

INSPECTION REPORT

LEYLAND ST JAMES C of E SCHOOL

Leyland

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119476

Headteacher: Mrs K M Tyson

Reporting inspector: Mrs R J Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 10 – 11 March 2003

Inspection number: 248023

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Slater Lane
Leyland

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Revd A Holliday

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. James' is a Church of England primary school situated on the outskirts of the small town of Leyland in the Blackburn diocese. Children start in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. There are 213 boys and girls on roll which makes the school average in size for its type. The admission number has been reduced to 30 per year since the previous inspection. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a smaller proportion than in most schools. There are a number of pupils who come from a mix of cultural backgrounds but all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special education needs, mainly for learning difficulties, is below average. The proportion who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is much higher than in most schools. When children start in the reception year, there is an unusually wide spread of attainment. A few have attainment much higher than expected while that of others is much lower. Overall their attainment is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St James' is an effective school that is successful in achieving many of its aims. Pupils appreciate their school and work hard at their lessons. The very good leadership of the headteacher and key staff drives effective school improvement. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils' achievements are good. There is a proper emphasis on including all pupils in the school's provision and in welcoming all those who look to join the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standard of pupils' work is well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6, reflecting the very good quality of teaching and pupils' eagerness to learn.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and pupils develop excellent relationships with each other.
- The headteacher and key members of staff lead and manage the school very well.
- All subjects contribute effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding, and in Years 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language.

What could be improved

- Individual targets are not used well enough to help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- In the reception class, there is not enough structure or challenge to some of the activities that children choose for themselves to help them develop and learn through their play.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's improvement has been good since the inspection in 1997. In mathematics and science standards have risen faster than the national picture but standards in English have remained much as they were at the last inspection. This masks the significant improvements that have been made in the last two years in English and the well above average standards now being attained in Years 2 to 4. Teaching has improved considerably in Years 1 to 6. At the previous inspection the school was asked to improve pupils' attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2. It is now well above average. Reports to parents include good information about pupils' attainment in all subjects and explanations of how to improve are good. Planning for children in the reception class has improved but there is still further improvement needed. It now provides for large play activities both indoor and outdoor, and there are stimulating role play areas. Staff use good methods to teach children how to write but there are not enough well planned opportunities to encourage children to write or learn other skills as they play independently.

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	D
mathematics	B	B	C	C
science	B	B	B	B

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

Standards in mathematics and science have been above average and have improved each year, with the exception of mathematics in 2002. In 2002 there was a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs and who joined the school late in their primary education. Because the school has a relatively small number of pupils in each year group, these factors explain the drop in the results in mathematics for that year. There were also a few pupils with much higher attainment than most, and two pupils attained a well above average level in the mathematics tests. In English, test results have been average each year. Standards in English were not high enough because reading had not been taught well in earlier years. This was identified by the school and successfully addressed. The standard of pupils' work currently in Year 6 is above average in English, mathematics and science. The school set its targets for 2002 before pupils had left or joined the year group, and, as a result, the targets were too high and were not met. The pupils are on track to meet the targets for this year. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 do not yet reflect the very good provision in the school but in younger classes standards are higher.

Results for pupils at the end of Year 2 have been above average or well above average for four years. Current standards are well above average. Teacher assessment in science was average in 2002 and this has been improved on as standards are currently well above average. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress and are on track to attain the nationally expected standards by the end of the reception year.

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to the targets set for their learning and their achievement by the end of Year 6 is very good with some pupils attaining the nationally level expected for all pupils. The current achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good and in Years 3 to 6 it is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are proud of their school and what it offers them. They are keen to work hard at their lessons and most have the same good attitude to the work they are expected to do at home. In the reception class, children enjoy school and behave well but their curiosity is not always aroused enough to make them keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils listen to their teachers' instructions well and at play and in assembly they behave exceptionally well. A few pupils need occasional help from an adult to understand the right way to behave.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility and the pupils' response is excellent. The relationships they build with each other and with adults in the school are also excellent.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are never absent without good reason and they arrive punctually in the mornings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The very good quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is based on teachers' strong knowledge in each subject. Tasks are very well thought out to build on previous knowledge and as a result pupils learn quickly. Because teachers' explanations are short and to the point, pupils listen intently. Little time is wasted during lessons and stimulating resources and methods are used to capture pupils' imaginations. English and mathematics are both taught very well. Learning support staff have been well trained in the best methods to develop understanding for those pupils who need a little extra help to learn. Learning support staff and teachers plan well together so that their time is put to best use. All staff manage pupils very well and a warm and friendly atmosphere is engendered in all classes. Pupils respond to this with good behaviour and enthusiasm for their work.

The school has introduced a system of giving each pupil a target to reach in mathematics and English. This good strategy is not fully effective because the targets encompass too much and it is not easy for pupils to appreciate when they have been achieved. In the reception class, teachers and staff work well together to teach children the basic skills they need in reading writing and mathematics. Planning, however, does not provide well enough for children to continue this learning in those activities that are provided for their play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a stimulating range of opportunities for learning in all subjects that contributes well to pupils' knowledge of English and mathematics. In Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit greatly from learning German and French. In the Reception class, planning for learning through play activities does not fully reflect the national guidance for this age range.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The individual learning plans for these pupils are very well-thought out. The school has identified a very good range of specialised programmes and strategies that are taught by skilful and well trained support assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in all aspects of its work. All school activities provide well for pupils to learn right from wrong and to gain insight into their future role as good citizens. The diversity of culture and different faiths is taught very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The caring nature of the school ensures that procedures to protect and watch over pupils' welfare and safety are very good. Staff, including those who work at lunchtime, develop excellent relationships with the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher sets high standards for staff and pupils. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities who strive hard to ensure the school continues to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body understands its responsibilities well. It is beginning to play a more significant role in school evaluation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school makes good use of data from national tests to check on the quality of its work. The headteacher and senior staff have a very clear picture of what is needed for further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Staff are deployed exceptionally well; the talents of all staff are used effectively. The school makes good efforts to obtain good value for its spending.

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 make good progress and are expected to work hard. • The school encourages good behaviour and their children gain in maturity. • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents and they find it very approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents were not happy with the amount of homework. • Some were not happy with the range of activities provided outside lessons.

The inspection fully confirms parents' positive views of the school. Parents did not make it known whether they think there is too much or too little homework. Homework makes a good contribution to the learning that takes place in class, but on occasions overwhelms some pupils in the younger classes and they would benefit from more selective homework. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and similar to that found in schools of this size where there are not many staff to take on this extra duty.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The standard of pupils' work is well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6, reflecting the very good quality of teaching and pupils' eagerness to learn.

- 1 The quality of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 is very good. As a consequence, pupils are keen to start their lessons and there is a real buzz of interest as work proceeds. The standard of pupils' work in Year 6 is above average and in Year 2 it is well above average. The high quality teaching stems from the very strong subject knowledge of the subject co-ordinators that is shared well with all staff, including learning support assistants. The English, mathematics and science co-ordinators all have a high level of expertise and this is a major factor in ensuring the good standards pupils' attain in these subjects. Planning builds progressively on pupils' previous knowledge and teachers draw upon a very good range of methods to provide good quality tasks. Teachers assess pupils' understanding and achievements well. They alter their plans, if necessary, when misconceptions occur or understanding is less, or greater, than expected. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was found to be good and there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The current situation is a good improvement since then.

- 2 Teachers' explanations are clear and well paced. They use examples, questions and resources very well so that new principles and concepts are understood. For instance, in a very good mathematics lesson on the different ways in which the movement of shapes can be studied in Year 6, the use of a data projector linked to the computer allowed pupils to move shapes freely. As a result, pupils understood the terms 'rotation', 'reflection' and 'translation' more quickly than if confined to examining them with pencil and paper. Nearly all pupils worked on problems relating to shape and space at a level beyond that expected for their age. In science, pupils were learning about the growth of plants in Year 3 and the growth of micro-organisms in Year 6. In both lessons, the teachers planned for the increase of knowledge and understanding through the scientific process of investigation. Both teachers structured their lessons so that the sequence and procedures for scientific enquiry were correct but ensured that all the ideas were drawn from the pupils. The pupils had ownership of the investigations. This resulted in pupils being enthusiastic about the tests and keenly interested in the results. They were confident to put forward ideas and quickly learnt to use the technical vocabulary used by their teachers. Teachers freely stated that outcomes of tests might be different to those expected, even by them. This occurred very tellingly in Year 6 when, 24 hours after the pupils had set up their experiment with yeast, an unexpected change had occurred. The cling film cover was drawn down tightly into a concave shape. The pupils were excited by this and could not understand why it had happened. The teacher, who had not anticipated this result, joined in with the pupils' surprise and then gave them the scientific explanation for what had occurred, to which they listened intently. In their science work, pupils in Year 6 use measurements accurately and draw conclusions from their findings. Their understanding of the process of scientific enquiry is very good and overall their work is above average.

- 3 The methods recommended in the numeracy and literacy strategies are used effectively by all teachers. Mental mathematics sessions are lively and challenging, helping pupils gain a good level of skill in mental computation. Pupils are taught to use a range of methods to work out answers and to think through problems. Pupils' workbooks in Year 6 showed that all pupils had a good understanding of how to

explain and record the methods they used to work out problems. They learn to use mathematical language correctly at a good rate. For example, in Year 5, pupils working on testing a hypothesis using a bar chart to provide information used terms such as 'axes' and 'tally' learnt in Year 4 to carry out their work.

- 4 In English, teachers have a good understanding of the key features of successfully teaching writing and reading. Writing has been particularly well encouraged and pupils are proud of their work. This was noticeable when Year 6 pupils read extracts from the biographies they had written about a family member. They organized their work well using chapters where appropriate. The standard of their work was above average and showed a good understanding of the clarity needed to describe a character from different perspectives. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, the teaching of letter sounds is done very well and so pupils quickly learn to use the sound of letters to help them spell words when they write, and to work out the meaning of words as they read. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to use a range of strategies to help them derive sense from what they read. For instance, a pupil in Year 2, whose reading level was average for his age, explained that if he re-read his text he might understand it better the second time. This is a strategy not usually grasped until pupils are older. Pupils' written work improves at a good rate because teachers ensure that pupils learn correct grammatical structures, and talk about what they are going to write before putting pen to paper. A very good example of this occurred in a Year 2 lesson. The teacher worked with a group of pupils who needed a little extra help than most to understand how to use a word that connected two parts of a sentence. The children could all read the sentences and phrases used but would have difficulty writing such a sentence. The activity allowed them to join the two parts of the sentence written on separate cards using words such as 'because' and 'but'. They needed a lot of support from the teacher to work out if the sentences they constructed made sense. Because the activity interested them and the teacher's level of challenge was very good, the pupils made very good progress. By the end of the session they wrote their own complex sentences and two pupils discovered their own connecting word, using 'if' correctly. Their understanding of this feature of writing was well beyond that expected of pupils of this age, as was the case for other more able writers in the class.
- 5 Teachers and classroom assistants create a warm, friendly atmosphere in all classes. There is a clear expectation of good behaviour. The use of sanctions is rare because most pupils respond very well without the need of stern reminders. A few pupils have emotional or social problems that make good sociable behaviour more difficult for them to achieve. The school provides very good support for these pupils by understanding their specific needs and putting in place systems and strategies to support them. They very rarely disrupt the learning of others or fail to learn well themselves.
- 6 Learning support assistants plan with teachers so they are well prepared to support the groups that they work with. They allow pupils plenty of time to try work for themselves before providing them with the help needed so that their initiative and efforts are not undermined. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress with their learning. Their individual learning plans are tightly focused on what they need to do to improve and parents are successfully included in supporting their learning. Those pupils who slip behind with reading are very well supported by the school's 'better reading partnership' which involves a concentrated period of work with a very well trained learning support assistant. She develops pupils' skills in using letter sounds and other reading strategies while also raising the pupils' interest and

enjoyment in reading. Many of the pupils who are now successful, keen readers in Years 5 and 6 benefited from a short time in this partnership.

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and pupils develop excellent relationships with each other.

- 7 The school's Christian aims are central to its work and staff put these aims into practice very well. The very good provision seen at the time of the inspection in 1997 has been maintained and developed. There are strong links with the church, particularly through the very active support of the chair of governors. Teachers' day-to-day planning and the organisation of the school provide pupils with very good opportunities to consider personal issues and powerful ideas about life and living. Through music, hymns and prayer, there is good celebration of belief in a higher being and reflection on the purpose of human effort. Through class discussion, the school council and other strategies such as a well organised residential visit, the school successfully develops pupils' understanding of their future role in society.
- 8 Assemblies are very well organized. They draw pupils together to gain a sense of school community. They teach, and develop in the pupils concepts that combine four elements: spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. For example, during Lent the pupils had been given a good insight into the symbolism of the cross and how, over the long period of its history, it had been depicted in different cultures and in different parts of the world. In one assembly, the headteacher taught the pupils about a 'picture cross' from El Salvador. It told the moving story of a gentle Christian teacher who was taken from her home and killed by government forces. The pupils listened intently. They showed great sympathy and clearly felt moved by the story. The assembly raised their awareness of the moral issues of such difficult situations. The pupils' own painted and decorated crosses, several of which had been the result of collaborative working that had been done in previous weeks, showed care and much creative effort. In an assembly, when those pupils in the choir and those who played musical instruments led a celebration of music in its different forms, the strong community feeling of the school was particularly noticeable. Everyone, pupils and adults alike enjoyed the event and pupils' response was excellent.
- 9 In lessons, pupils work exceptionally well together in pairs or when collaborating as a group. Boys and girls mix well and those pupils with special educational needs are fully included by all pupils in their activities. Pupils listen to each other and are generous in their praise of others' efforts. For instance, in a small group session when pupils needed to take turns to put forward their views, one pupil pointed out that another had missed their turn and that this pupils' work was particularly good. Pupils are keen to help their teachers or other adults in small ways as well as in the more important tasks, for instance, holding open a door, or spontaneously tidying away resources. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and pupils respond to this very well. The excellent relationships that teachers foster between adults and pupils are reflected in the relationships pupils develop with each other.
- 10 Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to understand personal and social responsibility. As pupils move up the school, they gain in maturity. By the time they are in Year 6, they take on the responsibility of playing with younger pupils very seriously. This includes those who might have been unsure in the past of how to control their own behaviour. The school made careful plans to ensure that the strategy of older pupils playing with younger ones would be successful and that all could be included in the initiative. An outside trainer was invited to help the Year 6

pupils learn about the different issues around playing with younger children, that it was not just a matter of spending time with them at play time. They were given the opportunity to explore what it means to gain trust, to be fair when disagreements occur and to develop the interests and enjoyment of younger children. When pupils join the school, teachers take great care to ensure that they are made to feel welcome and in a very short time they are happy members of their new class. Pupils in Year 6 are confident and look forward to moving on to their secondary education but they also admit that they will be sad to say goodbye to their primary school.

- 11 The school highlights the need for pupils to learn about other cultures and religions. This is thoughtfully depicted in teachers' planning in all subjects. In religious education, there are visits to other places of worship such as a synagogue and a mosque and good instruction on the features of different faiths. Open and informative discussions help pupils understand the issues concerned with racist discrimination. Art and design, and music are taught very well. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their own skills and appreciate the skills of artists and musicians from all parts of the world and from different historical times.

The headteacher and key members of staff lead and manage the school very well.

- 12 The headteacher has established a common purpose for all members of the school by translating the school's mission statement into easily understood aims and objectives. She has successfully promoted the ethos of the school based on Christian values, commitment to high achievement and the inclusion of all in its provision. The dedication of the deputy headteacher has laid a good foundation for others to follow in their support to the school. All key members of staff contribute effectively and, as a result, there is a successful hard working team in which all members of staff play an important part. The school has maintained the high standard of leadership and management found at the time of the previous inspection in 1997.
- 13 The school's strengths and weaknesses are identified accurately and plans to address areas for improvement are efficient and comprehensive. The governors are properly included in the school's process of planning for improvement and its evaluation of the success of those improvements. Parents are also included in this process, and this helps to cement the very good relationship they have with the school. Governors have been particularly well focused on checking that spending is effective and used to the best purpose. This has meant that resources have been well targeted with examples of this ranging from the considerable improvements to the accommodation and storage of resources in Years 3 to 6 to the purchase of good quality sets of books to improve pupils' reading.
- 14 The quality of teaching and pupils' achievements are checked in a rigorous manner, but proper care is taken to ensure that staff do not feel criticized or threatened by the process. As a consequence, staff are reflective of their teaching and willing to change the methods they use if this would benefit the learning of pupils. Examples of how teaching and learning have moved forward in recent years are numerous. The English co-ordinator has worked particularly hard to improve the provision and teaching of English in Years 3 to 6, where teachers had found it difficult to instill in pupils an enthusiasm and interest in reading. Good strategies and resources were put in place and carefully monitored; current teaching is good, and pupils are keen readers.
- 15 The school has developed a good system to track pupils' progress as they move up the school. Data is analysed and used by senior managers to understand where

improvements need to be made. Because the headteacher, supported by co-ordinators, has made it a priority, the importance of using assessment information in planning work is well understood by staff. The co-ordinator responsible for special educational needs has been absent for almost two terms but the good systems and procedures she had established have been very well maintained by the headteacher. There is good communication between all parties responsible for the provision for pupils with special educational needs, including parents and learning support assistants. Pupils with special gifts and talents are identified and appropriate plans identify how to meet their different needs.

- 16 The process of performance management is very well embedded into the school's process of school improvement. Staff appreciate the benefits to their own professional development. Teachers' current areas for development are making a good contribution to improvements throughout the school. The development of pupils' awareness of racial issues and attitudes is currently an area under review and there are constructive plans in place to improve on pupils' already good attitudes. The school has good policies that ensure that the inclusion of all pupils in its provision is a high priority and the example of the headteacher and key members of staff ensure that policies are put into practice.

All subjects contribute effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding, and in Years 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language

- 17 The school places importance on giving pupils a wide range of experiences through all the subjects of the National Curriculum, personal, social, health and citizenship education, and religious education. Unusually, the school also offers to pupils the opportunity to learn German in Year 5 and French in Year 6. Good teaching in all these subjects ensures that pupils' experiences are rich and diverse and that those who have a particular gift or talent in one or more subjects have the opportunity to shine.
- 18 During the inspection, much of the evidence of the quality of pupils' work and the level of their understanding came from analysing the quality of pupils' work and displays and talking to pupils about their work. The inspection did not judge the level of pupils' attainment in any subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, the quality of pupils' work and their knowledge suggested that pupils' are achieving well in most subjects.
- 19 One of the main reasons for the strength of many subjects in the school is the good knowledge and understanding of the co-ordinator leading the subject. Subject co-ordinators have an enthusiasm for their subjects and this is communicated to other staff and to pupils. This starts with the headteacher who is passionate about geography. Pupils are given very good opportunities to learn a range of geographical skills including that of outdoor field study both in the local area and on the residential visit in Year 5. The co-ordinator for music and art has a good depth of knowledge and skills in these subjects and both subjects have other specialists on the staff who offer good support. The art work displayed in the school shows that pupils have gained good level of confidence in the use of visual and tactile elements. For instance, pictures of daffodils using many shades of yellow use form and colour well to capture the delicacy of these flowers. A good number of pupils learn to play a musical instrument and perform to others in concerts and assemblies but the strength of the music teaching in the school is best indicated by the fact that all pupils participate in singing in assembly and their efforts are harmonious and joyful.

- 20 In their planning, teachers link subjects well. Work in other subjects is planned so as to develop further pupils' skills in writing, reading and mathematics. In this respect, teachers successfully make use of information and communication technology. Pupils are confident in their use of computers and other equipment such as cameras and various types of recording equipment. A range of activities, including presenting their work attractively through publishing programs and investigating data, give pupils a good insight into the way in which computers are used in many aspects of life. Information technology is well linked to the use of the library for research purposes. A good example of this was research pupils in Year 6 carried out in science when learning about different wildlife habitats. Each pupil was able to pursue their own research into the life of a water creature that particularly interested them using the internet and library books.
- 21 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are very proud of their ability to use the simple every day expressions they have learnt in their German and French lessons. The member of staff responsible for this work is knowledgeable and fluent in these languages. Pupils are gaining a good grounding in the languages. They have the opportunity of a good start to their studies in secondary school and it contributes to their understanding of the diversity of world languages. The member of staff responsible for the introduction of a special time in class for discussions on personal, social and health aspects has communicated her enthusiasm well to others and these lessons are effective in extending the range of pupils' understanding about their own lives and their responsibilities to others.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Individual targets are not used well enough to help pupils understand how to improve their work.

- 22 During 2001, the school identified the need to help pupils understand how well they are achieving by giving them targets to reach in English and mathematics. Commercially produced stickers that identify different targets for pupils in English and mathematics are put on the front of the pupils' work books for English and mathematics. This makes them very visible and easy for pupils to refer to. However, very few pupils did this, either as they worked, or on reflection afterwards. Many of the targets are very broad or give general advice. Examples for older pupils include, "Practise your handwriting as often as you can" or "Give yourself something to be proud of". Several younger pupils had the target "Look for words that rhyme". Targets such as these do not provide pupils with a goal, the achievement of which is easily understood. Consequently, when questioned about whether or not they were well on the way to achieve their target, most pupils were unsure. One pupil in Year 5 explained that she had the target: "re-read your work to make sure it makes sense" because she sometimes got carried away and did not check often enough to see if she was still writing about the same subject. This was helpful, but the teacher had not followed it up with comments or marking that pinpointed for the pupil where structural weaknesses were occurring.
- 23 Teachers generally mark pupils' work well. In one pupils' book, a piece of written work was marked with three points for development. These were very specific to the piece of writing that the pupil had done and at least two would have made good targets for future work. However, the next few pieces of work were not marked with any reference to these development points either to congratulate the pupil on their achievement, or to point out that more effort in that direction was needed.

- 24 The school has many good systems for assessment. Objectives for lessons are clearly identified and teachers tell pupils if they have achieved what they were expected to learn by the end of the lesson. However, the current system of setting targets for individual pupils does not provide a good link with these assessments and with the comments made when teachers mark work. As a result, it does not provide good motivation to pupils to improve their work.

In the reception class, there is not enough structure or challenge to some of the activities that children choose for themselves to help them develop and learn through their play.

- 25 At the time of the inspection in 1997, the school was asked to improve aspects of teaching and provision in the reception class. The improvement in provision for large play equipment and stimulating role play areas has been good. The methods used to teach children to write are good and are well understood by all the staff, including lunchtime staff, although, on occasions, staff do not use the correct sound for letters. The school has focused its drive for improvement very specifically on the areas of weakness identified at the last inspection but has not identified whether all its provision reflects the full principles of learning as laid down in the national guidance for this age range. In particular, planning for table top activities, such as jigsaws and bead threading and general classroom areas such as the construction areas, book corner and writing areas does not identify clearly enough the different starting points of the children so that activities build on what they already know.
- 26 An example of the good improvements in planning and methods could be seen when children were playing in the role play area. It had been adapted to provide them with the exciting thought that they could play in a space rocket or visit the moon. A computer monitor and keyboard enabled them to understand the importance of telecommunications in space travel and ingenious resources such as 'oxygen' packs and 'moon rocks' allowed free rein to their imaginations. A skilful learning support assistant provided good support for children as they played and as they wrote their own 'letters home' from the 'space station'. She effectively encouraged children to use the sounds they knew as they struggled to spell their own words. A few children wrote short sentences and could spell one or two words correctly but the majority was at an early stage of writing and needed a lot of adult help to use the correct letter to indicate the initial sound of a word. Although keen and confident to try when encouraged by an adult, a number of children did not have enough skills or motivation to go it alone. Their lack of confidence reflected the fact that they mostly write only when encouraged by an adult and that play activities do not tempt them enough to have a go on their own.
- 27 Planning does not provide sufficiently for children to take on their learning when an adult is not directly teaching them. The expected outcomes for children's learning when they participate in these activities have not been carefully thought out. There are few strategies in the classroom environment that prompt children to make a response or to investigate for themselves. For example, the book area is not well defined and has few cosy features to encourage a child to read. Signs or well known routines are not clearly visible to encourage children to re-read a favourite story. Easily understood questions inviting a response are not displayed.
- 28 Free choice activities do not link sufficiently to the intended learning for the week. For example, on one table, children were threading long strings of beads. There were no questions, either from adults or from written notices about pattern or number to provide a challenge to this activity. The mathematical learning for the week was on

weight and the children working with the teacher made good progress in understanding the concept of weight and the vocabulary of weight measurement. However, the opportunity to include the children on the bead threading table was missed: there could have been a great deal of interest generated around the weight of a full string of beads in comparison to that of a half string of beads. A high attaining child, who could count to 20 easily, had selected a floor jigsaw to play with that was intended to help pupils learn the numbers one to twenty. He was only partially interested in the task, because it was too easy for him. A simple ploy of subtracting one piece could have provided the child with the challenge he needed perhaps to record the missing number or to make his own missing piece.

- 29 Children are organized in groups according to their age and ability and tasks that are led by the teacher or other adults match the different levels of understanding of the children. However, some areas of learning are not sufficiently established or developed so that when children explore them for themselves they can make connections with other learning and experiences, and they are not challenged sufficiently to work out problems on their own.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

30 The headteacher, staff and governors should:

- i) improve the use of targets to motivate pupils and to help them understand how well they are achieving (paragraph references 21, 22, 23);
- ii) improve the rate of learning of children in the reception class by:
 - developing the planning in the reception class for those activities children choose for themselves, with clear objectives set for different levels of attainment; and good connections between related experiences (paragraph references: 24, 25, 26);
 - improving the organisation of areas of learning within the reception class so that they provide interest and challenge for all children. (paragraph references:24, 27).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	14
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	5	3	0	0	0
Percentage	7	36	36	21	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 seven 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)	-	213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	31

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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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	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	26	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (94)	93 (91)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	15
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	26	29	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (88)	100 (100)	93 (100)
	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	14	18	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	12	12	17
	Total	25	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (75)	75 (75)	97 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	14	11	16
	Total	26	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (78)	72 (78)	94 (97)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	205	5	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	5		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	1	
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
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			

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	206

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	455,976
Total expenditure	484,864
Expenditure per pupil	2,298
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,521
Balance carried forward to next year	33,633

Total aggregate hours worked per week	-
Number of pupils per FTE adult	-

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	213
Number of questionnaires returned	100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	46	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	60	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	54	17	1	0
The teaching is good.	53	43	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	50	11	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	38	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	48	7	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	45	51	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	48	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	38	19	4	6