

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST BOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Maidstone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118568

Headteacher: Mrs J Foulsham

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Bonser
22870

Dates of inspection: June 16th –17th 2003

Inspection number: 247920

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 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Tonbridge Road
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Kent

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Howard

Date of previous inspection: October 20th –23rd 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

West Borough Primary School is a community school that draws its pupils from the local neighbourhood. At present there are 381 boys and girls from 4 to 11 years of age. Children's attainment on entry has altered since the last inspection with a changing intake to the school. It varies in some year groups but is well below average overall. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, many of which are disadvantaged and the number known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are 36 per cent of the pupils identified as having special educational needs, mainly as a result of learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties although some have physical difficulties. This is well above average. Just over two per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is above average. Eight per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and seven per cent speak English as an additional language, several of whom are at an early stage of acquiring English. There is a high movement of pupils in and out of the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

West Borough Primary School is a good school with many strengths. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen since the last inspection because the quality of teaching is good now throughout the school. This means that pupils achieve well. They behave well and are very keen to learn. The headteacher, governors and staff work together very well as a team to improve standards for all pupils and are fully committed to continuing this. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved in English, mathematics and science, especially in the last three years, and pupils now achieve well because they are taught well and there is very good provision for those with special educational needs.
- The headteacher, governors and staff work together very effectively as a team to improve standards in all aspects of school life.
- The school promotes pupils' very good personal development and attitudes towards school very well through a rich variety of learning opportunities, successfully encouraging them to behave well, to get on very well together and to work hard.
- Standards in art and design are high because pupils are taught a wide range of skills very well.

What could be improved

- Standards at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, which are below average and not improving as quickly as at the end of Year 6.
- The unsatisfactory rate of attendance that slows the pace of learning for some pupils.

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 October 1997 and since then there has been a good improvement. There has been an effective response to all of the weaknesses noted then. For example, the curriculum for the reception classes has been broadened and children now get a good start to their school life. The provision for information and communication technology has been greatly improved and this has helped pupils develop a much wider range of skills. The school has also received a number of prestigious awards for its web site. As a result of considerable effort and determination, a new infant building will be ready for the new school year, replacing the previous unsuitable accommodation. In addition to this, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have risen and this has been recognised by a School Achievement Award. The quality of teaching has been improved and consequently pupils now achieve well. Good quality planning and teamwork, together with a rigorous and ongoing programme of monitoring and support and a well-focused programme of training have helped to

bring this about. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have also been implemented well and consistently. In addition, there have been further improvements in aspects of leadership and management, in the provision for pupils with special educational needs, in the enrichment of the curriculum and in the personal development and attitudes to learning of pupils, which are now very good. There is a strong, shared commitment in the school to continue to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	B	C	A	well above average A
mathematics	E	D	C	A	above average B
science	E	C	B	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Standards at the end of Year 6 fell initially after the last inspection to a low point in 2000. However, since then they have risen rapidly as a result of effective school action, with a good improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. In the 2002 national tests, results were well above those of similar schools. Overall, results have kept pace with national trends since the last inspection. In 2002, results at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science were also well below average. However, nearly a third of the pupils in that year group were on the register of special educational needs and there was a high turnover of pupils during Years 1 and 2.

Standards on entry to the school are now well below average overall, although in the current reception year group they were below average. Children achieve well in relation to their individual starting points, with most likely to meet the early learning goals in all areas of their learning and to exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of their reception year. Lesson observations and past work show that at the end of Year 2 standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This shows some improvement from last year, especially in mathematics. However, although few pupils reach the higher Level 3 in English, mathematics or science, most are achieving well overall in relation to their attainment on entry to the school, which was well below average in this year group. At the end of Year 6, the above average standards in science and average standards in English and mathematics have been maintained from last year with a further increase in mathematics in the percentage of pupils both reaching and exceeding the expected levels. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well. This represents further improvement as nearly half of the pupils in this year group have special educational needs and there has been a considerable turnover of pupils since Year 2. The school is likely to exceed the realistically challenging targets set for this year. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well and some achieve very well as a result of the very good provision made for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy coming to school, they are enthusiastic, very eager to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good throughout the school both in lessons and at play. There have been only two exclusions during the past two years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils use their initiative and act responsibly. They get on very well together and with all the adults in school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory; below the national average, mainly due to the number of family holidays taken during term time.

Boys and girls alike co-operate together very well, concentrate and take a pride in their work. They show thoughtfulness, care and respect towards the feelings and ideas of others.

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved from satisfactory since the last inspection. As a result, pupils learn well in many lessons. The consistency in the quality of teaching across the school means that pupils build well on previous learning. This has contributed significantly to the improvements in standards and achievement by the end of Year 6. Literacy and numeracy are taught well across the school, with examples seen of some very good and excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6. As a result, pupils were engrossed in their learning and made rapid progress during the lessons. The quality of teaching and learning in art is very good and this contributes significantly to the high standards in the subject.

The school now meets the needs of most girls and boys well, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, although some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not always challenged enough. In well-taught lessons across the school, teachers use skilful questioning to involve all pupils and use a good variety of methods and resources to give them well-matched and interesting activities. As a result, pupils concentrate very well and work hard. Teachers plan work very well to link pupils' learning across the curriculum and so make it more relevant to them. The way that teachers manage their pupils and the very positive relationships between them help pupils to feel that they can succeed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; enriched by a very wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; their very varied needs are met very well through very effective teaching and support both in the classroom and in focused small group

	work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall; pupils receive good support from class teachers that helps them participate well in lessons although the external support for those pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English is still being developed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; very good for moral and social development; good for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' self esteem contributes very well to their personal development.

The school has rigorous systems for monitoring and improving attendance. Teachers and learning support assistants use their very good knowledge of pupils to provide very good educational and personal guidance to pupils. The school has a very good partnership with parents and this makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall; very good leadership by the headteacher, very well supported by the senior management team and by very good teamwork between all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; they take an active and very effective part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; a rigorous programme of monitoring and support has contributed strongly to improvements in standards and teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Very good; available funds are used very well to support the school's priorities.

The headteacher has established a very clear sense of direction, shared by the whole school community and focused on improving standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The good number of skilled learning support assistants contributes very effectively to pupils' learning. The school applies the principles of best value well when making decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children enjoy coming to school.• Their children are well taught. They are expected to work hard, do their best and they make good progress.• The school is well led and managed.• The school is approachable and responsive to their views and concerns.• The children are well behaved and the school helps them to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework given.

Inspection findings support the very positive views parents have of the school. With regard to their concern, the team found that the amount of homework given to pupils is appropriate and used well to support their learning in class.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved in English, mathematics and science, especially in the last three years, and pupils now achieve well because they are taught well throughout the school and there is very good provision for those with special educational needs.

1. The good improvements in standards since the last inspection were recognised in a School Achievement Award this year. From 2000 to 2002, the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching Level 4 or above has risen from 56 per cent to 80 per cent in English, from 58 per cent to 78 per cent in mathematics and from 78 per cent to 93 per cent in science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 has at least doubled in all three subjects. Inspection evidence shows continuing improvements at the end of Year 6 in the number of pupils reaching both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in mathematics. The above average standards in science and the average standards in English reached last year in the national tests have been sustained even though 44 per cent of the current Year 6 group have a wide variety of special educational needs. This is a much higher proportion than last year. In addition to this, there has been a high turnover of pupils in this year group, with over 40 per cent of them joining the school since their reception year. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Several factors have contributed to this positive picture of rising standards and achievement.
2. The impact of effective action in areas where there has been a whole school focus for improvement, such as writing across the school last year and girls' attainment in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 this year were clear in lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' work. No significant differences were seen in the work of girls and boys in Year 6 in mathematics, with several girls among the group working confidently at the higher level 5, while lower attaining boys and girls found similar difficulties, for example, in describing and explaining patterns and problems. Both were equally well motivated and from their books had made good progress over this year in developing their mathematical skills and understanding.
3. In English, pupils achieve well in reading but they now achieve very well in writing by the end of Year 6 in relation to their prior attainment. Most pupils write competently in a wide range of genres. Teachers give pupils frequent and purposeful opportunities to practise and develop these in subjects across the curriculum. Examples include an imaginary diary of Howard Carter, a modern version of 'The Good Samaritan' and 'A Tour Guide to East Farleigh Church'. Each pupil has a beautifully presented anthology of the stories they have written over the year, which are the end result of very good redrafting and crafting processes. They include extended stories and stories written for younger pupils in the school. A higher attaining pupil wrote skilful, reflective diary extracts exploring the emotions of having a new baby brother, taking the reader convincingly from excited anticipation to feelings of jealousy and neglect. Very good examples were seen in pupils' books of teachers making very pertinent comments to help them know exactly what they needed to do to improve their work next time, such as varying the length of sentences and using paragraphs to show new ideas or time moving on.
4. In science, there is a continuing emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills. The importance placed on practical work makes the subject more accessible to some lower attaining pupils as their progress is less dependent on their literacy and numeracy skills. This is one reason for the high proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4. In a Year 4 science lesson, pupils were investigating different surfaces and friction. They demonstrated a good understanding of fair testing in their suggestions for setting up their experiments, using correct terminology and some pupils, for example, checked their results without prompting by repeating what they had done, showing their good developing skills in scientific enquiry.
5. The quality of teaching and learning has improved from satisfactory to good across the school since the last inspection. This, together with carefully planned setting arrangements, helps pupils

of all levels of attainment to do well. Teachers have made very good use of very well planned training and support, to increase their expertise. Very good use is made of specialist teachers and those with particular expertise, both in the way that the teaching groups are organised but also in the sharing of good practice with colleagues. The outcomes of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, good planning and co-ordination have been used very effectively to bring about a consistent approach to teaching in the core subjects. This, together with very good teamwork, mutual support and co-operation has helped to sustain the pace of improvement in spite of the high movement of pupils in and out of the school. Assessment information is carefully analysed to identify specific areas of weakness within each subject and well-focused target setting at school, class, and group level and in writing at individual level helps to focus teaching on these areas. Good use is also made of assessment information to identify pupils in need of additional support in English and mathematics, who are helped by the very good use that the school makes of initiatives such as the Early and Additional Literacy Strategies, Springboard mathematics and booster classes. The effectiveness of this support is reflected in the increasing number of pupils reaching the expected levels by the end of Year 6.

6. In most lessons, there are strong features that contribute to the very good attitudes pupils have towards their learning and their good achievement. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school, which help to motivate pupils well. Teachers and learning support assistants use their very good knowledge of individual pupils to support their learning and to promote their self-esteem and personal development sensitively. This contributes very well to the respect that pupils show for each other. Teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. Many very good examples of this were seen in lessons across the school. Teachers manage pupils very well, helping them to meet their high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work by creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. They deploy their learning support assistants well so that their highly skilled support has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Good examples were seen of teachers using effective questioning skills in whole class sessions to involve pupils of all levels of attainment and to ensure, for example, that boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language were equally involved. Well taught lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with a good variety of learning activities that keeps pupils on their toes and helps them to concentrate well.
7. Many of these features were illustrated in an outstanding English lesson for Year 6 pupils. This was one of a series in which pupils were investigating how poets manipulate words and meaning to achieve particular effects. In response to very good questioning, pupils drew out similarities in the rhyming patterns and the number of syllables in the lines in an extract from 'Romeo and Juliet' and one of Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes. The teacher then modelled ways in which a poet might adapt, change and select words to keep the pattern of rhyming couplets very well as he used pupils' suggestions to write the two lines of a verse based on 'The Three Little Pigs.' A very effective blend of focused questions and very salient teaching points which built very well on pupils' responses showed his own considerable expertise but also kept pupils of all levels of attainment engrossed and very keen to offer ideas that reflected their rapid learning. Boys and girls alike were highly motivated and so settled quickly to write a poem in rhyming couplets based on a traditional tale. They concentrated and worked very hard on this challenging task, showing how well they could apply what they had learnt. All were keen to share their initial efforts, which were of a high standard. Lower attaining pupils had successfully adapted words such as 'pig' to 'piggie' to increase the number of syllables in a line and used assonance, such as 'straw' and 'poor', in some cases to obtain a rhyme. Some higher attaining pupils had already drafted several entertaining verses.
8. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator is highly organised in successfully managing a wide variety of support groups for pupils of all ages in a way that promotes very good communication between everyone concerned. The support groups are carefully matched to pupils' varied and particular needs, and draw on a wide range of strategies that provide support for social, emotional, behavioural, physical and varied learning difficulties. Class teachers, special needs teachers and highly skilled learning support assistants work closely together to help these pupils to do well, through good support in

the classroom and very effective small group teaching. The very good relationships that they establish with pupils, their very good individual knowledge of them and their encouraging approach all help these pupils to make good and often very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. These are clear, precise, and discussed appropriately with parents and carers with whom there is very good communication. Pupils know their own targets and this helps them to be aware of and encouraged by the progress they make.

9. All of these strengths contribute to the very positive ethos of the school, the improving standards and the good achievements of pupils of all levels of attainment.

The headteacher, governors and staff work together very effectively as a team to improve standards in all aspects of school life.

10. The headteacher provides very good leadership and very clear direction for the work of the school. This is focused on continuing to raise standards and pupils' achievements by further improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, while providing a rich curriculum and high level of care and support for pupils. She has shared this very effectively with governors and staff, with the result that all work very hard and very well together towards common goals. One way she has achieved this was to use a training day at the beginning of last school year for governors, teachers and all other staff to review the school's vision and aims together. The discussions resulted in issues being identified that would move the school towards its aims, which were then incorporated into the school improvement plan. The outcomes are reflected in the strong, shared sense of purpose among staff and governors.
11. The impact of this close teamwork and the headteacher's very good leadership can be seen in the improvement in standards at the end of Year 6, especially over the last three years, in pupils' achievement throughout the school and the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. The school has worked hard and successfully to achieve this, and continues to do so, overcoming the challenges presented by a high turnover of pupils, a change in the intake of the school and the considerable disruptions caused by the building of the new infant block. The very good relationships, teachers' very good knowledge of individual pupils, the way they promote self-esteem, recognise and value the achievements of each pupil and the very good inclusion of all pupils, are some of the many examples of how the school's aims and values are seen in practice daily. All of this makes a strong contribution to the very positive attitudes and good behaviour of the pupils as well as their very good personal development.
12. Very good relationships underpin the close co-operation between all staff. The headteacher delegates responsibility effectively, and this contributes to the climate of trust in which all are and feel valued and to the evident high morale of the team. The same is seen with governors and parents, who play an active part in life of the school. The school promotes very good links with parents, keeping them very well informed and actively encouraging their involvement. This very good partnership contributes very well to pupils' motivation, interest and learning. Governors are very supportive and fulfil their role as critical friends very well. Each governor is linked with and spends time with a specific class as it moves through the school. The relationships built up in this way over time, as well as their involvement in data analysis and target setting, contribute to the very good overview that governors have of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of what is needed for continuing development. The governing body, under the very able leadership of its chairman, has been particularly effective and proactive in managing difficulties that have arisen in the current building programme.
13. The determination and capacity of the school to raise standards further, by improving the quality of teaching and learning, is seen in the focused use of the performance management process. This has been developed as a very positive tool to support key priorities on the school improvement plan and is carefully linked to very well-planned training for all staff. The priorities are determined through the detailed analyses of national tests and form the basis of linked curricular targets that are set at school, class and individual level. The successful raising of standards, for example in writing and in girls' attainment in mathematics in the last two years illustrate the effectiveness of this process. The school also makes very good use of other initiatives, such as the Early and

Additional Literacy Strategies, as well as schemes such as Investors in People and other innovative strategies to provide further support for pupils' learning and school improvement. A rigorous programme of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in which the headteacher, governors and the core co-ordinators are all fully involved, as well as local education authority advisors, have also helped to bring this about.

14. Very good use is made of performance data to track the progress both of individual pupils and of particular groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. The information is used well to identify pupils who are not achieving as well as they might in the core subjects. Additional help is then provided for them, either in targeted groups within class or in a wide range of additional support groups for pupils of all ages led by very skilled, well-trained special educational need and support teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils make very good progress in these groups and because of the number of pupils involved, this has a significant impact on their overall achievement and the rise in standards.

The school promotes pupils' very good personal development and attitudes towards school very well through a rich variety of learning opportunities, successfully encouraging them to behave well, to get on very well together and to work hard.

15. Pupils of all ages are well behaved and have very good attitudes to their learning. Throughout the school, pupils work very well together and concentrate on the task in hand. Numerous examples were seen of pupils giving spontaneous help to each other in lessons and in other situations and in sharing resources amicably. At playtimes and lunchtimes pupils play together happily and purposefully. The high degree of racial harmony shows the effectiveness of the school's policy relating to this. Year 6 pupils show a very good sense of responsibility in carrying out their role as Buddy Guards and look after younger pupils well. Pupils get on together equally well with all of the adults who work in the school. They are helpful and friendly towards visitors, willingly engaging in conversation. Opportunities, such as showing new parents around the school, contribute well to their confidence. The school achieves this through its very positive and caring atmosphere, its emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development and by providing learning activities that are interesting and relevant to pupils.
16. The relationships between all of the adults in the school provide pupils with very good role models. All teachers manage pupils in a very consistent and positive way. There are clear rules for what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, which pupils know and respond to well. These are underpinned by a strong commitment to building pupils' self-esteem and confidence through appropriate praise and encouragement. It is very clear in lessons that teachers value each pupil and their ideas and contributions. This is reflected in the respect that pupils show for each other. Pupils are genuinely appreciative of each other's efforts and achievements. A good example of this was seen in a Golden Book assembly for younger pupils. It also means that pupils are keen to share their ideas and learn readily from their mistakes.
17. The respect for and valuing of each pupil is seen not only in the way that staff speak to pupils, but also in the care with which they display pupils' work attractively. This helps pupils to take a pride in their work. The inclusion of the Golden Book and pupils' work on the excellent school web site also gives a very positive message to pupils about how their efforts in all areas are valued. The school considers carefully ideas put forward by pupils for improving the school environment. An outstanding outcome of this is the way that Year 6 pupils in the art club have redecorated and completely transformed the toilet areas of the older girls and boys and also painted a large mural to brighten up an infant cloakroom area. This enables pupils to know that they can make a difference to the quality of their community life, thereby increasing their sense of self-worth and citizenship.
18. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They are very well motivated and show great interest in school activities both in and out of the classroom. One reason for their enthusiasm is that teachers work hard and successfully to ensure that every pupil, irrespective of their culture, social background or level of attainment is included in all activities and feels fully part of the school. Teachers are very good at ensuring that the work given to pupils is interesting and

set in a relevant context. The very good and purposeful links that they make between subjects across the curriculum when planning pupils' learning makes a strong contribution to this. The school also makes very good use of the local area and the good links it has with the local community to provide a wide range of visits and visitors that enrich the curriculum and extend pupils' learning opportunities. These include theatre groups, Road Safety and Fire Officers, visits to Penshurst Place and a local hop farm as well as an annual residential visit for older pupils. Every year there is a themed week in which the whole school participates. This year, for example, the theme is 'Celebrating Diversity'.

19. The school also provides a very good range of additional activities for pupils. These include after school and lunchtime clubs, such as those for a number of different sports, art, maths, dance and information and communication technology. There is a particularly good range of additional musical opportunities in which many pupils take part. A peripatetic string teacher has over fifty violin pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. There are currently seven recorder groups, catering for differing ages and levels of expertise, choirs for lower and upper Junior pupils, an orchestra and music club. Pupils have very good opportunities to play, sing and perform together, which they do to a high standard in assemblies and school concerts, as well as in the community. They take part successfully in, for example, an annual Infant Singalong with other schools and the Maidstone Recorder and International Music and Dance Festival. The school was chosen to represent Kent in a music and drama performance in the Millenium Dome. Such opportunities, involving so many pupils, make a strong contribution to pupils' very good personal development and help to fulfil the school's aim of 'Identifying and celebrating strengths and talents in all children', very well.

Standards in art and design are high because pupils are taught a wide range of skills very well.

20. Very attractive displays of high quality art work immediately catch the eye throughout the school. They illustrate the wide variety of media in the work undertaken by pupils of all ages linked to their learning across the curriculum. They include Egyptian silk paintings, textile work influenced by African art, portraits inspired by Picasso's work, Islamic patterns, a daisy collage, clay tiles and wire and papier-mâché figures, modelled using photographs of original work by Giacometti.
21. The way in which pupils are helped to develop their skills was seen in lessons during the inspection in which the quality of teaching and learning was very good overall. In Year 1, pupils were learning how to weave paper. In a very good introduction, through good questioning and discussion, which motivated pupils very well, the teacher extended their knowledge about the uses of woven cloth and the properties of different types of paper. She introduced terms such as 'corrugated' and 'crepe', ensuring pupils could use them accurately. They listened and watched carefully as the teacher demonstrated the process and this helped them to achieve success themselves by the end of the lesson.
22. In a Year 3 art lesson, almost all pupils were demonstrating a good level of skills and some were very good. One group of pupils was sketching Viking long ships as part of their work in history and showed in these a good sense of proportion and perspective. A few were outstanding. All were absorbed in their work and keen to respond to the perceptive suggestions of the teacher. Other pupils were painting designs based on a poster of Clarice Cliff's work and showed a very good grasp of the concepts of shape and colour. They were confident in their use of paints and dextrous in handling their brushes. The teacher was very positive in her approach, blending teaching points and suggestions very skilfully in a way that gave pupils a framework within which they could experiment confidently. A lesson for Year 6 pupils began with 'A quick 10 minute sketch' as a warm-up exercise. Previous work in their sketch-books showed very good examples of pencil shading in portraits and objects such as shoes. During the main part of the lesson, all pupils including those with a variety of special educational needs were fully engaged on their challenging half term project of producing memory portraits. They made good use of information and communication technology as they edited and copied computer generated images, based on the work of Andy Warhol, on to acetate sheets.

23. A well-constructed scheme of work that guides teachers' planning contributes to pupils' very good achievement in the subject. This sets out clearly a comprehensive range of skills and techniques that should be taught to each year group, helping pupils to build progressively on previous learning. Another factor is the high level of expertise and enthusiasm for the subject among the teachers. They share these very effectively with pupils in a way that not only enthuses them and extends their skills but also raises their own expectations of what they can achieve. The keenness of boys and girls to join the art club is a very good illustration of this. As so many want to take part, it is limited at present to Year 6 pupils who attend on a rota basis to accommodate them all. The club usually undertakes large-scale projects, frequently to improve the school environment, using the pupils' own ideas. The toilet areas of the older boys and girls have been completely transformed, with their own choice of colour for the walls and lively motifs of their design on the doors of the cubicles and on the walls. Pupils in the club are now working on a large tile mosaic that they have designed for the new infant building. All of their work is of an excellent standard.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, which are below average and not improving as quickly as at the end of Year 6.

24. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 are lower than at the time of the last inspection and have not kept pace with national trends. This is partly due to a change in the intake of the school since that time, with the attainment on entry of most year groups now being well below average. There is also a higher proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school during each year. For example, there has been a turnover of about a fifth of the pupils in both the current Year 1 and Year 2 groups since their reception year. In addition to this, there has been some lack of continuity in pupils' learning over the last three years, with several unavoidable changes of teachers in the reception classes. The move to temporary accommodation last summer, while the new infant block is built was another unsettling factor for young children. It is, however, remarkable and a great tribute to the hard work and commitment of the staff that they have created such a welcoming and pleasant learning environment in such poor accommodation.
25. The school is working hard to overcome these difficulties in order to raise standards, which are not improving as quickly as at the end of Year 6. One way is by intervening quickly to provide additional small group support for any pupils who join the school in Years 1 and 2 who are not progressing as well as they might. However, there is not always sufficient time for the impact of this to be seen by the end of Year 2. School tracking information shows that most pupils who join the school at the beginning of their reception year do well by the end of Year 2 as a result of good teaching. This is equally true of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The school is also focusing action on identified areas of weakness, such as writing and mathematics. The effect of this is starting to be seen in some improvements from last year in the unconfirmed results of the Year 2 national tests this term, especially in mathematics.
26. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Year 2, although this represents good achievement for the majority of pupils in relation to their individual starting points. However, as yet, relatively few pupils reach the higher National Curriculum Level 3 in these subjects. While this partly reflects the spread of attainment in the year group, the expectations of higher attaining pupils are sometimes not high enough and they are not always given challenging enough work. Additional support and targeted groups tend to be focused on the lower attaining pupils. Pupils have good opportunities across the curriculum to practise a good range of writing genres. They have a sound grasp of phonics, but few pupils apply this knowledge yet effectively and consistently in spelling in their own writing. Although pupils are set writing targets, such as the use of full stops and capital letters, these seem to have little impact on their subsequent work. While the quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2, and aspects such as the management of pupils, relationships, teamwork and liaison with learning support assistants are particularly strong, the quality of questioning skills varies. In some lessons, teachers missed opportunities to extend or build upon pupils' initial responses or to help them explain orally what they were doing. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to engage in

paired or small group discussions to help them order, develop and articulate their ideas as part of their learning either with each other or with an adult.

The unsatisfactory rate of attendance slows the pace of learning for some pupils.

27. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory because it is below the national average for primary schools and is lower than it was at the time of the last inspection. While the level of unauthorised absence has improved, the level of authorised absence remains above average. The main reason for this is that a large number of parents take their children out of school during term time for annual holidays. The school has very good procedures in place to promote attendance and works closely with the education welfare officer. The Family Liaison Officer also follows through cases of poor or irregular attendance. Weekly awards are given to the classes with the best attendance and the information is displayed for parents to see. The school also reminds parents frequently through newsletters and the Governors' Annual Report of the adverse effect on the continuity and pace of their child's learning that such absences have, in spite of teachers' efforts to minimise this by setting work for them.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

28. In the context of the school's many strengths, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education still further:

- Continue to raise standards at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, which are below average and not improving as quickly as at the end of Year 6 by*:-
 - ensuring that higher attaining pupils are given tasks that consistently challenge and extend them;
 - providing more focused opportunities for all pupils to apply their phonic skills to their writing and to engage in paired and small group discussions;
 - providing training opportunities for teachers to further develop their questioning skills.
(see paragraphs 24, 26)

- Improve the unsatisfactory rate of attendance that slows the pace of learning for some pupils by*:-
 - continuing to stress to parents the disadvantages of taking their children out of school during term time.
(see paragraph 27)

** areas already identified for development in the school improvement plan.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	13	5	0	0	0
Percentage	4	24	52	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	381
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	94
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	138
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	42

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	21	28
	Girls	16	18	20
	Total	38	39	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (75)	68 (70)	84 (83)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	25	28
	Girls	16	17	19
	Total	34	42	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (68)	74 (74)	82(75)
	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	33	26	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	30	30
	Girls	21	16	25
	Total	47	46	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (80)	78 (64)	93 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	28	31
	Girls	19	20	22
	Total	43	48	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (70)	81 (76)	90 (80)
	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	329	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	292

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	808428
Total expenditure	770858
Expenditure per pupil	2045
Balance brought forward from previous year	46791
Balance carried forward to next year	84361

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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	372
Number of questionnaires returned	128

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	52	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	49	19	1	1
The teaching is good.	60	38	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	41	9	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	0	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	13	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	41	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	43	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	38	12	4	9