

INSPECTION REPORT

TEMPLEWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welwyn Garden City

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117174

Headteacher: Mr. B. P. Martin

Reporting inspector: Dr. Eric Peagam
14943

Dates of inspection: 28th/29th January 2003

Inspection number: 247736

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pentley Park Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire
Postcode:	AL8 7SD
Telephone number:	01707 324251
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. P. Reynolds
Date of previous inspection:	12/1/98

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Templewood is an average-sized primary school and nursery, which provides education for girls and boys from 3-11, located in Pentley Park, which is a suburb of Welwyn Garden City. The school is at, or near capacity for most of the time and each year there are more pupils applying to attend the school than it can accommodate. At the time of the inspection there were 212 full-time pupils on roll with 30 children attending the nursery part-time. Pupils have above average levels of attainment on entry, they largely come from favourable economic backgrounds and there are a below-average number currently eligible for free school meals. There is a higher than average proportion (11 per cent) of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils (1.6 per cent) for whom English is not the language used at home is slightly above average, but none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average at 22.7 per cent but the number of pupils with statements is below average at 0 per cent. There are always more pupils seeking places than can be accommodated, reflecting a strong parental preference. As a result of the admissions policy administered by the LEA, not all children who attend the nursery are able to transfer to the Reception class and not all Reception pupils have previous school experience.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Templewood is a highly effective primary school where excellent leadership and very good management ensure that the needs and aspirations of pupils and parents are very well met and which rightly enjoys a high level of parental and community esteem. During the past year, the school has faced significant problems of staffing, including the long-term absence of both the headteacher and his deputy. While, for a time, this clearly had an impact on the school's development, the school has now recovered from the effect of these absences. It has many great strengths and very few shortcomings. It has a very good ethos that combines a commitment to the achievement of high standards with a strong provision to support pupils' personal development and a determination to create a community within which all are valued and enabled to realise their potential and which prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. Very good teaching, based on good curriculum provision ensures that it achieves very high standards for pupils from all backgrounds and, in consequence, gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Very high quality teaching and learning ensures that pupils of all abilities learn very well.
- The school monitors the outcomes of its work very carefully and uses this monitoring well in planning.
- The school achieves very constructive relationships with parents, which results in a high level of support.
- A very high quality of support for pupils' personal development encourages the development of very good attitudes and excellent behaviour and promotes their sense of citizenship very well.

What could be improved

The curriculum provision for information and communications technology (ICT) and particularly the extent to which it supports learning in other subjects.

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 January 1998. Since then it has made good overall improvement; the Key Issues have been successfully addressed and a good range of other initiatives and developments have been carried through. Parents confirm this when they list a range of improvements they have observed. They cite the improvement in reports which are now very good, especially on personal and social development, increased cultural activity, improvements to the physical environment, ICT facilities, out of school activities and the quality of dramatic productions, culminating in the recent production of 'Oliver'. Standards have continually improved overall from an already high base, and there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Management structures have been refined and strengthened and the school has developed very effective structures for self-evaluation that are very well linked to planning for improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A*	A
mathematics	A*	A*	A*	A*
science	A	A	A	A

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

Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science continue to be consistently very high when compared both with national averages and with those of similar schools, particularly at the end of Year 6. Last year, taking the core subjects overall, the school was ranked among the top five per cent of schools when compared both with all primary schools and those with similar catchment areas. The school gets very high numbers of pupils attaining levels higher than the national benchmark (National Curriculum level 4), particularly in mathematics where its results are again among the highest five per cent of schools.

The overall rise in attainment has been broadly in line with national trends and there are no significant gender differences in the extent to which national averages are exceeded. In spite of the very high proportion of pupils already attaining level 4 each year, the school sets challenging targets for improvement, which it met last year, and again this year reflecting very good achievement. Standards observed in lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy were very high and in line with the school's targets for 2003. Pupils achieve very well over their time in the school, so that while attainment on entry is above average, and it is generally above average at the end of Year 2 (Key Stage 1), it is very high by the time pupils leave in Year 6 (Key Stage 2). The basic skills that pupils develop in literacy and numeracy are very well used to support work in other subjects. Skills in information and communications technology (ICT) are less well developed and less consistently used in other subjects. Pupils identified as having learning difficulties also achieve very well and many are enabled to reach the expected standard in the national tests. In other subjects, where pupils' work could be examined, standards were also generally high with pupils attaining above expected levels by Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils are very positive and speak well of the school. They demonstrate throughout the day how highly they value the school community. They participate with enthusiasm in all aspects of school life, show great willingness to undertake duties and responsibilities and show a very good sense of citizenship.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent: pupils are polite and actively co-operative in lessons. They treat each other, staff and visitors with great courtesy and are highly mature and civilised at break times or when moving about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: the school is very effective in building on the strengths that pupils bring to the school and especially in promoting independence and collaborative working. The school works very effectively to ensure that pupils from all ethnic backgrounds enjoy equal esteem and this is reflected in the very positive racial harmony that exists within the school.
Attendance	Very good: the school regularly achieves well above average attendance levels and has a very low level of unauthorised absence. Punctuality is very good.

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.

Teaching is very good overall. During the inspection, it was usually good, very good in more than a half of lessons and never unsatisfactory. At times it was excellent for all age groups of pupils, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The high quality of teaching is underpinned by the consistent and coherent policy for teaching and learning that is applied in all subjects. This, in addition to the attention paid to national strategies means that teaching in literacy and numeracy is also very good overall. All teachers demonstrate very high expectations and class lessons are conducted at very good pace with a sense of urgency throughout. Teachers take very good account of pupils’ commitment to work and build on this by setting deadlines for group and individual tasks. Planning ensures that lessons are well matched to the needs of all pupils, including the most able and those with special educational needs. Learning support assistants are fully involved in planning, teaching and assessment and, as a result, make a very effective contribution to lessons. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and use these very effectively in achieving high quality oral work. Assessment during lessons is very good and teachers use what they learn from it very effectively in planning. As a result, pupils learn very well. Their very good attitudes ensure that they are highly productive in the amount of work they produce and increasingly take responsibility for managing and monitoring their own learning. In this they are very well supported by the consistent reviewing of learning objectives at the end of lessons that ensures that they are aware of, and enabled to reflect on, what they have learned.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enriched through extra-curricular activities and takes good account of pupils’ individual needs. Some aspects of the National Curriculum requirements for ICT, particularly in other subjects are not met, although the school is working to meet them.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: Individual needs are identified well and appropriate programmes are in place to meet these. The school makes effective use of learning support assistants but when individual pupils require more support than the school is ordinarily able to provide the school seeks appropriate outside advice and support.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: The school makes consistent provision for pupils’ personal development both through curriculum planning and through specific activities. Assemblies and other opportunities for personal interaction promote pupils spiritual, moral and social development very well and pupils have a good range of cultural experiences including a good contribution from visits and visitors.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good: the school has a very strong commitment to the welfare of its pupils and promotes their safety and well-being very well. Academic and personal development are very effectively monitored and the information is very well used to help them to improve further.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is excellent and management is very good: the headteacher is highly focussed and is very well supported by the governors and all staff, who provide high quality leadership at all levels, including enthusiastic and dynamic subject leadership. The school is very well managed and policies are effectively implemented
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well: governors are highly committed to the school's success and are very knowledgeable about its strengths and areas for development. They are assiduous in ensuring that they meet statutory requirements and undertake their management role very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: the school has very good systems for evaluating its performance, using a range of internal and external measures and using these to identify areas in which performance could be improved. The principles of Best Value are well understood and consistently applied, particularly in school improvement planning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good: the school plans and manages its budget very well and makes effective use of the resources and accommodation at its disposal. New resources required for subjects are identified through an audit of curriculum needs so money is carefully spent. However, in some areas, particularly ICT this means that some resources needed are not available.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high quality of behaviour • The high expectations the school has • The high quality of teaching • The extent to which their children like the school • The way the school responds to parents and encourages them to participate in school life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection confirmed the strengths identified by parents and noted the very effective partnership between parents and the school. Inspectors established that the school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities, including lunchtime and after-school activities as well as ensuring that pupils are provided with materials and challenges to occupy and exercise them during break times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.

1. Pupils arrive in the school with attainments that are generally above average and make good progress during their time in the school. During the foundation stage (Nursery and Reception), children develop and consolidate a good awareness of language and acquire basic literacy skills. Many are articulate and are already beginning to use the language of mathematics in simple contexts; they compare things that are lighter or heavier, bigger or smaller and gain comfortable familiarity with numbers. They make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world exploring and commenting on the properties of materials as they reflect on the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. By the end of this stage, most pupils have achieved the appropriate Early Learning Goals in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, and many have exceeded them. As a result, they are well prepared to work within the National Curriculum.
2. In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), considerable priority is given to developing literacy and numeracy skills, making very effective use of national strategies so that pupils continue this progress, and this is reflected in national tests at the end of Year 2. In 2002, when the school is ranked against all others in terms of the percentage of pupils achieving at least the national benchmark (National Curriculum level 2), attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average. In writing, achievement is slightly less good, but still above average. However, when comparisons are made with schools in similar neighbourhoods, while attainment in reading is still well above average, in mathematics it is above average and in writing it matched the average. Teacher assessments of attainment in science, are consistently well above average. When the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels is considered, reading and mathematics scores and aggregated scores are well above average with writing above average.
3. During Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), the timetable continues to give appropriate weight to literacy and numeracy, with particular attention being given to the development of writing skills. At the same time, while ensuring that pupils acquire very good knowledge and understanding in science, strong emphasis is placed on developing enquiry skills and the promotion of scientific thinking.
4. As a result, by the time pupils leave in Year 6, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science rise still further, so that in 2002, taking core subjects overall, the school was ranked among the top five per cent of all primary schools. This reflected particularly good results in English and mathematics, where results placed the school in the top five per cent, while in science, they continue to be well above average. The extent of the improvement is seen when results are again compared with similar schools. The school is placed in the top five per cent in English and mathematics, while science is now well above average. Overall scores are also among the highest five per cent. However, the school is not yet satisfied and is reviewing science provision to ensure that standards in science match those in the other core subjects.
5. The school gets very high numbers of pupils attaining levels higher than the national benchmark (National Curriculum level 4), particularly in mathematics where its results are again among the highest five per cent of schools. In all subjects, current performance (2002) is better than that of any previous year, with a sharp overall rise in mathematics and a better than average rise in English. The rise this year was greater than that nationally in each of the core subjects. This level of achievement means that the number of pupils who reach or exceed national benchmarks in all three subjects is now not only significantly higher than in the great majority of schools, but is currently rising faster than that in the country as a whole. During the inspection, the standards observed were very high and Year 6 pupils are currently on track to achieve or exceed the school's targets for 2003. In mathematics, for example, pupils were seen working at levels normally seen in secondary schools and, where appropriate, individual work was given at a level commensurate with a GCSE course. In English, pupils worked very effectively together showing very good skills in developing a cogent prepared argument and very good understanding of the language and structure required in producing a balanced report.
6. The school works hard to achieve equality of opportunity by careful monitoring of the performance of different groups of pupils and, unlike the national picture, where boys achieve less well than girls, there are no significant gender differences in the extent to which national averages are exceeded. In spite of the very high proportion of pupils already attaining level 4 each year, the school sets challenging targets for

improvement, in conjunction with the local education authority (LEA) which it met last year and again this year reflecting very good achievement.

7. The very high results the pupils achieve are due in large part to the quality of teaching, assessment and monitoring described elsewhere in the report, as well as the commitment and enthusiasm of pupils. As a result, pupils who arrive with above average attainments are attaining at levels well above average and in many cases at very high levels by the time they leave. This significant improvement in performance represents the achievement of the pupils and the value added by the school.

Very high quality teaching and learning ensures that pupils of all abilities learn very well.

8. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching was mostly good with a small amount of very good teaching and an equivalent amount that was unsatisfactory. Since that time, the quality of teaching and learning has been significantly improved and made consistent through the development of the coherent teaching and learning policy to which all staff have contributed and which underpins and informs work in all lessons. Good progress has been made in addressing the Key Issue of providing more challenging work for higher attaining pupils and this is reflected in the significant rise in the proportion of pupils attaining level 5 which is now very high compared to similar schools. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, several pupils were working on a Key Stage 3 fractions programme on the computer and another had work set from a GCSE programme. Very able pupils are given challenging opportunities in other areas (for example, music, dance and drama) to broaden their skills beyond the purely academic. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is also very effective and as a result, most are enabled to attain at the levels expected for their age.
9. In addition, in spite of the difficulties of recruiting and retaining staff in a high-cost area, the school has succeeded in ensuring that when staff leave, they are replaced by high quality and highly committed teachers. At the same time, a carefully planned programme of professional development ensures that the training needs of staff are identified and met. In order to ensure continuity of quality and approach, the school has developed detailed structures to support supply teachers that enable them to be very effective and the regular use of particular supply teachers who are also paid to attend staff meetings and training has contributed well to this objective.
10. The result of this is that teaching is now very good overall. During the inspection, it was rarely less than good; it was very good in more than a half of lessons and never unsatisfactory. Teachers are well aware that the pupils are highly motivated and willing and capitalise on this by demonstrating very high expectations and ensuring that class lessons are conducted at very good pace. They add to the sense of urgency by setting deadlines for task completion and reminding pupils of elapsed time. This urgency is very evident in mental mathematics activities that begin lessons as when Year 6 pupils try to beat their previous best times in completing a round-the-class chain of number facts and relationships. Each pupil concentrates very hard to be ready if the required answer is on his or her card and to be ready to pose the next question.
11. Planning, which follows a consistent pattern across subjects ensures that lessons are well matched to the needs of all pupils, including the most able and those with special educational needs. The management of learning in groups is very effective with identified outcomes planned for all groups and with appropriate work being provided. Very good support is given to pupils within these groups based on careful assessment and monitoring of their progress and by sensitive feedback to ensure that they do not waste time in error. In written work, learning is very well supported by very consistent and informative marking that enables pupils to be clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
12. A key feature in the very high quality of teaching is the very concentrated and consistent commitment to teamwork that is demonstrated. This ensures that all staff skills are effectively brought to bear and the quality of this is evidenced by the supporting report when Investors in People status was awarded to the school. The strong and confident leadership has enabled the development of a collegial structure within the school that encourages a high level of willingness to show initiative and contribute by all staff. In pursuance of this, learning support assistants are fully involved in planning, teaching and assessment and, as a result, make a very effective contribution to lessons. They are able to support higher-attaining pupils in more difficult work, enabling the teacher to work effectively to support the learning of lower-attaining pupils.
13. Teachers place considerable emphasis on learning as an active process as opposed to pupils producing work in response to a demand. Pupil involvement and interactive learning are fostered well and the process includes high levels of pupil self-assessment and review. In an excellent Year 6 dance lesson, pupils made rapid progress in developing and refining group sequences as a result both of the teacher's feedback and that from other pupils. self-assessment is very well supported by the consistent presenting and reviewing of learning objectives at the beginning and end of lessons that ensures that pupils are aware of, and enabled to

reflect on, what they have already learned. This is clear in a Year 2 science lesson when pupils cover a lot of ground very quickly as they use the knowledge gained in the previous lesson to consider the suitability of materials for specific purposes and suggest why a towel made of foil or a bicycle made of glass would not work. This interactive approach has the effect of successfully marshalling and building on the very good attitudes pupils display, with the result that they are highly productive in the amount of work they get through and the speed of their learning. When Reception class pupils investigate whether objects are lighter or heavier than others, they learn very effectively from each other's experience so that their knowledge and understanding is very quickly built up and they are enabled to make finer and finer predictions.

14. Pupils increasingly take responsibility for managing and monitoring their own learning, especially in extended homework projects where the development of task and time management skills is an important component. However, teachers use their knowledge of individual pupils' learning styles to monitor progress in a way that ensures that those who need regular supervision and support are provided with them.

The school monitors the outcomes of its work very carefully and uses this monitoring well in planning.

15. When the school was previously inspected, although leadership and management were sound overall, there were shortcomings in monitoring and planning for improvement and the extent to which such planning was linked to the budget process. Improvement has been made in all these areas, with the result that monitoring of the school's work and planning for improvement are now considerable strengths.
16. The school monitors and evaluates all aspects of its work very thoroughly and has very good arrangements for self-review which take account of the views of all members of the school community. These arrangements include questionnaires for parents, evaluation of responses to newsletters, meetings with parents, questionnaires for children and follow up discussions through the school council and assemblies. The school makes effective use of feedback and comment sheets from a range of other agencies that train student teachers and nursery nurses and offer work experience.
17. Monitoring of teaching and learning is well established and includes classroom monitoring both by members of the senior management team and by external advisers, monitoring of the class weekly plans and work sampling. The results of this are compared with the extent to which test results are improving and related very well to the structures for performance management for teachers and learning support assistants. These in turn lead to written and verbal reports to senior management, staff and governors as part of an ongoing review pattern. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is enhanced by the coherent approach to school improvement planning whereby teachers' performance management targets are incorporated into school planning. This in turn feeds into effective planning for in-service training to meet staff and school needs.
18. Other aspects of teaching and learning are monitored through scrutiny of pupils' work in their books as well as through displays. An example of this is the review of teaching and learning with reference to writing, following which the school adopted a plan to improve this area through raising its profile in the school and ensuring that all staff accord it equal priority. A plan is now in place, which includes support from literacy consultants, additional staff training, implementation of a new handwriting policy and visits by staff to other schools. The plan also included ways of monitoring success through a termly writing task and use of external assessment with close examination of the progress made by less able pupils and those with special educational needs. The outcomes of this plan are already evident in the quality of writing seen during the inspection.
19. In the longer term, the progress that pupils make is successfully monitored through a range of formal and informal procedures. These include internal teacher assessment procedures and the use of nationally validated assessments which are undertaken twice yearly, and the setting and reviewing of individual targets, including those within individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs.) The school also makes effective use of assessments linked to an ICT-based tracking system not only to evaluate progress but also to identify any anomalies across subjects for individual pupils. Formal assessments and records of achievement in each subject area contribute to overall information and are used alongside an analysis of baseline assessments to establish the extent of value added throughout the School.
20. In addition to the use of comparative attainment data, the school makes good use of external validation and comparison with other schools through staff visits to other schools and visits to this school by other teachers for demonstration lessons. This is further strengthened by the impact of external advisers looking at teaching strategies and in-house training and discussions.

21. The school ensures that, in addition to the central areas of teaching and learning, there are efficient systems in place for monitoring other aspects of its work. Governors monitor the effectiveness of the behaviour management policy on a regular basis and there are a variety of formal and informal systems for evaluating the impact of personal, social and health education (PSHE). The finance committee monitors the school budget on a regular basis, looking at planned spending, spending patterns and the extent to which the principles of Best Value are being followed.
22. The impact of this monitoring on the work of the school is clearly established through very effective planning for school improvement. There is a commitment to innovation ensuring the School Improvement Plan is clear and identifies ways of moving the school improvement forward with an effective and clearly defined school plan for each school term. These objectives are located in an overall three-year rolling plan within a set of strategic priorities that relate to the quality of teaching and learning, staff management, building developments, and school resources. Expectations of and for pupils, staff, governors and parents are part of this strategic planning. The identification of priorities is securely based in the self-review process and has a very clear focus on raising standards. Criteria for success are clearly stated and include improvements in school processes as well as measured outcomes. The review of the most recent plan shows that significant staffing issues resulted in a number of priorities being carried forward. However, in spite of this, significant advances were made in terms of planning and assessment across the curriculum, performance management structures and associated monitoring, recording and reporting of progress and the Foundation curriculum (leading to the award of an LEA quality mark). Good progress has been made in implementing the long-term plan for ICT but the school has recognised and planned to address the necessary further developments identified elsewhere in this report.

The school achieves very constructive relationships with parents, which results in a high level of support.

23. Although the previous inspection reported that home/school partnership was a strength of the school, it found weaknesses in the system for dealing with complaints and made this a Key Issue for action. The school has addressed this aspect well and has built on the existing strengths so that there is now a very constructive partnership with parents that pervades all aspects of school life.
24. Parents, many of whom are professionals and highly articulate, have very high expectations of the school and actively promote their views. The school is pro-active in seeking these views and has created structures where they can meet in a constructive forum with teachers and governors. Parents report that they found the joint meeting for parents, governors and teachers to be very exciting, valuable and very well structured to enable views to be constructively shared. They felt that the use of a questionnaire to structure the agenda ensured that parental concerns and views were explored, while the meeting was well managed and productive.
25. Communication is very good and parents are provided with good information about the life and work of the school. In addition to the information contained in the high quality prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, regular newsletters provide updates. These include return slips to ensure parents have received them and on which comment can be made. There is competition among classes to get the highest return rate, and most obtain over 95 per cent. Termly (or half termly) information sheets are sent out from each class teacher setting out the curriculum and other objectives for the period ahead.
26. The school makes very good arrangements to ensure that parents are enabled to ensure that pupils have a successful start in the school and are kept informed about progress. The induction meetings for parents of children entering the Nursery and Reception classes are followed up by meetings to discuss the school's approach to learning and the nature of the curriculum. Reception induction includes lunch in the school with parents and staff. Parents value these opportunities as they do the consultation evenings when parents and teachers discuss each child's progress and review the individual targets which parents support at home and demonstrate this by 100 per cent attendance. Parents also express their approval of the changes in the format of the report, which is seen not only as informative and accessible, but gives due weight to their children's personal and social development. They make very good use of the opportunities these contain for parents to make their contribution to end of year assessments.
27. Questionnaire returns, both in the Ofsted format and those with single focussed issues, show a high level of satisfaction about the work of the school and, in particular, about relationships with parents, but perceptions are far from unanimous, reflecting the very high expectations that many parents have of the school. This pattern was reflected in the meeting where parents felt the school was open, there was good information on entry and relationships with and availability of staff were excellent. They were aware that there was a regular newsletter and had become used to expecting it and found it informative. They felt that information about

curriculum, progress and special educational needs was communicated well. They were very pleased with the present structure for reports and consultations and felt able to approach the school for any information they required.

28. The relationship with parents is evidenced by the high level of support received, both in terms of working within the school and taking an active interest in its work. Parents reported that there was strong encouragement to support pupils, in the classroom, on trips and for swimming as well as other activities and that a good number did so. Parents run the uniform shop, the crèche, the nearly new uniform exchange and the holiday swimming club. They also undertake the maintenance of the school plants and the art collection on loan from the LEA as well as supporting extra-curricular activities. Parents undertake specific tasks in improving the school environment and parental help was a central feature in the provision of the new ICT network. The Templewood School Association is very active in supporting the school; it is valued by parents and staff, raises large sums of money and is able to make decisions about how it is spent. Recently, when the extended absence of senior staff placed stress on the school, parents formed a steering group to enable the planned production of 'Oliver' to go ahead. The result was a highly successful production which all agreed had been a very valuable experience for the pupils.
29. The annual parents' meeting always attracts a good number of parents and provides a useful forum for lively debate. At the well-attended meeting for parents, disappointment was expressed that only about a quarter of parents had attended the joint consultation meeting although this figure compares very favourably with attendance at many schools, which reflects the high expectations that parents have.
30. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents showed a very good understanding of school management issues and a thoughtful approach to the questions raised, expressing concerns and reservations about various issues but always emphasising that these were minor issues in what was overall a very successful school. Parental interest in the running of the school is reflected in the fact that there is never a shortage of volunteers to become parent governors, and many co-opted governors are former parents who have sustained their interest in and commitment to the school.
31. Although the partnership with parents is very good, the school has already produced plans to extend it further, including addressing the issues raised by parents during the inspection. These plans include more detailed involvement of parents in the self-evaluation process and the extension of arrangements for feedback, including the use of ICT. Plans for future consultation include the agreement on policy for extended visits, further extra curriculum activities for younger children and a review of the homework policy to ensure consistency across school.

A very high quality of support for pupils' personal development encourages the development of very good attitudes and excellent behaviour and promotes their sense of citizenship very well.

32. While pupils display above average attainments on entry, baseline tests indicate that their social development and capacity for independence are not at such a high level. Although pupils are usually confident and positive when they arrive, they often require considerable socialisation into working in a large group with the constraints that this imposes on individual freedom. The school has very good arrangements, including a very active school council, to foster these areas of pupils' development and is highly successful. Pupils are provided with a very secure learning environment where independence is fostered and pupils encouraged to think for themselves. Personal relationships are very well supported by the policy through which all teaching and support staff spend time interacting with and listening to pupils. The school sends out very clear and consistent signals to the children, through offering them opportunities to make decisions, both individually and collectively. At a simple level, they can choose whether to go out or remain indoors at break times and this choice is exercised sensibly and responsibly. The expectation of positive pupil behaviour is embedded in the culture of the school and only on rare occasions does the school have to actively manage behaviour. The success of this approach is further underlined by the care taken of the school fabric by pupils and their willingness to support the school including working to ensure the effectiveness of the school council. Pupils willingly accept responsibility within the class and around the school. Year 5 pupils participate in a pairing scheme that begins with reading but extends to a range of other activities in which they promote the well-being and self-esteem of Key Stage 1 pupils. In Year 6, they have designated responsibilities across the school, which they carry out without specific supervision. These include looking after playtime equipment and monitoring its use as well as involvement in the management of extra-curricular activities.
33. There are regular procedures for taking pupils' views into account and ideas for development are shared with pupils through questionnaires, discussions and views from the school council. For example, they

contributed significantly to the debate on what playground equipment should be purchased including voting for what they most wanted. These procedures contribute very well to the real sense of community that helps to create a common vision and strong ethos of mutual interdependence within the school. This is reflected not only in the effectiveness of the 'Buddy' system and other activities such as paired reading, but in the pupils' attitudes towards them. One Year 5 pupil commented that one of the best things about the school was paired reading because it gave her an opportunity to help someone else. Younger pupils value the opportunity to be with older role models and especially the personal touch when, for example, their reading partner gives them a card on their birthday.

34. The care and concern the school exercises in promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development is recognised by parents as a significant strength of the school. Regular assessment of every child's personal and social development in response to the PSHE programme looks at attitudes to learning, self-esteem, relationships and perseverance through a range of activities with pupils. In terms of the effect of personal guidance, almost all parents agree that the school is helping their child to be mature and responsible. Parents stress the high quality of relationships within the class and around the school and feel that this reflects the ethos of mutual respect and care for each other that is a significant area of strength. Behaviour is seen as excellent, and as a result, some parents feel concern about how pupils might fare when transferring to schools with rougher pupils since this is outside their children's experience. However, other parents report that pupils are encouraged to be appropriately assertive and to demonstrate high levels of self-confidence, preparing them well for the future, especially when they move into a more mixed school community where their inter-personal skills are highly valued.
35. At the meeting, parents stressed the positive nature of the rules, which are mainly couched in terms of class 'promises'. Parents were pleased with the way in which pupils are involved in monitoring their own development and in thinking about ways of improving it. They feel that the school's emphasis on all-round personal development is good and enables accurate assessments to be made of their progress. No parents raised bullying issues in their responses and those at the meeting were unanimous that bullying was not an issue. Where they were aware of it, parents felt the buddy system worked well, although many were unclear as to who does what with whom. They commented favourably on reading pairs and on the Jubilee Day activities. They feel the school council promotes skills and self-esteem well, particularly for older, more articulate pupils.
36. During the inspection, the strengths parents identified were confirmed and clearly linked to the positive attitude all staff have towards encouraging maturity and independence. The school considers this area to be crucial part of a child's development and places great emphasis upon these aspects of school life. This includes active concern for pupil welfare as well as the strong structures to promote self-esteem, independence and a sense of ownership of processes that contributes very well to the development of positive citizenship. The school takes the positive attitudes and strengths that pupils bring, and channels them into constructive, socially valuable activities that prepare them very well for an active role in society. Throughout their time in the school, pupils increasingly benefit from a secure grounding in the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship.
37. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes to work and each other are usually very good, and excellent at times. No unsatisfactory behaviour was seen at any time. Pupils display considerable maturity and speak very well of the opportunities they have to make decisions about the school. They increasingly take responsibility for aspects of their own learning, and plan activities collaboratively as they do when preparing group dance routines in Year 6. In role-play activities designed to stimulate writing, pupils are inventive and cogent in presenting arguments on behalf of their 'character' and show mature awareness of the skills of debate, by listening and responding to others' arguments. In Key Stage 2 assemblies, pupils are invited to discuss issues, both in small groups and as a whole community and show self-discipline and constructive approaches throughout. The headteacher confidently suggests that when younger pupils are unsure of the rules of board games provided at break times, they can ask an older pupil to teach them, secure in the knowledge that such an approach will not be rebuffed.
38. Overall, the school is very effective in treating pupils as maturing individuals and enhancing this aspect of their development. This is very effectively underpinned by the attitude of the headteacher and staff who show a very high level of respect for pupils and work constantly to reinforce their self-esteem. The result is a community within which all are equally valued and where the calm and ordered atmosphere contributes very well to pupils' academic and social learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The curriculum provision for ICT and the extent to which it supports learning in other subjects.

39. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in ICT were found to be in line with those expected and were well used across the curriculum. Since that time, the rapid developments in the range and capacity of computers and related technology have required that, in order to maintain satisfactory standards, schools have had to match these developments in terms of curriculum planning, resource availability and, most importantly, staff training. Overall, the school has managed to maintain standards, so that, at this inspection, they were still in line with national expectations. However, since this does not reflect the standards that pupils achieve in other subjects and, since there are specific areas where the need for improvement has been identified, the school has given ICT a high priority in both the recent past and in future school development planning.
40. There has been very good progress since the last inspection in terms of hardware provision and the school now has a very impressive ICT suite as well as a good range of resources attached to individual classes. However, much of this has been recently completed and has not yet had its full impact. The school is still awaiting the equipment to enable the teacher to demonstrate tasks to the whole class at once, and there is as yet very little use of the digital camera.
41. Curriculum provision has also developed well, but there are still gaps in pupils' entitlement, particularly in modelling and data-logging, which the school has identified and plans to address. The planned assessment structure has not yet been implemented. There is some inconsistency in which the various strands of the subject are covered, particularly in terms of desktop publishing, data handling and modelling. The planning structure ensures that there is some good use of ICT to support work in other subjects, but this again is inconsistent and dependent on the extent to which resources have been updated to reflect the needs of new equipment. While this is broadly satisfactory in most subjects, in others and in science in particular, there is insufficient use to ensure that the full National Curriculum requirements are met.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42. In order to improve further on the school's very high standards, governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - implement the existing plans to ensure that all aspects of ICT are planned for, taught and assessed and that pupils' skills are consistently used to support learning in all other subjects, particularly in science;.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	12	9	1	-	-	-
Percentage	8	50	39	3	-	-	-

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 two 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)	15	212
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (84)	91 (94)	94 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	32	32	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	94 (97)	100 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	15	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	16
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	31	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (88)	100 (100)	94 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	31	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (97)	100 (100)	97 (97)
	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	188	-	-
White – Irish	2	-	-
White – any other White background	9	-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	-	-
Mixed – White and Black African		-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	1	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	-	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	-	-	-
Black or Black British – African	-	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	-	-
Chinese	2	-	-
Any other ethnic group	-	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	3	-	-

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26:1
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	147

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	2001/2
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	£
Total income	603,820
Total expenditure	603,190
Expenditure per pupil	2,384
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,582
Balance carried forward to next year	18,212

Results of the survey of parents and carers⁹

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	243
Number of questionnaires returned	146

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know*
My child likes school.	56	40	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	53	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	42	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	55	10	1	1
The teaching is good.	46	47	3	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	49	16	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	45	6	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	41	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	45	12	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	45	4	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	48	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	34	38	5	7

*or is not applicable to my child

Other issues raised by parents

Additional comments were received from 22 parents, mostly amplifying or qualifying their responses to questions. There was a range of views about pupils' progress reflecting different perceptions of what was appropriate at various ages in terms of learning activities and behaviour as well as some concerns expressed about the difficulty of raising issues with the school. A number of parents expressed the view that extra-curricular activities were insufficient, particularly for younger pupils. Many of these views were also shared at the meeting with parents, but did not find general support other than the suggestion that, while Year 6 pupils were swamped with activities, there were very few if any for pupils in Year 1. It was however, agreed that pupils were provided with a good range of activities at playtimes and lunchtimes and there was a very good programme of visits to support pupils' learning and personal development.