

INSPECTION REPORT

MILVERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leamington Spa

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125610

Headteacher: Mr. R. C. Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs O. M. Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 18 – 19 November 2002

Inspection number: 248697

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greatheed Road, Leamington Spa Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV32 6ES
Telephone number:	01926 424043
Fax number:	not applicable
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. A. Smail
Date of previous inspection:	6 – 9 October 1997.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 - 9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10 - 17
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	17 - 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19 - 23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Milverton Primary is an above average sized mixed, community school located in a relatively prosperous area of Leamington Spa. There are 280 pupils on roll; 140 girls and 140 boys in the four to eleven age ranges. Almost one third of the pupils live beyond the immediate locality of the school, often in less affluent areas. The school has a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, the current number being 43. Twenty-five of these pupils speak English as an additional language and one is in the early stages of learning to speak English. Most of these pupils are British Asians of Indian origin, with a few of Spanish, Portuguese, Pakistani, Chinese or Caribbean origin. A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs, most have moderate learning difficulties, with others having behaviour, communication or specific learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is broadly average. Overall attainment on entry to reception classes is average for the age of the pupils, but varies from being just average in some years to securely average in others. The school has Investors in People status, acknowledging its commitment to staff training and development, and good practice.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school providing a very good quality of education for its pupils. By the time pupils transfer to the next stage of their education, overall standards are now above average. This is because the school is well led and managed, the teaching is good, pupils are well cared for, are happy and have very good attitudes to school and work. The school is efficient and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards have improved and by the end of Year 6 are now above average in English, mathematics and science.• The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good, resulting in the improved standards.• Teaching throughout the school is good and enables pupils to achieve as well as they can.• Pupils' very positive attitudes to school, good behaviour and regular attendance support their learning.• Parents have very good views of the school and are well satisfied with the quality of education provided.• Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and make good progress. |
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What could be improved

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards in writing and the presentation of pupils' work by the end of Year 6.• The tracking of pupils' attainment from year to year to show their progress over time in the school. |
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The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in October 1997. The action plan to remedy the areas for improvement identified in the previous report has been successful. As a result, standards have risen, the leadership and management of the school; the quality of teaching, the curriculum provided and pupils' attitudes to school have improved. Strengths in the care for pupils, the provision for their personal development, the well above average attendance rates and the very good site management identified in the previous report have been maintained. The school is well placed to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	B	C	C
Mathematics	C	B	B	B
Science	C	A	C	C

Key	
Well above	A
Average	
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Children in the reception classes make good progress and, by the end of the year, the majority are on course to achieve, and a significant number to exceed, the national targets in language and number, their knowledge of the world and in their personal, creative and physical development. Overall standards are now above average for the age of the children.

The school's 2002 results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were above the national average in mathematics, broadly average in reading, but were below the national average in writing. Teachers' assessment in science showed standards to be above the national average. Whilst these results showed a good improvement in mathematics and science between 2001 and 2002, and a slight improvement in reading, standards in writing declined and were not high enough, due to the teaching of these skills. Current standards of work amongst Year 2 pupils are above average in mathematics, where mental arithmetic skills are developing well, and broadly average in reading and writing. Whilst most are likely to reach the level expected by the end of Year 2, in reading and writing, the proportion likely to exceed this level is below average. Nevertheless, from their attainment on entry these pupils are achieving well.

Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were above the national average in mathematics, and broadly average in English and science. Whilst these results were lower than in 2001, these pupils in fact achieved very well in Years 3 to 6 as their results at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in writing and mathematics. The fluctuations in results reflect the attainment profiles of different year groups and previous weaker teaching in Years 1 and 2. Standards of work among the current Year 6 pupils are above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils are achieving well although higher standards in reading compensate for lower standards in writing. The trend in the results at the end of Year 6 is broadly in line with the national trend. Standards are high enough in mathematics, but could be higher in English, particularly in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and most of those from minority ethnic groups make good progress. British Asians of Indian origin do well as they work hard to improve.

The school sets itself challenging targets in English and mathematics based on reliable assessment data. The school met its 2002 targets and is on course to achieve those set for 2003, which are higher. The school has been focusing on raising standards in writing through staff training, the performance of boys, and implementing additional national initiatives to help the drive to raise standards. The success of these measures is becoming evident in pupils' work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are happy to come and most are very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In lessons, at playtime and lunchtime behaviour is good. There has been one fixed period exclusion for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show initiative and take responsibility for themselves and others. Their relationships with each other and with staff are very good.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

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.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The teaching throughout the school meets the learning needs of pupils' well, including those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, with effective action being taken to improve the teaching of writing skills, but with further work to be done. The teaching of numeracy skills is good, with high levels of challenge in mental calculations at the start of most lessons. Other strengths in the teaching are in the planning of lessons, the management of pupils, some with behavioural difficulties, the deployment of teaching assistants and the use of resources. Teachers use the time towards the end of lessons to assess whether pupils have made sufficient progress, but these sessions are not always as effective as they could be. The weaknesses in satisfactory lessons are in the slower pace, and expectations of pupils not being as high. There is a general weakness in the presentation of pupils' work, which goes unchallenged in the marking. The purpose of lessons is shared with the pupils at the beginning, which gives a focus for their learning. In the very good lessons, the teachers return to the purpose at the end, so that the pupils are aware of their new learning and the progress they are making. Pupils have good knowledge of their learning, with Year 6 pupils aware of the level they are hoping to reach by the end of the year. The good teaching enables pupils to acquire knowledge and develop skills at a good pace.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All National Curriculum subjects, French, religious and health education are taught and statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for all pupils, whatever their difficulty. The provision is well managed by the co-ordinator. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed, maintained well and provide challenging targets. The good provision for pupils with behavioural difficulties prevents any disruption for other pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are supported well by their class teachers and teaching assistants who check they understand the vocabulary being used in specific lessons. Where necessary, pupils are assessed on entry in their first language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with very good opportunities to develop personal and social skills and to understand right from wrong. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and traditions and they are well prepared for life in our multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is high regard for pupils' health and safety. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment are good, but tracking the progress of individual pupils over time needs more rigour.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides clear direction for the work of the school and is well supported by the assistant headteachers. The management roles of curriculum leaders have developed since the previous inspection and they are influencing the development of their subjects and effectively supporting the drive to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governors are very knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities and work successfully with the headteacher and staff to ensure that high standards and provision are maintained. All statutory obligations are met and their business is conducted most efficiently through a committee structure, which makes best use of the expertise of individual governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and key staff diligently monitor the effectiveness of the school, through careful analysis of data about individual pupils' progress and comparative information about the performance of schools nationally and locally. The information is not collected together to show each pupil's progress from when they enter to when they leave, to ensure sufficient progress is made each year.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The governors have very effective systems to oversee the budget and obtain best value for money. They plan strategically for the longer-term development of the school and its priorities. Specific grants are used well and in the best interests of the pupils and the standards achieved. Staff are deployed effectively. The principles of best value are applied very well.

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 like coming to school. • The staff are approachable. • The teaching is good. • Behaviour is good and pupils become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are expected to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents feel that the school could provide a better range of activities outside of lessons. • Parents would like reading books sent home with infant pupils to be changed more often.

The inspectors support the parents' positive views of the school but. Do not support the negative views. The range of activities provided outside of lessons is good and better than that found in most schools. Infant pupils have a library book and two reading books sent home each week, which supplements the reading in literacy hours in school. This again is more than found in many schools and is good provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards have improved and by the end of Year 6 are now above average.

1. At the time of the previous inspection, standards at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in English, mathematics and science, with the exception of pupils' competency in using and applying their mathematical skills and knowledge in investigations, which was underdeveloped. Current standards of work amongst Year 6 pupils are above average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected nationally, or higher, by the end of Year 6 has increased broadly in line with, but slightly above, the national trend over the last five years. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level has also increased. For example in English, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level in 1997 was 18 per cent. This proportion has increased each year to reach 39 per cent in 2001, with a slight dip in 2002 to 37 per cent.
2. In 2001, the school achieved its best results ever at the end of Year 6. Overall, the school's results were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. The National Curriculum test results were above the national average in English and mathematics and well above in science. These pupils achieved very well over time in Years 3 to 6 as their results were below average at the end of Year 2. Pupils who left the school in 2002 also made very good progress and achieved very well over time in Years 3 to 6 but, because of the ability profile of the year group, despite the good progress the results dipped in English and science from those in 2001. In the current Year 6, an increased proportion of pupils is on course to reach the expected level by the end of the year, with a similar proportion likely to reach the higher level. The success of the action taken to improve the performance of boys is a key factor in raising overall attainment and standards. The overall performance of boys in Year 6 in 1999 was well below that of boys nationally, but has improved significantly to exceed that of boys nationally, with the gap increasing each year over the last three years. The school has focused on the reading materials and the topics chosen for writing to add more interest and enjoyment for boys, and the employment of teaching assistants has enabled small groups of pupils to receive additional support. Staff have undertaken further training which has improved the teaching of writing skills. Some of the boys interviewed said how they liked the opportunities they had in Year 5 to write longer stories or accounts and wished they still had them. Such opportunities could be provided through other subjects. Pupils are confident in understanding how to organise their writing for different purposes, a weakness identified by the school previously. For example, Year 6 stories about 'The Final Year' in the school successfully aroused the reader's emotions. A lower attaining pupil wrote 'I put my things into my schoolbag, dreading to think about how I'd give my teacher a first impression of me'. Spelling is mostly accurate, punctuation used correctly and handwriting is fluent and joined for the large majority of pupils. Reading skills develop well, with pupils in Year 6 able to discuss books they have read by a range of children's authors and give reasons for their likes and dislikes. Some pupils are avid readers.
3. In mathematics, the emphasis on developing pupils' skills in mental calculations and the different strategies they can use has had a positive effect on standards. Most pupils can recall multiplication facts quickly and accurately, which aids their work in calculating answers to written questions. They have good understanding of mathematical vocabulary, which helps them in knowing which number rule to apply when solving problems. Enough emphasis is now placed on encouraging pupils to use and apply their knowledge in investigations, for example when investigating quadrilaterals. Pupils have good understanding of decimals, fractions,

percentages, and of ratio and proportion. Higher attaining pupils can plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants accurately, average attaining pupils struggled to complete all four quadrants, with lower attaining pupils at the stage of plotting co-ordinates. By planning tasks at different levels of complexity to meet the pupils' learning needs, teachers ensure that all groups are able to make good progress.

4. There is a strong emphasis on practical investigations in science, which pupils enjoy and this helps them to build up a good body of knowledge and develop their understanding of why and how things happen. For example, pupils in Year 6 have been studying plant life and what is needed to revive pot plants. From this experiment they have acquired knowledge about photosynthesis in plants and reinforced their knowledge of conditions necessary for plants to flourish.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good, resulting in improved standards.

5. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good and a key factor in the improving standards now found in the school. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the work of the school and is well supported by the two assistant headteachers appointed recently. This is a significant improvement from the time of the previous inspection when the management structure and other aspects of the leadership and management had weaknesses. The governors have provided the headteacher with a job description which shows clearly his roles and responsibilities and to which he can be held accountable.
6. The headteacher has undertaken training for serving headteachers that has strengthened and improved his leadership skills and led to further delegation of responsibilities to members of staff. Good staff appointments have been made, which have improved the teaching and aided the building of a high-performing team who work well together. The school's procedures for appraising the work of teachers and support staff have been implemented rigorously and targets for improvement set. The roles and responsibilities of curriculum leaders have been reviewed and increased to develop their leadership and management skills and enable them to play a greater part in school self-evaluation and in influencing the development of their subjects.
7. The governors meet all their statutory obligations in full and play an outstanding role in moving the school forward. They have a very clear understanding of how the school works that enables them to work successfully with the headteacher to make sure that high standards and provision are upheld. They have a very effective committee structure, which makes use of the wide range of expertise available amongst them. Each committee carries out its work in a thorough and rigorous manner. For example, the curriculum committee refused to ratify the homework policy on two occasions because it was not clear enough. A meeting of the curriculum committee in February 2002 reviewed sporting and other cultural opportunities available for pupils. Whilst acknowledging the range of activities was impressive, cycling proficiency and a theatre visit were to be considered to add further enrichment. The finance committee members know exactly what the carry forward in the budget is earmarked for and how the school is to meet the government's target for the number of computers in schools by 2004.
8. The school has a good programme for monitoring the teaching and pupils' learning and progress. Assessment information is analysed thoroughly to pinpoint where improvement can be made and to set targets for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 based on reliable information. The only area where the school could improve its procedures is in tracking each pupil's progress from year to year, which is reported on later in this report. The areas for improvement in

teaching, identified from observing lessons are fed back to teachers and support or further training is provided. For example, the underachievement of boys and weaknesses in teaching writing skills were identified and are contained as priorities in the current school development plan. As reported earlier, further training in teaching writing skills has been provided. Another priority in the current plan is to improve the target setting for year groups. The school development plan is a good document, which is updated annually and provides a clear summary of each term's action and the person responsible. The expected outcomes of the action taken, in terms of pupils' attainment, are very clear and measurable and are checked by the governors.

9. The strategic planning for the longer-term development of the school is very good and the budget plan ensures sufficient funding is allocated to achieve the key priorities in the school development plan. Specific funding for the training of teachers has been used effectively to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of aspects of the National Literacy Strategy and in particular in grammar for writing. Some of the funding has been used to train teaching assistants in other national initiatives designed to help those having difficulties in learning to read and write, which is also helping the drive to raise standards. The funding available for all teachers to improve their skills in information and communication technology has been used appropriately and computers are used in most lessons to support pupils' learning in many subjects. Effective use is made of the funding for pupils with special educational needs. Some is used to release the co-ordinator to check on the provision and progress of these pupils, to liaise with external agencies and some pays for additional classroom assistants. The latest auditor's report in October 2002 found the school's financial administration controls to be good, with up to date records and adequate supporting documentation being retained. There were very few, minor recommendations for improvement. All financial decisions made are in the best interests of the pupils.
10. The principles of best value are applied very well in the school's use of its resources. The governors and staff compare the school's performance with that of similar schools and take appropriate action where standards fall below the average of similar schools, for example in writing. They check the value added to pupils' attainment over Years 3 to 6, compared with schools with similar results at the end of Year 2. The school challenges itself about its provision, for example in teaching French and the annual visit to France and the value of these in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education. Questionnaires are issued to parents every two years to seek their views on the provision. An area where improvement could be made is in taking pupils' views into account more often.

Teaching throughout the school is good and enables pupils to achieve as well as they can.

11. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good throughout the school, has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and is a key reason for the rising standards. Three out of every four lessons are good or better; this includes two in four that are very good and occasionally excellent. The remaining one in four lessons is satisfactory. There are examples of very good lessons in most year groups. The teaching in English and mathematics is good overall and meets the learning needs of all pupils, although the teaching of mathematics is slightly better than in English. This is because pupils in Years 3 to 6 work in smaller groups, based on what they already know and can do, and they can receive more support from their teachers because of the lower numbers. It will take a little longer for the good teaching now evident in Years 1 and 2 to show fully in the National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2.

12. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies continue to have a positive influence on the quality of teaching. The steps taken by the school to improve pupils' learning and progress, by improving the quality of teaching, have been very successful, particularly in Years 1 and 2, where all lessons seen in literacy and numeracy were very good. Support provided by the local authority's inspectors and literacy and numeracy consultants has helped the teachers to develop their skills in observing lessons; to monitor the quality of the teaching and to feedback where improvement can be made. In addition, all teachers have undertaken further training in teaching aspects of the National Literacy Strategy, particularly writing skills and this is evident in their confidence in explaining or showing pupils how to structure their writing for different purposes. For example in Year 4, pupils were learning how to write newspaper articles that would interest the reader and from looking at a newspaper, they realised the importance of the opening paragraph in giving an outline of the rest of the article. The area where further improvement could be made is in using the time towards the end of lessons to assess if pupils have made sufficient progress and are ready to move on to the next stage of learning.
13. There is a slight variation in the teaching and pace of pupils' learning throughout the year groups. This has more to do with the differing numbers of boys and girls, the proportions with special educational needs, the accommodation and the level of support, than with the teachers' planning. For example, the Year 4 class has a very high proportion of boys, most of whom need consistently good teaching to motivate them to work hard, especially as a significant number have special educational needs. In addition two new pupils joined the class this term. In most of the lessons seen, the management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties was a particular strength, as these pupils did not stand out from the rest. The behaviour management strategies used were very effective and consistently applied. In the mixed Year 5/6 class, absence of support staff, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lack of space affected the pupils' pace of learning as they received less help when working in groups. In these classes it took pupils a little longer to settle to their work and this affected the overall pace of the lessons. On the other hand, in Year 2, there is a high proportion of girls who are eager to learn and rise to the demanding challenges set. Here the pace of learning is very good because the activities planned are interesting and learning is fun. For example, an introductory session in numeracy to increase pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary for addition and subtraction was made into a 'bingo' game. The pupils listened and watched their bingo boards closely, as they wanted to be the winners. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has been maintained and the good planning and improved accommodation is supporting the teaching.
14. An example of excellent teaching was seen in a science lesson in Year 1. Pupils learned how sounds were made by different instruments; and then sorted the instruments into groups according to the sounds they made. During the initial question and answer session, pupils listened closely and the teacher directed questions to anyone not participating fully, to check they understood. Pupils then had opportunities to explore further the sounds made by the instruments, presenting their findings in a block graph. They sustained their concentration throughout, and worked hard to complete the task set. The higher attaining pupils were challenged by having to present their findings using the computer. The lower attaining pupils were well supported by the teacher and produced a group graph, whereas the others produced individual graphs. This met the learning needs of all groups of pupils very well and they rose to the teacher's high expectations of them.
15. Teachers' planning has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been securely based on the recent national guidelines. Detailed medium term plans in other year groups, which identify what pupils are expected to learn, are helping teachers in their planning for pupils of differing abilities. Weekly lesson plans for literacy and

numeracy show activities planned at three levels of complexity and in addition activities for those with special educational needs, which are often on an individual basis. The planning is a key factor in the good teaching and learning. The purpose of the lesson is often shared with pupils at the beginning to give a focus for their learning and referred to as the lesson proceeds. The weakness in teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology has also been overcome satisfactorily through additional training. The time available for learning is used well, for example registration time is used for pupils to practise spellings, or read quietly.

16. Another strength is in the use of resources. Small whiteboards are used effectively for pupils to record their answers during mental arithmetic sessions, write words or opening sentences for stories. This enables the teachers to check quickly where pupils are having difficulty and need further teaching. The relationships between the teachers and their pupils are very good and the pupils are comfortable in saying when they do not understand. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on measuring area and perimeters. A small group of pupils found they were not sure about calculating the perimeters of irregular shapes, when they were not given all the measurements they needed. The teacher worked through additional examples with them and as they were confident to try again they moved away to work individually. By the end of the lesson all were able to complete questions accurately.
17. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in supporting groups of pupils. They have been trained in additional literacy strategies and through withdrawal groups or in class support, they help to boost the performance of selected pupils or enable those with special needs to make good progress towards their targets. They help those with special educational needs to sustain their concentration and remind them of what they have to do. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported by their class teachers who check they understand the vocabulary being used or what they have to do. Teachers have good understanding of the needs of pupils from different minority ethnic groups and provide appropriate support for all groups of pupils. The marking of pupils' work is kept up to date and comments are written which inform pupils as to how they can improve their work in the future, but it does not refer to pupils' targets as often as it should. The marking helps teachers to plan the next step in pupils' learning.
18. Whilst no unsatisfactory lessons were seen, there are areas where teaching could be further improved. The time towards the end of lessons is not always used effectively to assess if pupils have made enough progress in the lesson and are ready to move on to the next stage. In a significant number of lessons, pupils merely talk about their work and what they have done rather than what they have learned. Very occasionally in lessons the activities set do not provide high levels of challenge for all groups of pupils.
19. The good teaching helps pupils to acquire knowledge and develop their skills at a good pace over time in the school. The learning targets shared in lessons help pupils to understand how well they are doing and the progress they are making. Pupils also have individual targets to move their learning on to the next stage, and they work hard to achieve them. Year 6 pupils are well aware of the levels they are hoping to reach by the end of the year and how they have progressed from the previous year. Pupils' own knowledge of their learning is good.

Pupils' very positive attitudes to school, good behaviour and regular attendance support their learning.

20. The responses to the parents' questionnaires show that 99 per cent think their child likes school, including 70 per cent who hold this view strongly. The pupils' responses to lessons and

discussions with them confirm the views of parents. In all lessons, the pupils worked hard, with most showing enthusiasm, as they want to succeed. This was particularly evident among British Asian pupils of Indian origin, who talked about working hard to raise their attainment. Most pupils are responsive in oral discussions and usually when they work independently, or in groups, they sustain concentration, discussing the activity sensibly, or checking with others when unsure. The exception to this is in classes with large numbers of boys, for example in Year 4, where they often rely on the girls to answer the questions. Pupils are confident in telling their teachers when they have not understood something in a lesson, knowing they will receive the help they need. Pupils are keen to participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities and in the school's annual visit to France.

21. Behaviour is good in lessons and was very good in 40 per cent of the lessons seen. That is the general expectation of all teachers and is very much part of the ethos of the school. Rarely did teachers have cause to speak to pupils about their behaviour in lessons and where they did it was in classes where a significant number of pupils have behavioural difficulties or other special educational needs. Pupils' behaviour was exemplary in a Year 1 science lesson, where their attention never wavered during a practical investigation into the sounds made by different instruments. They enjoyed the activity, were interested and learned much from their investigation.
22. Relationships between pupils themselves and between all adults and pupils are very good. Around the school, pupils are most helpful, polite and courteous. There are high levels of mutual respect and older pupils care for younger ones. They take on responsibilities as 'buddies', or for showing visitors around the school and assist willingly in the daily routines, such as putting chairs out for assembly, or collecting fruit for distribution at mid morning break. They show initiative in raising funds for charities such as Children in Need, or by organising stalls for 'bring and buy' sales, as in the impending sale in aid of the Anthony Nolan appeal. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting spoke highly of the caring, community ethos and stated that incidents of bullying were rare and dealt with swiftly and successfully. This was confirmed in discussions with pupils themselves. There has been one fixed period exclusion for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.
23. The attendance rate at the school in the last year was well above the national average, an improvement over the previous year. Parents understand the importance of regular attendance and support the school by not taking holidays in term time and by getting their children to school on time, so lessons start punctually and are not disrupted by late arrivals. The very positive attitudes, good behaviour and regular attendance make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and attainment.

Parents have very good views of the school and are well satisfied with the quality of education provided.

24. The parents' views of the school are very good. The responses to questions in the parents' questionnaire showed that, in eight of the twelve questions, over 95 per cent of parents responded positively. This is a similar response to that received when the school itself last sent out a questionnaire. Virtually all parents perceive their children to like school; agree that the teaching is good, and are comfortable in approaching the school with any concerns or problems. A very high proportion agree that the school is well led and managed, that pupils make good progress and that the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.
25. The parents present at the pre-inspection meeting were again very positive about the work of the school, with the exception of the frequency in changing reading books in infant classes.

However, these procedures are good and better than found in some schools, with two reading books and a library book being taken home each week. The parents present at the meeting could not indicate any ways in which the school could improve its links with them, other than by providing a list of staff and their responsibilities at the beginning of each school year, which can easily be overcome.

26. The parents raise substantial amounts of money for the school, which helps to provide additional resources for learning, recent purchases have included a digital video camera and play equipment for use at lunchtimes. The contribution of parents to pupils' learning at home and at school is very good and is a factor in the improving standards. Parents are very supportive in hearing pupils read and in the completion of homework. Many parents work alongside teachers as voluntary helpers in class, providing valuable support for pupils and teachers, and on school visits.
27. Teachers are readily available to talk to parents at the end of the school day on three days each week, a message that is communicated clearly to parents. This helps in overcoming any concerns or raising any problems at an early stage and before they develop into more significant concerns. This contributes to the level of satisfaction evident among parents. The closer partnership with parents is helping the school to raise its standards. Parents are aware of the targets set for their children and most support them in trying to achieve them. Parents are more involved in the development and improvement of the school and know where it is heading.

Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and make good progress.

28. The school caters well for pupils with special educational needs and they are fully included in all lessons and activities. The special educational needs co-ordinator, appointed recently, has a clear vision for further improvement in this aspect. Clear systems have been set up and shared with the Foundation Stage teachers, other teachers, support staff, pupils and parents. Relevant support agency reports, such as those from occupational therapists are available in well-organised pupil files. There is effective use of appropriate computer software to ensure there is a standardised system for writing pupils' individual education plans throughout the year groups. Teachers' planning-files contain relevant information on pupils with special educational needs and weekly plans show how individual pupil needs are to be met. Lesson observations strongly indicate the positive steps taken by all staff to meet the differing needs of these pupils. For example, in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson, a learning support assistant worked closely with a pupil who has emotional and behavioural difficulties, by gently coaxing her to remain on task and by explaining teaching points. This ensured that the pupil fully understood what was expected of her by the end of the lesson and that it was achieved successfully.
29. The school's 'buddy system' also extends to pupils with special needs in the school, whereby older pupils with special needs have oversight of younger ones, thus reinforcing the inclusive and caring ethos of the school.
30. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced arrangements for the early identification of pupils who may have special educational needs, which is an improvement. This has led to the rising standards now evident in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Because of the early intervention and support from teachers and teaching assistants, some pupils overcome their difficulties at an early stage and catch up with their peers. The school uses behaviour profile sheets to help in modifying the behaviour of individual pupil's and maintains close links with the local authority's support service for advice and guidance when necessary. The success of the school's strategies for supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties is evident in the good and sometimes very good behaviour in lessons. At no time during the inspection was the learning of

other pupils disrupted by the behaviour of individuals. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are similarly well supported by their class teachers and teaching assistants, who ensure pupils understand what they have to do, particularly in lessons where specific subject vocabulary is used, for example in science. The involvement of outside agencies to assess pupils in their first language on entry enables the school to determine the needs of individual pupils, ensure appropriate support is provided and so help the pupils to settle quickly and make good progress.

31. The special educational needs register is very well maintained. The new Code of Practice has meant that some pupils have now come off the register and the responsibility for their needs lies with the class teachers, who are doing a good job. The co-ordinator has ensured that all parents have been sensitively informed as to whether or not their children are on the register and they are fully involved in review meetings held in school.
32. The best practice in supporting these pupils in the school is evident where class sizes are below 30, where there are enough teaching or support assistants for the number of pupils with special needs and where space and resources are sufficient for the lesson planned to be taught well. The overall management between the headteacher, special needs co-ordinator and governing body is working well towards this ultimate goal.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing and the presentation of pupils' work by the end of Year 6.

33. The development of pupils' skills in writing is a priority in the current school development plan. Whilst there has been some improvement in standards at the end of Year 2, in recent years, and better than found nationally overall, it is only just bringing standards up to broadly average levels. For the last three years standards in writing have been below the national average at the end of Year 2. In 2002, the below average standards resulted from the large proportion of pupils (almost a half) who only just reached the expected level 2 (2C) and very few pupils achieving the higher level (level 3). The proportion reaching the higher level in reading was close to the national average, in mathematics just exceeded the national average, but in writing was below. This indicates standards in writing should be higher, both at the expected level and the higher level and better use of assessment information is the key to this as indicated in the assessment section of this report.
34. At the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards dipped from the above average standards found in the two previous years. This was not unexpected for this year group as the targets set were lower, reflecting the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Current standards are higher, but there is still room for further improvement, to bring standards closer to those in reading. Teachers have undertaken further training in teaching writing skills, have more confidence in their teaching and this is evident in the good lessons seen. However, there is insufficient emphasis on developing the skills learned in literacy lessons, such as note taking and report writing in other subjects such as history, science and religious education. Pupils, particularly by Years 5 and 6, do not do enough writing in other subjects. For example in the Year 6 history books, pupils wrote two or three lines about the Romans and then drew pictures. When longer pieces of writing were produced, such as about the Vikings, this was where information had been acquired from the Internet. There were very few examples of pupils' written work of good quality on display to give pupils a standard to aspire to. Many displays around the school showed word-processed work and labels. Pupils' written work requires a higher profile around the school to set the school standard.
35. The teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, particularly in Years 3 to 6 are not always high enough in English and mathematics. Whilst a significant majority produce neat

work, the remainder scribble words out, their handwriting is too large, or untidy and in some cases pupils revert to printing having been taught to join their letters. This slows their progress in recording their work for those concerned. In mathematics, the pupils use books with small squares to help them set their work out neatly in lines and columns and so aid their calculations. Too many pupils do not write on the lines or place one number in each square, as they have not been taught to do so when first starting to use these books. A clear, whole school approach, to the presentation of pupils' work in the different subjects throughout the school is required.

The tracking of pupils' attainment from year to year to show their progress over time in the school.

36. The school has continued to develop its assessment procedures since the previous inspection, but the way the school tracks pupils' attainment each year to show the progress made by individual pupils over time in the school could be improved. At the end of each academic year, each class teacher, with the exception of Year 6 teachers, indicates the National Curriculum level pupils are likely to achieve in a year's time, but does not set clear year group targets. The class sheet, passed on to the next teacher, indicates those pupils who should achieve the expected level for their age, those likely to achieve the expected level with some support, those who will need additional help and may then reach the expected level, and those unlikely to do so. These sheets do not show pupils likely to exceed the level expected and they only cover one year. At the end of the year the process is repeated for the next class teacher. Pupils who have lost ground over the year are not identified. The lack of clear information which tracks each pupil's progress from the point of entry to when they leave the school is preventing the teachers from identifying pupils who have made insufficient progress compared to what is expected nationally, so they can be supported and helped to catch up. In addition, the information, for example in Year 2, is not broken down into the sub levels to show those likely to achieve level 2C, 2B or 2A. This would help the school to determine those pupils who need more intensive support to boost their performance and help them towards achieving level 2B and so raise overall standards. The school is unable to show from its current information, the progress made over Years 3 to 5 towards the Year 6 targets set, to ensure the school is on course to achieve them. Pupils have a 'half-termly' book, which contains samples of their work to show progress, but these are not as helpful as they could be. The samples of work, particularly in writing, do not show the National Curriculum level attained, or indicate to the pupils what they have done well and what their next stage in learning is. The pupils' writing scripts from the National Curriculum tests are not analysed to find where pupils lost marks and why, so that any weaknesses can be overcome.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. In order to continue the very good improvement since the previous inspection and raise or maintain standards, the headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:
- (1) improve standards in writing and the presentation of pupils' work by Year 6 by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work, not only in literacy lessons but also in other subjects;
 - making more effective links between literacy and other subjects so that skills learned in literacy are reinforced in other subjects;
 - giving pupils' writing a higher profile in displays;
 - teaching pupils how to set their work out in mathematics;
 - having a clear policy for the presentation of pupils' work in different subjects and checking it is implemented consistently;
 - encouraging pupils to persevere in developing fluent joined handwriting.

Discussed in paragraphs 18, 33, 34, 35

- (2) improve the tracking of pupils' attainment from year to year to show their progress over time in the school by:
- using a system which shows the progress made by individual pupils each year so that any making insufficient progress are highlighted and helped to catch up;
 - analysing pupils' National Curriculum test scripts to identify the areas for improvement and amending the curriculum accordingly;
 - setting year group targets.

Discussed in paragraphs 8, 36.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	7	5	0	0	0
Percentage	5	35	35	25	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 five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	280
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	62

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	24

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	21	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	24
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	42	40	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (86)	87 (86)	98 (86)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	24	24
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	42	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	98 (86)	98 (89)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	17	16	20
	Total	32	32	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (84)	74 (84)	86 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	16
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	33	37	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (78)	86 (82)	84 (82)
	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	237	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	21	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	4	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	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	255

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	629,301
Total expenditure	635,013
Expenditure per pupil	2,276
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,127
Balance carried forward to next year	43,415

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	43	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	49	3	2	3
The teaching is good.	57	42	0	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	51	7	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	27	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	39	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	45	6	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	50	2	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	37	1	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	43	9	3	8

NB percentages may not total 100 per cent due to rounding

Other issues raised by parents

Eleven letters were received from parents, most expressing positive comments about the work of the school. No concerns were expressed by a number of parents.

At the pre-inspection meeting for parents, a small, but significant number of parents with children in infant classes expressed concern at their child's progress in reading, with books to read at home not being changed often enough and the books themselves lacking in interest and challenge.