

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTH WOOTTON FIRST SCHOOL

South Wootton, King's Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120903

Headteacher: Mr A Mash

Reporting inspector: Graham Bate
20926

Dates of inspection: 28th and 29th January 2003

Inspection number: 248194

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 8 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane South Wootton King's Lynn Norfolk
Postcode:	PE30 3LJ
Telephone number:	01553 671552
Fax number:	01553 671552
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr U Thakrar
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
20926	Mr G Bate	Registered inspector
21858	Revd J Pryor	Lay inspector
09942	Mrs S Stevens	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset TA8 1AN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a residential area on the eastern outskirts of the market town of King's Lynn. It caters for 235 pupils aged four to eight years, which includes 59 who are under six in the reception classes. The number on roll is now broadly similar to other primary schools nationally as the school has grown since the last inspection. The school is over-subscribed and pupil mobility is low. A significant proportion of the pupils come from outside the area traditionally served by the school. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are five for whom English, which is spoken fluently, is an additional language. Fourteen per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is below the national average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, about four per cent, is also below the national average. The pupils' standards of attainment on entry covers a wide range but is broadly average. Analyses of assessments made by the school indicate that this represents a fall, and a larger number of children on entry to the school now have weaker skills in speaking, listening and concentration. The school is organised into eight classes and none is mixed age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. At its heart lies the excellent quality of relationships that are evident in all aspects of school life. Everyone is important, child or adult, whatever their role in this large, caring family. As a result of the good teaching and the positive atmosphere for learning that has been created, the pupils are enthusiastic, curious and very well behaved. This leads to rapid progress, good achievement and high standards. The staff have high expectations for the development of the whole child and a very good curriculum is provided to support this aim. There is a very strong commitment to the raising of standards, the welfare of the pupils and working positively with their parents. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is ably supported by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic governing body and very effective staff team. Such positive attributes result in the school providing very good value for money.

What the school does well

- High standards are attained in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to achieve well.
- Relationships in the school are excellent, leading to pupils having extremely positive attitudes, exhibiting very good behaviour and an enthusiasm for learning.
- The quality and range of the learning opportunities are very good.
- There is a very good partnership between the school and the parents.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good; he is very well supported by all the staff and a well-informed, able governing body.

What could be improved

- Provision for the consistent improvement in the standards of writing.
- The consistency of short-term lesson planning and assessment procedures, in the foundation subjects, through the school.

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 and was found to have many strengths. Since then, the school has continued to improve and has addressed well the key issues raised in the last report. There has been an evaluation of the distribution of the teachers' curriculum responsibilities and of the headteacher's time made available to monitor the curriculum and teaching. This has resulted in clearer roles and responsibilities and a very effective programme of monitoring. There has been a significant improvement in the outdoor facilities for children under five, which are now used in a very well planned programme of activities. Whilst there has been an unavoidable delay in the provision of appropriate

information and communication technology (ICT) hardware, a well-structured programme of teacher training has significantly improved their competence and confidence; the use of computers is now well and effectively established. The school has instituted a programme of formal assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science, but assessments in other subjects lack a common whole-school approach. Imaginative, successful thought and action have been given to improving the working environment for both pupils and adults.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A	A	A	B
Writing	A	A	B	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	B

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

Standards attained, compared with all schools nationally, in the most recent reading and mathematics tests are high. They are above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, that is those with fewer than eight per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results reflect a fall of four pupils in the numbers attaining the higher Level 3, of learning in the three areas, compared with the 2001 results. Such a fall is statistically of no significance and represents a variation in pupils' abilities in different year groups. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 in reading and mathematics was significantly higher than the national average, but average in writing. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils in Years 1 to 3, achieve well, make good progress and attain standards above expectations in nearly all subjects. Children in the reception classes are well on course to meet or exceed the national early learning goals. The pace of progress in ICT has now quickened through the school with younger pupils attaining nationally expected levels and the older pupils rapidly catching up now the computers are fully in place. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets. Of particular note is the very good standard of speaking and listening that is attained. This is as a result of the school's atmosphere, which allows and encourages pupils to gain much personal confidence.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very positive attitudes to all aspects of school life and clearly enjoy being in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently very good. They co-operate and collaborate exceptionally well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between the pupils and with adults are excellent. The pupils show considerable confidence and are pleased to undertake responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and above the national average. Unauthorised absence, whilst it exists, is below the national average.

The exceptional quality of relationships that exist is the foundation of much of the school's success. All

pupils are valued and well integrated into the life of the school, including those pupils of ethnic minority. The pupils react positively to the high expectations of behaviour. There have been no exclusions. Attainment and progress are greatly assisted by the very good levels of attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. The teaching in 84 per cent of lessons was good or better, which is an improvement on the last inspection. A very significant improvement in the quality of teaching has taken place in the reception classes where 60 per cent is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well, which help the pupils to achieve well in all subjects. Learning is greatly assisted by the very good management of the pupils and the very effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils show considerable interest in their work, concentrating well and exhibiting increasing levels of independence. The very good relationships in the classroom encourage a positive atmosphere for learning, with the teachers' good questioning skills clearly making pupils think. Whilst a number of useful strategies have been used by the teachers to improve the quality of writing, there is insufficient use of drafting and editing techniques and too few opportunities for older pupils to write extended pieces in other subjects. All teachers are clearly committed to the raising of standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school takes every opportunity to enrich the curriculum in a wide variety of ways. It more than meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils are very well supported enabling them to make good progress towards individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. It contributes very significantly to the very positive atmosphere within the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All adults in the school show great care for the pupils' welfare. There is good monitoring of health, safety and child protection. Assessment procedures are in place to monitor attainment and progress but lack a whole-school approach.

The learning of the pupils is helped by a very good curriculum that is made relevant and interesting. It is enriched by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school who bring a wide spectrum of skills and interests. Many aspects of such projects as 'Healthy Schools' and 'Thinking Schools' also help to enrich the curriculum. ICT is also being used well to support a range of subjects. A good range, in relation to the age of the pupils, of extra-curricular activities is provided.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership is provided by the headteacher. He has worked very hard and successfully to develop a team approach to all aspects of school life. There is a clear commitment to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil well their statutory responsibilities. They have a clear view of the direction the school needs to travel and are well informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, including teaching, are most effective. Very detailed and precise analyses of test results and organisational developments are undertaken.
The strategic use of resources	The principles of best value are applied well; available resources are used very well. Financial control is very good and is linked particularly well to educational priorities. The school provides very good value for money.

It is rare to find a school with such a commonality of purpose. Everyone, including the pupils, is part of a team. The school improvement plan is of high quality and gives a thoughtful and clear direction to the school's future development.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents gave overwhelming support to most aspects of school life. The parents were particularly pleased that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their children like school - they make good progress - behaviour is good - teaching is good - the school is approachable - there is an expectation of hard work - the parents and school work together - the school is well led - children mature well - the school runs courses for parents - the school council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority of parents would like to see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more extra-curricular activities - more information about reading expectations at home - more information of how their children are getting on - more lunchtime activities in winter.

The inspection team happily gives very strong endorsement to all parents' positive views. The range of extra-curricular activities is appropriate for the age range of the pupils. Lunchtime activities, similar to those undertaken in the summer, are not possible in the winter in order to protect the safety of the pupils in a small playground. The school has a logical and systematic approach to reading at home. The system is outlined in the home/school reading record. The school always welcomes parents and is willing to discuss concerns about progress at any time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

High standards are attained in reading, writing and mathematics

1. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils achieve well and make at least good progress through the school. As a result, they attain, at the age of seven, well above average standards in reading and mathematics and above average standards in writing in comparison with all schools nationally. In all these three areas of the curriculum, over the last three years, performance has well exceeded the national average for their age group. However, against schools deemed to be similar, results showed that reading and mathematics were above average and writing average. Detailed analysis of the results indicates that this drop in performance was due to about four pupils fewer than the previous year reaching the higher Level 3. This is within the bounds of normal cohort variation and is of no significance statistically. Inspection evidence confirms that at least good standards are being maintained in most subjects in Years 1 and 2 and into Year 3. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress towards their individually set targets.
2. An increasing proportion of the children entering the reception class have weak speaking, concentration and, particularly, listening skills. However, there are high expectations for the use of language, independence of action and thought, and the ability, not just to listen passively, but also to respond. As a result, most children answer questions in whole sentences and with rapidly increasing vocabularies, for example there was confident use of the term 'contents' when discussing a book, which a good number recognised as 'non-fiction'. The children describe well activities they are undertaking, whether it is the creation of a 'tropical butterfly' using a computer mouse, or the recognition of a range of mathematical shapes. Pre and early writing skills are well developed and many children confidently recognise and write numbers from one to nine. Most children are well on course to attain or exceed the nationally expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
3. All the teachers have a very good understanding of the teaching of reading. The school has also ensured that the teaching assistants have been well trained to work very effectively in partnership with the teachers to support reading development. As a result, reading is a strength of the school. Most pupils read with confidence and use well their understanding of how to deal with unfamiliar words. The pupils also have a good understanding of the basic structure of words, which not only assists reading but also the pupils' very good spelling standards. Confidence in reading is gained by reading to their peers; for example in a good Year 2 lesson, the pupils read out confidently a passport application they had written for Cinderella. The pupils are challenged well by the teachers to read with understanding and to extend their vocabularies, for example in another good Year 2 lesson, the teacher used cloze procedure, that is asking them to insert a suitably imaginative missing word into a sentence. The suggestions that followed showed that the pupils had a very clear understanding of the nature of the text and the potential for improving it, on this occasion, by inserting appropriately humorous words. The pupils are encouraged in their love of reading by the attractive nature and good condition of most of the school's books.
4. The pupils are given a good range of opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and for different audiences, for example descriptions of characters from well-known fairy stories, logical sequential writing on how to build an igloo, or creating and using ICT to produce some short, alternative appropriate phrases to insert into the speech bubbles of a story they had read together. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the structural elements of language. They write, generally, in well-constructed,

grammatically correct sentences, with some higher attaining pupils using, for example, direct speech correctly. Colour is added to the pupils' writing by encouraging, for example, the use of classified adjectives to create different moods. The structure of the pupils' writing is supported well by the requirement to plan an outline and structure before commencing to write. There was, however, little evidence to show pupils using redrafting or editing techniques to improve further the quality of writing. Amongst older pupils in the school, there was insufficient extended writing in other subjects.

5. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very effectively implemented and has contributed well to the maintenance of high standards. As the teachers plan challenging introductory sessions to mathematics lessons, the pupils have developed very good mental recall skills. In a good Year 1 lesson, for example, the pupils listened intently to the number of claps made by the teacher, then accurately clapped a required number, which is either more or less than the teacher's number. Some Year 2 pupils show a very good grasp of mentally adding three, two and single digit numbers by a variety of strategies. Higher attaining pupils effectively use known number bonds to assist their mental calculation, for example little use of fingers or other means was seen when undertaking these calculations. As well as a very good understanding of basic number concepts, such as place value, Year 3 pupils know well the properties and names of a good range of three-dimensional shapes, including triangular and hexagonal prisms, cuboids and spheres. For example, when asked, they could quickly identify the shapes that were evident in and outside the classroom.

The overall quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to achieve well

6. There is a strong commitment by the teachers to the raising of standards. They expect all pupils to achieve well, whatever their previous level of attainment. For example, a determination is shown by the teachers that no stone will be left unturned in their effort to maintain, consistently, good standards in pupils' writing. The teachers challenge the pupils to think, express themselves clearly and with confidence and to work hard. As a result, the pupils show very good interest and concentrate extremely well with growing levels of independent learning.
7. An important element of the teaching is the very good management of the pupils by the teachers. Little time is lost, therefore, to the maintenance of order so that most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and all planned activities are undertaken, including a final session to consolidate learning. The control of the pupils is not by repressive means but is a function of mutual respect and the excellent quality of relationships. The teachers clearly enjoy their work and this enthuses and motivates the pupils to learn. The teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to the pupils' good learning, as it is clear that there is mutual and professional understanding between them and the teachers and they are clearly seen as part of the team by the pupils. A good example of a teaching assistant's positive contribution to learning was seen where she was noting systematically the responses of pupils in the introductory part of a lesson.
8. The teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of the subjects they teach. This is well supported by an effective programme of professional development; for example the previous report noted the teachers' lack of confidence and competence in the use of ICT. This has been addressed successfully with pupils' standards now rising steadily to a level above expectations amongst the younger pupils, and in line with expectations for older pupils who have more ground to make up. The teachers' confidence in the subject has grown to the extent that they plan successfully for its use in a number of subjects. Overall planning is good. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. Learning objectives are generally clearly identified. In the best lessons they are shared with the pupils and used at the end to evaluate with the pupils their knowledge

and understanding. Short-term planning, however, rarely includes a formal identification of how the school's important 'Thinking Skills' initiative is to be used in a particular lesson.

9. The teachers have implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very well. They have sensibly made adaptations to suit the needs of their own pupils, for example by extending the literacy hour once a week to concentrate more on writing in Year 3 and introducing 'writing weeks' twice per term during the literacy hour time. The impact of these changes is systematically evaluated. During group work, in these and other lessons, the teachers use this time very effectively, in very good co-operation with the well-briefed teaching assistants, to teach and take learning forward; they do not just supervise and maintain pupils on task. This was seen, for example, in a Year 3 art and design lesson where the teacher very imaginatively prompted the pupils to think about the parameters within which they were working, resulting in improved standards in their work. As well as challenging the pupils to think, the teachers have high expectations for the development of technical language and vocabulary, for example in a Year 2 lesson, the pupils use such terms as 'poetic version', 'distinguishing features' and 'characterisation' with confidence.
10. The teachers know their pupils very well, which is helped by the excellent quality of relationships and the conscientious way pupils' work is marked, the best of which includes targets for improvement. Homework is also used well and appropriately in relation to the pupils' age, to support learning. The teachers undertake regular and formal assessments of pupils' progress. This, in addition, effectively aids future planning. In foundation subjects, however, there is no commonly agreed format across the school in order to evaluate long-term academic progress. This confuses the tracking of pupils' progress.

Relationships in the school are excellent, leading to pupils having extremely positive attitudes, exhibiting very good behaviour and an enthusiasm for learning

11. In a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher reminded the pupils about 'co-operating' in the use of the experimental resources and of 'the need to think about the needs of others' before beginning their work; a good, appropriate and consistent reminder so that it seems almost second nature for the pupils to do so. The excellent quality relationships that permeate every aspect of school life are very clearly evident. As a result, the pupils show an enthusiasm for learning, are proud of their achievements and clearly enjoy school life. They show very good levels of concentration and, in informal and formal conversations with them, they are pleased to talk about the work they enjoy and to discuss all aspects of school life. The pupils are obviously at ease in the school and feel valued in the family atmosphere. Behaviour is very good in most lessons and around the school and playground; in some lessons it was beyond reproach. The pupils show great courtesy to all staff and their peers. They were attentive to the needs of visitors and answered politely when spoken to. All these positive attributes have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning.
12. The school encourages pupil independence, beginning immediately in the reception class as the teachers insist that the children learn quickly to change for physical activities themselves with very little adult assistance. The pupils are very keen to undertake small responsibilities around the school. One of the most significant contributors to pupil independence is the school council, which contains representatives from all years, including reception. The council has a budget which is run by the pupils. The basic concept behind the activities is 'children helping children'. The council runs a suggestion box, has supported many charities, organises gardening and devised and initiated a circle garden, which was built by gardeners. The council cares for the school environment and spoke of the need to talk to reception class

children, as some were breaking through the sides of the willow tunnel. Representatives of the pupils were even involved in the interview round for new staff. Such strategies increase immeasurably the personal development and confidence of pupils, which has a positive impact on their learning.

The quality and range of the learning opportunities are very good

13. The school seeks, successfully, to make the curriculum both interesting and relevant. To this end the school organises an exceptionally broad spectrum of visits, ranging from the reception class visit to a fish and chip shop during 'potato week', to a three-day residential visit to North Norfolk for Year 3. Visits to museums, concerts, the Walsingham Shrine and the theatre all add significantly to the cultural development of the pupils. Many visitors to the school also enrich the curriculum. They include drama groups, various sports workshops, professional musicians and the fire service. The school also has strong links with the community, such as shops and businesses, and has set up relationships with people from a variety of religious backgrounds who visit the school, all of which add to the pupils' curricular experiences.
14. The school is involved in a number of local and national initiatives, which, in a variety of ways, contribute to an enriching curriculum and eventually to the desired aim of raising standards. These include 'Healthy Schools', Citizenship and 'Healthy Eating' (case study for the DfES) and 'Thinking Skills' (a key school in the local education authority's pilot programme). The Thinking Skills project, for example, has a direct impact on the curriculum as it involved staff planning to consider the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements of learning in order to maximise this learning, for example the playing of suitable background music related to different curriculum activities. They effectively support the school's overall curriculum aim, which is to develop the whole child. Although the Foundation Stage curriculum includes an appropriate well-planned range of outdoor activities, the current facilities do not allow for this area to be a natural extension to the classroom, as its use has to be planned more formally.

There is a very good partnership between the school and the parents

15. The vast majority of parents have very positive feelings about the school. As a result, most are extremely supportive of their children's learning, which is an important element of the good achievement of the pupils. Virtually all parents feel that they can approach the school about any matter. One parent summed up the attitudes of most parents when, at the pre-inspection parents' meeting, she said, 'I can raise whatever issue I like and it will be considered'.
16. For its part, the school provides a range of helpful information to the parents. The school booklet is outstanding. It is attractive, contains easily understood information and sets the right tone for the future parent/school relationships. Parents with children starting in the reception class are provided with a 'welcome pack' and are then invited to 'Year R Walkabouts', when they are shown around by their own child. There is a clear, and regularly updated, homework policy, supplemented by useful guidelines of how to support reading at home. Most parents give good support to this aspect of their children's learning.
17. In order to help the parent/school partnership, and to raise parental understanding, the school has organised three, heavily over-subscribed, courses entitled 'Keeping up with your Children'. This course was deemed by the parents to be very useful and was highly praised by those who were able to attend. A number of formal and informal opportunities are provided for consultation during the year, including open afternoons and evenings called 'Meet the Teacher'. It was evident during the inspection that many parents take advantage of the 'open door' policy for consultations about any matter.

These consultations are backed up, at the end of the year, by a full annual report. It contains a good picture of the activities undertaken by the pupil and their response to them. In literacy and numeracy, clear targets are set for improvement, but are rarely indicated in other subjects. Many parents give active support to the thriving parent/teacher association and by helping in the classroom. This is of mutual benefit and the helpers generally enjoy the experience.

The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good; he is very well supported by all the staff and a well-informed, able governing body

18. The headteacher is a very good leader. He has a very clear understanding of the direction the school has to take. However, he does not wish to travel this road alone and has worked very hard to establish a 'team approach' to all aspects of the school's development and management. In this aim he has been extremely successful. It is clearly evident that all adults in the school, whatever their role, feel that their contributions count. The status of an 'Investor in People' award, and the work done through the 'Well Being' initiative to, for example, maintain and improve staff morale and assist retention and recruitment, are both testimony to the school's commitment to the team, including the governing body. There is also a strong commitment by the headteacher, governing body and staff to the maintenance and the further improvement of standards. In order to help the realisation of this aim, the headteacher and governing body carry out very systematic analyses of available data, monitor developments and issues with subject co-ordinators and effectively evaluate, for example, the quality of teaching.
19. The governing body is provided with high quality information by the headteacher so that governors are keenly aware of the school's strengths, areas for development and future needs. This understanding is well supplemented by the governors' direct involvement in staff training and, for example, as part of the school's strategy for the improvement in the standard of writing, a governor carried out a useful evaluation of the present position. The school improvement plan is also the result of a team effort involving all staff and governors. It is a very clear and well-structured strategic document; it is also a working document. The plan is subject to effective and regular evaluation. Financial control and management are very good and the school is administered very efficiently. A very clear view is held of future financial trends and the school is developing strategies to manage a range of potential options so that planning is realistic. The principles of best values are well applied.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The provision for the consistent improvement in the standards of writing

20. The school has invested much time, effort and money in its drive to raise further the standards of pupils' writing. These have included measures, such as 'writing weeks', improved writing scheme, resources for teachers, audits of pupils' writing development and teachers' training courses. Compared with five years ago, there has been a good deal of success, for example a halving of the pupils attaining the lowest benchmark level in writing (Level 2C) and a doubling of those at a higher Level 2A. Evidence from lessons seen and the scrutiny of pupils' previous work show a good range of opportunities for pupils to write in a wide variety of styles and for different audiences. In some of the best work from Years 2 and 3 pupils, there was evidence of the correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as imaginative flair. However, these two aspects of writing were not always combined. Whilst most pupils clearly understand the need for planning written work with a cohesive structure, there was insufficient evidence of redrafting and editing work, for example writing a first draft on

alternate lines in order to facilitate any amendments necessary. Too few opportunities, especially for higher attaining pupils, were also evident of more extended writing in other subjects, such as science, history and geography.

The consistency of short-term lesson planning and assessment procedures, in the foundation subjects, through the school

21. There is a clear, and regularly evaluated, whole-school framework for the curriculum. This is supplemented, in each year, by more detailed half-term plans which appropriately identify, for example, agreed learning objectives and resources. This is good practice. However, there is no commonly agreed structure to the teachers' weekly plans. As a result, for example, the very desirable aspects of the school's 'Thinking Skills' initiative are not identified or, the very closely related provision that may be made in a lesson for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
22. Similarly, and again in the foundation subjects, each year is developing its own strategies and formats for assessment. The school is to be praised for initiating systems to monitor and record the pupils' attainment and academic progress. However, the lack of a whole-school approach inhibits clear understanding of pupils' development from year to year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

23. The school should now:
 - (1) Build further on current initiatives to improve the standards of writing, by providing more opportunities to redraft and edit work and to undertake more extended writing in subjects other than English.
 - (2) Support such initiatives as 'Thinking Skills' by developing a more consistent approach to short-term planning.
 - (3) Evaluate the current assessment procedures in foundation subjects in order to develop an effective whole-school approach.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	16	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	67	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	235
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Boys	30	31	31
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	56	57	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	95 (97)	95 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	31	30
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	57	57	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (100)	95 (98)	93 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
221
0
1
1
0
0
2
5
0
0
0
0
0
2
0
2
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

No ethnic group recorded

1

0

0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29.25

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	209

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	452,462
Total expenditure	443,655
Expenditure per pupil	1,872
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,343
Balance carried forward to next year	32,150

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	124

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	22	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	28	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	27	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	44	2	1	0
The teaching is good.	76	21	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	37	12	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	14	3	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	61	27	8	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	31	27	7	10