending to be Florence Nightingale writing to Queen Victoria. Children in reception were skilfully shown how to design a simple information leaflet about how to care for a pet. They imitated the teacher's example to produce simple but informative pamphlets of their own.

13. The new phonics and spelling scheme is very successfully addressing difficulties pupils formerly had with learning the sounds of letters, recognising spelling patterns, and making reasonably accurate attempts to tackle imaginative vocabulary in their writing. It was impressive to see, for example, a middle-achieving group in Year 2 spelling irregular words with the *aught* and *ough* patterns dictated by a teacher onto whiteboards. They wrote complex words, such as *daughter*, *laughing*, *rough*, *thought* and *thoroughly*, quickly and with a high level of accuracy.

14. Additionally, independent practice on the computer is encouraged. This was seen to motivate those pupils who need special support with their reading, spelling and writing. At least six pupils from one class in Year 2, for example, choose to start their day at 8.40.a.m. working on a special program where they set their own targets and tackled a series of graded exercises. They take full responsibility for finding a new work card and for recording their progress onto a 'talking' computer record sheet. The system works well. Last year, for example, pupils on the programme attained at least the level expected of their age group in writing. Spurred on by success, the school aims to move a higher percentage of pupils into the middle Level 2 band for writing this year.

15. In mathematics, in 2002, 99 per cent of pupils attained Level 2, compared with the national average of 89 per cent, whilst almost 50 per cent gained Level 3. This was very good achievement compared with the national average of 31 per cent, and compared with the

results of the previous year. Boys, in particular, improved their performance. Much of this success is due to the extra tuition gifted pupils receive from the headteacher, where they are challenged to explore alternative methods for solving problems and to show these methods in jottings in their books. All pupils apply mathematical knowledge well in much of their work in other subjects. There are many displays, for example, of data handling where pupils present findings, such as different ways of travelling to school, graphically. There are some fine examples in science books of pupils measuring their pulse rate before and after exercise, and recording the difference between them. Many pupils say that mathematics is their favourite subject because they have so many interesting things to do involving estimating, measuring and exploring shape and pattern. Teachers' written comments in exercise books show how they challenge pupils to explain results as well as they can. Pupils' books are packed with a wide variety of interesting and lively examples, such as to investigate different kinds of shoe fastenings. One pupil wrote, *"More people had Velcro than I thought,"* to which the teacher responded, *"How many more than you estimated?"* The pupil then replied, *"There were 4 more children with Velcro than I expected."* Pupils in this year group are well on their way towards achieving high standards in mathematics tests this year.

Provision for personal development is excellent. It enables pupils to develop very positive relationships, caring and responsible attitudes and behaviour, and the ability to plan, manage and review much of their work independently.

16. The school is now giving pupils responsibility for planning and reviewing their own learning. The work is still evolving and there are still things that need to improve. However, the overall impact on pupils' ability to make choices and decisions, set targets, work co-operatively, manage their own time, and talk about what they have learnt, is impressive, especially for pupils in Year 2. It is reflected in lessons, the quality of work in exercise books and the wealth of lively displays around the school.

17. From reception to Year 2, pupils are now encouraged to 'plan, do and review' independently. In reception, children select what they want to do quickly and decisively. When presented with a choice of two construction kits, for example, children explained clearly and concisely what they wanted to do. *"I want to make a fire engine with a powerful engine,"* said one. The group shared the kits and the space without fuss or problems and managed their time very well. After just twenty minutes they had met their personal targets and were keen to report how well they had worked to each other and the teacher. As the fire engine was examined, the child explained, *"I have made a long ladder so that the firemen can get up to the top of high buildings."* Every child in the group had gained personal pride from developing his or her own ideas.

18. In Year 1, pupils are increasingly innovative and willing to include others. In one lesson, for example, pupils with special educational needs were successfully encouraged to work within a group to plan an imaginative sequence of movements to represent a Native Americans' dance. The more able pupils spontaneously invented symbols to represent the steps and musical accompaniment. As they performed to the rest of the class pupils showed how successful they had been in meeting their objectives. They also demonstrated how well they had applied previous knowledge about American Indians to extend and communicate their learning.

19. In Year 2, pupils are even more sensible and mature in the way they organise different roles and responsibilities, such as group leader, scribe or reporter. In one lesson, for example, some pretended to be eyewitnesses reporting on the Great Fire of London. They devised questions for another group to answer that proved quite a challenging task, drawing productively on pupils' historical knowledge, reading and writing skills. During the review time they read their questions and answers aloud whilst the teacher skilfully brought out different

strengths, such as an interesting start to a sentence, good explanations of events or accurate use of punctuation.

20. At the same time as developing independence, the school has maintained all the very good elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reported at the time of the previous inspection. There is a strong overlap in the provision for each that capitalises on pupils' independence and prepares them very well for living in a multi-racial society. Assemblies and collective worship underpin the emphasis on all these aspects. The joyous atmosphere as pupils sing together and the moments of quiet reflection when they share a prayer, typify the school's welcoming ethos. Pupils gain a lot of pleasure and satisfaction from joining all together to listen to stories, participate in discussions and demonstrations and to reflect on their meaning. They thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the meaning of Lent to Christians, for example, and thinking about both the literal and deeper meaning of something or someone being strong. Older pupils were also contemplative when, at the end of the assembly, they thought quietly about the impact of war on ordinary children and their families.

21. Pupils have many opportunities for thinking about human endeavour, the mysteries of life and the wonders of the natural world. From their first year in school, children begin to respond sensitively to these experiences, such as the gentle way in which one reception class cuddled and stroked two baby animals belonging to one of the children. Adults helped children to realise, if there is a pet in the home, the responsibility they share with adults to care for it appropriately.

22. The significance of special people, festivals, celebrations and other events are imaginatively explored from a variety of angles in many lessons, such as when pupils in Year 2 compared the customs of the Hindu festival 'Holi' with their own experience of bonfires and sending greetings' cards. Photographs of elderly people highlight the thoughtful way in which pupils have been encouraged to recognise how much grandparents mean to them. Visits and visitors clearly add immeasurably to pupils' love of learning about people's different lifestyles. A colourful display in the hall, for example, shows pupils with a theatre group from London. They worked collaboratively to plan and perform routines from the Wizard of Oz, and to perfect the skills of Salsa and Limbo dancing. Pupils recall this experience with pleasure and respect. The visit had a particularly positive impact on boys, some of whom had previously had a less than favourable view of male dancers. Other displays show the outcomes of intensive study about Africa, literature, poetry, and the arts. They show pupils' highly impressive effort in applying academic, creative and practical skills as well as the high quality and wide variety of the work. As pupils pause to look at them, and respond to the questions alongside them, they consolidate the respect they have for social and cultural diversity.

23. Systems for rewards, incentives and allocating responsibility work very well. Pupils with special educational needs respond to instant rewards, such as to put a marble in a jar, or add a sticker to his or her chart that records progress towards an individual target. The work of the School Council epitomises the careful way in which pupils' understanding of citizenship and democracy is being developed and the way that the school takes their views into account. Its members sorted and judged many pupils' suggestions for improvements to the school grounds, for example. They also managed to persuade the canteen staff to make a few easy adjustments to lunchtime menus to accommodate some pupils' healthier options. Overall, the twelve representatives manage their roles very responsibly. They take pride in their contribution and their peers are very proud of their achievements.

The curriculum is very imaginatively planned and taught to provide many exciting and stimulating opportunities for pupils to achieve well.

24. Teachers regard pupils' creative, technical, practical and physical development as very important. They realise that encouraging pupils' talents and aptitudes broadens their horizons and give many pupils, especially those less gifted academically, a deep sense of pleasure and purpose. Adults are dedicated to finding as many opportunities as they can to make sure that pupils progressively learn to use as wide a range of designing, making and appraising skills as possible. Overall, teachers are adept at enabling pupils to find out a great deal about what shapes and governs the world around them, both past and present, near and far. Every subject is fully represented in the lively displays around the school.

25. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in creative and physical development were average and children made satisfactory progress in both of these areas of learning. Similarly in Years 1 and 2, pupils attained above average standards in history and geography but made satisfactory progress to achieve average standards in all other foundation subjects and religious education. Now they are above average in creative and physical development in reception and, judging from what is seen around the school, above average in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. Standards in music were below average before but are now above average due to the time teachers have spent developing music. Dance, drama and music-making are far better organised since governors invested in a room where children have an open space in which to experiment with musical instruments, listen to music and recordings of different kinds of sounds, and make up their own sound patterns. They do this enthusiastically, sometimes then choosing to write about their discoveries. For example, one reception child with special educational needs was inspired to write, "*The noise sounded like a waterfall.*" Collections of work in a special music portfolio also show that pupils have listened to many different composers and orchestras, and used them as inspiration for painting, drawing and creative writing.

26. Role-play areas are popular with children in reception and provide a wonderful opportunity for pupils to develop their vocabulary. A well-stocked farm shop in one classroom, for example, gives children the chance to re-enact a recent visit they made to a dairy farm. In another, a small group of boys were seen to become completely absorbed in making up their own story about buying a new puppy. They kept up a dialogue for several minutes working out who would be the shopkeeper and the customer, what the dog would cost and how it would be taken home.

27. In one corridor, there are carefully designed pictures produced by pupils in Year 1 from a computer art package. Another display board in Year 2 celebrates the lively drawings and paintings produced by pupils about the Great Fire of London. There is a display in another room of three-dimensional papier-mâché figures representing famous people, also made by pupils in Year 2. They reflect a high standard of practical skill. Year 2 pupils have also made some excellent life-size models of '*The Iron Man*' as a result of hearing the famous story by Ted Hughes.

28. Practical work in science features strongly. In reception, pupils participated in a considerable amount of work about animals. They have cut out pictures or found photographs of animals and devised their own criteria to sort them, such as farm and wild animals, animals from hot countries, animals with hooves and animals with spots or stripes. Pupils in Year 1 have studied various mechanisms to answer the question, '*How does it work?*' Their drawings and writing show that they have learnt the basic features about forces of energy by experimenting with push and pull movements. They use appropriate language, such as press, squeeze, switch, as they describe the different devices they explored. In Year 2, pupils recently investigated natural and manufactured materials and their properties, and measured the temperature of liquids in different places. Captions illustrate their discoveries; '*It is colder in the shade than in the sunshine.*' A visit to an interactive science centre enabled

pupils to see through large telescopes and find out more about the night sky. One wrote, *“It was the strangest telescope that I had ever seen.”*

29. The topic on Native Americans has kept pupils in Year 1 enthralled for several weeks. Their drawings, paintings and writing show how closely they have observed photographs of totem poles, and features of tepee homes. Pupils’ work has a strong spiritual dimension, with its focus on the significance of the costumes Indians wear for a ghost dance. Pupils have explained that the special dress *‘keeps the wearer safe from harm’*.

30. Reception children have produced some striking pictures, writing and maps about favourite fairy tales, such as *Hansel and Gretel* and *Goldilocks*. These are accompanied by stimulating interactive captions to which children can respond. One says, *‘Can you follow Hansel and Gretel’s route through the forest?’* Another says, *‘Can you remember practising the words shorter, longer, heavier, lighter, half-full and half-empty?’* Pupils in Year 1 learnt to appreciate and recite the poem *‘Commotion in the Ocean’* and made a big colourful frieze to illustrate it. Pupils throughout the school have discovered children’s classics, dressing up as characters, such as Captain Hook from *Peter Pan*. They recall with pleasure writing stories and poems to enter for special competitions, some of which are of a very high standard.

31. Overall, it is easy to see why pupils enjoy school so much and achieve so well. There are many exciting things to do every day; no one wants to be away.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

In a minority of lessons, teachers do not fully match learning activities to all pupils’ needs, nor do they manage pupils, teaching time and resources quite well enough to ensure that pupils consistently work hard and meet their learning targets.

32. Although most pupils usually make good progress, in one lesson in Year 2, higher-attaining pupils made progress that was only satisfactory in recognising the equivalence between fractions, such as two quarters equals half of a whole one. This was because, though the learning objectives for the lesson were shared orally, they were not displayed for pupils to refer to and use for checking their own progress. The task, to split squares into halves and quarters, was quite straightforward for about 20 per cent of the class. The group created interesting patterns but pupils were not challenged to write a sentence to explain what they had done. They were easily capable of doing this and of experimenting with shapes to discover other equivalent parts of a whole. In this, and several other lessons, opportunities were missed to encourage pupils to reflect on their learning and to find ways of following up a mathematical idea or another skill at home. This may account for some parents’ view that children should be given formal homework in mathematics, even though teachers provide written suggestions from time to time for activities that parents could do with their children.

33. Many of the school’s pupils are energetic and lively but lack a certain amount of self-discipline and composure. They require very sensitive and careful management to enable them to achieve their best and in some lessons they take up too much of the teachers’ time. This was especially noticeable when pupils were engaged in an exciting activity, such as performing a dance they had invented about the life of North American Indians. Some became noisy and made considerable demands on the teacher. The pace of the lesson slowed down whilst a calm atmosphere was restored. Inevitably, other pupils then lacked sufficient time to improve their performance as well as they might have done without interruption.

34. In one lesson, a group of lower-attaining pupils, including some with special educational needs, were working with a support assistant on a practical task involving

rounding numbers to the nearest ten. They were confused by the way they were being asked to do this. Though the confusion was eventually resolved, it took some time and this slowed their progress. More specific guidance from the teacher about how to manage the task would have avoided this.

35. Occasionally, teachers' expectations are unrealistic and they try to cover too much in the space of half-an-hour. Then, for example in music lessons, pupils do not have enough time to improve their phrasing as they sing, keep a beat as they play instruments, or follow the score of a sound picture they have composed. Teachers do not yet manage time consistently well enough to give themselves and pupils sufficient opportunities to assess and evaluate the outcomes of the lesson. This prevents pupils from gaining a clear understanding of how hard they worked and whether they made the best possible progress.

36. Teachers and support assistants are reflective and self-critical. They are, therefore, very aware of features of teaching that they need to strengthen. They are working hard to set and enable pupils to meet relevant improvement targets. Teachers know they need to persevere with these efforts to enable all groups of pupils to make even more rapid progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) In order to meet its target to reduce the percentage of satisfactory lessons and deliver a high percentage of very good or better lessons the school should maintain the programme of professional development for teachers so that:
 - Learning activities are always well matched to the needs of all pupils;
 - Behaviour, time and resources are managed as well as possible;
 - All pupils fully understand what is expected of them and work consistently hard to meet their learning targets.(Paragraphs: 32 – 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	10	6	0	0	0
Percentage	5	19	47	29	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 6 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	263
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	50

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	41	48	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	40	41
	Girls	47	48	47
	Total	87	88	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (92)	99 (97)	99 (99)
	National	98 (92)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	41	39
	Girls	47	47	46
	Total	87	88	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (97)	99 (99)	96 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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	158	2	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	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	14	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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	256

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	578 072
Total expenditure	569 496
Expenditure per pupil	2 125
Balance brought forward from previous year	91 600
Balance carried forward to next year	100 176

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.6
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	264
Number of questionnaires returned	166

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	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	47	4	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	47	8	2	2
The teaching is good.	58	36	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	40	17	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	29	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	37	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	42	43	10	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	32	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	42	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	25	15	4	28

Other issues raised by parents

Three parents have concerns about the security of the site and supervision at break-times.