

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PONTESBURY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Pontesbury, Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123493

Headteacher: Miss M Hotchkiss

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Grainger  
20782

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 248464

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 Controlled Church of England
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bogey Lane Pontesbury Shrewsbury Shropshire
Postcode:	SY5 0TF
Telephone number:	(01743) 790226
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	The Rev Preb D H Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England primary school. It is situated on the edge of the village of Pontesbury at the foot of Pontesford Hill, five miles south west of Shrewsbury. Most pupils live in Pontesbury although some travel from outside the area. With 86 boys and 92 girls on roll, the school is below average in size. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and none has English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (15 per cent) is below average. However, the percentage with statements of special educational needs (two per cent) is close to the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (three per cent) is below the national average. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the school is average in relation to the expectations for their age. Many children, however, have good speaking, listening and social skills.

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

Pontesbury Church of England Primary School is a very effective school. It provides a very good education for its pupils. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are achieving very well in English and science in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Pupils also make good progress in mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology as they move up through the school. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology. Very good standards are achieved in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Very good attention is given to ensuring that all pupils are valued equally and that they have equal access to the opportunities provided. The leadership and management of the school are very good, as is the value for money provided.

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

- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils achieve very well in English and science and well in mathematics in relation to their attainment on starting school.
- Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are above those expected nationally in Year 6.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They have very good relationships with each other and with the adults in school.
- Teaching is good. Questioning is used very effectively to challenge pupils to deeper levels of thinking and to encourage independence in learning.
- A high priority is given to pupils' personal wellbeing.
- Leadership and management are very good. There is very effective teamwork at all levels.

#### **What could be improved**

- The provision for reception age children is not closely enough matched to their needs.
- Pupils' annual reports do not always give their parents a clear enough picture of how well they are achieving or of what they need to do to improve.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in March 1998. At that time pupils were not making enough progress in information and communication technology (ICT) or in design and technology (DT) as they moved up through the school. The result was that standards in these two subjects were below those expected nationally. Significant progress has been made in rectifying the weaknesses in these areas. Standards are now above those expected nationally and pupils are making good progress throughout the school in ICT and DT. The quality of science teaching in Years 1 and 2 has also improved. At the last inspection it was unsatisfactory and it is now good. Lesson planning in

Years 1 and 2 is better and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn.

Standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 are better than those shown by the most recent National Curriculum test results at the last inspection. Very good standards have been maintained in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Other strengths in provision, such as the attention given to pupils' personal development and the care for pupils, have been maintained and built on further. With its many very significant strengths, the school is well placed to achieve even further improvement.

## 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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	C	E
mathematics	B	A	A	A
science	C	A*	A	A

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

In 2001, pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in mathematics and science. In these two subjects, standards were just as high when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Apart from a dip in the science results in 1999, the school has maintained standards consistently above the national average in mathematics and science since the last inspection. Although the national data is not available for 2002, the school's results show that standards within the school have been broadly maintained this year in mathematics and science. There is a slight drop in the mathematics results, which is largely a reflection of the natural variation found in different year groups of pupils. The English results fell in 2001. They were close to the national average but well below average compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. This year, however, there has been a good improvement within the school. This is the result of effective action to target specific shortcomings identified in pupils' writing. The trend of improvement in the school's results for English, mathematics and science together, has been above that found nationally since the last inspection. The school's targets for improvement are appropriately challenging and, for the last two years, they have been met comfortably.

The evidence of pupils' school work is that standards now in Year 6 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are making good progress in all three of these important subjects. In Year 6, progress is very good as a direct result of very effective teaching. In the national tests, girls do better than boys in English at the end of Year 6, although boys and girls achieve equally well in mathematics and science. There is no significant difference in the rate of progress of boys and girls in their school work in English.

Year 2 pupils' National Curriculum test results in 2001 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers also assessed pupils' work in science as well above the national average. The 2002 results show that this position is largely maintained within the school, although the writing results were just a little lower. As with the Year 6 mathematics results, this is simply a consequence of variations in year groups. The evidence of pupils' school work is that standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average now in Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress overall. Those in Year 2 are making very good progress because they are very well taught. As in Year 6, there has also been good improvement in the school's results in Year 2 since

the last inspection.

Throughout Years 1 to 6, pupils are making good progress in information and communication technology and design and technology. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are above average in both these subjects. Children in the reception class are making satisfactory progress. Most are on course to achieve the standards expected at the end of the reception year. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress from Year 1 to Year 6. (No pupil in the reception class is identified as having special educational needs.)

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and try hard with their work. They appreciate the efforts teachers and other staff make on their behalf. They are proud of their school and their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school, including when at play. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions. The school is calm and orderly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play very well together, willingly helping each other and sharing ideas in lessons. They are friendly, but also courteous, in their relationships with adults.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils arrive at school punctually in the mornings.

Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance all help to create a climate supportive of learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.*

During the inspection, 19 lessons were observed. In just over a third of lessons seen, teaching and learning were very good, including an instance of excellent teaching in Year 6. Teaching and learning were good in almost a third more of the lessons seen. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The strongest teaching is in Years 2 and 6. This results in pupils learning very well in the lead up to the National Curriculum tests. A distinguishing feature of much effective teaching is the use of questioning. Through effective questioning pupils are pushed to deeper levels of thinking and teachers successfully assess how well pupils are learning.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good in Years 1 to 6. Science, information and communication technology and design and technology are also well taught throughout the school. Not enough information was gathered to make firm judgements on teaching and learning in other subjects. Children in the reception year are taught satisfactorily, including in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. Teachers meet all pupils' individual needs well in most classes, including those of pupils with special educational needs and very well in Years 2 and 6. However, work for reception age children is not always well enough matched to their individual needs.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is very good coverage of all the required subjects in Years 1 to 6. Pupils' experiences are enriched very well through additional activities. These include a very good range of clubs in sports and the arts and a residential visit in Year 6. The range of learning opportunities in the reception class is satisfactory, but not always closely enough matched to the children's needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are identified well and teachers take good account of them in lessons. Their progress is checked carefully. Support staff give good help to these pupils when working with them individually or in small groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school gives particularly strong attention to pupils' social and moral development, the outcomes of which are evident in their very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. The spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. There is a warm family atmosphere in the school. Staff are sensitive to pupils' personal needs. The school is successful in promoting race equality. There are good arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress in Years 1 to 6. However, procedures to record children's attainment and progress in the reception year are still at an early stage of development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. There is very effective teamwork, with all teaching staff working together towards a clear common purpose. All staff with leadership and management responsibilities fulfil their responsibilities well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors are very clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They contribute very effectively to the development of the school and to the identification of priorities for the future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher, staff and governors all look critically at what the school does. When areas are identified as needing improvement, effective action is taken.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Spending is targeted on priorities for pupils' education. Specific grant is spent on the purposes for which it is intended. Funding presently held in reserve is allocated for clearly identified purposes. Good consideration is given to whether the school provides best value for pupils and parents.

## 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>• Almost all children like school.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• Their children are helped to become more mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework.</li><li>• The information they receive on their children's progress.</li></ul>

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. Inspectors judged the amount of homework to be satisfactory and much the same as in most primary schools. However, they found that the school does not in all cases communicate well enough with parents on this topic. Reports on their children's progress do not always tell parents clearly enough how well their children are doing or what they need to do to improve.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils achieve very well in English and science and well in mathematics in relation to their attainment on starting school.**

1. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001, standards were well above the national average in mathematics and science and close to the national average in English. Compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance was also well above average in mathematics and science, but it was well below average in English. In 2001 the English results dipped from having been at least above the national average in the previous two years. The school responded by looking carefully to see why this had happened. Effective action was then taken to rectify identified shortcomings in pupils' writing. The school's 2002 results show a good improvement in English. Although there was a broad maintenance of the previous year's standards in mathematics and science, the mathematics results fell just a little in 2002. This slight change in the mathematics results reflects the natural variations found in different year groups of pupils rather than any difference in the quality of the school's provision. Standards in all three subjects are better than those shown by the test results at the last inspection. Since then, the trend of improvement in the school's results has been better than that found nationally.
2. Standards as seen in pupils' school work in the present Year 6 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. These standards represent very good achievement in English and science in relation to pupils' attainment on starting school. In mathematics, pupils are achieving well when they reach Year 6. The present overall rate of progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, in Years 1 to 6 is good in all three of these important subjects. Those in Years 2 and 6 are making very good progress because they are very well taught.
3. By Year 6, many pupils are confident and articulate communicators who listen carefully to each other during discussion. They have a good 'feel' for written language and how to match it to a variety of purposes and intended audiences. This is seen, for example, in arguments to prove that the spider in the nursery rhyme did not deliberately frighten Miss Muffet. Pupils write stories from the points of view of different narrators, making effective use of language to create an atmosphere and paint a picture. Higher attaining pupils are particularly successful in varying the introductions to their stories, for instance, using dialogue that makes an immediate impact. Ideas are especially well developed and communicated in the writing of higher attaining pupils, such as in a letter to pupils in a Birmingham school. Most pupils organise their writing correctly in paragraphs and have good spelling, punctuation and grammar for their age. Lower attaining pupils are confident in writing for different purposes but make some errors such as in basic spelling and punctuation. Almost all pupils' handwriting is of a good quality and is neat, legible and joined. Nearly all pupils have favourite books and authors. Novels by Tolkien and J K Rowling are particularly popular. Most pupils are confident and accurate readers for their age and have particularly well developed skills in reading comprehension. Lower attaining pupils use a good range of strategies to read unfamiliar words.
4. In mathematics, by Year 6, most pupils achieve at least the standards expected for their age in all aspects of the subject. However, not quite as many reach the higher levels across all areas studied, as do so in English and science. Many pupils achieve a good standard in their work with decimals, fractions and percentages. They competently undertake long division and multiplication of three digit numbers by two digit numbers. There is also much good work in the aspect of weight, shape and measure. All pupils successfully estimate and check their estimations in weighing, measuring and working with angles. The work of higher attaining pupils shows particularly good accuracy. This is seen, for example, as they construct shapes, measure angles and calculate areas and perimeters of rectangles. When working with graphs, many pupils represent and

interpret data confidently. Most are secure in their understanding of probability, with higher attaining pupils showing a particularly clear understanding. Most pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding confidently in practical problem-solving activities. Lower attaining pupils successfully cover all the same areas as other pupils although at a simpler level.

5. In Year 6 in science, pupils are very confident in undertaking practical investigations. Almost all, including those who are relatively lower attaining, are secure in their understanding of what makes a scientific test fair. They make well thought through predictions, such as how altering various features of a parachute might change the speed at which it will fall. Pupils have a thorough and detailed knowledge and understanding of all the areas of study of science required by the National Curriculum for pupils of this age. This is evident, for example, in their work on electricity, light, the systems of the human body and the classification of materials into solids, liquids and gases. Pupils record their work very thoroughly using a variety of methods, for example in the form of tables and diagrams.
6. Effective teaching is the main reason for pupils achieving so well in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 are very aware of each pupil's individual needs and match work carefully to them. Pupils with potential for higher attainment are challenged by more demanding tasks. Those who are lower attaining, or who have special educational needs, are given the focused support they need. Good quality marking spurs pupils on to do better, as well as telling them what they are doing well. The result of the strong teaching is that good progress is made within individual lessons and over time. There is an emphasis on developing pupils' depth of understanding and not just their body of knowledge and skills. This is most evident in practical and investigative science. Teachers cover topics in depth and pupils have a good amount of carefully recorded work. In mathematics, there is very good attention to detail and accuracy. Pupils are expected to record methods clearly so that any errors in processes are identified easily.
7. Effective teamwork results in teachers planning well to support pupils as they move up through the school, rather than simply focusing on each year group in isolation. Linked to this, there is a whole-school approach to improving provision and pupils' progress as a result. Evidence of this is apparent in the recent action taken by teachers to rectify the weaknesses in pupils' writing that had caused the 2001 English results to dip. The introduction across the school of new approaches to practical and investigative science is a further example. A good improvement since the last inspection that has contributed to pupils making better progress in science is that there is no longer unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2.

**Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are above those expected nationally in Year 6.**

8. The provision for information and communication technology and design and technology has improved significantly since the last inspection. At that time, teaching in these two subjects was unsatisfactory throughout the school and the standard of pupils' work was below that expected nationally. Improvements have been brought about by effective co-ordination and development of these subjects and by a whole staff focus on putting new ideas into practice. Linked with this, there has been staff training to ensure that all teachers are competent, for instance in using computers in a variety of ways to support pupils' learning. New resources have been purchased for both subjects and staff are now confident in using them. The number of computers in the school has increased since the last inspection. The co-ordinators for both subjects have developed very good files to support teachers in ensuring that work is at the right level for pupils in each year group. They also check on the provision and give guidance to teachers as required.
9. By Year 6 pupils have good confidence for their age in using computers and other new technology such as digital cameras. Their work on the computer is presented well as they very competently organise information in different forms. They combine text and pictures, scanning in photographs and inserting computer-generated art, for example to create a record of a visit to Ironbridge. When selecting fonts for information sheets, pupils give careful consideration to how the finished piece

will look. As part of their work in mathematics, pupils have produced instructions for an Egyptian game. In this work there is good use of images interspersed with text and fonts are well selected for the purpose. Pupils achieve a good standard in representing data on the computer and then in interpreting it. They make charts, for example, to show the length of shadows at different times of the day. In Year 4, pupils have undertaken a design project on the computer focused on improving the school environment and designing playground markings. Pupils competently use computers to monitor external events, such as temperature and sounds in the school environment. Throughout the school, pupils competently use the Internet and CD ROMs for research. They also use computer programs and programmable toys for control and modelling.

10. Teachers place much greater emphasis on the use of computers and other new technology to support pupils' learning than they did at the last inspection. This has increased the confidence and competence of pupils. Teachers plan specifically for the use and development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology alongside their planning for other subjects. As a result, pupils readily use computers to support their learning in a range of subjects, for instance to research information in geography and history.
11. Pupils in Year 6 achieve good standards for their age in design and technology in all aspects of the design process. When designing a product, they give careful thought to the purpose for which it is intended. Their plans are clearly labelled and instructions for making an item are well ordered. Pupils show good independence in selecting the tools, materials and techniques needed. They evaluate their finished products in relation to their fitness for purpose and make well-considered suggestions for improvement. Pupils also reflect on what was difficult and what was straightforward during the process of making their product. Pupils' final products are well finished; as is seen in the pencil cases made in Year 4 and the torches produced in Year 5.
12. Design and technology teaching throughout the school is effective because it is closely based on a very good scheme of work. This ensures that work in one year builds appropriately on that undertaken in the previous year as pupils move up through the school. Good allowance is also made for the development of pupils' own creative responses to tasks. In marking pupils' designs and evaluations, teachers offer constructive comments on how pupils might make improvements. This encourages pupils to reflect on what they have done and contributes well to their learning. When planning design and technology activities, teachers are very mindful of health and safety matters. Resources for design and technology are very good and are well organised. They are used effectively to provide a good range of learning opportunities and to support pupils in making good progress.

**Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They have very good relationships with each other and with the adults in school.**

13. Many children are socially confident when they start in the reception class. They settle well and quickly learn the school routines, for example, they sit sensibly in a circle on the carpet for the class introduction to a lesson. They readily share toys as, for example, they play in pairs in the home corner pretending to make sandwiches for a party. When working in twos on the computer, they willingly take turns and help each other. Children sustain involvement well during such activities. The opportunities for children to learn routines and to work and play together in the reception year contribute to the very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships seen among older pupils.
14. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils value what the school offers them, recognise the efforts made by teachers and other staff, and are keen to succeed in their work. They respond well to teachers' high expectations in lessons, sustaining involvement in their work and thinking carefully about the tasks set. This was seen in Year 2 as pupils thought of spooky words and phrases to include in a poem. In Year 6, in a science lesson, pupils thought hard about how changing various features of a parachute might alter the speed at which it would fall. Most pupils take a good deal of care with the presentation of their work and ensure that they

complete activities. Pupils leaving to go to secondary school speak with pride about their school and their achievements. In reflecting on their time at the school, they consider that they have had a good time and that their primary school years have been enjoyable.

15. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are attentive to their teachers and also listen carefully to the contributions of their classmates in lessons. When moving about the school, for example when going to the hall for assembly or physical education, pupils are sensible and orderly. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions and behaviour on the playground is also very good. Pupils show very good care for the school environment. They respect school property and other pupils' belongings. No instances of untoward behaviour were seen during the inspection. One pupil was excluded during the last school year. This exclusion reflects the school's determination to set high standards and not to accept unsatisfactory behaviour.
16. Relationships are very good among pupils and between pupils and adults. During lessons, pupils willingly work together and share ideas. They readily help each other, especially those with special educational needs, who appreciate the extra support they are given. Ideas were shared enthusiastically in a Year 4 and 5 lesson when pupils discussed the factors that lead to good teamwork. Year 3 pupils willingly helped each other when they worked on mechanisms to produce different types of movement in a design and technology lesson. At playtimes, pupils mix well and show good awareness of each other on the field and playground. Boys and girls and pupils of all ages mix well. The school is a harmonious community, free of racism and sexism. Pupils are friendly towards adults, but also courteous and polite. They show good respect for their teachers and the other adults in school who help them.
17. Almost all pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in the attendance levels that are well above the national average and in pupils' punctuality in the mornings. The school is a calm and orderly community. Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance all help to create an atmosphere supportive of learning. All the strengths found in this area at the last inspection have been maintained.

**Teaching is good. Questioning is used very effectively to challenge pupils to deeper levels of thinking and to encourage independence in learning.**

18. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is good. During the inspection, 19 lessons were observed. In just over a third of these teaching and learning were very good, including an instance of excellent teaching in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. In almost a third more lessons seen, teaching and learning were good. The evidence of pupils' school work also shows a considerable amount of good teaching and learning. The most effective teaching is in Years 2 and 6. As a result, pupils in these two year groups make very effective progress in the lead up to the National Curriculum tests.
19. In the excellent mathematics lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher made use of a variety of styles of questioning to push pupils' learning on at a very rapid pace. At the start of the lesson, quick-fire questioning ensured all pupils were concentrating and focused as well as applying their skills in mental mathematics. As the main activity of the lesson got underway, pupils' awareness of methods of long multiplication was extended very effectively through the use of many 'why' and 'how' questions. This very competent questioning, combined with the teacher's very good subject knowledge, ensured that she picked up on difficulties and guided pupils to the next step in their learning. Pupils willingly responded to the questions because the teacher accepted all suggestions and valued all their contributions. These very effective aspects of teaching were also evident in a science lesson in the same class. In this lesson, pupils' learning was also strengthened as the teacher required them to pose their own scientific questions and to carefully consider the wording of these.
20. A particularly strong feature of the teaching in Year 2 is the use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. This results in the teacher being very keenly aware of how effective her teaching is and of how well pupils are learning. She picks up on which pupils need further explanation or

reinforcement and also identifies where additional challenge is required for those who have readily understood and need to move on. In a science lesson in this class, the questioning pressed pupils to explain their predictions about how quickly different sized pieces of ice might melt. This made them think more carefully about the basis for their predictions and ensured that they shared their ideas as a class. As a poem was analysed in an English lesson in this class, questioning checked pupils' understanding of the language and structure and of how a spooky feel was achieved.

21. Questioning is also used well in much of the other good teaching in the school. In a Year 3 English lesson, questions were used to guide pupils to work things out for themselves. This made the learning of basic skills more effective and meaningful than if the teacher had simply explained and given pupils the answers. As pupils tried to punctuate the speech in a text extract, the teacher asked simple but effective questions such as "Do we need all those speech marks?" when an extra set had been added unnecessarily. In a very good design and technology lesson in this class, there was regular checking of pupils' understanding of the task through carefully focused questions. Productive questioning, combined with praise, offered pupils encouragement and also checked their understanding in a Year 1 design and technology lesson. Awareness of shading techniques was developed in a Years 4 and 5 art and design lesson as the teacher's questioning required pupils to look critically at how an artist had achieved particular effects.
22. Much marking of work is an effective dialogue between the teacher and the individual pupil. The best marking tells pupils what they are doing well, offers guidance for improvement and also sometimes questions in a way that requires pupils to reflect on their learning. The strong use of questioning throughout the school develops pupils' independence as thinkers. It requires them to take some responsibility for their learning because they are not spoon-fed answers and information unnecessarily.
23. Teaching is better now than at the last inspection. At that time teaching was unsatisfactory in a number of subjects such as science in Years 1 and 2 and in information and communication technology and design and technology throughout the school. Good progress has been made in rectifying these weaknesses. The stronger features of teaching found at the last inspection have been maintained. These include the calm management of pupils.

### **A high priority is given to pupils' personal wellbeing.**

24. The headteacher, with the support of all staff, places a particular emphasis on the care for individual pupils. Staff recognise that pupils will only learn effectively if they are cared for on a personal level and if they feel happy and confident when at school. The school has a warm family atmosphere and all staff know pupils well. The culture of the school is one of being very positive and celebrating pupils' achievements. Parents are particularly pleased with the care shown for pupils by the headteacher and school secretary. They are confident that should their children have any worries or concerns they would be able to approach an adult in school. Pupils themselves say that they feel comfortable in school and that all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are approachable. School rules are kept to a minimum and are geared towards making the school a happy, safe and efficient place for learning.
25. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and all staff are aware of the need to be vigilant. Staff also pay good attention to matters of health and safety, including ensuring safe use of the Internet. The headteacher and relevant governing body committee carry out regular risk assessments. Staff are well trained in first aid and there is careful supervision of pupils at all times during the school day. The pupils themselves are safety-conscious.
26. Through the school's programme for personal, social and health education, pupils are taught how to look after themselves. They are made aware of 'stranger danger'. They have appropriate education in the dangers of drugs and smoking. Specific factual sex education, in the context of family life, is provided for older pupils. The school nurse and other outside speakers sometimes

contribute to sex education and other aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education. Issues such as bullying are explored on a planned basis and are also picked up further should the need arise. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with fairly and fully, both for the victim and the instigator. Appropriate procedures are in place to deal with incidents of oppressive behaviour should the need arise. The school also has the necessary procedures to ensure race equality and to check that this is achieved.

27. Very good attention is given to ensuring that all pupils are valued equally. The school is well aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The deputy, in his role as special educational needs co-ordinator, carries out careful checks of the provision for these pupils. The school is successful in promoting race equality. Links with a school in Birmingham and work in religious education help pupils to gain an awareness of the diversity of modern multicultural Britain. All the strengths found in the care for pupils at the last inspection have been maintained. There has been further recent development of the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.

### **Leadership and management are very good. There is very effective teamwork at all levels.**

28. In this school there is a strong belief in meeting pupils' needs through a consistent team approach. The very effective teamwork of the headteacher, staff and governors is a significant feature in what makes the school successful. There is a clear shared direction for the school's development that puts the pupils first. At the last inspection, there was found to be a strong team spirit within the school and this has been maintained and developed well.
29. The headteacher maintains a clear overview and also delegates very effectively to staff with leadership and management responsibilities. She gives good support to others to lead in their areas. All staff know what is expected of them. This is seen, for example, in the effective development of information and communication technology and design and technology by the co-ordinators. Currently, the science co-ordinator is leading the implementation of new approaches to practical and investigative science successfully. There is very good leadership of special educational needs by the deputy.
30. One reason why the delegation of responsibilities in this school is so effective is that there is a very good shared commitment to the further improvement of the school. The dip in the writing standards at the end of Year 6 in 2001 was speedily rectified. The whole teaching team undertook an analysis of provision and pupils' performance in the tests. This was followed up by effective action to rectify the weaknesses the analysis had revealed.
31. The governing body has full confidence in the headteacher and staff and has a very strong involvement in shaping the direction of the school. Governors have, for instance, recognised the need to market the school in view of a predicted falling roll. The governing body has many strategies for finding out about the school's effectiveness. In addition to the headteacher providing them with regular reports and updates, systems are established that link individual governors with co-ordinators. This allows governors to check what the school does and to make a specific contribution in a wide range of areas.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

#### **The provision for reception age children is not closely enough matched to their needs.**

32. While the school has established planning for the learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6, it is still developing its specific provision for reception age children. These children are being taught satisfactorily, but improvements are needed to ensure that the teaching and learning opportunities are always well enough matched to their specific and individual needs.



33. The present small group of reception age children is taught together with another small group of the youngest Year 1 pupils. There are occasions when all the class cover the same work and this is not appropriate for the needs of the reception age children. There are also times when the work is too easy for some of the children, with the result that these children are not learning enough. When group work is organised, there is not always adequate support for the children working without direct teaching. Not enough opportunities are provided for children to record their work. The work that is recorded does not always show sufficient challenge for all children. Systems for checking children's progress towards the standards expected nationally at the end of the reception year are at an early stage of development. More work is needed to refine and establish them.
34. The school is planning to improve the accommodation for reception age children and recognises that the outdoor provision is in need of development. At the time of the inspection, there was no enclosed outdoor play area specifically for children of this age, although there are plans for the development of such an area. While there are plenty of good quality toys for outdoor play, their use is restricted. They can only be used in small groups when another adult is present. The consequence is that there are too few opportunities for learning outdoors. The outdoor provision does not contribute enough to children's physical development or, for instance, to their exploration of early mathematical and scientific concepts.

**Pupils' annual reports do not always give parents a clear enough picture of how well they are achieving or of what they need to do to improve.**

35. The quality of their children's annual written reports is a concern for some parents and the school has recognised that there is a need to improve them. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' reports are satisfactory overall. In some classes, such as last year's Year 1, they are good. However, there is some variation in the quality of reports in different classes. Not all give a clear enough picture to parents about what their child as an individual knows, understands and can do. In some reports, targets for improvement are too general. They do not tell parents enough about what their children need to do next in order to improve.

**WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to rectify the weaknesses, while maintaining the many strengths of the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- a) Improve the provision for reception age children so that the learning opportunities are closely matched to their needs by:
- using assessment to make sure that work is at the right level for each child; and
  - developing the use of the outdoor environment to support children's learning.

*(Paragraphs 32 – 34)*

- b) Ensure that pupils' annual reports give their parents a clear picture of how well their children are achieving and of what they need to do to improve.

*(Paragraph 35)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	6	6	0	0	0
Percentage	5	32	32	32	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 five percentage points. Percentages total more than 100 owing to rounding.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	27

#### 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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	13	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (88)	96 (93)	100 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (93)	96 (98)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
		2001	9	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	17	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (97)	86 (97)	95 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	19	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (97)	86 (100)	95 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	175	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	25.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	106

***FTE means full-time equivalent.***

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	425625
Total expenditure	424151
Expenditure per pupil	1964
Balance brought forward from previous year	36693
Balance carried forward to next year	38167

### ***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	2.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	178
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	41	3	3	3
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	8	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	55	5	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	53	23	3	0
The teaching is good.	53	41	5	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	37	15	8	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	32	6	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	37	41	1	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	50	32	8	8	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	55	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	50	9	1	4

Not all responses to questions total 100 owing to rounding.