

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT WITLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Witley, Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116881

Headteacher: Mr H Lewis

Reporting inspector: Mr G Sims

28899

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th November 2002

Inspection number: 247711

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Stuttard
Date of previous inspection:	24 th November 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Great Witley to the north west of the city of Worcester. It is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school. It has 139 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 and is much smaller than most primary schools. Although there is an equal number of boys and girls overall, there is a significant imbalance in the number of boys and girls in most year groups. The school is popular and over-subscribed, and pupils come from a wide geographical area. The socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils are generally well above average. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds or from homes where English is not the main spoken language, and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. These figures are below average. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school, other than at the usual times of joining or leaving, is above the national average. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Five per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is well below average. Five pupils receive help from outside specialists for a range of needs, but no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Most children have attended privately run playgroups or nurseries before they join the school. All children join the Reception class at the start of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, but most attend part-time for the first term. The attainment of children when they start school varies, but is generally above average. The school's staffing situation is very stable and, apart from the construction of a new classroom, there have been no major changes since the last inspection. The inspection of collective worship and religious education has been carried out by a separate Diocesan team.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Great Witley Primary School is a very good school. The enthusiastic and long-serving headteacher provides very good leadership, setting high expectations which are fulfilled by a very committed and hard-working staff. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is very good. Lessons are productive and pupils work hard. As a result, pupils make very good progress and achieve very high standards by the time they leave the school. The intimate, friendly atmosphere of the school and the care shown by the staff help pupils to develop very good standards of behaviour, to relate well to each other and to develop very positive attitudes towards their education. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported well by highly committed teachers and an active governing body. As a result, pupils receive a very good quality education.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, which results in excellent attitudes and very good behaviour and relationships throughout the school.
- The quality of the teaching is very good. As a result, pupils make very good progress and achieve standards which are very much better than those found in most schools.

What could be improved

- The school's use of information and communication technology.
- The way teachers mark pupils' work and help them to learn from their mistakes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The improvement since the last inspection in November 1997 has been very good. The school has not only maintained all of the positive features noted at that time, but has responded well to the key issues which were identified. Some very good work is undertaken in geography and design and technology throughout the school. Although the school still does not make enough use of information and communication technology, there have been significant improvements in the school's provision for this subject, particularly in the infants. There is plenty of opportunity for the younger more able pupils to achieve high standards, and the national test results at the end of Year 2 show that pupils make very good progress in developing their writing and mathematical skills. Subject responsibilities are now delegated much more effectively, and the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is monitored well by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school's plans to enable other subject coordinators to become more involved in monitoring what happens within their subject areas are appropriate. The school's development plan now provides an appropriate tool for further improvement, and the school's response to new initiatives, its own self-critical attitude and the staff's commitment to providing the best education they can, ensure that the school continues to move forward. The teachers continue to make refinements to their teaching which are reflected in academic standards which have risen even further since the last inspection.

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			similar schools	Key	
	all schools					
	2000	2001	2002	2002		
English	A	A*	A*	A*	Very high	A*
Mathematics	A	A	A*	A	Well above average	A
Science	A	A*	A*	A	Above average	B
					Average	C
					Below average	D
					Well below average	E
					Very low	E*

The table of results indicates that the school has achieved consistently high standards over the last three years. In 2002, the results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 were amongst the top five per cent of schools in the country and were all well above the average for similar schools. The school's results were well above the national average at the time of the last inspection, but have continued to rise, at a faster rate than the national trend. The school consistently sets itself high targets and is successful in meeting them. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and mathematics and were amongst the top five per cent of schools in writing. When compared with similar schools, they were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Since the last inspection, results at the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics have improved at a similar rate to other schools nationally, and results in reading have been maintained at a well above average level.

The attainment of children at the start of the Reception year is above average, although very few children show markedly advanced literacy and numeracy skills. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.

By the time they start Year 1, nearly all achieve above average standards for their age. The inspection findings show that pupils make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and that, by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. A large proportion of pupils, between a third and a half, exceed the nationally expected standards in these areas. The standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 2 are not as high as those obtained by last year's pupils. Pupils continue to make very good progress in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science. Virtually all pupils achieve the nationally expected standards in these subjects, and almost three-quarters of the pupils exceed them. Throughout the school, there is evidence of very good work in other subjects, such as geography, history and design and technology. Standards in information and communication technology are improving, but pupils' achievements in this area are not as advanced as in most other subjects. Overall, pupils are achieving very well and leave the school with very good literacy and numeracy skills and very well equipped for the next stage of their education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to school. They enjoy their lessons, participate enthusiastically and work very hard. They show a very mature attitude when working with a partner or in a small group.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well within lessons, and their behaviour around the school is good. They are polite and helpful, and there is no evidence of disruptive, anti-social or oppressive behaviour. The school is an orderly, well-disciplined community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The quality of pupils' relationships with the staff and amongst their peers is very good. Pupils respond in a mature and sensible manner to the responsibilities they are given, although there is room for providing pupils with more opportunities to take on responsibility. Most pupils have great self-confidence, but they respect the views of others, and older pupils have a very good sense of concern for the younger pupils.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are eager to come to school. The level of attendance is above the national average, but is affected by a number of families who take holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 and 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.

The quality of teaching across the school is very good. The combination of very good teaching, the very positive attitudes of the pupils, and well-disciplined classes, results in very good learning and standards which become increasingly high as pupils move through the school. The pupils' ability to concentrate and work productively has a positive effect on their learning. The teachers plan their lessons carefully, cover all aspects of the curriculum thoroughly and cater well for pupils of all abilities. The employment of additional teachers during the morning session enables the school to divide pupils into single-year groups for teaching, resulting in smaller classes, greater attention to individual pupils and work which is appropriately matched to the pupils' needs. These arrangements benefit not only the small proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but also the more able pupils, and they have a significant impact on the standards achieved in English and mathematics, both of which are taught very well. Plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills through work undertaken in other subjects. Although the pupils make very good progress, teachers miss opportunities to help them to improve even more through the marking of their work. Most pieces of work are marked with ticks and the occasional positive comment. However, the teachers are not always rigorous enough in pointing out where pupils have made mistakes, particularly in the correct usage of English, or how they could improve their work. Not enough opportunities are given for pupils to go back over completed pieces of work to correct their mistakes and make improvements. The teachers' confidence in the use of information and communication technology is improving, but standards in this subject lag

behind those in English, mathematics and science. The main reasons for this are the pupils' lack of exposure to the subject and a shortage of resources, despite the recent acquisition of some laptop computers which are used increasingly in most classes. Throughout the school, the excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and the very good way in which pupils work collaboratively with each other and with their teachers, contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities for its pupils, and the curriculum provided meets the statutory requirements. The school provides a very good range of well-supported extra-curricular activities, visits to places of interest and involvement within the local community, all of which motivate pupils and enrich their time at school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school has very few pupils with special educational needs, but the procedures for identifying pupils' needs and providing additional support are good. Provision for these pupils is well organised and their progress is monitored carefully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught important core values and to have respect for all people. Teachers and other adult helpers provide very good role models and provide good opportunities for pupils to learn to work cooperatively. They value pupils' thoughts and ideas and encourage a climate in which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Staff treat pupils with care and consideration and pay very good attention to their welfare, health and safety. As a result, the pupils feel safe and well cared for. The staff know their pupils well and keep careful track of their progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the school well. The very good ethos within the school owes much to his direction and enthusiasm. He is supported very well by a committed staff, who share his desire to provide the best possible quality of education for the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors fulfil their statutory obligations very well. They are very supportive of the school, and understand its strengths and areas for development. They maintain a careful overview of the finances and provide thoughtful input into strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school evaluates its own performance well and identifies appropriate areas for development. Staff use assessment data well to identify aspects of pupils' work which could be improved. Greater autonomy could be given to subject coordinators to monitor teaching and learning and to share expertise within their subject areas.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school's finances are managed very efficiently and effectively, and high priority is given to funding sufficient teachers to provide small class sizes wherever possible. In seeking to provide best value, the school compares its performance with others,

	undertakes appropriate consultation before making major spending decisions, and assesses the impact of its spending decisions.
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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 and are making good progress. • The teaching is good and the teachers expect their children to work hard. • The school promotes the right values and attitudes and has good standards of behaviour. • The staff are supportive and helpful and are easy to approach with any concerns. • The school is led and managed well. 	<p>Very few parents expressed any concerns about the school. Some parents felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not always give sufficient notice or information about events or their children's progress. • Supervision and behaviour during the lunch break are not as good as they should be.
<p>[The views of parents are based on those expressed by the 23 parents who attended the parents' meeting and the 89 parents (65%) who returned the parents' questionnaire, some of whom also enclosed written comments]</p>	

Parents have very positive views of the school and greatly value the quality of education it provides for their children. They have a very high regard for the leadership provided by the headteacher. The inspection findings endorse all of the positive views expressed by parents. Procedures for communication with parents appear to be good, but the school has taken note of the concerns expressed by a few parents. No evidence of any unpleasant behaviour, such as that alluded to by a couple of parents in written notes to the inspectors, was observed during the six break-times which occurred during the inspection. The behaviour observed on each occasion was good. The school could, however, give a little more thought to the variety of activities available for pupils during break times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported well by highly committed teachers and an active governing body. As a result, pupils receive a very good quality education.

1. The success of Great Witley Primary School owes much to the positive, enthusiastic and well-informed leadership of its long-serving headteacher. He has maintained a passion for providing rich educational experiences for the pupils, for demanding high standards and for working hard. This enthusiasm is communicated to, and influences, staff and pupils, and results in a very productive, buoyant and vibrant ethos. In return, he receives very good support from all of his staff, who display equal rigour in their teaching, great commitment to their work and a desire to make the school as good as they can. The school is over-subscribed, and parents and pupils, justifiably, have a very high opinion of the school and of the headteacher's leadership in particular.
2. The quality of the leadership is reflected in the richness of the curriculum and the learning opportunities provided by all of the staff for the pupils. Not only does pupils' learning span the full breadth of the National Curriculum, but work is covered in more detail than in many schools. A very good range of well-supported extra-curricular activities is an essential part of what the school has to offer, as is involvement within the local community and the opportunity to visit places further afield. Even though the school is small, importance is attached to sporting endeavour, and the school participates regularly, and with spirit, against other schools in netball, tag rugby, football, athletics and other sporting events. Music also plays an important part in the life of the school. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments and there is an active school choir.
3. The headteacher's approach to school development and improvement is pragmatic, but effective, and involves all staff, who play key roles in bringing about improvement. The school development plan provides a basic structure for the annual cycle of school development, but the headteacher's response to school development is much more dynamic than an annual written plan. The school is small enough for new issues to be discussed with all of the staff as they occur. Decisions are made quickly and action taken, without necessarily featuring in a written development plan. For example, the continuing improvement in standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 has happened because of the continuing and ongoing dialogue amongst the staff which inspires new ideas and motivates them to maintain high standards, rather than slavish adherence to a formal action plan. Formal structures, however, also play their part and have been instrumental in guiding the very good range of improvements which have occurred since the last inspection.
4. The headteacher has a very clear picture of the strengths of the school and areas for development. His understanding is gained more through a very good general awareness of what is happening than through formal monitoring procedures. In this respect, the excellent working relationships amongst the staff are crucial factors, as informal discussions about teaching, learning, the quality of pupils' work and all aspects relating to the management of the school take place frequently. The headteacher encourages openness and engenders confidence, so that staff value the opportunity to talk about issues, share their own experiences and learn from each other. However, formal procedures, whereby a subject coordinator observes the teaching in other classes are beginning to play an increasingly important role and are opening up other ways for staff to improve their expertise and gain a better understanding of what is happening in other parts of the school. So far, lessons in English and mathematics have been monitored by their subject coordinators, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, respectively. Although other staff are somewhat apprehensive about

carrying out similar activities in their own subject areas, the school's development plan has rightly identified the importance of them doing so, and further progress is to be made in the coming months and should help cement the improvement in subject leadership which has occurred since the last inspection.

5. The headteacher and staff are supported well by active and committed governors, who have a good understanding of the school and its strengths. The headteacher keeps the governing body up to date with school matters and changes in legislation through his termly reports and through informal interaction with governors whenever they visit the school. Discussions with governors during the inspection show them to be well informed and to have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Individual governors are linked to a particular year group, which helps them to keep abreast of what is happening within school.
6. The school's finances are managed very efficiently and effectively. Governors and headteacher stand by their decision to place a high priority on staffing. The employment of two additional teachers in the morning enables pupils to be taught in discrete year groups for much of the day. This decision is certainly well justified. Not only does each teacher have smaller teaching groups as a result, but they are able to match work much more easily to pupils' needs. This benefits both those with special educational needs and the more able pupils, all of whom receive greater attention than is possible in a large class.
7. When evaluating the success of the school's leadership, two key words stand out – enthusiasm and relationships. This is a school where it is fun to learn and where people, from youngest to oldest, get on well with each other. And the headteacher leads by example.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, which results in excellent attitudes and very good behaviour and relationships throughout the school.

8. The visitor to Great Witley Primary School is struck by the very good ethos which permeates the school. The ethos is influenced to no small degree by the leadership and personal example of the headteacher, but every single member of staff plays a crucial role in maintaining it. The pupils are confident, friendly and outgoing and have very positive attitudes to their school and their work. They are keen to learn, and work hard. Their behaviour, particularly in lessons, is very good and the quality of their relationships with the staff and with each other is first class. Whilst many pupils bring very good personal qualities from their home backgrounds, the school plays a very important part in the pupils' personal development and for ensuring such a positive atmosphere throughout the school. It is clear that parents greatly value the school's work in this regard, and responses to the parents' questionnaire show that parents have a high opinion of the attitudes and behaviour which the school promotes, and nearly all say that their children are happy at the school.
9. Teachers and other adult helpers provide very good role models for the pupils, in the way they deal respectfully with the pupils and with each other, the way they value pupils' opinions and contributions in lessons and in the way in which they encourage a climate in which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected. Because the staff treat pupils with care and consideration, the pupils feel safe and secure within the school environment and confident that any problems which do arise will be sorted out by the teachers. The fact that the number of pupils is small in comparison with other primary schools helps to generate a family atmosphere in which all staff know all pupils and are well aware of their needs. Good opportunities are built into the regular timetable, through personal, social and health education lessons, for pupils to consider matters of importance not directly related to their academic work. Assemblies are also used well to promote good attitudes and values, and at the parents' meeting some parents spoke with appreciation of the way the headteacher reinforces important concepts on these occasions.

10. The pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are excellent, but they are fostered well by the staff who provide interesting lessons and give pupils a good reason to want to learn. Staff set high expectations with regard to what they expect pupils to accomplish. Pupils work quickly and productively, enabling teachers to cover much more ground in a lesson than is the case in many schools. Teachers encourage pupils not to waste time, even when carrying out mundane tasks, such as tidying away at the end of the lesson, and pupils, therefore, make productive use of their day. In one class, for example, pupils responded quickly and sensibly to the bell and lined up without being told, because this was part of a familiar routine established by the teacher. The great majority of pupils participate very enthusiastically in lessons. They are keen to answer questions, and, indeed, to ask them if they are not sure or wish to express another point of view. When there is a change of focus in the lesson, for example, moving from a whole-class activity to one in which pupils work on their own or in groups, pupils move quickly to their new tasks, settle down well and get on with their work with minimal prompting.
11. The pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. Indeed, in many of the lessons observed during the inspection, the pupils' behaviour was exemplary. Pupils are well aware of the standards expected during lessons and respond extremely well. They await their turn to speak, listen politely to others, follow the teachers' instructions and are cooperative. It is unnecessary for teachers to carry on discussing school and classroom rules with the pupils, because the rules have been internalised and become part of their normal pattern of behaviour. As a result, the school is an orderly, well-disciplined community, where teachers are free to teach and pupils are free to learn. In one class, there is a very small minority of pupils whose behaviour is, at times, challenging, but these pupils are managed with skill and patience by the teacher to minimise any effect their behaviour might have on others. Pupils' behaviour is also very good within the school building. They move sensibly and quietly from their classrooms to the hall, and show consideration for others within the corridor. At break-times, their behaviour is good. The atmosphere in the playground is, at times, noisy, vigorous and boisterous, but there is no hint of threat or danger, and observation of pupils' faces show that there is much enjoyment and good camaraderie. Pupils commented that there is the occasional instance of bullying, but they do not see it as a problem, because matters are sorted out quickly, and staff are always available to help.
12. The quality of pupils' relationships with the staff is excellent. This is the product of mutual respect, where teachers listen to what pupils have to say, are supportive and helpful, and where pupils show politeness, but a trust and confidence in those who are there to help them. The pupils' relationships with their peers are very good. They play amicably with each other in the playground and collaborate in a very mature way when working with a partner or in small groups within the classroom. Older pupils have a very good sense of concern for the younger pupils, and these vertical relationships not only give a strong sense of confidence to the younger pupils, but help the older pupils to develop a sense of responsibility. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in the school, but they are well-integrated members of the school community which lives out admirably, and without pretension, the best principles of respect and racial harmony. Pupils who join the school during the course of the school year or come into a well-established class are made to feel welcome and settle very quickly. Pupils in Year 6 summed up their school in a series of short phrases, 'Very friendly. Everyone is nice, teachers, everybody. They are very supportive, both teachers and children. If you are upset, you can always talk, you are not ignored. Everyone welcomes you.'
13. The way pupils develop personally is very good. Self-confidence is evident at an early stage, but experiences within the classroom help pupils to develop this confidence in an unassuming way. The teachers give pupils opportunities to develop independence and initiative. In a geography lesson on rivers, for example, many resources were made available for the pupils, but they were required to use their initiative in making choices and carrying out their own research. In another class, pupils volunteered to give out materials, and in another there was very good cooperation as pupils helped to tidy away at the end of the lesson. The teachers are

very good at providing opportunities for pupils to work together, and there is clear evidence of growing maturity as pupils discuss and work together. The maturity and responsibility shown by pupils sometimes surprise the teachers themselves. Teachers were delighted at the wonderful way in which two pupils were excellent ambassadors for their school as they showed inspectors around shortly after they arrived. The school could look for even more opportunities to give pupils responsibilities of this nature in order to help them learn new skills. Within all of these positive aspects, neither teachers nor pupils forget their place in the wider scheme of things. Pupils are taught to think of others and to show concern for those who are less fortunate than they. Pupils are involved in various fund-raising activities. During the inspection, for example, shoe-boxes were beginning to pile up with presents for distribution to children in Eastern Europe living in orphanages or suffering through war, poverty or natural disaster. Pupils are taught to value what they have. This is achieved through celebrating what pupils have achieved, either through recognition in class or in an assembly, or through one of the many stimulating displays throughout the school. In one display, pupils had depicted the world as a wonderful place, highlighting many aspects of wonderment for which they have to be grateful. The school is, indeed, preparing its pupils well, not only academically, but personally, and helping to instil important values and attitudes.

14. All of these positive features have a significant impact on pupils' work and the standards they achieve. The staff present a very unified, mutually supportive and cooperative team. Pupils follow the example. They love school and are enthusiastic about what happens. As a result, they enjoy their work, they work hard and they learn well.

The quality of the teaching is very good. As a result, pupils make very good progress and achieve standards which are very much better than those found in most schools.

15. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is very good. Lessons are productive and pupils work hard. As a result, pupils make very good progress and achieve very high standards by the time they leave the school. This view is also supported overwhelmingly by parents' response to the questionnaire, which indicates very strongly that parents feel that the teaching is good, that teachers expect their children to work hard and that their children are making good progress. Of the 22 lessons observed during the inspection, over half were very good or better, and most of the remainder were good. The work observed in pupils' books from the previous year shows that the quality of the teaching is of a consistently high standard throughout the year.
16. Since the last inspection, with one exception in 1999, standards at the end of Year 6 have been consistently well above the national average. For the last two years, the overall results have been amongst the top five per cent of schools in the country, and in 2002 were amongst the top five per cent of schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds. Standards have risen year by year and are now very high indeed. This reflects the fact that almost all pupils achieve Level 4, the nationally expected standard, in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, and that a very high proportion move on to achieve the higher Level 5. In 2001, the school received a School Achievement Award for 'better results than most schools in similar circumstances.' Observations made during the inspection reveal work throughout the school and across a range of subjects which is consistent with these high calibre results. Pupils complete a wide range of work and, because they work productively, they cover topics in depth.
17. Results at the end of Year 2 have also been very good since the last inspection, with results being well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in most of the last five years. In 2002, the pupils' writing results were amongst the top five per cent of schools in the country. Although they have risen, standards have not improved as markedly at Key Stage 1 as they have at Key Stage 2. The results at this stage also do not compare quite as highly against similar schools, but are still above average for this sector overall. Observations made during the inspection indicate that the current cohort of pupils in Year 2 is unlikely to achieve such good results, but this is consistent with the school's own internal assessments of these pupils when they started in the Reception and at the end of Year 1. This does not mark a decline in the standard of the teaching, but the fact that this year group contains a number of pupils who experience difficulties with their learning. Overall, pupils make very good progress throughout the school, a result of the very good teaching they receive, well-disciplined classes and the very positive attitudes shown by virtually every pupil.
18. A key factor in providing very good learning experiences for the pupils is the very good quality of the teachers' planning, which not only covers all elements of the curriculum thoroughly, but provides interest and stimulation for the pupils. The planning for a mathematics lesson in Year 6, for example, was a model of clarity, with a clear, succinct objective which led on well from pupils' previous experience and provided activities which held pupils' attention and interest whilst extending their knowledge and understanding of coordinates. Teachers draw links, wherever possible, from one subject to another. For example, pupils complete a considerable amount of writing in geography and history, which makes a significant contribution to the development of their literacy skills. A science investigation in Year 6 drew upon, and helped to consolidate, pupils' abilities to plot the results of their investigation in a chart, as well as contributing to their personal development as they were required to decide in their groups of three how they were going to extend their investigation, and who was going to be responsible for what.
19. Another key feature of many lessons is the pace at which lessons are conducted, which ensures that a good amount of ground is covered in each lesson and which encourages

pupils to be productive themselves. In a very good history lesson in Year 3, for example, the pupils moved swiftly from the introduction into the main activity, which had been well thought-out and for which resources had been well prepared. Because the teacher was very good at bringing Anglo-Saxon history alive, the pupils' showed interest, concentrated well and persevered with their tasks. Allied to the productive use of time is the teachers' ability to ask quick-fire, challenging questions. In a very good English lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils were carried along, thoroughly absorbed by the brisk pace and searching questions. Children in the Reception class quickly become used to answering questions and love to participate. In a very good lesson for these youngest pupils, the teacher led children on to think about which senses they might use if they suddenly woke up in a dark room, and children quickly developed the idea of how they would depend more on feeling and hearing, than on their sight.

20. Although the pace of lessons is brisk, the teachers are good at providing encouragement for the pupils. In a history lesson in Year 2, for example, individual pupils were visibly lifted after the teacher had praised them for their effort, for an improvement in their writing or for their attempt to spell an unfamiliar word. In a lesson in the Reception class, the teacher ensured that all children were included in the discussion. She did not allow the more vociferous children to dominate, but handled them sensitively so that they were not offended by not being asked, and they learnt to allow others to participate.
21. Teachers' explanations are clear, logical and methodical. In a very good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher gave a very clear introduction which helped pupils to understand how to approach problems expressed in words. In another very good lesson, this time in information and communication technology in Year 4, the teacher provided a good introduction to the use of an object-based graphics program, skilfully getting pupils to suggest reasons why this program might be more suitable than the paint program with which pupils were already familiar.
22. The teachers provide plenty of practical involvement, which pupils not only enjoy, but carry out in a sensible and responsible manner. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5, for example, the pupils were already intrigued by an activity to put numbers into segments of three overlapping circles so that the total in each circle was the same. The teacher's own enthusiasm was catching and carried over into the next activity, in which pupils investigated different types of triangle, before the class was drawn together to discuss their conclusions. Practical tips also help pupils to remember from one lesson to the next. Pupils in Year 6, for example, had remembered in which order to plot coordinates and how to label the axes as a result of a simple memory device. A photographic record for pupils in Year 2 shows a rich variety of activities with plenty of hands-on experience, such as investigative work in science, various projects in design and technology, watching chickens hatch, learning about drumming and dancing during an African week and visits to places of interest outside school. In an excellent session in Year 6, aimed at developing pupils' self-confidence and speaking abilities, a pupil talked to the rest of the class about his three-week tour of the United States. His prepared talk was delivered with confidence and clarity and an excellent command of the subject matter. The audience sat totally absorbed as the pupil showed pictures, illustrations and examples of volcanic stone and talked with such obvious enthusiasm and interest.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school's use of information and communication technology.

23. One subject in which standards are lagging behind those achieved in other subjects is information and communication technology. This subject was highlighted as a key issue in the last inspection. There has been significant improvement in the school's provision for this subject since then, but the school still does not make enough use of information and communication technology. The standards attained by pupils are improving and, in many aspects, are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, pupils' achievements in this subject are not as advanced as in most other subjects and the school

has, appropriately, identified the continuing improvement of pupils' information technology skills and the use of new technology in all areas of the curriculum as areas for further development.

24. Since the last inspection, the school's resources have improved, and each class is equipped with at least one well-specified computer and an appropriate range of software. The number of computers is, however, below the government's target figure and insufficient to allow all pupils sufficient and regular access to practise new skills or to use computers regularly as tools for learning in other subjects. There are no central computer facilities, and arrangements for teaching new skills and for enabling pupils to gain sufficient practice are far from ideal. When a teacher wishes to introduce new ideas, pupils have to gather around the classroom computer and focus on a small screen, on which it is difficult for pupils at the back of the class to see clearly what is happening. As only a small number of pupils can use the facilities within the classroom at the same time, there is often a considerable amount of time between the teaching input and the opportunity to try things out for themselves. The acquisition of a digital projector, which could be moved from class to class, would provide teachers with the means of projecting larger images on a screen and enable pupils to see more clearly. The school has yet to investigate possibilities of other arrangements, for example, grouping all of its computers together in the hall in order to form a temporary computer suite, to allow tasks to be completed more efficiently without having to have a constant rota of pupils missing parts of a lesson to have their turn on the computer.
25. The school has recently invested in a number of laptop computers which are used in most classes to allow a group of pupils to work together on a task. This has been an effective development, welcomed by both staff and pupils, although pupils have yet to become fully familiar with using them and the school has yet to work out a system to ensure that they are used fairly and equally by all pupils. The laptops were used in a science lesson in Year 6 during the inspection as an additional tool to help pupils to present the results of their investigation into the solubility of sugar. Whilst this was a very appropriate use, it also highlighted the fact that pupils are not yet entirely confident with the software and the need for them to spend more time consolidating their skills.
26. As a result of training and their willingness to learn new skills, the teachers' confidence in the use of information and communication technology is improving, and there are some good examples of where teachers have chosen to use new technology to enhance learning in another subject. In Year 2, for example, pupils have used the computer to produce weather charts, present poems about the weather and chart noise pollution around the school. Pupils in Year 3 used a microscope connected to the computer to help them investigate pond life related to their work in science. Further training sessions are planned for staff, but there needs to be a greater input into helping staff to realise the potential of new technology and identify ways of using it within their normal lessons to extend pupils' learning. There also needs to be a greater recognition of when and why it is appropriate to use a computer or other technology rather than traditional methods. In one class, for example, pupils had written a letter perfectly acceptably by hand, but were then required to type the same letter on the computer. No gains were made in pupils' learning, either in literacy or in information and communication technology. The use of a computer at an earlier stage could, however, have been beneficial, allowing pupils the opportunity to use a spell-checker or to produce different drafts of their letter without having to go through the laborious process of copy-writing large sections which were quite acceptable on the first draft.
27. The first key issue for the school to address, therefore, is the need to consider the way that new technology is planned into the curriculum. Subject coordinators have yet to fully grasp the importance of identifying appropriate software and occasions on which new technology could enhance learning within their subject areas, and to build these opportunities into their schemes of work. At present, much is left to the individual teacher. In Year 3, for example, the teacher provided opportunities for pupils to conduct research on the Internet in connection

with their history project. However, the school has only recently acquired general access to the Internet, and the appropriateness of its use to enhance more traditional methods of research has yet to be properly explored. Consideration also needs to be given to the scheme for teaching information and communication technology skills, to ensure that pupils are prepared at the right time to use software which would be helpful to them in other subjects, and that all skills are taught within meaningful contexts which, as far as possible, enhance pupils' learning in other areas. Attention has yet to be given to the implications of an increasing number of pupils who have access to computers at home, and how the skills which these pupils learn at home can be integrated into their work at school.

28. The second key issue is the need to provide pupils with greater and more frequent access to new technology in order to help them develop and consolidate their skills. Pupils are certainly keen to use computers within school, as conversations with pupils in Year 6 demonstrated, but they also commented that 'we are quite slow on the computer as we struggle to find where the keys are.'

The way teachers mark pupils' work and help them to learn from their mistakes.

29. The teachers are clearly proving to be highly effective in the way they motivate pupils and get them to learn. However, they do miss opportunities to help pupils to improve even more through the marking of pupils' work. There is good interaction between teachers and pupils in lessons, previous learning is consolidated, and teachers are adept at providing correction and guidance for pupils during oral work. This is not always the case with the pupils' written work.
30. Most of the work pupils complete in their books is marked by the teachers, but the marking frequently consists only of ticks with perhaps a positive or encouraging comment written at the end. The marking, however, lacks rigour, as there are times when teachers miss mistakes, particularly in the correct usage of English. Most of the pupils are quite capable of coping with a greater amount of correction. Indeed, some pupils acknowledged that they 'occasionally make a sloppy mistake,' but the extent of their 'sloppy mistakes' is not immediately clear from the way their work is marked. Even when pupils' writing is accurate, there are few occasions when teachers challenge pupils, as they do orally, to see if they could express themselves in a better way. There are only the occasional comments to show pupils how they could improve their work, yet pupils commented that they found such comments helpful.
31. Pupils are rarely asked to go back over completed pieces of work to correct their mistakes and make improvements. This is frequently because teachers feel compelled to move on to the next piece of work, but valuable opportunities are missed to get pupils to think more deeply about their work and thereby raise their standards even further. Occasionally, teachers will write a question designed to challenge pupils to think more deeply about their previous work. In one example, a teacher had written, 'What do your results show or prove?' But the question remained unanswered, as do other similar follow-up questions, thus depriving pupils of the opportunity of extending their learning.
32. When pupils complete written work for subjects other than English, teachers' evaluative comments and corrections hardly ever refer to the quality of pupils' writing, yet it is in such contexts that the pupils learn to use their written language correctly and appropriately, and these opportunities, of which there are many, provide an excellent medium for consolidating what has been taught in English lessons.
33. Although there are occasions on which pupils are asked to produce a draft piece of writing and then to improve it, the practice is not widespread and is sometimes carried out in a very impractical way. In one exercise, a pupil copied much of the first draft of a piece of writing verbatim onto the next page of their exercise book, necessitating frequent turning of the page, but because insufficient input had been given to get pupils to think more deeply about how

they could improve the first draft, there was very little difference between the first and second drafts.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

34. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve, the governors, headteacher and staff should work together to:

1) improve the school's provision for information and communication technology* by:

- ensuring that all pupils have frequent and regular access to computers in order to consolidate their skills;
- planning more opportunities for pupils to use new technology as a tool for learning in other subjects;
- ensuring that the planning for information and communication technology reflects the need for pupils to acquire new skills as well as to use these skills in a range of contexts and in all subjects;
- providing teachers with continuing opportunities to improve their own skills and their understanding of the use of new technology within the curriculum;
- providing teachers with access to large screens or projection facilities when teaching in whole-class situations to enable all pupils to follow what is happening on screen;
- ensuring that the school has adequate resources to meet these needs.

(paragraphs 23 – 28)

2) improve the quality of teachers' marking by:

- expecting greater rigour in the way pupils' work is marked;
- ensuring that pupils are given clearer indication as to how they can improve the quality of their work;
- ensuring that all pupils take note of teachers' corrections and comments and learn from their mistakes.

(paragraphs 29 – 33)

* This issue has already been identified as a priority in the school's development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of formal discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils [In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	6	3	0	0	0
Percentage	9	50	27	14	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 four 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)	–	139
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	–	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	–	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	–	7

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.4

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	10	15	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	–	–	–
	Girls	–	–	–
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (95)	96 (95)	96 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	–	–	–
	Girls	–	–	–
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (95)	96 (90)	96 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Details of boys' and girls' results are not published separately when there are 10 or fewer boys or girls in the year group.

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	14	3	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	–	–	–
	Girls	–	–	–
	Total	17	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	82 (95)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	–	–	–
	Girls	–	–	–
	Total	17	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	88 (100)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Details of boys' and girls' results are not published separately when there are 10 or fewer boys or girls in the year group.

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	0	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	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	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.85
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.14
Average class size	23.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	51

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	–
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	–

Total number of education support staff	–
Total aggregate hours worked per week	–

Number of pupils per FTE adult	–
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.38

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	313,354
Total expenditure	315,289
Expenditure per pupil	2,236
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,308
Balance carried forward to next year	13,373

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	139
Number of questionnaires returned	89
Percentage of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	22	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	36	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	28	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	45	6	1	0
The teaching is good.	76	22	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	48	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	13	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	40	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	81	19	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	22	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	63	28	8	0	1