

INSPECTION REPORT

SOMERS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Malvern

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116772

Headteacher: Mr Stuart Sewell

Reporting inspector: Mr Douglas Hayward
21234

Dates of inspection: 30th June – 1st July 2003

Inspection number: 247689

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Somers Park Avenue Malvern
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Telephone number:	01684 572949
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tim Swallow
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Somers Park is a large primary school situated close to the centre of Malvern. Currently there are 425 pupils on roll, including 50 who attend the nursery part-time, for morning or afternoon sessions. Most of the pupils are white and live locally, and almost all speak English as their first language. There is a mix of pupils who live in privately owned housing and those who live in housing association owned accommodation. Their range of ability on entry to school is wide, but assessments show it to be lower than expected at that age.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number identified with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, is below the national average. In the last few years the school has become very popular and is now regularly oversubscribed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Somers Park is a very exciting school with many outstanding features. It is a very happy, popular, caring place where pupils feel valued and enjoy learning. Its success is due to the expertise, enthusiasm and hard work of teachers, support staff and governors. It helps pupils of all abilities to make very good progress. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership. They give clear educational direction and have introduced many adventurous and innovative changes that contribute to the school's success. Staff and governors provide outstanding support.
- Teaching is very good overall, and in some lessons it is inspirational. Teachers are very enthusiastic and work very well as a team. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan work that is interesting and varied and at just the right level for pupils in their classes. Pupils say, *'Teachers give us loads of encouragement. They are always positive'*.
- It helps pupils of all ages to make very good progress from the time that they start in the nursery, including those who have special educational needs or who are gifted and talented.
- It has an excellent ethos. Pupils are very proud of their school, enjoy their work and want to do well. They say, *'All the lessons are interesting'* and *'We want to learn!'* Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and they enjoy the responsibilities they are given.
- It teaches a wide range of interesting subjects. As well as emphasising the importance of literacy and numeracy, pupils have many very good opportunities to develop other interests, for example in drama and music.
- The school forms very strong links with parents. They feel that the school has improved and that their children are happy and learn well.

What could be improved

- Outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage¹

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997, when it was judged to provide sound value for money. Since then, many changes have taken place that have made it a much better and more effective school. It has successfully addressed all the key issues identified then, such as the way in which support is organised for pupils with special educational needs and standards in information and communication technology. It has improved in many other areas as well. For example, the proportion of very good teaching has trebled since the last inspection and this means that pupils' learning is also much better. The quality of leadership and management is excellent now and that has helped to bring about the many improvements that have taken place. The school is in a very good position to continue to improve and build on its many strengths.

¹ Foundation Stage – this was introduced in September 2000 and forms a separate stage of education for children from the age of three until they reach the end of the reception year.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	B	B	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	B	A	A	
Science	C	A	A	A	

In last year's national tests, standards for eleven-year-olds were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science compared with those in all schools. They were well above average in all three subjects compared with those in similar schools. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to achieve and, consequently, there has been a steady improvement in junior pupils' results, with those in mathematics and science in the top 25 per cent in the country last year. The school has predicted slightly higher results in all three subjects this year. Standards for seven-year-olds have also risen year by year. The school felt that they could be improved still further and put in even more effort to raise them. Their hard work has paid off and, in the most recent national tests for infants, results have improved significantly at Level 2 and Level 3². In fact, about a third of pupils attained the higher level in reading and mathematics. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and, by the time they leave the reception classes, most attain the Early Learning Goals³. During the inspection, standards in the foundation subjects were at least in line with those expected for infants and juniors and in some subjects, such as design and technology, history and information and communication technology, they were higher than expected. The school is very good at using pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are extremely proud of the school and want visitors to know how good they think it is. They get on with their work quickly and no time is wasted. They greatly respect their teachers and say, <i>'We do our work well because we want to!'</i>
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils are extremely well behaved in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that Somers Park is <i>'a well mannered school'</i> and that bullying is not an issue.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. They greatly enjoy the responsibilities they have. They fully understand the school motto <i>'We shine'</i> and say that <i>'It makes us feel bright!'</i> There are excellent relationships between adults and pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory. In line with most primary schools. Most pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start on time.

² Levels – by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Those pupils who attain Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

³ Early Learning Goals – these are targets for children by the end of the reception year. They refer to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection 30 lessons were observed. Teaching is very good overall, and in almost 15 per cent it is excellent. This is high quality teaching and it is found throughout the school. In some lessons teaching was inspirational, with pupils becoming totally absorbed in their lessons and sitting open-mouthed in amazement. A consequence of the high quality teaching and a constant feature of many lessons is that pupils remember what they have learned. Their learning is exciting and interesting and they want to learn more. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently very good and has a significant impact on standards in other subjects, for example pupils' written work in design and technology and their numeracy skills in science. A major benefit of the school's arrangements for teaching pupils in groups of similar ability is that work is very well planned at just the right level for them to make progress. Pupils also like the groups and say, *'Work is really challenging. If you don't understand, teachers take time to explain to you'*. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. They want them to succeed and use praise very well to motivate them. In turn, pupils want to live up to their teachers' expectations and try their best.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a wide range of visitors and visits to help enrich the curriculum. There are very good opportunities for pupils to make decisions, share ideas and develop ways in which they think for themselves.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' needs are identified early and teachers and classroom assistants give them lots of help. Pupils have very clear targets for their work so that everyone knows what has to be done to help them make progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes very good provision for the very few pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school helps to develop high levels of understanding and respect. Pupils say, <i>'We are taught what is right and wrong'</i> . Everyone's talents are valued. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school. Pupils know that adults really care about their well being. They say, <i>'If you have problems people help you'</i> and pupils in Year 6 say, <i>'We are really going to miss this school!'</i>

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an extremely effective partnership and provide outstanding leadership. The assistant head gives excellent support and has made a significant impact since his appointment. Teachers with responsibility for managing subjects are very knowledgeable and have played an important part in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are extremely well informed, conscientious and supportive. They fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school with considerable expertise. They play a major part in supporting the headteacher to get the best value for money from its budget.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is always looking for ways to improve. It knows what it does well and is open to new ideas to help improve the already high standard of education it provides.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of people, time and resources to provide a stimulating education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Before the inspection started, 13 parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector and 104 (23 per cent) returned their questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make progress. • Behaviour is good and their children become mature and responsible. • The school has high expectations and teaching is good. • The school is well managed and led and works closely with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few feel that they are not well informed about progress. • Some would like to see a wider range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team strongly supports parents' positive views. No parents indicated how they felt they could be better informed about their children's progress. Parents receive annual reports that give a good picture of their children's strengths and areas for development. There are regular occasions when they can discuss their children's progress with teachers and all said that teachers are willing to discuss any concerns at short notice. A few did indicate that they would like more information about the work that their children will be doing each term, and the team agrees that this could be more consistent. In the team's opinion the school organises a wide range of activities outside lessons, including an early morning computer club for older pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership. They give clear educational direction and have introduced many adventurous and innovative changes that contribute to the school's success. Staff and governors provide outstanding support.

1. The impact of the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is apparent from the standards of work that pupils achieve, the smooth day-to-day running of the school, its very strong ethos, the significant improvements that have taken place since the last inspection and the clear direction for the school to continue to improve. Ninety-nine per cent of parents, in their questionnaires, agree that the school is well led and managed. Parents refer to 'enthusiastic' and 'energetic' leadership. There is no doubt in parents' minds that they have made many important changes to improve Somers Park since the last inspection. The headteacher's and deputy headteacher's skills complement each other very well. They agree on educational innovation designed to improve the quality of pupils' learning and that was clearly apparent during the inspection. For example, their commitment to developing pupils' ability to ask searching questions and to take increasing responsibility for aspects of their own work. Their thorough and purposeful monitoring of lessons has had a positive impact on improving standards of teaching and is now firmly embedded as good practice throughout the school.
2. The school is committed to staff development, communication and the well being of staff. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on teamwork and the importance of the role of each individual. There is a clear commitment to developing the full potential of all staff. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are extremely good at delegating responsibility to staff and enabling them to succeed by providing time, resources and opportunities for professional development. They have a definite idea of how the management structure can benefit different aspects of the school. For example, the recently appointed assistant headteacher has done a great deal to develop the part that pupils play in school by introducing a school council that is well funded and has real influence to improve things. The pastoral manager has effectively improved links between parents and school. The roles of subject co-ordinators are very well developed and very effective in raising standards. The fact that staff have taken on so many changes so successfully, enthusiastically and effectively to improve the quality of education indicates their commitment to the school and the way in which it is led and managed.
3. The governing body is extremely effective in its role. Governors are very proud of the school, and very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They fully understand how changes have improved the school and how their own role has been instrumental in those changes. Their annual report to parents is informative and very attractively presented. They visit school frequently to see it in action and to observe lessons. They are committed to using the budget effectively to raise standards and have a keen interest in ensuring that when they spend money they get the best value they can. They have a keen understanding of the school's strengths and areas where improvements can be made. Above all, they are very good at asking the right questions to make sure that they are fully aware of, support and can justify decisions that are taken regarding the management of the school. Careful budget management by the headteacher and governors has ensured that, while the school is well resourced, a prudent carry forward has enabled the school to maintain good staffing levels, including non-contact time for managers.

Teaching is very good overall, and in some lessons it is inspirational. Teachers are very enthusiastic and work very well as a team. They have very high expectations of what

pupils can achieve and plan work that is interesting and varied and at just the right level for pupils in their classes. Pupils say, *'Teachers give us loads of encouragement. They are always positive'*.

4. In their pre-inspection questionnaires, 100 per cent of parents indicated that they feel that teaching is good at Somers Park. At the pre-inspection meeting parents commented on teachers' enthusiasm and their open approach to discussing any concerns with parents. Teachers are hardworking and committed to the success of the school. Teachers new to the school said that they feel very well supported and have settled in quickly.
5. In the 30 lessons observed teaching was at least good in 90 per cent of them and very good in 60 per cent. This is high quality teaching and it is found throughout the school. The quality of teaching in this inspection is far higher than it was in 1997, when the percentage of good or very good lessons was 19 per cent. In some lessons teaching was inspirational, containing real 'awe and wonder' that had a mesmerising effect on many pupils. The high quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress and attainment is clear in lessons, in books and in national test results.
6. The improvement in the quality of teaching is due to changes in personnel, an increase in the monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and staff, raised expectations of what pupils can achieve and better planning to ensure that work matches pupils' needs. There has also been a marked shift in the way that teachers plan to make pupils think more carefully about their work and how they ensure that they take part more actively in lessons. For example, they plan how pupils can work together in groups, discussing and making decisions. They use resources well to make the lesson content more appealing, for example interactive whiteboards and computers. This makes the pace of lessons brisker, pupils are more involved and consequently interested, and they remember what they learn.
7. One notable feature of lessons is the teachers' positive and enthusiastic approach that really makes pupils sit up and listen. Lessons have a definite start, when there is a clear expectation from teachers and pupils that learning will take place. The start of lessons is often preceded by a quick mental activity that immediately involves all pupils, as one teacher said, *'To start the lesson with a buzz and to wake those brains up!'* Another commonly used strategy is to 'brainstorm' ideas. That is, for all pupils to be directly involved in suggesting ideas for the lesson in a 'quick fire' activity. Whatever the methods that teachers use, there is no doubt that the first few minutes set the tone and expectations for the remainder of the lesson.
8. What the teacher expects pupils to learn is written up on a board and discussed with them. Sharing the 'learning objective' with them in this way ensures that there is a brisk, lively, focused start to the lesson and that pupils know what to expect. Sometimes these are directly linked to pupils' targets which, as one pupil explained, *'Remind me what to aim for and what I need to do to improve'*. Usually at this point in the lesson the teacher revises previous work by a brisk question and answer session that really probes what they know. Questions to children in the nursery such as *'Shall we? What do you think?'* become more complex as pupils get older, such as *'Do you really think that would work with this poem?'* or, in Year 6, *'How could we re-phrase that answer to use different mathematical vocabulary?'*
9. Teachers welcome pupils' answers and use a very good range of strategies to include them all. They ask searching questions directed at individual pupils to encourage them to answer. They cleverly provide time for pairs of pupils sitting next to each other to discuss their answers. In some lessons teachers thoughtfully plan for higher attaining pupils to work with pupils of lower ability, encouraging them to discuss possible answers. Some pupils are chosen as 'scribes' to record answers that a group of pupils think up, and then

report back to the whole class, giving them good opportunities to develop their speaking skills. Teachers value all pupils' answers and this helps to build their confidence and self esteem. Once again this starts in the nursery with the teacher praising the youngest children for '*Sitting beautifully on the carpet*'. With older pupils, teachers praise their work in an art lesson saying, '*I can't wait to see this one! It will be fantastic!*' Sometimes their praise is for accuracy in their responses, '*I like that answer! That's excellent! Well done!*'

10. Work is very well planned to challenge pupils to think hard, but at just the right level for them to succeed. The system of grouping that the school uses for literacy and numeracy is successful. In lessons observed it was clear that work was still planned differently for groups of pupils within these sets. However, the narrower range of abilities within separate sets allows teachers to plan challenging work much more effectively, whatever pupils' ability. It also meant that lessons were very well paced and allowed pupils of all abilities to move on quickly. Support for pupils with special educational needs is well planned and is a major improvement on the last inspection. Classroom assistants work closely with them, explaining tasks in detail and making sure that they work hard. Pupils' individual education plans contain precise targets for improvement and progress towards achieving them can be easily measured.
11. In some lessons teaching is quite inspirational. It has an almost magical quality that makes pupils '*Ooh!*' and '*Aah*' in wonder. For example, pupils watched in disbelief in an outstanding lesson as a teacher, adopting the role of Samuel Pepys, poured out the 'blood' that was taken from his arm to make him feel better! In an excellent personal, social and health education lesson, the teacher listened extremely sensitively as pupils talked about their feelings and emotions. In a junior assembly, with its theme about how weather influences people's lives, pupils gasped in amazement when they realised how far some people in underdeveloped countries have to walk to get water. The impact of this is that it makes learning memorable.
12. The school is also working very hard and successfully to ensure that pupils develop their ability to think carefully. Teachers carefully plan activities that foster independence. For example, very good opportunities are planned for problem solving activities, where pupils work individually or in groups. Activities are very well planned to encourage pupils to think for themselves and offer alternative ideas, rather than giving only a '*yes*' or '*no*' answer. For example, a very challenging activity in a religious education lesson called for pupils to think very carefully before they could answer questions about the work of a lay reader such as '*What does he think about it?*' and '*Why does he do it?*'

It helps pupils of all ages to make very good progress from the time that they start in the nursery, including those who have special educational needs or who are gifted and talented.

13. Children starting in the nursery have a wide range of ability that is evident in many ways, but overall their attainment is below that expected. For example, many have a limited range of speech and language and their ability to express themselves is restricted. Some have little confidence or do not find it easy to follow school routines. Many have a limited understanding of the world around them. They make very good progress that is maintained when they go into the reception classes. By the end of their reception year most children will attain the Early Learning Goals in all the different areas of learning.
14. Listening to children read and looking at work in their books shows the quite remarkable progress that many make in communication, language and literacy, which is probably the weakest area of learning for many when they enter school. One child, in the first three weeks in the reception class wrote, **h N is**, meaning '*holding nanny's hand in the shops*'. Towards the end of the first term she was able to write unaided, **I went to H a J Hs** meaning, '*I went to Harvey and Jack's house*'. Within a few weeks of the following term

the child wrote, **I went to nanny** and half a term before the end the reception year wrote independently, **One day a lion saw a mouse. The mouse was cood (called) iod (Jord). The lion got chat (trapped). A Mceey (monkey) heeved (heaved) but he cud (could) not help. They all heaved. The mouse got the tooth.**

15. The results of the 2002 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds were below average in reading, mathematics and science compared with those in all schools, but average compared with those in similar schools. The school felt that, although many pupils were making good progress and achieving well, especially considering their below average attainment when they started in the reception classes, a number of pupils could do better. It decided to teach pupils in groups organised by ability and, this year, the results for infants are significantly higher. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or higher has increased in reading from 78 per cent to 89 per cent. In writing it has gone up from 81 to 89 per cent and in mathematics from 91 to 93 per cent. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 has also increased and this supports the view of the inspection team that work for higher attaining pupils in lessons was challenging and that pupils were achieving the best standard that they were capable of. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 in reading has increased from 21 per cent to 38 per cent. In writing it has increased from 7 to 14 per cent and in mathematics from 21 to 36 per cent. Pupils now make very good progress in the infants and build very well on their work in the Foundation Stage.
16. The results of the 2002 tests for eleven-year-olds were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science compared with those in all schools. They were well above average compared with those in similar schools. With the exception of science in 2000, results for juniors have never been lower than 'above average' in any subject and are frequently well above average. Ofsted has recently started to make comparisons based on pupils' prior attainment. That is, the amount of progress made by pupils when comparing their results with those they attained in Year 2. At Somers Park last year, pupils' results based on 'prior attainment' were well above average in English, mathematics and science. They are predicted to be slightly higher this year and support the inspection team's view that pupils make very good progress in the juniors. The high quality of pupils' written work is evident in their stories and descriptions. For example, *'The dark clouds settled on the school roof as the rain thundered against the glass pane. Zoe and Poppy sat slouched on the splintered bench as Emma lurched in, drenched to her feet, leaving a long trail of water. 'Had a shower Em?' Zoe looked at her. 'Or did you take a short cut through a car wash?' Poppy giggled sarcastically.'*
17. The school's thorough analysis of statutory and voluntary test results has helped it to identify areas where pupils do well and where they could do better. It is helping to challenge all pupils, regardless of ability, to achieve high standards. In literacy and numeracy lessons pupils relished the challenge that their work provided. They are clear about their personal targets and know what they have to do to improve. Teachers' marking in literacy is precise and its detail helps to focus pupils on what they have to do to improve. For example, *'You have written in great detail and made good attempts to use temporal connectives. Next time think about cutting down your opening paragraph a little. Just make general statements about your first impression. Well done!'*

It has an excellent ethos. Pupils are very proud of their school, enjoy their work and want to do well. They say, ‘All the lessons are interesting’ and ‘We want to learn!’ Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and they enjoy the responsibilities they are given.

18. Ninety-six per cent of parents in their questionnaires indicated that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. At the pre-inspection meeting they strongly supported the view that Somers Park promotes positive and worthwhile values. They feel that children, *‘Learn how to care for people from the nursery onwards and it becomes second nature for most of them’*. Pupils’ attitudes and values were identified as strengths in the previous inspection and this is still the case. They talk enthusiastically about their school and want to explain to visitors why they think it is so good.
19. They think that the school motto ‘We Shine’ is very appropriate because *‘It makes you feel bright’* and *‘It makes you feel proud’*. Pupils of all ages would definitely recommend the school and feel that it cares very much for their well being, saying, *‘There’s loads of encouragement. Teachers are always positive’*. They enjoy the opportunities that teachers plan to work in groups and say, *‘Boys and girls get on well – usually!’* During the inspection boys and girls were equally positive in their attitudes to work and there is hardly any difference in their results in national tests. Not once during the inspection was any pupil heard to say that they did not want to work with another. They bring conscientious and positive attitudes to their work and their willingness to listen carefully to what they have to do, to start work quickly and to concentrate and work hard means that hardly any time is wasted in lessons.
20. Pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent, as it was in the previous inspection. Ninety-seven per cent of parents indicated that they believe behaviour is good in school. At the pre-inspection meeting they said that pupils know what is right and wrong and recounted how strangers commented positively on pupils’ behaviour on trips outside school. Pupils very much enjoy the responsibilities they are given, for example monitors, prefects and working with children in the Foundation Stage. Each morning there is a busy, workmanlike atmosphere around the school as pupils go about their duties, for example delivering fruit to the nursery as part of the Healthy Schools initiative. They especially value the opportunity to be members of the recently formed school council. Currently this is open only to junior pupils but there are plans to extend its membership. Pupils feel that the qualities required to be a councillor include being *‘Able to communicate and stand up in front of others’* and being *‘Willing to give up your free time’*. The experience that they gain from the council in decision making makes a very good contribution to their social and moral development.
21. Pupils enjoy the school’s reward system of ‘Well Done’ stickers and feel that they act as a real incentive. There was no sign of any bullying during the inspection and pupils themselves say that it is not an issue in school. They are confident, however, that if it did occur it would not be tolerated, saying *‘Teachers wouldn’t stand for it!’* The school’s approach to pupils’ personal, social and health education is very positive and successfully encourages pupils to talk about potentially sensitive issues. They have a very matter of fact attitude to homework. They are pleased that it is marked regularly and say that it supports the work that they do in school. The inspection team shares this opinion.

It teaches a wide range of interesting subjects. As well as emphasising the importance of literacy and numeracy, pupils have many very good opportunities to develop other interests, for example in drama and music.

22. A few parents, in written responses to the inspection team, indicated that they felt that the range of subjects studied by the pupils was not wide enough. The range of subjects on offer was studied carefully by the inspection team, as were the links between literacy and

numeracy and other subjects, and the use of information technology across the curriculum.

23. Pupils themselves say that they enjoy the range of subjects on offer. Their comments included *'They teach us about different backgrounds. Everyone is the same'* to *'There are lots of after school clubs'* and *'The trips are excellent, especially the educational trip to Red Ridge'*. Displays of pupils' work reflect very good curriculum breadth. There is considerable evidence of literacy in other subjects and the contribution of information and communication technology is very good and developing well. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage includes all the areas of learning, but restricted access to outdoor play areas for those in the reception classes limits the scope of their work (**see paragraph 27**).
24. During the inspection there was a great deal of evidence of pupils enjoying and attaining good standards in varied musical activities, for example hand bells, steel pans, recorders and singing in assembly. Pupils have enjoyed and benefited from their involvement in local musical and drama activities, including work with specialist companies and other schools. Visits to places of interest and visitors to school enhance the quality of the curriculum. The result of a recent visit by a local potter resulted in pupils' high quality clay work, well linked to their history topic. Pupils talked at length about their favourite subjects. The only subject where their knowledge was limited was in art and design, where they did not know a great deal about the styles of different artists.
25. The contribution of literacy to other subjects is significant. In design and technology they write thoughtful evaluations of their Ferris Wheel project such as, *'My wheel has got sturdy posts on either side. They are safe and are certainly going to hold it'*. In science, older pupils study the effects of drugs and learn a great deal about their impact on the body. *'This morning I woke up and got out of bed. My head was spinning. It felt like someone was pounding it with a hammer.'* Numeracy is also well represented in subjects such as science and geography, when pupils use different types of graph very well to represent data. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is developing well as teachers plan the use of programs to develop pupils' computer skills as well as extending the range of work in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils use a control box well to light up windows in a house. They use graphic programs imaginatively in art and search the Internet thoroughly to find out information for their history topics. Older pupils combine graphics and sound very effectively to deliver a very detailed and informative presentation.

The school forms very strong links with parents. They feel that the school has improved and that their children are happy and learn well.

26. Parents' questionnaires show solid support for the school. Ninety-five per cent of parents say that the school works closely with them and 98 per cent feel comfortable approaching the school with problems or concerns. The school's growing reputation means that it has become increasingly popular and is now regularly oversubscribed. Parents agree that they are well informed about arrangements for their children starting in the nursery. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were very happy with the improvements that have taken place since the last inspection, such as higher standards and better resources, including the computer suites.
27. The school maintains very good links with parents through the enthusiastic and hardworking friends association. Not only does the association raise very large sums of money each year, but it also donates earnings from the school shop to the school council in order that it can develop its role.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

28. The school's provision for children's physical development in outside play in the Foundation Stage is not adequate. The accommodation for children in the reception classes severely limits what can be provided. Although children in the reception classes use the hall, neither class has immediate access to secure outdoor areas and there is no cover for activities in wet weather. Opportunities to use outdoor equipment have to be timetabled and tightly monitored. This means that there cannot be a free flow of activities that include opportunities for children to develop many different skills through outdoor play. For example, they have restricted opportunities to develop their often poor communication, language and literacy skills through discussion about taking turns to use equipment and describing their emotions. Opportunities to develop their creativity are lost because they have few chances to use very large apparatus.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. **In the context of its many strengths and the very high quality of education it already provides, the governors, headteacher and staff should:**
- review the arrangements for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage to ensure that provision complies with the requirements of the Early Learning Goals.
- (see paragraphs 22 and 27)**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	14	9	3	0	0	0
Percentage	13	47	30	10	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	400
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		63

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		57

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	27	31	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	25
	Girls	26	26	27
	Total	45	47	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (83)	81 (83)	90 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	25	26
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	46	52	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (83)	90 (94)	91 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	35	24	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	32	34
	Girls	21	20	23
	Total	50	52	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (86)	88 (80)	97 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	31	34
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	48	51	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (84)	86 (84)	95 (93)
	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	331	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	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	2	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	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	60	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)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002 / 03
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	£
Total income	895,595
Total expenditure	838,694
Expenditure per pupil	1,976
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,340
Balance carried forward to next year	58,901

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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 25%

Number of questionnaires sent out	460
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	34	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	42	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	41	5	1	3
The teaching is good.	81	19	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	43	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	23	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	46	4	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	29	0	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33	1	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	36	10	0	7