

INSPECTION REPORT

MEADOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Madeley Heath, Crewe

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124102

Headteacher: Ms. L. Davis

Reporting inspector: C.D. Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 7 and 9 July 2003

Inspection number: 248549

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and junior
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Madeley Heath Crewe
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E-mail address:	headteacher@meadows-primary.staffs.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. B. Welsh
Date of previous inspection:	1 December, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Meadows Primary school is a very small school in North Staffordshire. Nearly all the staff, including the headteacher, joined the school in the last two years. The school admits up to 14 children into its Reception class. There are currently 71 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven and they are taught in four classes. Nearly all of the pupils are of white heritage and all speak English as their first language. Attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year because the number of pupils is relatively small. It is currently in line with the standards expected nationally for pupils starting Reception. Five per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Fourteen per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is below average and two per cent (below average) have a Statement of Special Educational Need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school and the pupils achieve very well in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in other subjects, including information and communication technology are above average. The teaching is very good throughout the school. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and senior staff. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve very well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The teaching is very good and is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and their attitudes and behaviour.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good at all levels. The headteacher in particular, provides very effective leadership and direction for the school.
- The curriculum includes very good use of information and communication technology to enhance and support pupils' learning in other subjects. The school also provides a very good range of topics and activities, including many out of school activities.
- Teachers make very good use of assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is helping them to prepare and match tasks to the pupils' abilities.
- Parents think highly of the school and there are good links with them and the local community.

What could be improved

- The pupils' speaking skills and the standard of spelling in independent and extended writing.

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 December 1997 and has made very good progress since then. All the key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The headteacher and governors have ensured that teaching and learning are monitored systematically; that the school development plan includes success criteria and that the priorities are costed and linked to the school's budget; that reports to parents include comments on the pupils' progress in individual subjects; and that governors are now more involved in development planning, target setting and reviews. The school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

STANDARDS

Only ten Year 6 pupils took the National Curriculum tests last year the table of results is not published.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception age children), the results of baseline tests show that standards of attainment on entry vary from year-to-year but are mostly average for children of this age. In 2002, ten Year 6 pupils took the tests and eight pupils took the Year 2 tests. Because of the small number of pupils taking the tests annually, the results need to be interpreted cautiously. The 2002 tests for both Year 2 and Year 6 show that the school's results were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, the results this year for both year groups show marked improvement. All the pupils taking the tests in Year 2 and Year 6 reached or exceeded the levels expected for their age in all subjects. This upturn in standards is likely to be sustained, as younger pupils in both the infants and juniors are likely to reach the same standards next year. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls. The school sets challenging targets, which it usually meets.

Inspection evidence confirms that by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' speaking skills are below the standards expected for their age and this is an area for further improvement. When writing independently, the pupils tend to spell some common or high frequency words incorrectly. The school is aware that it must do more to improve these areas of language and literacy.

In the foundation subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science), standards are above those found at the last inspection and are above national expectations. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably and the pupils use computers confidently. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and are very well supported by teaching assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to learning, to school and to each other are very good. They try hard and enjoy learning, applying themselves well to the many interesting and practical tasks provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This helps to create an orderly and positive learning environment. There was only one temporary exclusion last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils are independent and show maturity. Relationships are excellent. Older pupils support younger ones. The pupils enjoy helping each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with the national average. There is no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is very good overall and ranges between good and excellent. It has improved very well since the last inspection and particularly in the infant years. Most of the teaching seen across the school has sufficient challenge and the work set for the pupils is well matched to their abilities. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently effective across the school and this has a positive impact on how well the pupils learn in other subjects. The school could now do more to improve the pupils' speaking and spelling. Teachers make good use of their assessments of the pupils' progress, especially in English, mathematics and science, and this is guiding their planning, resulting in a better match of work and higher standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. A great deal has been achieved by the staff in improving their confidence to use ICT as an aid to learning in other subjects. This has led to a significant improvement in standards in ICT as well as using computers in subjects such as science, art and design and design and technology. The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in lessons and, as a result, make very good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good. The teachers provide a broad range of practical and relevant tasks and there are very good opportunities for the pupils to use computers to support their learning in science, art and design, and design and technology work and other subjects such as geography, history and religious education. More could now be done to improve the pupils' speaking skills using drama and role-play. Spelling also needs to be improved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils receive very good support. They are identified early and make very good progress. Teaching assistants play an important role in helping the pupils to improve their language skills as well as providing effective and highly skilled support in all other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision is very good and is supported by a broad range of activities in school and outside school times. Very good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. The pupils are also developing a good understanding of life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a good level of care provided for all of the pupils. The school has good procedures to assess how well the pupils are doing, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers use these assessments to set realistic and measurable learning targets for the pupils to achieve.

Parents believe that the school improves their children's personal development very well. Very good quality information about the curriculum and school events is provided for parents as well as information about the progress their children make and their attainment targets.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. The staff work closely with her to monitor lessons, pupils' work and their progress. The management of the school is clearly focused on raising standards and providing a rich and broad curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides very good and effective support. They work closely with the school and its staff and have a clear understanding of their role in managing and monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good overall. The governors and staff have established clear priorities in the school development plan through an effective process involving audits, monitoring progress and evaluating teaching, learning and the progress that pupils make.
The strategic use of resources	This is very good. There are targets which are matched to spending priorities. The school manages its finances very well, ensuring best value for money when committing the school's resources.

The administrative support is efficient and effective and makes a very good contribution to the running of the school and its finances. The school building and school site are very well maintained and managed by the caretaking and cleaning staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress. • The teaching is good and sets high expectations. • They feel comfortable approaching the school. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The range of activities provided outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Information about their children's progress. • To be more involved in the work of the school.

There are very effective links and positive relationships with parents. Inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by the parents. Homework is good and well planned. A small number of parents had concerns about the quality of information provided about the pupils' progress. The inspectors judge that the school provides a very good range of information about test results and information about the pupils' academic and personal development is presented very clearly in the annual pupil reports sent to parents. Inspectors also judge that the school does a great deal to involve parents and often invites them to help in school or to participate in workshops and activities outside school times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils achieve very well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

1. Inspection findings confirm that standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in most subjects. The National Curriculum tests alone are an unreliable measure of the school's performance as the school usually has a very small number of pupils taking the tests each year. Inspection findings show that all the pupils have reached or exceeded the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Furthermore, by comparing the progress the pupils make from their attainment on entry to the school, inspection findings confirm that the pupils achieved very well. For example, the pupils in Year 2 this year started the school with below average standards on entry to the Reception year and the pupils in Year 6 started Year 3 with below average standards four years ago. There have therefore been significant gains in their learning to reach or exceed the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
2. By the time the pupils start Year 1, they read and write with confidence and have a good understanding of numbers. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils can use their knowledge of letter sounds very well when playing a special 'eye-spy' game at the beginning of an English lesson. Both Year 1 and 2 pupils are able to change statements into questions and punctuate the sentences accurately and clearly. Literacy skills such as this build very well on the very good start made in Reception. The Reception children sound out letters and they are comfortable reading familiar words. Overall they are making very good progress in both reading and writing. By Year 2 the pupils can find information in stories and non-fiction texts and are able to write sentences independently with understanding. In mathematics, both Reception children and infant pupils can use their good understanding of number facts. Reception children happily count in twos and can start from any point on a number line. By Year 2, the pupils quickly learn to count in fives and tens and this helped them to work out time differences on a clock face in a very effective mathematics lesson. The progress made in basic literacy and numeracy skills is helping the pupils to understand their science work. The scrutiny of the pupils' workbooks shows that, by the end of Year 2, the pupils have a very good grasp of fair testing. They can draw simple conclusions from observable changes, such as the changes to plants as they grow and the conditions that are best for growing.
3. Similarly, in the junior classes, the pupils use their basic literacy and numeracy skills very well in other subjects including science. Teachers use an interesting range of tasks to keep the pupils focused on reading and writing skills. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils are able to analyse copies of advertisements to identify key features and words that are aimed at persuading the reader to buy a particular product. From this they go on to investigate key features of persuasive writing and are clear about the use of adjectives, adverbs and alliteration in advertising. From previous work seen in the pupils' books throughout the junior years, the pupils have learned to take notes, self-correct and edit their writing and to research using fiction and non-fiction texts. Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, having read extracts from Michael Morpugo's novel 'Kensuke's Kingdom', write an account of an incident from someone else's point of view. The pupils' writing throughout the junior years shows that they are able to distinguish key features in texts such as plot, endings and the use of phrases that describe indefinite time such as 'long, long, ago'. There is clear progression in what the pupils learn in English so that by Year 6 they are able to write fiction stories using flashback and

time-slips. The standards achieved by the end of Year 6 are above those expected for pupils this age.

4. Junior pupils make very good progress in mathematics and science. Building on the good work done in the infant classes, junior pupils can apply their knowledge of Carroll Diagrams to sort and interpret data. In previous work the pupils demonstrate that they are able to choose the most appropriate number operations to solve a range of problems. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils quickly use multiples and factors to work out number patterns such as those in factors of nine or seven. By Year 5, the pupils use rules of divisibility to help them quickly check their answers when calculating multiplication and division. Year 5 and 6 pupils are able to use good techniques to help them self-correct by reversing multiplication and division and this has improved their confidence when attempting to solve problems independently. They can use multiples in steps, recognising that multiples of 7, 70 or 700, produce similar patterns when extending number operations beyond hundreds and thousands. Workbooks show that the pupils are able to use and interpret information and data and can present these as graphs, tables and matrices. By the end of Year 6 the pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills very effectively to a range of problem solving activities that involve money, decimal fractions, time and measures. For example, they have learned to calculate angles inside triangles and recognise key features of different triangles such as isosceles, equilateral and right-angled triangles.
5. The pupils' good knowledge of basic skills, such as reading, writing and numeracy are helping them to make good progress in other subjects, including science. This is also reflected in last year's teacher assessments in Year 2 where the pupils achieved above average standards in science. By the end of Year 6, science standards are above average. In the science lessons seen, Year 5 and 6 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to measure and observe changes to pulse rates before, during and after exercise. The pupils can explain why you breathe harder during and when recovering from exercise and can set up a fair test. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks shows that their recorded work includes detailed and well labelled drawings of their investigations and good quality writing about observable similarities and differences when classifying and drawing conclusions from their findings. In Year 5 and 6 the pupils have retained a good understanding of the terminology associated with electricity and circuits. Building on the work they covered two years ago, the pupils are able to recall basic facts about electrical sources, components and basic rules that apply to electric circuits. Other work seen throughout the school in pupils' books or displayed on walls shows that the teaching has clearly developed the pupils' understanding of scientific properties of plants from a basic understanding of root growth in Year 1 to more advanced hypotheses in Year 3, with searching questions about the most effective conditions in which plants grow and thrive. The pupils' reading and writing skills help them to record their findings clearly and when asked to read information from non-fiction texts during science lessons they are able to understand the main points very well because of their very good reading skills.

The teaching is very good and is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and their attitudes and behaviour.

6. The teaching is very effective. It is planned to meet the needs of all year groups and the teachers monitor and adapt their planning to take account of the pupils' progress and abilities. All the teachers and support staff expect the pupils to behave well, contribute to class discussions and respond to others with courtesy and respect. This expectation is consistent throughout the school and, as a result, pupils make very good progress, show very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.

7. The Reception children are taught the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy very effectively. The children make very good progress so that by the time they start Year 1 they have achieved the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning. The teacher's planning is very good because it sets out long term objectives planned in each area of learning to relevant short term learning goals which are achieved through practical and interesting tasks and activities. The classroom areas are very colourful and provide stimulation, mystery and wonder for the children. Consequently, the children respond enthusiastically, for example, they enjoy talking about the changing weather and help their teacher to work out how many children are present each day by adding up and 'taking-away' during registration time each morning. Early writing is inspired by books such as John Burlingham's 'Mr. Gumpy's outing'. The children have made their own books, forming letters and words into simple sentences and illustrating their stories with a picture. This is very well linked to topics about 'Going on a holiday' which is displayed in the Reception class. Here the children have painted pictures of different modes of transport, vehicles and vessels that float, fly or move in different ways. Mathematical learning is reinforced in stories and nursery rhymes, such as 'What's the time Mr. Wolf?' The children behave superbly in lessons, listening to their teacher or teaching assistant and relationships are excellent. They show a very good level of concentration and application in lessons because the teaching is so stimulating and well organised.
8. Throughout the school the teaching is very good and ranges from good to excellent. The headteacher and staff ensure that the teachers' planning takes account of the needs of pupils according to their age and abilities. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and say that the teachers do well to help them become mature and responsible in a supportive and positive learning environment. The teaching is well organised and planned with stimulating, practical and relevant activities that help the pupils to enjoy their learning so they respond very positively to school and to their work. In a mathematics lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils made excellent progress investigating and measuring angles in triangles. Year 1 and 2 pupils were provided with very good and well organised teaching which incorporates real life experiences such as times of the school day to reinforce the pupils' understanding of telling the time in both analogue and digital forms.
9. The work is well matched to the pupils' needs and abilities. This helps all the pupils to enjoy their learning and to work with others. In Year 1 and 2, for example, the pupils had a clear understanding of how to read and use a play script and could distinguish between narrative and descriptive writing in the text. They responded enthusiastically when describing how the three pigs might feel about the wolf 'blowing their house down' and wrote letters asking the wolf to apologise for what he did. In a very good writing lesson linked to geography work, Year 3 and 4 pupils enjoyed looking at photographs of different climates and people from around the world. This evoked thoughtful discussion and writing about how people cope in challenging climates such as deserts, floods and particularly cold parts of the world. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils were inspired by an extract from a story in which a character falls overboard into the sea and tried to write an account from an observer's point of view. This lesson, like so many others in the school, is made lively and interesting and linked to direct experiences. For example, the pupils have interviewed members of the local community who experienced the war and used their knowledge to investigate facts about the personalities and individuals who influenced the outcome of the war. The pupils talk enthusiastically about learning experiences such as this.

The leadership and management of the school are very good at all levels. The headteacher in particular, provides very effective leadership and direction for the school.

10. The headteacher provides very good leadership. In a short time she has established a very good working partnership with the staff and governors and is highly valued by the parents, admired by her pupils and respected by the staff. She provides very effective leadership and is determined to raise standards in line with the school's stated aims. These aims are based on a commitment by the staff and governors to provide opportunities and improvement for all pupils. The headteacher and governors work closely with the staff. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support and help the headteacher to monitor lessons and support teachers and pupils. The headteacher's monitoring is thorough and she leads by her very good example in the classroom. The pre-inspection self-evaluation undertaken by the staff and governors demonstrates that the school is self-critical and evaluative about its teaching. The governors have managed the high turnover of staffing over the last three years very well. This has been endorsed by parents who are very supportive of the school and say that the headteacher and staff have transformed the school, often referring to how much the school involves them and the local community.
11. The monitoring of teaching and learning is aimed at helping the school to be clear about how well the pupils are doing and how well the teachers teach. A thorough review of the school's curriculum planning has led to improvements in standards, especially in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The staff have identified speaking and listening skills as areas for further improvement. This has determined the shape of professional development and how this can be tailored to improve speaking skills in lessons.
12. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. They are provided with regular reports by the headteacher. This helps the governors to monitor the work of the school giving them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making.
13. Financial planning is very good and the budget is used well. The school development plan is very well set out, showing priorities for further improvement. These priorities have been arrived at through careful audits, reviews and monitoring, led by the headteacher and guided by local and national initiatives. The headteacher and governors, together with the staff, set appropriate targets for improvement and measure how well each area is progressing. This is very much driven by the headteacher's determination to provide high quality resources for the pupils in an educational environment where second best will not do.

The curriculum includes very good use of information and communication technology to enhance and support pupils' learning in other subjects. The school also provides a very good range of topics and activities, including many out of school activities.

14. The curriculum is very good. It is enriched by a breadth of interesting and stimulating activities and experiences for all the pupils. Teachers successfully link topics and themes across a range of subjects. This makes learning meaningful and realistic for the pupils. The use of information and communication technology is very well linked to the work that pupils do in other subjects. The teachers use computers very well and this is particularly effective in supporting and enhancing the pupils' learning. In most lessons, teachers plan work so that the pupils use computers as an aid to learning. Previous computer work shows that, for example, the pupils have investigated a range of texts and sources of information using the Internet and CD-ROMs. Good use is made of the school's laptop computers to record data, as for example, when Year 5 and 6 pupils entered information into a spreadsheet to record information about pulse rates during a very effective science lesson. Reception children took

turns to use a digital camera when they went on a walk to observe plants and flowers. This helped them to label parts of a sunflower and to illustrate this with their photographs and pictures drawn from their observations. Year 1 and 2 pupils have undertaken a branching exercise, using a computer to determine the key features of 3D shapes. The pupils isolate the attributes of shapes by asking key questions that are resolved by answering 'yes' or 'no'. So for example, the computer program helps the pupils to ask whether the mystery shape has six faces or not; whether it is a pyramid or prism and so on.

15. The curriculum is well planned to make learning meaningful, practical and relevant to all the pupils. In Reception, the children experimented with pushing and pulling by explaining what happens to playground toys and other objects. 'I pushed the see-saw', or 'I pulled top...' This work was very well linked to experiments with toy boats and self-made rafts where the children saw them float and made them move by blowing and pushing. Year 1 and 2 pupils have sculpted using clay after looking at photographs and images from the work of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. Their clay sculptures are very well made and are clearly formed to represent abstract art. Older junior pupils have produced very good observational sketches entitled 'Still Life'. These are then adapted into abstract paintings and mounted on paper or card to form a beautiful display of artwork in the reception area of the school. The work also extends into investigations of light and tone so that the pupils learn to create shadows and highlights which add form and texture to their paintings and sketches. Year 3 and 4 pupils have been inspired in their history work about ancient civilisations. They are studying the Aztec civilisation and are soon to go to 'Cadbury World' in Birmingham to look at how chocolate is made. The topic has been thoroughly explored and has led to a variety of topics and subjects which have stimulated the pupils' interest and taught them many different subject specific skills that relate to literacy, numeracy, geography, history, art and design and design and technology. Information and communication technology has also been drawn into their studies as they sketched Aztec designs and then scanned them on to the computer to produce a coloured image which is re-designed and modified using graphic modelling techniques. Outside on one of the perimeter fences, the pupils have designed and produced an Aztec collage using coloured polythene shopping bags and members of the local community and commuters on their way to Newcastle-under-Lyme have written to the school or commented on how attractive and imaginative this is. In the classroom the pupils have produced an attractive and interactive display of questions and answers about Aztecs. This is very well linked to science work as the display invites you to answer a question and choose from three answers by pressing a button. The correct answer lights up demonstrating how well the pupils have learned to apply their knowledge of simple electric circuits to produce a quiz about Aztec civilisation. The same scientific skills are applied to design and technology as Year 3 and 4 have produced some beautifully decorated 'treasure boxes' that buzz as you open the lid.
16. Junior pupils learn and make very good progress developing an interesting and varied range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Year 3 and 4 pupils use their literacy skills to very good effect when making 'pop-up books' as part of their design and technology. Here, the teacher links literacy very well and makes the learning of design and technology skills more meaningful and relevant to the pupils. In this example, they learn to consolidate their knowledge of simple levers and mechanisms to produce moving illustrations and surprises for the reader as they are invited to lift a flap, open a door or move a paper lever to make a character move in the story books. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have written accounts from the viewpoint of a child during World War II. The teacher successfully brought together the work undertaken and information gathered in their history topic about the war to introduce to the pupils empathetic and imaginative writing in literacy lessons. This was very effective. The pupils responded

with enthusiasm as they interviewed local residents who experienced the war and looked at real artefacts like gas masks, ration books and army uniforms. The pupils then researched these by looking for information on the Internet and then produced a presentation about, say, the use of ration books using a multi-media computer program called 'PowerPoint'. Other groups worked with a parents and teaching assistant to make 'corn beef hash' to see how people coped with limited supplies of food and rations during the war.

17. The school has established a tradition for promoting art and design and the expressive and creative arts. These are making a significant contribution to the pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour. They inspire the pupils to participate in many activities outside school times. These include art club, where the pupils have experimented with different techniques such as very good quality batik work. Infant pupils attend a science club and a games club; other clubs include cycling run by the school's caretaker who is invited to assembly to award the pupils with their cycling certificates; drama club, tennis, netball, football, gardening, music (recorders), and a French class are all provided during every school year. Governors, parents, support staff and teachers run these so that the pupils work with all members of their community. Over half of the pupils in the school are involved in these activities and clubs at some time during the year. Sports and games are also promoted and supported by teachers and support staff out of school hours. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and, to the credit of the all the staff in the school, they organise these and give up a lot of their own time to help as many pupils as possible to participate in these activities.

Teachers make very good use of assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is helping them to prepare and match tasks to the pupils' abilities.

18. The school has very good and effective systems to identify, assess and monitor the pupils. This has improved the way that targets are set for the pupils and the quality of reports to parents about their children's progress. Consequently, there has been very good improvement in these areas since the last inspection as these were areas that were found to be in need of improvement at that time. The pupils make very good progress because the school monitors their work. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The pupils' targets, progress and achievements are shared with parents in order to maximise their support and co-operation. The school also identifies those pupils who have a particular talent in an area or subject or are gifted. Throughout the school, the staff regularly monitor and record how well the children do. In addition to this the staff keep and maintain records of the pupils' work to build up a record of achievement.
19. Assessments of the pupils' progress, especially in English, mathematics and science work have helped the school to improve standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It has also helped teachers to identify those pupils who are capable of achieving high standards and those who need additional support. This has helped them to plan, for example, extension work in lessons and homework to consolidate and support the pupils' learning. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and have commented on how useful homework is in helping them to contribute to their children's learning at home. Teachers plan work for individuals and groups of pupils based on their assessment of the pupils' progress. Teachers' marking is often sharp and analytical with descriptions about the context of the lessons or the work being done by each pupil.
20. The results of the end-of-year tests are analysed thoroughly by the headteacher and staff to predict targets and attainment levels for every pupil in the school. Ongoing assessments of the pupils' progress and the analyses of test results enables teachers to plan lessons that build on

what the pupils know and can do. In the Year 1 and 2 class, for example, the teacher skilfully planned a range of tasks in a very good mathematics lesson to help all the pupils understand how to tell the time in both analogue and digital forms. She grouped the pupils according to her understanding of their ability and progress. More able pupils investigated some challenging problems that involved reading and comprehending a 'time problem' then applying their knowledge of passages of time to work out, say, how long it would take someone to walk home from school when the problem provided limited information about passages of time at varying stages of the walk. Average attaining pupils in the same lesson worked out how to convert analogue times into digital forms and the pupils with moderate learning difficulties were well supported as they used clock faces to work out time intervals.

Parents think highly of the school and there are good links with them and the local community.

21. The school is successful in developing a positive and purposeful relationship with parents and its community. The school has established itself as part of the village and is increasingly become the focal point of the local community. The partnership between the school and its parents is very good, and the school enjoys very good support from the local village and surrounding areas. The overall contribution of parents to the work of the school is very good and the impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is also very good.
22. Parents find the staff helpful and approachable. The staff and governors are willing to listen to parents, often inviting their views and opinions, and the school considers the issues they raise carefully, responding swiftly to their concerns. The headteacher, staff and governors survey parental opinion to seek their views about improvements to the school and acts on recommendations and suggestions. The staff and governors work very hard to work closely with parents and this is helping to raise the profile of the school in the community.
23. Parents and volunteers from the local community feel welcome in the school. The school encourages parents to play an important part in supporting their children's work at home and this commitment has a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. The school communicates to parents what is being taught so that they can help their children with homework. In the process, many parents acquire new skills themselves and a greater understanding of the school's curriculum. The school offers regular and effective communication with parents by way of newsletters and bulletins, keeping them informed of events in the school. It also provides good quality curriculum guidance to parents. Such a guide covers all the National Curriculum subjects, informing parents about the topics that their children will study each term. Parents are also invited to attend numeracy workshops to help them understand how their children learn mathematics and to try activities for themselves.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The pupils' speaking skills and the standard of spelling in independent and extended writing.

24. There is an inconsistency in the way the pupils use their speaking skills. Many pupils do not use a broad enough vocabulary or, when attempting to answer questions or respond in class discussions, speak in punctuated phrases with common mistakes when trying to explain fully what they mean. The school could do more to develop speaking skills through drama, role-play and formal presentations.
25. The national test results in 2002 for both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils indicate that writing standards are lower than those in reading. This year, standards are better as all the pupils in both year groups have reached or exceeded the standards expected in English, but the evidence shows that the pupils performed less well in writing compared with reading. Previous test results also show that writing standards are usually lower than those in reading. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and this is reflected in the school's priorities for development and staff training. Consequently, there has been a steady improvement in the quality and range of independent writing but the pupils tend to make spelling errors of common or high frequency words in their writing.
26. The analysis of pupils' work shows that the pupils' spelling ranges from unsatisfactory to good. Many pupils in the infant years for example, are identified as requiring special support or speech therapy and many average attaining pupils throughout the school do not speak clearly enough or use complete sentences when answering questions in lessons. This hinders their writing, which is often set out in incomplete sentences or abbreviated forms. Whilst punctuation and handwriting show better progress, the use of adjectives or adverbs to illustrate or extend, say, characterisation or context in stories, is limited. More able pupils manage to reach or exceed the standards expected for their age because their writing flows with more imagination, imagery and illustration. However, even for these pupils, spelling errors are common and this tends to spoil what would otherwise be very good extended forms of independent writing.
27. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils' independent writing shows common spelling errors, lacks detail, imagery and characterisation and is usually of a lower standard compared with that seen in reading. A group of more able Year 6 pupils were observed reading poems such as 'Hare' or 'Bat' by Ted Hughes and could confidently identify rhythm, personification, imagery and alliteration. They could annotate the poem and explain meaning and context very clearly. However, in the pupils' writing, the same level of work is not always evident and can be spoiled by common spelling errors and incomplete or inaccurate sentences. Throughout the school, the pupils make some basic errors because they do not always recognise the roots of words to help them with their spellings. Infant pupils, for example, do not extend the word 'come' to 'coming' and often silent letters are not recognised in common words such as 'where' (written as 'were') or 'which' (written as 'wich'). Junior pupils who attain good reading standards sometimes make mistakes and rely on the sounds of letters rather than visual patterns to help them spell unfamiliar words. The scrutiny of some of their writing shows that some more able pupils are misspelling words like 'honey' (written as 'honny'), or confuse spelling rules and word patterns to produce 'frend instead of "friend". Throughout the school, when the pupils re-draft their writing, teachers try to point out correct spellings, but in some independent work regular mistakes are sometimes left unchecked. Although spelling

rules are taught, these are not being reinforced sufficiently to have an immediate impact on improving spelling standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

28. In order to build on the very good education provided by the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

*** Raise standards in speaking and spelling by:**

- providing more opportunities in lessons for the pupils to use and apply Standard English through drama and role-play;
- providing for older pupils more formal activities such as recitals and activities that involve speaking audibly with clarity and purpose;
- teaching spelling rules from an early age more effectively and continuing this through the school so that pupils use the roots of words, spelling patterns and word shapes to improve their spelling;
- applying more rigorous attention to spelling when marking the pupils' work.
- teaching spelling systematically across the school to ensure good progression and continuity.

(Paragraphs: 24 – 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

12

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	17	50	33	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 one eight percentage points.

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)	71
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

The number of pupils is not included in the tables below if they are below ten.

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			

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (88)	50 (100)	88 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (75)	88 (75)	63 (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			10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (67)	40 (60)	60 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (53)	70 (60)	100 (73)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	70	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	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	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	1	0	0
Chinese	0	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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4
Average class size	17.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	207,420
Total expenditure	209,209
Expenditure per pupil	2,862
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,940
Balance carried forward to next year	10,151

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	71
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	52	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	42	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	38	12	8	0
The teaching is good.	50	42	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	50	17	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	29	12	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	33	8	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	38	20	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	38	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	58	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

The parents say they choose the school because it provides a positive and supportive environment for their children. Many believe that this is a very good school where the staff work hard to provide a wide range of interesting activities and opportunities for all the pupils.