

INSPECTION REPORT

SINGLEWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gravesend

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118479

Headteacher: Mrs M Keeble

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel
21090

Dates of inspection: 4th - 5th November 2002

Inspection number: 247907

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mackenzie Way
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Kent

Postcode: DA12 5TY

Telephone number: 01474 569859

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Hobdell

Date of previous inspection: December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Singlewell Primary School is a community primary school on the outskirts of Gravesend in Kent. Pupils are aged from four to eleven years. It has 193 pupils on roll, of which 96 are boys and 97 are girls (below average size for this type of school). There are 29 pupils on the register for special educational needs (15 per cent – below average); one has a statement of special educational need. Ten per cent of pupils are identified as eligible for free school meals (below average). There are three pupils from minority ethnic groups speaking English as an additional language, but none at an early stage of acquisition. Attainment on entry covers the full range and indicates that children are broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Singlewell is a very good school where a high priority is placed on developing each pupil's potential to the full. It is very popular within the local community, and rightly so. Everyone has a shared commitment to do the best for all pupils, who are at the heart of the daily life of the school. The headteacher provides very good leadership and all staff work together very effectively. The good quality of teaching and the good support from teaching assistants result in pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Relationships are very good at all levels. The governing body works well with staff and shares in the commitment to do well. Parents are strong in their praise for the school and are partners in the continuing development of the school. Pupils of all capabilities achieve well and by the end of Year 6 attain standards which are above average in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), writing, speaking and listening. The school is very effective because it relates its planning to very clear evaluation of how well things are done. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- All pupils achieve well and standards in mathematics, ICT, writing, speaking and listening are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages improvements very well.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers are well supported by teaching assistants.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good as a result of the high priority placed upon their personal and social development.
- Assessment procedures are good and there is a shared understanding of the information gathered to track pupils' progress throughout the school.
- The school enjoys a very good partnership with parents, which contributes strongly to pupils' good progress.

What could be improved

There are no significant areas for improvement. However, the following areas for improvement will build on the satisfactory standards already achieved in these areas:

- Improve the provision for teaching investigative and enquiry skills in science.
- Improve the focus on reading skills to raise standards to the same levels as other literacy skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in December 1997 and has responded well to the key issues for improvement that were identified at that time. Standards in ICT have improved considerably from below average to above average, due to improved resources, better planning and teaching, and good subject knowledge of teachers. The provision in physical education and the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have also improved. Good improvement has also been made in assessing pupils' progress throughout the school and planning now builds effectively on the information gathered. The quality of the school improvement plan has improved and the collective commitment of all

staff and governors has resulted in good levels of self-evaluation and whole-school improvement. This improvement has also led to better monitoring by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators.

In addition to the good responses to the previous issues, the quality of teaching has improved. The standard of care and support for pupils has improved from good to very good. The adequacy and quality of staffing and accommodation have improved from satisfactory to good and the quality and use of resources have improved from satisfactory to good. The school is well placed to continue to improve its provision for pupils' learning.

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	C	C	C	C
mathematics	B	B	C	B
science	E	C	B	B

Key

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

Trends in the school's test results over the past three years have been just above the national trend, with boys and girls achieving similar levels. The school sets realistic targets each year based on the detailed records kept of pupils' progress throughout the school. These targets have been successfully achieved. In mathematics and science, a higher than normal proportion of pupils attain the above average Level 5 but a smaller than normal proportion of pupils attain this higher level in English and this accounts for the lower grade.

When children enter the school at the age of four, attainment covers the full range and is broadly average. By the end of reception, standards are at expected levels in all areas of learning. Test results in 2002 at the end of Year 2 were above average in writing and mathematics and were average in reading. Compared to similar schools, results were well above average in mathematics, above average in writing and average in reading. Results over the past three years have fluctuated but have been above the national trend, with writing consistently higher than reading. Boys' results have risen and are similar to girls' results, a difference from the national picture where boys achieve lower than girls overall. This is due to the school's focus on raising boys' self-esteem which has increased their interest in learning. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve well and standards are above average in mathematics, writing, speaking and listening and average in science and reading. Standards are also above average in ICT at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are keen to come to school, very enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy their time in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They quickly learn what is expected of them and display courtesy and thoughtfulness to each other and to all adults.
Personal development	These are very good. Boys and girls work and play together very well and

and relationships	the high quality of relationships is a strength of the school.
Attendance	Attendance levels are very good, well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. All teaching was satisfactory or better with high proportions of good and very good teaching seen. Particular strengths include very detailed and effective planning, very good management of pupils and the use of different strategies to develop every pupil's talents to the full. Good subject knowledge in most subjects contributes significantly to the successes. The good quality of teaching and the good support from teaching assistants result in pupils developing enthusiasm for learning. They soon become confident learners and achieve well as they progress through the school.

The teaching of literacy skills, particularly writing, is good. Writing has been a priority area during the past year and a half and pupils' learning has benefited significantly. Standards are above average as a result. Teachers use a good range of interesting texts and use good prompts to encourage pupils to write imaginatively. Pupils show considerable thought and creativity in their written responses. The teaching of numeracy skills is good. Teachers plan well for the full range of pupils' needs placing a strong emphasis on the teaching of rules and strategies. Planning builds effectively on what pupils already know and ensures that pupils of all capabilities make good gains in knowledge and understanding of mathematical skills. In all lessons, teachers form very good relationships with pupils and have good understanding of their needs. As a result, pupils of all backgrounds and capabilities make good progress in their learning. In their learning, all pupils show great interest in their work, concentrate well and develop very good levels of independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a good range of learning experiences, taking into account the interests and needs of the pupils. Provision is enriched by a good range of activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for these pupils. Good support given by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), teachers and teaching assistants helps them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils receive good provision and support and, as a result, they make good progress in their learning. Individual progress is checked regularly and suitable targets are set.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Spiritual development is sensitively encouraged within the strong caring approach of the school. Opportunities for moral and social development are very good and contribute significantly to the very good relationships in the school. Planning for pupils' cultural development is very good in relation to pupils' own culture and to the wider cultural aspects in society. Pupils gain a firm set of values and beliefs to guide them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff show very good levels of care. They know the pupils well and work together very effectively for the good of all. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.

Parents are strong in their praise for the school and support the staff and pupils very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages agreed priorities very well. She forms a highly effective partnership with staff and governors and is committed to effective consultation and delegation. All staff are involved in management at different levels. They work together very effectively and provide good levels of management in their respective areas.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and are clear about the school's priorities for improvement and how they can support these.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. There is a shared commitment to bring about further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of resources and is continually seeking ways to improve provision. Decisions about spending are based on a good awareness of the agreed priorities and the principles of best value are applied well. The school provides very good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Behaviour in school is good. • Teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible. • Children make good progress in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like to be kept better informed about how their children are getting on.

The inspection team fully agrees with all aspects that please parents most and would go further, to say that behaviour is very good and leadership and management are very good. With regard to keeping parents better informed about how their children are getting on, the team judges that the school provides regular information about this. However, in annual academic reports, the school does not always include an indication of the exact level attained in relation to average standards to help parents understand how well their children are achieving.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

All pupils achieve well and standards in mathematics, ICT, writing, speaking and listening are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

1. In mathematics, inspection evidence shows that standards are above average. In work observed during the inspection, most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are already working at levels that would be expected by the end of the school year. These standards are achieved as a result of the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school, teachers' high expectations and very good planning which builds on what pupils already know. This is an improvement for Year 2 since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. Above average standards have been maintained in Year 6.
2. When children first enter the school in reception, standards are at levels expected for this age. By the end of Year 2, results of the most recent national tests show levels above the national average, and by the end of Year 6, test results again show levels above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Over the past three years, the school has raised standards in mathematics faster than the national rate.
3. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have developed the national guidance well. Whatever their prior attainment and potential, each pupil is encouraged to achieve the best possible standards. As a result of the good learning opportunities provided, pupils systematically develop a wide range of mathematical skills and are keen to use and apply their knowledge and understanding effectively to make quick and accurate mental calculations to solve problems. This was clearly demonstrated in a lesson during the inspection when pupils in Year 2 worked confidently and accurately to complete their own sequences of numbers, using a range of multiples from two to eight. Higher attaining pupils and many average pupils achieved above expected levels, with the remaining average and lower attaining pupils achieving expected levels. In Year 6, pupils investigated the symmetrical properties of two-dimensional shapes, rotating them and reflecting them, using mirrors to check their results. All pupils were accurate with their answers, explained their methods thoughtfully and checked and shared their results with others. When given the opportunity, pupils in pairs also solved similar challenges in a computer program to reinforce their understanding.
4. In other aspects of mathematics, pupils confidently use methods of long multiplication and division and identify numerators and denominators when calculating equivalent fractions. They also create conversion graphs, interpret line graphs and investigate the range of probability from certain to impossible. The quality of work confirms that all pupils, whatever their background and capability, achieve well in this subject with most reaching above average standards.
5. In ICT, by the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils achieve well and attain above average levels. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average. All pupils are confident when using computers, tape

recorders and a digital camera. They work together well, taking turns and sharing ideas. Year 2 pupils produced very good representations of 'night-time fireworks pictures'. Using the controls well, they accessed a wide range of commands to draw, fill or spray bright colours and designs to represent bonfires and fireworks, including cascade effects. Higher attaining pupils also added expressive words, such as 'whoosh', 'bang', 'pop' and 'crackle' to add to the good quality of the work.

6. The quality of teaching is good. All pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy the benefits of very good planning strategies when they participate together in lessons in the computer room and when reinforcing skills in the classroom. Teachers systematically extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding year by year. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate above average standards when creating PowerPoint presentations of their own versions of stories. When finished, the stories will be shown to younger pupils in the school. Year 6 pupils access and retrieve text from previous lessons and add graphics and sound effects to prepare work of high quality, suitable for the younger pupils. They also add a linking button to enable any 'audience' to move backwards or forwards through the story and events. So keen are some pupils that they regularly do their homework, in a range of subjects, on their computers and bring it to school on a disk for the teacher to mark. In lessons, high levels of enthusiasm and achievement are very evident and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are exemplary. Good links are made with other subjects such as mathematics, history, geography and art and design, when pupils extend their ICT skills in gathering information and presenting it in a range of presentations.
7. In literacy, pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills are above average by the end of Year 6. Speaking and listening skills are effectively developed throughout the school. All pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other, respecting their opinions and contributions. Teachers make very good use of questions and prompts to extend pupils' thinking and encourage them to respond verbally, which they do confidently and thoughtfully. In a Year 6 lesson, these qualities were shown to good effect when two pupils read their story endings of how a young boy and his dog reacted in a very dangerous situation. The pupils spoke so expressively that they drew from the rest of the class – who had listened with great interest – a range of emotional responses, including gasps of excitement and exclamations of dismay and sadness.
8. Standards in writing are above average. In support of the school's focus on spelling this year, pupils learn different spelling patterns and are developing dictionary skills effectively. Work is further extended using ICT skills to access the Internet and to carry out comprehension tasks about the text of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Wordprocessing skills are further extended with work involving punctuation, scene-setting and sentence clauses. A good example of this was written by a Year 6 pupil as follows: *'They went to the nearest city, a noisy, brightly coloured place. Ruth, amazed at the wonderful carvings, bought many souvenirs.'* Teachers are very well supported by classroom support staff who contribute effectively to the regular monitoring and assessment of pupils' work. As a result, all pupils are interested and involved in their literacy lessons and are keen to play a full part in contributing ideas and answers.
9. The most recent national test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that standards are above average in writing but average in reading. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading are still at average levels. Inspection evidence confirms these levels. In addition to the recent focus on writing and the current focus on spelling, which have raised standards, there is a need to develop reading skills to the same above average level of other literacy skills. The school has identified the need to extend the provision for home reading books in the most recent school improvement plan in support of this initiative.

The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages improvements very well.

10. The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the work of the school. She forms a highly effective partnership with staff and governors and is committed to effective consultation and delegation. All staff are involved in management at different levels. They work together very effectively and provide good levels of management in their respective areas. Singlewell is a very effective school because the headteacher, staff and governors share a common purpose and place pupils and their wellbeing first and foremost. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection, building on its strengths and responding well to the key issues for improvement that were identified at that time. The quality of the school improvement plan has improved and the collective commitment of all staff and governors has resulted in good levels of self-evaluation and whole-school improvement. This improvement has also led to better monitoring by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators. Good use is made of staff and other resources in the pursuit of increased effectiveness.
11. All staff contribute to the successes in management. The deputy headteacher is effective in her monitoring role and provides a very good partnership with the headteacher. Subject co-ordinators have good knowledge and understanding of their subjects and support other staff effectively to improve their practice. There is a shared commitment to bring about further improvements and staff appreciate the value placed upon their efforts by the leadership. The headteacher earns the respect of the parents and the local community for the way in which she leads the school.
12. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the challenges it faces. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and are clear about the school's priorities for improvement and how they can support these. Costs and services are regularly compared to justify the provision and use of resources as, for example, in the improved provision for ICT. Governors make regular visits to the school, not only to help them evaluate the school's performance but, in addition, a number of governors regularly help in the classes. Performance management is well established and well monitored.
13. The high quality of leadership and management is very effective in identifying strengths in what the school does and evaluating areas that need improving. Regular monitoring and discussions enable all teachers and classroom support assistants to provide very good support for pupils' learning and their personal development. This includes the commitment to continually develop teaching and learning in response to national and local initiatives. The school regularly evaluates its provision and the findings give a clear agenda for further improvements. New staff are made very welcome and are soon involved in the strong team commitment. In recognition of its efforts, the school has been awarded Investor in People status.
14. The school makes good use of resources and is continually seeking ways to improve their provision and effectiveness. Decisions about spending are based on a good awareness of the agreed priorities and the principles of best value are applied well. This is demonstrated well in their decision to provide a new computer room and greatly increase the number of computers, following the previous inspection. These improvements have contributed significantly to the rise in pupils' knowledge and skills. Taking account of the very good quality of education provided and the good and very good achievement of pupils in their learning and personal development, the school provides very good value for money.

The quality of teaching is good and teachers are well supported by teaching assistants.

15. The quality of teaching is good across the school. In lessons observed, all teaching was satisfactory or better. There were equally high proportions of very good and good teaching and a small proportion of satisfactory teaching. This confirms the good quality identified in the previous inspection but with a higher proportion of very good, or better, teaching.
16. Good subject knowledge and detailed planning contribute significantly to the successes. This was particularly evident in mathematics and ICT lessons where teachers' expertise and high expectations ensured that pupils worked at a good pace with interest and enthusiasm for the challenges set. These factors promoted confident learners who achieved well and enjoyed their work. This is a big improvement in ICT where previously there were shortcomings in subject knowledge and the planned use of computers. Very good use is made of support staff who work closely with designated pupils, monitoring their learning closely and enabling many pupils with early learning problems to improve and reach average levels.
17. The teaching in reception is good and takes full account of the early learning goals, providing a good balance between structured learning experiences and practical first-hand play activities. As a result of well-established routines, children are clear about rules and procedures. Together, the teacher and support staff form a strong team who monitor children's learning closely and adjust planning accordingly. Children benefit from the good provision that ensures that they make a good start in their learning.
18. In Years 1 to 6, almost all lessons are well structured and build upon previous learning experiences. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what all pupils should achieve and how they should behave. Teachers use whole class, small group and individual work, as appropriate, to support and extend learning in an effective way. Very good use is made of questions and prompts to extend pupils' thinking and help them understand and respond. A good example of this was in an ICT lesson in Year 6, concerned with creating a story using PowerPoint to combine text, pictures and sound. The quality of pupils' finished work was much improved by the teacher's very good strategies as they responded to her challenges and thought about different ways to appeal to their intended audience.
19. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils, have good knowledge of their needs and regularly assess work to track progress and plan the next stages in learning. Classroom support staff also contribute effectively to this regular assessment. As a result, all pupils are interested and involved in their lessons and are keen to play a full part in contributing ideas and answers. Pupils of all backgrounds and capabilities make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve very well in relation to set targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are taught well and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils and pupils with particular interests are encouraged to develop their skills to high levels, as evident in art and design, music and ICT.
20. Literacy skills are taught effectively. Teachers plan effectively to improve pupils' achievement. Learning is supported well and developed in a variety of carefully planned experiences. During the past year and a half, the focus has been on raising standards in writing and this has been achieved successfully with a rise in test results and general standards. The current focus is on improving spelling but strategies are at an early stage. Numeracy skills are taught well. Teachers have developed the national guidance well. Whatever the prior attainment and potential of pupils, each is encouraged to

achieve the best possible standards. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment in most lessons and challenged at their own particular levels. Good use is also made of developing pupils' mental strategies to help them solve problems in their tasks.

21. Teachers are very aware of links that can be made across subjects, confirming the similar judgement made in the previous report. Good links with ICT are evident, particularly in English, mathematics, art and design, geography and history. Good use is made of opportunities to gather information from CD-Roms and supervised use of the Internet. Overall, the many strengths in teaching have a significant impact on the good levels of achievement made by pupils.

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good as a result of the high priority placed upon their personal and social development.

22. The attitudes of pupils are very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school and delight in talking about their learning. An important aspect of many lessons is the respect and appreciation that is shown for each other's efforts and contributions as they become fully involved in sharing their work. They learn quickly what is expected of them and display courtesy and thoughtfulness to each other and to adults.
23. The behaviour of all pupils is very good. Boys and girls work and play together very well and the very good relationships are a strength of the school. Older pupils are very caring and considerate towards younger pupils and these caring attitudes are seen at most break-times and lunchtimes and set examples of very good behaviour. Pupils themselves say that they enjoy playtimes, are confident that any problems are sorted out straightaway and, (quote) 'School is brilliant'.
24. Very good procedures are in place to ensure very good support and guidance for all aspects of the care and welfare of pupils, whatever their background. When children first enter the school, their capabilities and needs are quickly and accurately identified and effective support is provided. In reception, children benefit from working in small groups, as they become more involved in their activities. Good support is provided for children's needs both in learning and in personal development. Upon leaving reception and entering statutory schooling, pupils continue to benefit from the caring teachers and adults around them. Personal and social skills are further developed very effectively in Year 1 through focused sessions involving role-play, respect for others and teamwork. All staff are trained in matters of child protection and a governor has responsibility for this area. There are clear procedures for health and safety and risk assessment.
25. Regular and focused monitoring ensures that pupils' progress in personal, social and academic development and citizenship is evaluated and important amendments are made in the programme of support. Pupils' problems diminish as they are helped to become eager learners within the school's positive environment. All staff, supported by the SENCO, work hard to support pupils with special educational needs, by providing what is best for each individual pupil. Support for the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also good. When pupils leave the school they are well rounded individuals. The high quality efforts made by the school are much appreciated and highly valued by parents.
26. The school works very successfully to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This very good provision begins in reception where a calm, well organised and purposeful atmosphere creates good opportunities for children to learn routines and relate well to each other. Spiritual development is sensitively supported within the strong caring approach of the school. Collective worship provides a very

good sense of belonging to a caring school environment through opportunities to share success and emotional experiences. Very good relationships are formed between all pupils and adults. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are provided with very valuable experiences in working together collaboratively in such lessons as ICT, physical education and music, ensuring a richness of provision for social development.

27. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. From the moment they start in school, pupils are taught the differences between right and wrong. Teachers and other adults provide consistently good role models and treat all pupils fairly and openly. In this positive environment, pupils show care and consideration for each other as they work and play together. Pupils are well behaved at all times and show genuine respect for each other. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. There are good opportunities for pupils to discover more about, and understand, their own culture. These include gathering information about their own local community in geography and history and learning about and respecting other cultures in art and design, history and music. The school's provision promotes a healthy curiosity about their own and other cultures, preparing them effectively as future citizens in our modern multicultural society.

Assessment procedures are good and there is a shared understanding of the information gathered to track pupils' progress throughout the school.

28. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement and tracking individual progress are good and have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. The regular assessments made by teachers in English, mathematics and science help them to identify pupils who either need more challenge in their work, or have not yet reached the required standard. Information is used to form 'booster classes' for pupils capable of improving to average levels and 'extension classes' for pupils capable of improving to above average levels. The comprehensive policy and procedures are implemented consistently by all teachers and classroom support staff. An effective aspect of the procedures is the way teachers involve pupils in identifying targets. This strategy encourages pupils of all ages to talk about what they are doing and why and how successfully they have completed tasks. Teachers make good use of this information to plan their work and this is reflected in the high quality of teaching across the school. Assessment procedures have also been established in ICT, geography, history and physical education and are being developed in the remaining subjects. The recorded information contributes effectively to the monitoring of pupils' progress.
29. The school is effective in assessing and monitoring pupils who have special educational needs. These assessments are used as a basis for good quality support in classes. Work is well targeted and planned in manageable steps. As a result, pupils progress well and develop confidence and self-esteem because of their achievements.
30. Results of national and school tests are evaluated by staff very effectively to measure the school's performance. Care is taken to examine how all groups of pupils are getting on. For example, teachers evaluate the respective achievements of boys and girls and those with special educational needs. The information is used well to identify those areas of the curriculum where improvement is needed. Recent examples are the need to improve standards in writing where detailed planning and resources have been successfully focused on these areas, resulting in measurable improvements in pupils' achievements and test results. Procedures successfully integrate curriculum planning, assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

31. Targets are set for pupils to reach at the end of each year in English, mathematics and science and are shared with them. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide good quality feedback, including helpful and encouraging comments to help pupils improve. These arrangements are successful in helping teachers and pupils to work together in raising standards. Annual written reports meet requirements. They contain targets for each subject which are shared and discussed with pupils and parents. However, to improve the quality of these, a clear statement on the actual level of attainment for English, mathematics and science would help parents understand how well their children are achieving.

The school enjoys a very good partnership with parents, which contributes strongly to pupils' good progress.

32. Information that is provided for parents about the school, its programme of work, activities and pupils' achievements, is very good. The very effective partnership with parents is a strength of the school. Comments made at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, and the results of the parents' questionnaire, show that parents have a very high opinion of the school and are pleased with the education and care provided for their children. Those parents spoken to during the inspection said that their children can't wait to get to school and are encouraged to develop their talents. The headteacher and staff make themselves freely available to discuss with parents questions or problems that may arise and to deal with these quickly and sensitively.
33. Parents consider the school to be well led and managed. They are pleased that their children behave well and are helped to become mature and responsible. Relationships between parents and staff are very good and parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress. At the beginning of each term, they receive information about the work that their children will be doing. They are complimentary about the quality of teaching and like the fact that teachers are always trying to do the best for their children. They are pleased with the range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors endorse all the aspects that please parents.
34. Parents support the school very well. Almost all parents come to consultation appointments to review their children's progress. The parent-teacher association runs frequent events which are well supported. These add greatly to the school's social life and community involvement, while at the same time raising very valuable funds for the school. Many parents, some with special skills, volunteer to help in and around the school and accompany pupils on trips. Parents help with their children's learning at home, mostly by hearing them read and practising spelling and number work. Parents are fully involved in the regular reviews of the individual education plans for those pupils with special educational needs. This has a positive impact on the progress of these pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There are no significant areas for improvement. However, the following areas for improvement will build on the satisfactory standards already achieved in these areas:

Improve the provision for teaching investigative and enquiry skills in science.

35. Inspection evidence from pupils' work in science shows that overall standards are at average levels in Year 2 and in Year 6. In Year 2, pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of their 'health and growth' and 'plants and animals' topics. Within the programme of work covered, there are good links with other subjects, such as mathematics, ICT and physical education. However, their work is mainly knowledge based, and all pupils generally tackle the same tasks. There are few opportunities for genuine investigation and to carry out tests and make predictions.
36. By Year 6, pupils maintain at least average levels of scientific knowledge. They learn about habitats and feeding relationships between animals and plants and have a good knowledge of food chains. When considering conditions for the growth of plants, they carried out a fair test to answer scientific questions, altering one variable. Pupils made predictions but these were not always based on scientific understanding. There was little evidence of the higher levels of selecting apparatus, planning tasks and drawing conclusions based on scientific evidence.
37. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable about the subject. Although having few opportunities to directly observe teaching, she has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, through strong informal monitoring of standards and the very good relationships and discussions with staff. She has identified the need to extend the areas of coverage to include more investigative work and so raise standards further. This area of focus is in the current school improvement plan and strategies are already underway to implement regular assessment of investigative science and next term to organise a display of pupils' work in this aspect of their learning.

Improve the focus on reading skills to raise standards to the same levels as other literacy skills.

38. Over the past four years, the results of national tests and assessments of pupils' reading skills at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated from below the national average to well above the average, the most recent results being in line with the national average. Writing test results have been above or well above average. Over the same period, at the end of Year 6, English results have been in line with the national average. In the most recent tests, results remain average. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that standards in speaking, listening and writing are above average while reading is average. Detailed records of pupils' progress in Year 2, show a broad range of attainment, much as expected at this age. Lower attaining pupils lack confidence and need to re-read new words to become more familiar with them. Average readers are gaining in confidence but still lack the ability to fully express opinions about events and ideas in their stories.
39. By Year 6, the higher attaining and some average pupils are self-motivated and confident readers and use reading skills well to support independent learning. In their verbal responses they identify key features and phrases to support their views, such as those in a Year 6 lesson, when these qualities were shown to good effect. When asked to explain the level of interest in a particular passage, one pupil replied, *'The tension was building up. It was done by using short sentences.'* There is now a need to further

develop reading skills in the average attaining pupils to enable more of them to achieve the higher level in line with their writing, speaking and listening skills.

40. The school's own evaluation of test results in English over the past two years has led to identifying priorities to raise standards in writing and spelling. Improvements have been made in these two aspects of literacy. There is now a need to develop reading skills to the same above average level of other literacy skills. The school has identified the need to extend the current range of home reading books and to replace the 'big books' in Year 1. In addition to these initiatives the school will need to focus on setting higher targets in reading to enable a greater proportion of pupils to achieve the higher Level 5.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. There are no significant areas for improvement. However, the following areas for improvement will build on the satisfactory standards already achieved in science and English:
 - (a) Improve the provision for teaching investigative and enquiry skills in science to enable pupils to extend their scientific understanding.
 - (b) Improve the focus on reading skills to raise standards to the same above average levels as other literacy skills.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

12

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	5	2	0	0	0
Percentage	0	42	42	16	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 eight 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)	n/a	193
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	29

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	13	15	15
	Total	26	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (87)	97 (97)	100 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	13
	Girls	13	15	14
	Total	26	29	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (87)	97 (87)	90 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	13	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	18
	Girls	11	9	12
	Total	25	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (69)	81 (72)	97 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	16
	Girls	8	6	11
	Total	19	19	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (81)	61 (91)	87 (84)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
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
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
187	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table 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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	183.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	481,399
Total expenditure	483,812
Expenditure per pupil	2,337
Balance brought forward from previous year	88,934
Balance carried forward to next year	86,521

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.24
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.6
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	193
Number of questionnaires returned	96

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	40	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	36	0	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	35	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	45	4	1	1
The teaching is good.	61	38	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	38	13	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	19	6	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	43	5	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	74	26	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	32	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	40	8	2	6

(Figures in each row may not total 100 due to rounding up or down in each section)

