

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **GREAT DALBY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Melton Mowbray

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 119911

Acting Headteacher: Mr David Lashley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jan Sullivan  
3205

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 248058

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4+ - 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Top End  
Great Dalby  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE14 2HA

Telephone number: 01664 562750

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr David King

Date of previous inspection: 02 February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Great Dalby Primary School is a small school located in the rural village of Great Dalby in Leicestershire. It provides full-time education for 126 pupils aged four to eleven years. Nineteen pupils below the age of six years attend the school as reception pupils in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. The youngest reception pupils attend part-time, mornings only, until the beginning of the Spring Term. In total, there are five classes in the school, each providing both for boys and girls. Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, with the exception of Year 6. Mixed-age classes cover a two year programme of work and provide for reception and Year 1; Year 1 and Year 2; Year 3 and Year 4; and Year 4 and Year 5. There is a reasonably balanced mix of both boys and girls in all classes. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school admits the majority of its pupils from the village of Great Dalby and other nearby villages. Attainment on entry is above the national average. Six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is low in comparison with schools nationally. Fourteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; this is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is below the national average.

There have been substantial changes in staffing over the past two years. At the time of the inspection, the school was led by a temporary acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed with effect from January 2003. Three of the five class teachers were new to the school and in their first two years of teaching.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Overall, the school provides an effective education for its pupils. Pupils' positive attitudes to their learning, their good behaviour and social development are strengths of the school. In a small school, it is often the case that there are noticeable variations in standards from year to year. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, pupils' attainments by age eleven were above the national average for all schools in English and mathematics and in line with the national average for all schools in science. An underlying trend of underachievement by the more-able pupils frequently produces results that are less favourable in comparison with the national average for similar schools. The quality of teaching in all classes is at least satisfactory and often good. School leadership is in a state of change and is currently underdeveloped, with too little use of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to inform curricular provision. School management is effective and helps to provide a caring and purposeful working environment for pupils and staff. In these circumstances the school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Achieves high standards in science by age seven, and standards in mathematics that are well above average by the age of eleven. A longer-term view also shows standards by eleven in English that are above average.
- Promotes positive attitudes and good standards of behaviour amongst its pupils; relationships within the school are also very good.
- Sustains skilful and enthusiastic teaching in all classes, securing standards of teaching that are at least satisfactory and often good.
- Engages with parents in a positive relationship that promotes strong support for the school.
- The school is run efficiently. It promotes a caring learning environment for pupils, effective teamwork and secure day-to-day management.

### What could be improved

- The pace of progress by the more-able pupils. In English, science and, to a lesser extent, also mathematics, it is too slow.
- The balance and design of the curriculum which lacks sufficient breadth and appropriate progression.
- The leadership of the school. At present, under developed leadership roles do not promote effective, whole-school approaches to teaching and learning, nor do they provide a clear sense of educational direction.

*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 February 1998. Overall, the school is currently performing as well as at the time of the previous inspection. Whilst there have been significant variations in standards from year to year and throughout the school, standards of attainment at age eleven have shown some improvement in English and much improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. There has been an overall fall in standards in science for pupils at age eleven. The school is beginning to set appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics for pupils and is on course to meet these. The school broadly sustains the standards of teaching and learning reported during the last inspection.

Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made overall in the areas then identified as needing improvement. Guidance documents have been produced to help teachers plan the curriculum for history, geography, design and technology and religious education. These documents are used well by teaching staff throughout the school. In design and technology, this has resulted in more opportunities for pupils to develop their designing and evaluating skills. By age eleven, standards of attainment in this subject are broadly in line with national expectations, although too little ongoing teacher assessment within this subject means that trends throughout the school are difficult to trace. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has been enhanced through the purchase of more practical resources to support teaching and learning and through the development of opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual awareness within assemblies. The role of the governing body has developed with the establishment of a School Strategic Planning Group. Members of the governing body now work closely with the school's senior management team to design and review the school development plan. All governors have adopted responsibility for one or more curricular subjects and make regular visits to school to monitor standards. An act of collective worship is now a routine feature of daily assemblies.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

*NB. Similar schools are those with a comparable proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

***Care should be taken when interpreting the results of small year groups and small schools. The effect of one additional pupil on, for example, a school percentage measure can be considerable.***

In 2000, the school achieved results in the highest 5 per cent nationally for English and mathematics, when compared with the averages for all schools. In 2002, the school achieved results in the lowest 5 per cent nationally for science, when compared with the average for similar schools. The number of eleven-year-old pupils taking the national tests in 2001 was only nine. Since each pupil represented eleven per cent of the group, this does not provide statistically reliable data for comparative purposes.

Children in the current Reception Year are achieving well in all areas of learning. Even at this early point in the year, some of the more-able children are already attaining some of the Early Learning Goals for the end of the Reception Year in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. These young children demonstrate particularly good speaking and listening skills and this helps to promote their learning across the curriculum.

Results in national tests for mathematics at age eleven have been consistently above average for the past three years. Evidence from the inspection suggests that these high standards are being sustained for the eight to eleven year olds and are being promoted by the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, routine use of a published mathematics scheme to secure progression and pupils' positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils between eight and eleven make very good progress in mathematics, building upon levels of attainment by the seven year olds in national tests that are consistently below the national average. Whilst results in national tests for English have been more variable, standards in reading and writing by the seven year olds are broadly average, but rise to above average in English for pupils at eleven. Despite some significant year-to-year variations in science results for pupils at age eleven, standards in science over the longer term have remained broadly in line with the national average. Over recent years, results for the eleven year olds in English and mathematics have been significantly higher than results for the seven year olds. This shows good progress by pupils between eight and eleven. High standards of attainment in science for the seven year olds are not sufficiently reflected in the standards achieved by pupils in national tests at age eleven.

Across the school, all pupils, with the exception of the more able, make at least steady progress. This is particularly noticeable in national test results for the seven year olds. It is because too few pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment in national tests at seven and eleven that, too often, causes school results to compare unfavourably with other, similar schools.

The school is beginning to set appropriately challenging targets for itself and is broadly on course to meet these.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are conscientious and willing learners. They are eager to please their teachers and work with commitment and pride.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are well behaved, both in the school and outside on the playground. Movement around the school and in classrooms is orderly. There is much collaborative work and play with little disharmony.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils are courteous to adults and to each other. Older pupils play with and care for the younger ones. Pupils accept responsibility and carry out duties sensibly.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are usually punctual. There is very little unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Within this there is much good teaching. There were no unsatisfactory lessons.

The teaching of literacy skills is promoted well through close adherence to the National Literacy Strategy guidance. Basic reading skills and phonic work are taught enthusiastically to the youngest pupils, and all pupils are encouraged to take reading books home as homework. Writing is less well taught. Throughout the school, the emphasis upon structured, literacy-hour lessons and worksheet activities fails to provide the more-able writers with sufficient time and opportunity to write extensive, creative texts. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write as a means of self-expression or to learn how to apply their basic literacy skills in meaningful, real-life situations. Throughout the school, teachers use well the National Numeracy Strategy and this helps to promote high standards, especially for the eight to eleven year olds. However, teachers sometimes concentrate too heavily upon computation skills, without challenging the more-able pupils to apply these to problem solving situations, most noticeably in lessons for the five to seven year olds.

Across the school, skilful teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, establish positive relationships and make good use of exposition to promote pupils' learning. Teaching for children under five is again satisfactory; it is good when pupils are engaged in adult-directed tasks, but there are too few opportunities for the teacher and classroom assistants to support the children's learning through free-choice and free-play activities.

Pupils are well motivated and listen carefully to their teachers. As a result, most pupils make at least steady progress, including those with special educational needs. Progress is slower for the more-able pupils who are not always sufficiently challenged in their lessons by the tasks set for them.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. Skilful teachers promote quality through good use of exposition, learning support staff and resources. The range of experiences and the balance of the curriculum are less secure. Reception children receive too few opportunities for choice and independence. In all year groups, science, history and geography are not given sufficient attention. Music is not given sufficient attention for the five to seven-year-olds. Throughout the school, too little use of assessment to inform planning means that the more-able pupils are not always offered relevant learning opportunities that most appropriately reflect their needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are accommodated well in class lessons and are well supported by teaching support staff. In all classes, positive relationships between pupils help to support those experiencing difficulties.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision overall is good. The school's caring ethos promotes well the pupils' social and moral development. The pupils' willingness to learn also promotes well their spiritual development, although an emphasis upon formal skills and worksheet tasks means that there are too few opportunities in lessons for pupils to experience 'awe and wonder' at the world around them. Pupils are developing well an understanding of their own cultural heritage; there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultural perspectives.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a happy and caring environment for all pupils. Teachers do not make sufficient use of their ongoing assessment information to plan lessons that are well matched to pupils' learning needs and interests.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The day-to-day management of the school is effective, but leadership responsibilities are underdeveloped. Leadership roles do not yet provide a clear educational direction for the school. There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of standards and curricular provision to most appropriately inform school development or to secure high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is committed to the school, operates well as a critical friend and is active in school development planning. However, governors have not always been made fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The senior management team analyses national test results and monitors teaching and learning. These results are not always used most effectively to inform school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources, and staff are deployed effectively. The school has appropriate systems to ensure that it receives best value from any purchases it makes.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are happy at school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many parents would like to see a more interesting range of activities for their children after school.</li> <li>• Several parents would like to see more homework for their children.</li> <li>• A substantial minority of parents do not believe that the school has been well led and managed.</li> </ul>

Overall, the inspectors endorse the parents' views of the school. Pupils throughout the school are happy and confident learners who work hard to please their teachers. Whilst most pupils do make appropriate progress, too often the pace of progress for the more-able pupils is too slow. For a school of this size, there are a sufficient number and range activities provided for pupils outside lessons, including many sporting activities. All children throughout the school regularly take homework home, especially reading and spellings. The inspectors consider that the amount of homework set is broadly appropriate. The numerous recent changes in staffing have resulted in a current review of leadership and management roles.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Achieves high standards in science by age seven, and standards in mathematics that are well above average by the age of eleven. A longer-term view also shows standards by eleven in English that are above average.**

- 1 Standards of attainment on entry to the school are above average. Children in the reception class demonstrate good standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. They listen with understanding and readily contribute to small and large group discussions. They write their own name, mostly unaided, and many of the more-able children are beginning to form their own sentences. They acquire a good understanding of phonics and take reading books home regularly. Children quickly learn to count and recognise numerals. Some of the more-able children count on from a given number without the need for practical resources and are successfully undertaking simple addition sums. There is strong emphasis upon the development of literacy and numeracy skills in the reception class that helps to promote these basic skills.
- 2 Standards of attainment in national tests for seven year olds are broadly in line with the national average in reading, but over the past three years have often been below the national average in writing and mathematics. Over the past two years, teachers' assessment of standards in science at age seven has consistently been well above the national average and the average for similar schools. In 2002, no pupils achieved below the national average and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. Pupils are interested and motivated to learn, especially when engaged in practical activities. They follow instructions with care and attention to detail and work with concentration and persistence. These qualities help to promote their attainment when engaged in scientific investigation and exploration tasks.
- 3 Pupils attain high standards in the national test for eleven year olds in mathematics. This has been a consistent feature of school performance over the past three years. Standards in English are less consistent than in mathematics, but they too have been well above average in two out of the past three years. The small number of pupils engaged in national tests in this school can generate some significant differences in standards from one year to the next. Inspection evidence suggests that most pupils are currently on course to attain or surpass the nationally expected standard for their age in both English and mathematics at age eleven.
- 4 Mathematics results for eleven year olds in the 2002 tests were well above the national average, and the average when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' high achievements are well supported by the skilful teaching of numeracy skills and the National Numeracy Strategy. Routine use of a published mathematics scheme secures good progression in the teaching, with good progress in the learning of mathematics and helps to promote high standards. Pupils respond well to these structured and predictable routines and enjoy mathematics lessons. When asked what their favourite lessons were, a number of eleven year olds readily chose mathematics.
- 5 English results for eleven year olds in the 2002 national tests were in line with the national average but were well below the average for similar schools. Despite this,

only one pupil failed to achieve the standard expected nationally for this age. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, the performance of pupils in English exceeded the national average for their age group, although the steady rise in standards achieved between 1998 to 2000 was not sustained between 2000 and 2002. Effective teaching of the National Literacy Strategy promotes the development of basic literacy skills and helps to secure pupils' attainment at the national average for English. However, the structured nature of these literacy lessons does not sufficiently provide the more-able pupils with opportunities to achieve the higher levels of attainment, and this impacts upon the school's overall results in this subject. There are too few opportunities within the curriculum for the older and more-able pupils to engage in the writing of lengthy, creative texts to promote self-expression and the application of basic skills in challenging, real-life situations. It is because too few pupils achieved standards above average in the 2002 national test for eleven year olds that school results in this subject do not compare favourably with similar schools.

- 6 This year, the school has successfully secured a national award for the teaching of basic skills for the second time.

**Promotes positive attitudes and good standards of behaviour amongst its pupils; relationships within the school are also very good.**

- 7 Pupils are polite, well-mannered and considerate. They listen carefully to what others have to say, are eager to please their teachers and help and support each other in their lessons. On the playground, older pupils play well with the younger pupils and demonstrate concern for their welfare. During the inspection, some older girls were observed teaching younger girls to skip; they demonstrated patience and empathy.
- 8 Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. Lunchtimes are orderly, with pupils eating together and talking without undue noise. Outside, they play together well and any disagreements are quickly resolved. They are aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, and even the youngest pupils demonstrate good self-discipline. Pupils throughout the school help to create a happy and co-operative learning environment.
- 9 Pupils work quietly in classrooms and concentrate well. Older pupils know the school's expectations and readily follow established routines with confidence. Boys and girls work well together. In lessons, pupils frequently share ideas and resources, and older pupils can be observed working in a genuinely collaborative manner. For example, in a design and technology lesson, some of the older pupils in the school were sharing their designs and offering praise and helpful comments to others working alongside them.
- 10 Pupils develop a good understanding of others' feelings and the effects of their actions on other people and the wider community. They take personal responsibility for maintaining a harmonious working environment within the school. They work with perseverance and show pride in their achievements. Pupils' good attitudes to learning and positive behaviour help to promote a strong work ethos and support levels of attendance well above the national average.

**Sustains skilful and enthusiastic teaching in all classes, securing standards of teaching that are at least satisfactory and often good.**

- 11 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. All of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better; just under half were good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.

- 12 All teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly. Lesson plans identify what they expect pupils to gain from the lesson, the activities they consider will best achieve these objectives and show appropriate links with the school's schemes of work. Teachers frequently use questioning skills well to challenge the pupils' thinking and to engage all pupils in whole-class lessons. Teachers explain tasks and demonstrate skills particularly well, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons. Throughout the school, the management of pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils know what they have to do and they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own tasks. Teachers deal with any inappropriate behaviour firmly but fairly. Positive relationships of trust and respect between teachers and pupils help to promote a calm and purposeful work environment in most lessons.
- 13 The direct teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good and is well supported by effective use of National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy guidance. Teachers do not always provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to use and develop the knowledge and skills gained in these teacher-directed sessions through practical, independent application. Despite this, teachers manage well practical activities and mostly make good use of learning support resources. Reading is taught well; teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach phonics and text analysis. Numeracy is also taught well and pupils respond with enthusiasm. Learning support assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, especially when supporting pupils with special needs.
- 14 Teachers mostly set pupils appropriate tasks and challenges, linked well to the age-related expectations identified in schemes of work. This does not always sufficiently challenge the higher attainers who are capable of working beyond their chronological age, although skilful teachers ensure that, even in these circumstances, pupils remain committed to their tasks.
- 15 In many lessons observed, the satisfactory teaching would have been better had teachers made more direct use of their ongoing assessments when planning their lessons. It was often the case that, where teaching was good, pupils were engaged in open-ended tasks that encouraged them to work at many different levels of understanding. Even in these circumstances good teaching could have improved if teachers had better matched the learning targets to the needs and interests of individual pupils in their class.
- 16 In most lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and use praise well to motivate and reward the pupils' efforts and achievements.
- 17 In the Foundation Stage, teaching is often good but there are too few opportunities for pupils to engage in free-choice and free-play. Learning is very well-structured, appropriately linked to the Foundation Stage Curriculum guidance and high emphasis is placed upon children acquiring the basic literacy and numeracy skills.

**Engages with parents in a positive relationship that promotes strong support for the school.**

- 18 Parents think highly of the school. They contribute both practically and financially to the quality of provision offered by the school. Whilst only a few parents are able to become involved in day-to-day help in classrooms and in lessons, most parents feel welcome in school and regularly attend trips, presentations, concerts and open evenings. Parents also actively fund-raise to provide the school with additional resources, including the design and development recently of a new playground. They are interested in their children's learning and offer support and encouragement at

home, including support for homework. Relationships between school staff and parents are good and this helps to promote shared perspectives and expectations.

**The school is run efficiently. It promotes a caring learning environment for pupils, effective teamwork and secure day-to-day management.**

- 19 In this small school, all staff and governors work hard to secure efficient day-to-day management of the school. Systems and procedures are in place to ensure the smooth running of the curriculum and school community. Through effective teamwork, staff help and support each other and share tasks and responsibilities. New members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers, are well supported by other, more experienced colleagues. Teachers offer guidance to non-teaching staff, and all staff regularly discuss changes and developments as a whole team. This helps to create an environment in which all staff feel valued and this, in turn, helps to promote pupils' wellbeing.
- 20 Staff and governors are committed to school improvement. Recently, the school has undergone a significant number of staff changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher to take up post at the beginning of next term. During the interim, both the acting headteacher and deputy headteacher positions are temporary. The support offered by the staff team at this difficult time is helping to secure effective day-to-day management and ensuring that pupils continue to operate in a caring learning environment in which rules, routines and positive relationships can be sustained.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The pace of progress by the more-able pupils. In English, science and, to a lesser extent, also mathematics, it is too slow.**

- 21 Skilful teachers use well the age-related learning targets described in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies when planning their lessons. This helps to ensure that lessons build developmentally over time. However, teachers make too little use of assessments of pupils to plan lessons that match individual needs. As a consequence, the more-able pupils, who are capable of working beyond these nationally-prescribed, age-related targets, are not always sufficiently challenged in their work. This is less significant in the mathematics curriculum than in the English curriculum. In mathematics lessons, teachers also often make good use of a commercially-produced mathematics scheme to support the pupils' learning, with pupils working through the scheme at their own pace. Despite this, there were mathematics lessons observed during the inspection when the more-able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. For example, a group of seven year olds were 'fishing' with magnets for fish with numbers on them. When they had caught a fish they had to catch another number to add to the first to make a total of 20. Several of the more-able pupils were easily able to identify the second number needed once they had caught the first fish, by working out this sum in their heads. They then spent too long 'catching number fish' until they found the one they wanted and without developing their learning further. Similarly, in a lesson with ten and eleven year olds, the teacher engaged the pupils in unnecessary practice and repetition even though the more-able pupils had already demonstrated that they fully understood the techniques being taught.

- 22 In English, all lessons are modelled upon the structured literacy hour, as promoted by the National Literacy Strategy. These lessons give emphasis to skills development. They do not offer the more-able pupils sufficient opportunities to produce extensive texts or to use their writing skills as a means of creative, self-expression. More-able pupils spend too long practising skills when they are capable of extending their understanding through tasks that encourage writing for a purpose in real-life situations. For example, there are too few opportunities for older pupils to write letters, newspapers, stories, poems and plays for school productions and publications.
- 23 In too many science lessons, in the absence of a comprehensive science scheme of work, activities are not linked closely enough to the planned learning intentions. There is too little difference between the learning expectations planned for pupils of different abilities. For example, a group of five and six year olds, when learning about forces, ended up making pictures of machinery found on a building site. The task became linked more closely to art and design than science. More-able pupils, who clearly understood the purpose of lifting and carrying machinery on a building site, were not then encouraged to think about how these machines work. In a lesson with eight and nine year olds, pupils were learning about how sound travels. Despite the fact that the more-able pupils demonstrated a good understanding before the activity began, extension tasks were provided only for those pupils who finished quickly, rather than those pupils who were ready for the next level of understanding.
- 24 Too much emphasis is placed upon assessment of pupils as a result of tests and assessment tasks at the end of topics, programmes of work or each year. These tests do not provide teachers with sufficiently detailed information that can easily be used diagnostically to plan for an individual pupil's next steps in their learning. There is too little on-going teacher assessment of pupils' achievements on a day-to-day basis. This impacts most noticeably upon the progress made by the more-able pupils when teachers end up teaching to age-related targets in published schemes, rather than what they know about the needs, interests and achievements of all the pupils in their class.

**The balance and design of the curriculum, which lacks sufficient breadth and appropriate progression.**

- 25 A strong priority on timetables is given to literacy and numeracy lessons. The time available in these lessons is not always used to best effect, with too few links with other subjects. As a consequence, there is an imbalance to the curriculum. History, geography and especially science are not given sufficient attention in classes across the school. Also, music receives too little attention for the five to seven year olds. The status of science as a core subject is not sufficiently reflected in the time available for the teaching and learning of this subject. Weekly timetables show dedicated time for teaching that is slightly below the national average. It is highly likely that the restricted time available for the teaching and learning of science contributes to the slow progress made by the eight to eleven year olds and to the lower standards of attainment in national tests at age eleven.
- 26 The school curriculum is currently planned with reference to schemes of learning designed to promote a two-year rolling programme of activities and topics. In September 2002, the school restructured classes to accommodate a different mix of age groups in each class and to provide a separate class for the ten to eleven year olds. These schemes do not now meet the needs of the new class arrangements and have yet to be adapted. They fail to provide two of the five classes in the school with a curriculum that secures progression as pupils move from class to class. The school is aware of this difficulty and teachers are working hard to adapt existing

schemes as and when the need arises. This creates additional work for busy class teachers and fails to offer sufficient support to recently-qualified teachers. There is no whole-school curricular map to secure progression as pupils move through the school, or to secure consistency for pupils in the same year group working in different classes.

- 27 Whilst the school has schemes of learning in place for all subjects of the National Curriculum, there are some gaps that fail to offer teaching staff appropriate support when planning their lessons. The school's map of learning for English is incomplete for the oldest pupils, and the school's existing science scheme is in the process of being replaced by a new scheme that has been purchased, but is yet to be put into practice.
- 28 In the reception class the curriculum is planned with good reference to all areas of learning described in the Foundation Stage Curriculum guidance. However, there are too few links between teacher-directed tasks and playful activity. This is especially the case for the part-time children who attend only the morning sessions at this time of year. Most mornings are heavily teacher-directed and, on most days, literacy and numeracy lessons dominate the time available. Part-time children are also the youngest children in the school, but too often they miss out on opportunities to learn through free-choice and free-play. All reception children receive too little access to the outdoor curriculum.

**The leadership of the school. At present, under developed leadership roles do not promote effective, whole-school approaches to teaching and learning, nor do they provide a clear sense of educational direction.**

- 29 School leadership is currently in a state of change, with both the acting headteacher and deputy headteacher being temporary positions at the time of the inspection. In the past, school leadership has been under developed. A new headteacher is to take up post in January 2003. Curriculum co-ordinator roles are developing, but have yet to impact upon school improvement. Governors are committed to the school and work hard, but they have not always been fully involved in school evaluation procedures. The deputy headteacher has full class responsibilities, with too few opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in other classes in the school.
- 30 Monitoring systems are in place but these are not yet fully effective. The information collected is not analysed in sufficient depth and detail to appropriately inform school evaluations. There are too few direct links between monitoring and evaluation and school improvement targets. Targets in the school development plan are too rarely linked to outcomes that can be measured by gains in pupils' standards of attainment and progress. Leadership styles have not provided a clear educational direction for the school, with staff, governors and parents not sufficiently informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses to be able to promote and secure high standards.
- 31 There have been many recent staff changes; the existing school staff demonstrate a commitment to school improvement and a capacity to succeed.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

32 The school should now:

- (1) secure better progress for the more-able pupils in English, mathematics and science by:
  - providing more appropriately challenging tasks in their lessons through better use of ongoing teacher assessments to inform lesson plans;
  - creating more opportunities in English lessons for the more-able pupils to use their skills to write extended, creative texts and to promote self-expression in meaningful, real-life literacy contexts; and
  - promoting use of a structured science scheme of learning to secure a better match between learning experiences, learning intentions and the pupils' abilities. (Ref paragraphs 5; 14; 15; 21; 22; 23; 24)
  
- (2) review the balance and design of the curriculum to secure breadth and progression across the school by:
  - creating a more appropriate curricular balance that gives due attention to history, geography, music for the five to seven-year-olds and science as a core subject;
  - adapting curricular schemes of learning so that they better match the arrangement of year groups of pupils working in classes throughout the school;
  - developing a whole school curricular map to secure consistency for pupils of the same age working in different classes and to promote progression as pupils move from class to class;
  - finalising incomplete subject schemes of learning and introducing the new science scheme; and
  - providing more opportunities for learning through play and the outdoor curriculum for the reception children. (Ref paragraphs 25; 26; 27; 28)
  
- (3) develop school leadership to promote whole-school approaches to teaching and learning and a clear sense of educational direction for the school by:
  - making full use of monitoring systems already in place to collect and collate data that can be used to evaluate school performance;
  - introducing rigour into the analysis of school performance data;
  - establishing clear links between monitoring, evaluation and school improvement targets;
  - identifying outcomes within the school development plan that can be measured in gains in the pupils' standards of attainment and rate of progress; and
  - adopting leadership strategies that provide the school with a clear sense of educational direction. (Ref paragraph 30)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
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	-	-	9	12	-	-	-
Percentage	-	-	43%	57%	-	-	-

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. **It is important to note that each lesson represents approximately five per cent of all the lessons seen.**

### 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)		126
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		7

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	6.1

#### 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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	4	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	11	12	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (95)	92 (95)	85(95)
	National	84 (84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (90)	92 (95)	100 (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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	8	6	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	12	11	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (78)	79 (100)	71 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	9	9	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (78)	90 (100)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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



## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

124
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Number of questionnaires returned

55
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### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	56	42	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	42	15	4	0
The teaching is good.	49	45	0	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	60	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	42	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	58	5	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	45	35	11	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	53	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	2	44	31	11	13