

## INSPECTION REPORT

**BUCKNELL ST MARY'S CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bucknell, Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123537

Headteacher: Mrs D Cawte

Reporting inspector: A C Davies  
3639

Dates of inspection: May 6-7<sup>th</sup> 2003

Inspection number: 248474

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided Church of England
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bucknell Shropshire
Postcode:	SY7 0AA
Telephone number:	01547 530264
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Hann
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bucknell St Mary is a small primary school with 46 pupils, aged between 4 and 11. It is situated in a rural area to the south of Shrewsbury. There are two classes with approximately 24 pupils in each. Reception-aged children join the school in one of three terms according to their age. The school is a Church of England Voluntary Aided establishment and enjoys strong support from the Church. The pupils are mainly drawn from the community that immediately surrounds the school. The parents give a high priority to their children's education and many families have had long association with the school. The number of children on the special educational needs list is higher than average, although no one has a statement for special needs. Nearly all pupils are white and no-one has English as an additional language. When children first start school their levels of attainment vary greatly, however a significant number have problems with their communication skills. They display personal and social skills that are as expected for their age and are slightly more advanced than expected in their physical skills.

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

This is a good school with many strengths which far outweigh the few weaknesses. The majority of pupils are attaining standards that are expected for their age in English, mathematics and science and there is good use made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, standards in information and communication technology are below those expected for their age. The teaching is good and having a positive impact on the way pupils learn. The school is very well led by a dedicated and charismatic headteacher who is clear about how she wishes to continue to improve the school. The school gives good value for money.

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

- The headteacher leads a strong team of staff dedicated to helping pupils learn effectively and to achieve their potential.
- In each of the two mixed aged classes teachers meet the needs of all pupils by giving careful attention to what they are to learn in each lesson.
- More able pupils are being effectively challenged, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- The staff have worked hard to ensure that young children in their reception year are provided with a relevant and purposeful curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good and this is helping them to learn more effectively.
- The school has successfully formed a very strong relationship with parents and the community.

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

- Pupils' skill level in information and communication technology (ICT) is not as high as it should be.
- Although pupils write with confidence their written vocabulary is unadventurous and their stories tend to lack flair.
- Limited use is made of learning targets with individual pupils to help motivate them to improve their learning.

*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 April 1997 and it has maintained the strengths identified at that time. The positive action taken to deal with the key issues that were reported then has helped it make good progress since the previous inspection. In particular, the curriculum framework has been improved with greater clarity about the way the school seeks to give a balance of activities for pupils, with appropriate attention to creativity. Short and medium term planning has been improved and it is now clear how pupils' learning is being developed progressively. The school development plan, another area identified for improvement, is now well organised so that the school can see how it is making headway with its intended improvements.

## STANDARDS

With so few pupils in each year group it is difficult to use national test results for 7 and 11 year olds to make comparisons with other schools, both nationally and locally. However, when taking sets of results over a period of five years, the school is successful in enabling most pupils to attain the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics at the age of 7 and in English, mathematics and science at the age of 11. Overall, the picture is of pupils making good progress as they move through the school with strengths noted in mathematics, reading and music. In contrast, the pupils' level of attainment in information and communication technology is below that expected for their age.

More able pupils, in particular, show a real love for literature and read widely from a range of authors. They always take books away on holidays and read regularly at home. They are able to discuss the differences between authors' style and show preferences for different types of books. All pupils use a range of strategies to read unknown words and most read fluently with good expression. Pupils' written work is well organised and they sequence their thoughts effectively. They are prepared to 'have a go' at using words they are not sure how to spell and most make reasonable attempts at more difficult words. However, their descriptive language is disappointing because they tend not to use adventurous vocabulary. Their story lines tend to be unimaginative and lack flair. Pupils are, however, able to apply their literacy skills in other subjects and therefore writing in subjects like history, science and geography is appropriate for its purpose.

Pupils have secure numeracy skills and can quickly add or subtract numbers at speed. Older, more able pupils are able to order decimal fractions and know the value of negative numbers. Throughout the school more able pupils are able to apply their knowledge of number to solving problems. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the way work is organised to allow them greater access to practical methods of calculation. In science, a recent reorganisation of the curriculum has allowed pupils more access to investigational work and this is helping most pupils to achieve more highly in this subject. In other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age, except for music, where they attain better than expected, and in ICT, where their attainment is below that expected for their age.

When children first start school their attainment is broadly as expected for their age, except in communication where it is below, and in physical development where it is slightly better than expected. As they move through the school pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy, with more able pupils attaining well in the national tests for 7 and 11 year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with many attaining at the levels expected for their age in the national tests. Pupils' improved literacy and numeracy skills are helping them to achieve well in most other subjects. However, pupils' lack of use of ICT across the curriculum is inhibiting their progress in other subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils clearly enjoy their school and feel proud to be part of this community. They are enthusiastic about their work and try hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and courteous. They show good levels of respect for teachers and the vast majority's behaviour is exemplary.

Personal development and relationships	Good. Staff and pupils enjoy a warm relationship and pupils are keen to be given additional responsibilities. The school recognises that more can be done to widen opportunities for pupils to take on more responsibilities both in and out of classrooms.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Too many parents take pupils on extended holidays during term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

One of the key strengths of the teaching is the way all staff work at ensuring that the needs of all pupils, regardless of age and ability, are being met in the two mixed-aged classes. Good use is made of the classroom support assistants to help in this respect. Young reception-aged children and those with special educational needs benefit greatly from the impact made by these classroom assistants.

At the beginning of each lesson the teachers make it clear what the learning intentions are and this is helping pupils to be very focussed as the lesson proceeds. The teachers make effective use of the end part of the lesson to make sure that the pupils have learnt what was intended. The planning is very thorough and shows that teachers build on pupils’ previous learning so that they are able to learn at an appropriate rate. There is also good use made of specialist teachers to help raise the expectations of pupils. The use of an outside specialist music teacher is a very good example with standards in music being good as a result. Teachers make very good use of resources to help motivate pupils and the resources are exceptionally well organised in classrooms, giving pupils good access to them.

The staff ensure that pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills by requiring them to use these skills in other subjects, such as, science, history, geography and design and technology. Good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has benefited the teaching of English and mathematics with teachers feeling very secure when teaching these subjects. There is still some insecurity amongst teachers about how to make the most effective use of ICT across the curriculum. This, combined with the limited resources available to develop this subject is causing standards to be lower than they should. The school is keen to help pupils be more clear about what they need to do next in order to improve by introducing learning targets for them. This has not yet had time to make an impact on pupils’ learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Good application of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is helping the work in all subjects be of a better quality. The careful consideration given to the needs of very young pupils is helping the school have a strong foundation stage for reception aged children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Careful consideration is given to identifying pupils who require additional support. Very good plans are drawn up for these pupils, which identify small steps to help them move on their learning. The



	school is quick to bring in outside agents if there is specialist support required for individuals.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school works hard to help pupils have a view about what is happening in the world around them. The older pupils, for example, were writing to a person involved in the recent conflict in Iraq. The pupils are helped to have a compelling sense of belonging to a special community and this is seen at its best during assemblies, where a strong sense of unity exists.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Child protection procedures are secure. The school has effective systems in place to check on pupils' academic, as well as pastoral, well-being.

Many parents work voluntarily in classrooms, which underlines the strength of relationship that the school has with its parents. There is a very close relationship between school and home with frequent information being passed on to parents about what is happening on a day-by-day basis. Although the annual reports to parents about their children's progress are detailed they do not always make it clear what needs to be done next to help individuals improve.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has her finger on the pulse of this school. She is very clear about the way she wants to move the school forwards and has, in a relatively short time, made a positive impact on the staff, governors, parents and pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The range of committees that exist helps the Governing Body be efficient in its way of working. The governors have good knowledge of the school with some having had links with it for many years.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effective systems in place to help it check on pupils' progress and to consider the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the teaching and learning. Good use is made of this information to help the school continue to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The way the school makes effective use of its experienced and talented staff is a prime example of getting the best possible value from an important resource.

### 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>• That their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• That children make good progress in the school.</li> <li>• The school is well led.</li> <li>• The staff are always willing to help parents and children with any issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None noted.</li> </ul>

The inspection team can see why parents are positive about the school and agree with all the positive comments made.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- **The headteacher leads a strong team of staff dedicated to helping pupils learn effectively and to achieve their potential.**
1. The headteacher has, in a relatively short period of time since her appointment, established very positive relationships with governors, parents, staff and pupils. She is very well thought of and this is reflected by the way pupils respond to her lead, both during lessons and when showing leadership outside the classroom. The staff work to a common purpose and give dedicated time to ensuring pupils are provided with a stimulating learning environment and be able to achieve to their potential. Much is owed to the headteacher's personality. The friendly and supportive manner is very evident when leading situations with staff. Her charismatic leadership style is influential in persuading staff to work with her and to give additional time to addressing issues of school improvement. However, it is her vision for the school and the way she has communicated it that has had much to do with the success she has experienced to date. The headteacher is determined that each pupil is able to achieve to his or her full potential and therefore there has been no let up in the school's determination to help pupils attain very well in national tests and to make good progress as they move through the school. Her ability to communicate this vision to the rest of the staff has been a critical feature of her successful leadership.
  2. Parents appreciate her style of leadership. During the pre-inspection meeting and in the replies to the questionnaire there was an unanimous feeling that the school is well led. The parents at the meeting expressed their support for a leader who is always available to them and willing to spend time discussing any issue that concerns them. The parents commented on her personality and linked this to one of the reasons why their children enjoyed coming to school. Similarly, governors have much faith in her style of leadership. They feel well informed and guided, without being over-directed. In this way they find it easier to make their contribution to the overall leadership of the school.
  3. The headteacher successfully draws on the expertise and experience of staff, some of whom have been at the school for many years, to help focus attention on areas for development. She is able to recognise the individual strengths of members of staff and use this to help whole school development. Because there are only three teachers there is a great dependence on informal, as well as formal, structures to help everyone have a sense of continuity and progression. One of the teachers teaches in both classes and this helps to ensure that pupils are provided with stability. All staff are involved in identifying the school's priorities. Communication at all levels is very good so that by the time staff come to discuss priorities for the school improvement plan it is already clear what needs to be done. There is good response to national and local initiatives with the staff being very aware of current national initiatives and feel confident in implementing new ideas, such as the Foundation Stage of Learning curriculum.
  4. There is a comprehensive monitoring programme in place with good use made of the Local Education Authority to help focus on the quality of teaching and learning. The feedback provided to individual teachers acknowledges the quality of their practice. All staff use performance data sensitively and effectively to help track the expected progress of individuals as they move through the school. Pupils' work is scrutinised regularly with specific focus given

to certain aspects, such as creativity in writing. This has helped the school to be very secure when drawing up its priorities for the school improvement plan.

- **In each of the two mixed aged classes teachers meet the needs of all pupils by giving careful attention to what they are to learn in each lesson.**
5. All three teachers are experienced in working with mixed aged classes. They use this experience to good effect in planning for the needs of pupils of different age and ability. Their planning is very thorough and objectives for learning are clearly identified and focused on during the lessons. The shared planning format helps teachers recognise what the main objectives are and to build on pupils' previous learning. They also use their experience effectively in organising each lesson, making the most of the classroom support available to them. Teachers also make very good use of learning resources to help motivate pupils and these resources are exceptionally well organised in classrooms, giving pupils good access to them. The good quality of support provided by a number of classroom assistants has helped staff to give particular consideration to the needs of the very youngest children and to the needs of those with special educational needs.
  6. Teachers also rely heavily on their assessments of individuals to ensure that they are providing work that is suitable for each group of pupils. As a result of the thorough planning, which outline the learning intentions, both staff and pupils can assess if new learning has occurred. Plenaries (end parts of lessons) are used effectively to check if the learning intentions have been met. There is also good use made of specialist teachers to help raise the expectations of pupils. The use of an outside specialist music teacher is a very good example with standards in music being good as a result.
  7. In Class 1, the teachers ensure that the needs of reception-aged children, following the Foundation Stage of Learning, are met at the same time as they are providing challenge and support for Years 1 and 2 pupils, who follow the National Curriculum. The reception aged children are often involved in the first part of lessons before being provided with carefully planned activities that follow on from the introduction at a later stage of the lesson. These activities are usually full of opportunities for these younger children to gain experiences from practical activities.
  8. In Class 2, the teachers cater successfully for the four year groups, ranging from Year 3 to Year 6. They also give due attention to the ability levels within the groups. They manage this by frequently choosing topics that interest each age group and then move on to provide challenges that are specifically tailored to the needs and age of all pupils. This was seen at its best during one numeracy lesson when the teacher worked on making up 100 with all the class but expected the more able pupils to use decimal fractions as well as negative numbers. During the mental and oral starter to the lesson which involved all pupils the teacher focuses her attention on different groups of pupils at any time expecting their response to be in line with levels of difficulty that she had already made clear to each group. In the same lesson, she increases the challenge to a few pupils who have come up with a formula to work out a problem she has set them. They are then expected to use this formula to work out problems that involve more than one step.
  9. The both classes staff ensure that pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are required to use these skills in other subjects, such as, science, history, geography and

design and technology. In addition, good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has benefited the teaching of English and mathematics with teachers feeling very secure when teaching these subjects. The strategy has helped staff to have a process to use to engage and motivate all pupils of different age and ability. This has added to the level of confidence staff feel about handling such a wide age and ability range in each of the two classes.

- **More able pupils are being effectively challenged, especially in literacy and numeracy.**
10. During literacy and numeracy lessons the staff are very aware of the needs of more able pupils and provide suitable challenges for them. More able pupils are encouraged to read extensively and to talk about their reading habits. During a discussion with more able pupils it was evident that they chose from a wide range of authors and were quick to associate with characters they had encountered in their books. Many associated with characters that were different to themselves and were able to move into a 'make-believe' world pretending to be that character for a day.
  11. In Class 1, during the start of a literacy lesson, the teacher has chosen a book that enables all pupils, irrespective of ability, to gain much from it. For instance, the more able pupils are able to use the descriptive words that they met in the story to develop their own settings or characters. When they completed this task the teacher is quick to suggest that they now consider alliteration to heighten the challenge for them. In the same class, the teacher focuses her questioning expertly during the mental and oral part of the lesson so that more able pupils are having to think deeply about the way they work out their answer.
  12. In Class 2 the teacher also makes use of her questioning to challenge the more able pupils more appropriately. The use of negative numbers and decimal fractions are introduced to more able pupils while others think of combinations of numbers that make up 20, 30, and so on. In the same class, the teacher provides challenge for more able pupils during the literacy lesson by introducing the ideas of working on metaphors to capture the pupils' descriptions. Although the impact made within the lesson is not yet seen in the long-term completed written work of more able pupils it is clear that the teachers are very aware of the need to challenge them and improve the quality of their writing within each lesson.
- **The staff have worked hard to ensure that young children in their reception year are provided with a relevant and purposeful curriculum.**
13. Staff in Class 1 have worked very hard at implementing the Foundation Stage of Learning curriculum. They have given careful consideration to the amount of time that needs to be devoted to practical activities and to extending children's personal and social skills. They recognise that classroom organisation and management have to be carefully considered to enable pupils in Years 1 and 2 to work alongside reception-aged children.
  14. The very effective use of classroom assistants is considered a vital part of the organisation. The classroom assistants are used to follow up tasks that have been introduced by the teacher, either with the reception group or the Year 1 and 2 pupils. This was seen at its best during a literacy lesson with Class 1 when all the children listened to the initial story before the youngest children were taken to the 'foundation room' to continue to work on practical ideas based on the story. The development of the foundation stage working area, known as the foundation room, next to

staffroom has been another major and successful feature that has enabled the reception children to be provided with an appropriate curriculum.

15. In addition to the development of the Foundation Room, there are advanced plans in place to create a new outdoor learning environment for young children. The plans, which are at an advanced stage of development, support the requirements outlined within the relatively new foundation stage of learning curriculum for children to learn by working outside. The school has spent a great deal of money on ensuring that the curriculum for reception aged children is appropriate. They have also consulted with outside experts to help plan effectively and to use appropriate assessment materials. The new curriculum that has been adopted makes clear links between the foundation stage curriculum and that of the National Curriculum.
  16. In some cases the staff use the expectations of learning within the foundation stage of learning as a vehicle for working with older, Year 1 and 2 pupils. Once a week there is a heavy focus on creativity for all the pupils in Class 1. During this session all pupils are expected to plan out exactly what they are going to do taking account of the resources that are available to them. They then evaluate how effectively they have carried out their tasks and see how they could have improved on their original ideas. The process, which is steeped heavily in a problem solving approach, helps all pupils to think more clearly and successfully helps the reception aged children to think creatively. All children use a set of sheets to record what they are doing. These sheets are different according to the age and ability of the children but provide a focus for the children to consider their ideas. During this session there is a strong emphasis on independence, with children being expected to work things out for themselves with minimal direct support from adults. However, the careful organisation of resources and the additional number of adults that are available in the classroom gives indirect support to all. During this session the adults use a proforma to record any significant assessment point.
  17. The curriculum that is provided for these young children is balanced and broad and provides challenge for them. More able children are quickly identified and provided with demanding tasks while those who require additional support are able to access it.
- **Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good and this is helping them to learn more effectively.**
18. The vast majority of pupils behave exemplary in lessons. Only on a very few occasions did staff need to break away from their teaching to remind pupils of aspects relating to their behaviour. Almost all pupils enjoy coming to school, as is indicated in the parental questionnaire replies, and feel proud to be part of this school community. They are enthusiastic about their work and try hard in lessons. Pupils are polite, well mannered and courteous. They show good levels of respect for teachers and are keen to be helpful at all times. This is reflected by the number of pupils who are prepared to help out during break and dinner times.
  19. The behaviour of pupils, both in lessons and at play is good. They have positive attitudes to their work and this is helping to make an important contribution to their learning. This is a slight improvement on the good behaviour reported at the time of the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents state that pupils' behaviour is very good. This was also confirmed in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and when they attended the pre-inspection meeting.

20. In all lessons pupils are attentive and keen to listen to their teachers. In each of the two classrooms the class rules are made clear and all pupils feel that they are fair and sensible. Pupils are quick to settle to their tasks and are very eager to respond to the questions posed by the teachers, even though they may not be completely sure of the answers. This indicates that they have a good level of confidence and are able to sustain their concentration for long periods. It was noteworthy that many pupils were able to persevere with tasks that they found demanding. They show good levels of respect for the adults that work with them and appreciate any support they are given. Pupils with special educational needs, or those who find aspects of learning difficult, are very thankful for the support provided by classroom assistants. The good standard of behaviour is established in Class 1, where there is a strong focus on personal, social and emotional development. This is helping pupils, as they move through the school, to recognise what is, and is not, acceptable behaviour in different situations. Pupils are mature and this is helping them to make sensible decisions based on sound principles of courtesy and giving consideration to the well-being of their peers.
  21. The pupils' behaviour is also impressive when they are at play or during lunch times. In the dining hall, for example, pupils show good manners and are quick to thank the lunchtime supervisors for any help they receive. In the playground any small squabble is settled amicably and sensibly. Pupils stated that bullying was not an issue in their school but knew exactly what they would do if they felt threatened in any way.
  22. Most pupils are a delight to spend time with because they are polite, well mannered and courteous. They are also a pleasure to take out of school. The parents who have helped during visits also state that they were very impressed by the standards of behaviour of the pupils. Pupils are at ease when talking to adults and this is part of the school's expectation. The high priority given to speaking and listening throughout the school pays dividends in this respect. Importantly, the vast majority of pupils are very proud of their school and Year 6 pupils expressed some sadness about leaving.
- **The school has successfully formed a very strong relationship with parents and the community.**
23. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents there was very positive support expressed by all who attended with regard to the way the school provided for their children. This was also evident in the questionnaire returns which were extremely positive and reiterated what the parents in the meeting had expressed.
  24. Parents are very satisfied that the school is doing all it can to improve their children's standards of work and they believe that their children are achieving to their potential. As a small school, parents feel that it successfully caters for the needs of more able pupils as well as being able to effectively support the few pupils who have special educational needs. There were examples expressed by individual parents where the school had been able to give additional support to individuals after the parents had talked through an issue with the staff.
  25. Parents have a high level of involvement with the school and both staff and parents believe that there is a good atmosphere developed, especially since the new headteacher has been appointed. Parents are provided with a good amount of information and effective use is made of notice boards to help in this respect. The parents are happy with the quantity of information they

receive in their children's annual reports. However, the school does need to do more to ensure that they help parents to recognise what their children need to do next in order to improve.

26. The parental questionnaires received as part of the inspection were extremely positive. The twelve questions had positive response from all the parents who answered, with the exception of one parent who disagreed with one point from the twelve questions asked. This issue related to the amount of homework pupils received. This demonstrates that parents have a very high opinion of the school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- **Pupils' skill level in information and communication technology (ICT) is not as high as it should be.**
27. Up until recently and, to a certain extent the position holds for today, the school's level of resourcing to support pupils' information and communication technology capability is unsatisfactory. This is hindering the pupils' skills level and therefore they are not attaining at the level expected for their age, especially in Years 3 to 6. In addition, the school is not able to support the use of ICT across the curriculum. By the end of Year 6 all pupils are familiar with the process used to send and receive e-mails. Four out six pupils interviewed had better information and communication technology equipment at home than they had access to at school. They have carried out a limited amount of research in history and geography, using the Internet. No one had undertaken any work in multi-media presentations or any substantial work using spreadsheets.
  28. There has however been significant improvement since the previous inspection but there is still some way to go before pupils' skill level matches that anticipated for their age. There remains some insecurity amongst the teaching staff when it comes to teaching this subject. However, the school has recognised this deficiency and has plans to improve the position. The prioritisation of money to improving resources is already accepted with plans well advanced to cater for improvement.
- **Although pupils write with confidence their written vocabulary is unadventurous and their stories tend to lack flair.**
29. The national test results for the past few years show that pupils are stronger in reading and mathematics than they are in their writing. Although this matches the national trend the issue is more pronounced in the school than it is nationally. One of the main reasons for this is that pupils lack flair and creativity in their writing. They also tend to shy away from using new and more interesting words resulting in their descriptive passages being somewhat unadventurous.
  30. In Year 2, for example, a lack of use of descriptive language is inhibiting more able pupils from attaining well above the level expected for their age (level 3). These pupils successfully write for a range of purposes and their writing is carefully organised so that it follows a chronology that makes it easy for the reader to follow. They show a good range of punctuation and make plausible phonetic attempts at spelling unknown words, for example 'Shoosbery' for

'Shrewsbury' and 'chickin' for 'chicken'. Most sentences start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Most proper nouns have capital letters as does the word 'I'. Sentences start in interesting ways including 'meanwhile', although too frequently there is not enough variety in the way sentences start. The main issue is that there is not enough evidence of imagination coming through and the descriptive language is too limited.

31. This is also the case as pupils move through the school. By the end of Year 6 the vast majority are confident writers. They can interweave dialogue, description and action successfully and keep the reader very interested in the story line. Some aspects of their writing include humorous asides. Their handwriting is neat, spelling mostly accurate although they do have a tendency to mix up words like, 'where' and 'were'. The weaknesses remain in the use of descriptive language, including the lack of similes and metaphors in their stories. Stories are well sequenced, well planned but rarely include imaginative extracts. Pupils' written vocabulary is tending to be restrictive with only the rare occasions when adventurous words are used. In addition, their sentences tend to be too similar without enough variety and use of complex or compound sentences. However, there is good use of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum.

- **Limited use is made of learning targets with individual pupils to help motivate them to improve their learning.**

32. The school is keen to help pupils be more clear about what they need to do next in order to improve by introducing learning targets for them. This has not yet had time to make an impact on pupils' learning. The staff are at the stage of organising how best to implement a whole school approach to learning targets and are making decisions about which subjects are likely to benefit from the introduction of these targets.
33. During one literacy lesson in Class 2 the potential benefit of their introduction was evident when a group of pupils were writing descriptively. The teacher was effective in setting up the task and giving appropriate direction to pupils according to their age and ability. However, if the pupils were provided with learning targets this could have helped to improve the overall quality of the work that was produced. The absence of such targets required the teacher to move around each table to give added support and direction to each group.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

34. In order to continue to improve the school's provision and standards being attained by the pupils the governors, headteacher and staff need to:
- **Improve pupils' skill level in information and communication technology (ICT) by increasing the resourcing for this subject and continuing to raise staff confidence in teaching this area of the curriculum. (Paragraphs 27 and 28)**
  - **Find ways of helping pupils be more adventurous in their use of written vocabulary and try to find ways of helping them be more creative in their story lines. (Paragraphs 29-31)**
  - **Continue to seek ways of using learning targets as a way of helping pupils be aware of exactly what they need to do next in order to improve their work. (Paragraphs 32-33)**
35. In addition to these main issues the school also needs to deal with these less pressing matters.
- Review attendance rates and check to see if there is a pattern to the rising number of absences that the school is experiencing.
  - Review the way annual reports to parents are written so that it clear what it is each pupil needs to do in order to improve. (Paragraph 25)
  - Find ways of helping pupils have greater responsibilities with regard to the day-today running of the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	6
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33	67	0	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 16 percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		43
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		14

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	5	2	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	5	5
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	6	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	100 (75)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	5	5
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	6	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	100 (88)	100 (88)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	1	4	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (67)	80 (67)	80 (75)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	0	1	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	3	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (75)	80 (75)	80 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	42	nil	nil
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	nil	nil
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 ethnic group recorded			

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.7
Average class size	22

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	14

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002/3
	£
Total income	143,160
Total expenditure	143,140
Expenditure per pupil	3,328.84

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.1
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**

52.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out

44

Number of questionnaires returned

23

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	9	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	83	17	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	35	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	52	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	39	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	13	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	43	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	30	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	78	17	0	0	4