

INSPECTION REPORT

**NEWTON BLUECOAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Newton with Scales, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119805

Headteacher: Mr D Thompson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Marina Gough
22361

Dates of inspection: 1 – 3 July 2002

Inspection number: 249967

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Newton with Scales Preston
Postcode:	PR4 3RT
Telephone number:	01772 684415
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Woods
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Newton with Scales, not far from the town of Preston. There are currently two hundred and sixty pupils on roll between the ages of three and eleven, including thirty-three children who attend the nursery class on a part-time basis. Almost all pupils are of white ethnicity, and the school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Eleven pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This represents 5% of the school population and is well below the national average. Twenty-six pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This represents 10% of the school population and is well below the national average. The school has two pupils with statements of special educational needs. Children's attainment when they join the nursery class is above average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall the school provides a satisfactory quality of education for all infant and junior pupils, and a good quality of education for nursery and reception children. The school has some significant strengths in its work, but there are also some shortcomings which are adversely affecting pupils' progress and attainment. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in these subjects. Pupils do not however make enough progress in art and design, design and technology, history and geography, and standards in these subjects are below national expectations. Teaching is good throughout the school, and many very good examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils have very good attitudes to work which impact positively on their progress and attainment. The school is well managed on a daily basis by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and staff are committed to meeting the needs of individual pupils. However, there are some weaknesses in the way in which strategic decisions about the school's long-term development are reached. Relationships amongst staff, and between the staff and the senior management team are strained, and this is adversely affecting the school's capacity to move forward. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above the expected level in English, mathematics and science. They attain good standards in their work in information and communication technology. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in these subjects.
- The provision for the children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and enables children of all abilities to make good progress in each of the areas of learning.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. It is very good in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils of all ages have very good attitudes to work, and their behaviour is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and amongst pupils, are very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history is below national expectations. Pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects.
- The governing body is not sufficiently proactive in finding out about the school's life and work, and is not involved enough in the strategic planning of the school.
- The monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators is insufficiently developed, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Relationships within the staff, and between the staff and the senior management team, need to be improved so that the school can continue to move forward.

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 May 1998, and has fully addressed the issues identified. The overall rate of improvement since that time is satisfactory. Although good progress has been made in raising standards in English, mathematics and science, especially at the end of Year 6, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history have declined since the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved overall, and this is most noticeable in English, mathematics and science where teaching is now very good. Not enough progress has been made in developing the curriculum for infant and junior pupils, and they do not experience a sufficiently broad range of learning opportunities. The provision for the nursery and reception children continues to be a strength. Good progress has been made in developing assessment procedures in English and mathematics, but the school has not yet implemented effective assessment procedures to monitor and track pupils' attainment and progress in other subjects. Relationships amongst staff and between the senior management team and staff are unsatisfactory, and staff are not pulling together in the same direction. This situation is having an adverse impact on school development, and needs to be urgently addressed so that the school can continue to move forward.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	B	D
mathematics	D	D	A	B
science	C	C	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that on the basis of the 2001 end of Key Stage 2 national test results, the pupils' attainment is above the national average in English, and well above the national average in science and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is below average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Standards in English have been reasonably consistent over the past few years, but standards in mathematics and science rose significantly in 2001, and for the first time in three years were better than those in English. The improvement in standards in mathematics and science is due to the concerted effort of staff, more accurate assessment and improved teaching. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is well above the expected level in English, mathematics and science. The school sets appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics.

The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 national test results show that pupils' attainment is well above the national average in reading, writing, and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment is above average in reading, and well above average in writing and mathematics. Standards have been consistently high across all three areas for the past three years. Teacher assessments show that the pupils' attainment in science is well above average. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is well above average in English, mathematics and science.

Standards in art and design, design and technology, history and geography are below the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and have declined since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is too narrow, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to systematically acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects. Standards in information and communication technology have been maintained since the last inspection at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and are above the expected level.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children attain the Early Learning Goals in each of the six areas of learning, which are communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical, creative development, and personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress.

Pupils of all abilities in the infant and junior classes make good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress towards their individual targets. Higher attaining pupils are fully challenged, and additional support for these pupils in Year 6 enables them to fully achieve their potential. Pupils do not make enough progress in art and design, design and technology, history and geography, and do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. There is no significant difference in the progress and attainment of boys and girls.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to school. They concentrate well, have high levels of motivation, and take a full and active part in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils' behaviour is very good both in and around the school. Pupils are polite, helpful and friendly, and are keen to talk about their work.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils show good levels of independence in their learning, but even more could be done to involve pupils in decisions about aspects of the life of the school.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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 throughout the school. The teaching of the children in the nursery and reception classes has many very good features. There is often a very good balance between activities that the children select and organise themselves, and those that are directed by adults. Independent learning skills are often effectively promoted, although there are times when there is too much adult intervention, and this reduces the opportunities for children to make their own choices and decisions. Classroom displays of the children's work are very bright and colourful and help to create a stimulating learning environment.

In the infant and junior classes, the teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science. Lessons generally move at a good pace, pupils of all ages and abilities are fully challenged by the set tasks, and resources are used well to enhance the pupils' learning. There are times however when the literacy and numeracy sessions are too long, and pupils begin to lose concentration. Relationships between pupils and teachers and other adults are very good, and this means that pupils are confident about sharing their ideas, and making suggestions. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to carry out investigative work in mathematics and science, especially in the junior classes, and these activities capture the pupils' interest, and provide very good levels of challenge for pupils across the ability range.

The teaching of information and communication technology is good throughout the school. Pupils have good opportunities to learn and practise new skills in the computer suite, which they are then encouraged to use in their work in other subjects. The teaching of art and design, design and

technology, history and geography is satisfactory, but could be much better. Not enough time is given to these subjects, and as a result the National Curriculum programmes of study are not covered in enough depth.

Teachers and classroom assistants effectively meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs, and do so in a sensitive and unobtrusive manner. Likewise, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 receive good levels of additional support in English and mathematics to enable them to reach their full potential.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the nursery and reception children is very good and fully reflects the national guidance for this age group. The curriculum for infant and junior pupils is unsatisfactory. Too much time is given to English and mathematics, and not enough time is given to the other subjects of the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support from their teachers and classroom assistants, and make good progress towards their individual targets. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of the school's life and work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The school provides high levels of pastoral care for all pupils, and their well-being, health and happiness are the shared concern of staff and governors. Good child protection procedures are in place. Good assessment procedures are in place to enable staff to track and monitor the pupils' progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science, but the school does not yet have appropriate assessment procedures in place for other subjects. The policy for racial equality is still in draft form, but in practice there is no discrimination of any kind in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The day-to-day management of the school by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is good, and there has been a good improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. However, there is a lack of team spirit amongst the staff that has not been identified and addressed by the senior management team, and this adversely affects the school's capacity for moving forward on shared projects. The monitoring role of some co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governing body provides good levels of support on a pastoral basis, and ensures that statutory duties are fulfilled. However, governors are not sufficiently involved in strategic planning, or in monitoring the life and work of the school. The governing body does not consistently apply the principles of best value when making major decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school makes good use of assessment data to monitor standards in English and mathematics, but there is not enough rigorous evaluation of other aspects of the school's work.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school manages its resources well on a day-to-day basis, but not enough thought is given to the long-term strategic use of resources such as staff and buildings.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority of parents are pleased with the progress their children make and the standards they achieve. • Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school and agree that the school promotes positive values and attitudes. • Parents agree that the quality of teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. • Most parents agree that the school provides a good and interesting range of extra-curricular activities. • Parents are warmly welcomed into the school and feel that they can approach the staff and the headteacher with their concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more information about their children's progress. • Some parents are unhappy about the level, amount and frequency of homework. • A small number of parents think that the school does not work sufficiently closely with them. • A small number of parents do not think the school is well led and managed.

The vast majority of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, and who returned questionnaires, are pleased with the standard of education the school provides and the progress their children make. The inspection findings support the parents' positive views of the school, and indicate that homework is satisfactory in terms of level, amount and frequency. Reports about children's progress provide a satisfactory level of detail, but vary in quality from class to class, and could be more informative in some cases. The inspection findings indicate that parents receive appropriate information about forthcoming events, but that they would benefit from receiving more information about the curriculum. It is difficult to comment on the parents' concerns about the quality of leadership and management, and the fact that some parents do not think that the school works sufficiently closely with them, as it is not clear what the nature of their concerns is. However, the inspection findings indicate that the school aims to work closely with parents, and is keen to respond to the parents' negative views and to seek ways of establishing even better lines of communication.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above the expected level in English, mathematics and science. They attain good standards in their work in information and communication technology. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in these subjects.

1. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. For the last three years, standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well above the national average on the basis of the national test results in reading, writing and mathematics. In the junior classes, standards have improved over the last few years, especially in mathematics and science. This improvement is due to better teaching, and more effective use of assessment information to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
2. Pupils throughout the school often have very good speaking and listening skills, and there are many very good opportunities for them to talk to one another in pairs and small groups, and to take part in whole-class discussions. Pupils of all ages and abilities listen well to their teachers, and this enables them to follow instructions and requests quickly and accurately. Pupils in the infant and junior classes have a good vocabulary, which helps them to explain their ideas clearly and succinctly. Teachers are very effective in the way in which they develop the pupils' subject specific vocabulary, by providing good role models in their own use of vocabulary, and by encouraging pupils to use new vocabulary in discussions. During the inspection, a very good example of this was seen in a junior science lesson when pupils were describing how they might separate a mixture of solids. Although some of the pupils did not always use the correct word, they were keen to try to explain their ideas scientifically, and learned very well from their mistakes, which were gently picked up by the teacher. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to show respect for the ideas of others, and they do this well. They listen carefully to the contributions of their classmates, and observe the social conventions when joining in an ongoing conversation. Pupils have high levels of confidence, which are constantly reinforced by their teachers, and they are keen to speak in front of large groups of other pupils and adults, secure in the knowledge that their views will be valued.
3. Reading is taught well throughout the school, and pupils have access to a good range of books, both at home and at school. Basic skills of reading are very well taught in the infant classes, and pupils quickly learn how to decode unfamiliar and long words by breaking them up into smaller and more manageable pieces. Pupils practise regularly in school, and most children are well supported in their reading by their parents or carers. Good support for pupils who have special educational needs, ensures that they receive additional help with their reading which enables them to make similar progress to their classmates. Higher attainers are appropriately stretched by the books they choose, and by the questions their teachers ask them about the characters, the plot and the outcomes. By the end of Year 6, many pupils have a real love of literature, and a wide experience of reading different styles and genres. Higher attainers are encouraged to read 'between the lines', and are skilled in the higher order

skills of skimming and scanning, which enable them to carry out research in a highly effective manner. Pupils of all abilities accurately describe the main characters in the books they are reading, and are confident about predicting the possible outcomes of stories. Through their work in literacy sessions, Year 6 pupils have had good experience of reading a variety of poems, and extracts of play scripts, such as when they studied *Twelfth Night*, by William Shakespeare. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read aloud with good levels of expression, and vary their voices to bring the different characters to life. Pupils' very good reading skills have a very positive impact on their overall progress and attainment, and enable them to access and retrieve information quickly.

4. Standards of writing are very good across the school, and there are some good examples of pupils using their writing skills to support their work in other subjects. By the end of Year 2, pupils sequence their ideas in a logical manner, and their work is well structured. Pupils write in a variety of styles, including stories, reports, lists, and accounts, and the majority spell words accurately and consistently. Pupils successfully transfer their knowledge of grammar when they write, and most make good use of punctuation. Higher attaining pupils successfully use speech marks and exclamation marks in their writing, and produce extended pieces, developing their ideas carefully and systematically. Pupils of all ages and abilities benefit from regular opportunities to practise their writing skills, and from the very good teaching they receive in terms of basic writing skills. Pupils make particularly good progress in writing as they move through the junior classes, and some of the writing of the higher attaining pupils is extremely impressive. For example, having studied *Twelfth Night*, pupils have written about the characters from their own point of view, and as an extension of this, have then written about characters from the point of view of another character in the play. Some of this writing is excellent, and very successfully demonstrates the pupils' skill in writing, and also their understanding of the characters of the play. A very strong feature of the teaching of writing, which has a very positive impact on the standards pupils achieve, is the way in which teachers link grammar exercises to writing tasks, thereby providing a meaningful context for pupils' writing. For example, prior to writing a persuasive piece about corporal punishment, pupils were reminded about the function of 'persuasive connectives'. The pupils then used these words as useful devices around which to build their own writing. Pupils of all abilities produce good amounts of written work in the available time, and are skilled in planning their work, and organising their ideas in a logical manner.
5. Infant pupils get a very good grounding in the basic skills of mathematics, which ensures a very firm basis on which to build. In lessons, introductory mental mathematics sessions are very well organised, pacy, and challenging, and teachers use questioning very well to ensure that the needs of all ages and abilities are fully met. Pupils are encouraged to explain how they arrived at their answers, and this helps them to clarify their ideas, and provides additional models for the lower attaining pupils to consider. Higher attaining pupils have immediate recall of number facts up to and sometimes beyond 20 and this helps them to make quick and accurate calculations, whilst lower attainers use mathematical resources very effectively to help them with their work. Pupils are encouraged to consider the reasonableness of their answers, and higher attainers are starting to make generalisations which help them in this. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 pupils who were dividing counters equally into two groups, realised that if they selected an odd number of counters, there would always be a

'remainder'. The pupils' ability to solve word problems is good, and is enhanced by their very good reading skills, which enable them to understand quickly what is being asked of them. Most pupils have a very secure grasp of all aspects of shape, space and measure, and are particularly confident when describing the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of Year 2, pupils' overall attainment is well above national expectations across all aspects of the mathematics curriculum.

6. As they move through the junior classes, pupils make good and steady progress in mathematics and by the end of the key stage, their attainment is well above the expected level. Pupils continue to develop their understanding and knowledge of number, and become much more skilled in checking the reasonableness of their answers, often using the inverse operation to do this. They quickly and confidently change fractions to percentages and decimals, and have a very good understanding of place value. Pupils continue to develop their mental agility, and realise the value of having immediate recall of multiplication facts. Their written calculations are systematically presented, showing the various processes pupils have gone through to arrive at their answers. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary which enables them to process written problems with ease, and to express their ideas clearly. Pupils enjoy the challenge of investigative work, and tackle problems methodically. They are not afraid to try a variety of approaches, and higher attainers are particularly systematic in the way in which they organise and test their ideas. Pupils benefit from good teaching and have very positive attitudes to learning. They work very hard and produce good amounts of work in lessons. The learning of the lower attaining pupils is further enhanced by additional support through 'booster' classes, and higher attaining pupils are challenged by 'extension' classes which fully extend their learning. Good amounts of regular homework complement classwork and extend and consolidate the pupils' learning.
7. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in science is well above the expected level. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as they move through the key stage, and benefit from very good teaching and good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Pupils of all abilities have a very secure understanding of the notion of a fair test, and they make sensible predictions which draw on their previous learning and experiences. Pupils carry out a range of investigate work which helps them to develop skills of observation and scientific enquiry, and motivates them in their learning. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work, and to draw conclusions which reconcile the outcomes of an investigation with their initial hypotheses. Higher attaining pupils do this very well. There are many very good opportunities for the pupils to use and practise their literacy skills as they record their observations and report their findings. Most pupils have very well developed observation skills, and they notice a good amount of detail. Very good opportunities for the pupils to carry out fieldwork activities, such as when they looked at the habitats of mini-beasts, and took part in a nature walk, bring the subject to life for the pupils, help to capture their interest, and provide good opportunities for them to observe carefully and accurately.
8. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in science as they move through the junior classes, and by the end of Year 6, attain standards that are well above the expected level. Most pupils have a very comprehensive scientific vocabulary which they use well in discussion, and when writing about the investigations and experiments they have carried out. Pupils have a

very secure grasp of the notion of fair testing, and are very competent when setting up and carrying out investigations. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to set up their own investigations, and where the teaching is particularly effective, pupils are given very good opportunities to make choices and decisions, to organise their own learning, and to pursue their own lines of enquiry. Some very good examples of this were seen during the inspection. In a Year 3/Year 4 lesson, pupils were given the task of separating different solids, and were instructed to choose different sized sieves and colanders or to find their own ways of separating the mixtures. Likewise, in a Year 4/Year 5 lesson, pupils were given samples of soil, and magnifying lenses, and asked to find out the 'recipe' for soil. In both cases, the pupils approached the activities with high levels of enthusiasm and worked diligently and systematically, carefully recording their ideas and observations. Junior pupils have a very good scientific knowledge, and are successful in using and applying their existing knowledge and understanding to new situations. As in the infant classes, there are very good opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy skills in a meaningful context, and additionally, there are some excellent opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology, such as light, temperature and sound sensors, to support and enhance their learning.

9. Standards in information and communication technology are good at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils make good use of word-processing programs to support their work in English, and in subjects such as science, history and geography. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good mouse control, and confidently open and close programs, and save and print their work. They use a variety of graphics programs as part of their art and design work, and also to enliven their word-processed pieces. As they move through the junior classes, pupils gain further experience of using word-processing and graphics programs, and produce good quality pieces of writing which are attractively enhanced by borders and pictures. Junior pupils learn how to complete spreadsheets, such as the one completed by Year 3/Year 4 pupils showing the relationship between time and length, and the one completed by Year 5 pupils showing their plans for a party. Pupils regularly gather and record data, and are skilled in interrogating databases to retrieve information. They use the Internet with confidence for researching information, and are confident about the process of electronic mail. A particular strength of the pupils' learning, is their understanding and knowledge of how computers can be used to control external events. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were continuing their work relating to the 'control' element of the information and communication technology curriculum, and were writing short programs to instruct the lights in a lighthouse to go on and off in sequence. Although some pupils struggled a little, a surprising number of pupils achieved extremely high standards in this activity. Very good opportunities are provided for the junior pupils to use sensors in their science work, and again, these opportunities are invaluable in helping pupils to understand how technology can be used to monitor external events.
10. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are enhanced by the pupils' very positive attitudes to work, and their very good behaviour in lessons. Teaching is often very good in these subjects, and ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress. The leadership and management of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are good, and careful monitoring of standards in

English and mathematics especially has helped to drive standards up over recent years in the junior classes. The school provides equally well for pupils of all abilities, and offers good levels of support for those pupils who have special educational needs, and additional challenge for the higher attaining pupils. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

The provision for the children in the nursery and reception classes is very good, and enables children of all abilities to make good progress in each of the areas of learning.

11. The school caters very well for the children in the Foundation Stage. Nursery and reception children take part in a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities that successfully advance their learning. Children of all abilities make good progress, and by the end of the Reception year, achieve the Early Learning Goals in each of the areas of learning - (Communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical, creative development, and personal, social and emotional development).
12. There is often a very good balance between activities that are selected and organised by the children themselves, and those that are directed by an adult. Regular opportunities for the children to make choices and decisions about aspects of their learning successfully promote independent learning skills, and engender a sense of confidence amongst the children. Teachers organise their classes well, and ensure that there are regular opportunities for the children to work individually, in pairs and small groups, and as part of a whole class group. Classrooms are bright and cheerful, and the children's work is attractively displayed to create a purposeful and stimulating learning environment. Resources are carefully labelled and are easily accessible to the children.
13. Speaking and listening skills are very effectively promoted by adults, as they engage in conversation with the children about their work. For example, during the inspection, three children animatedly talked about the models they were making with small construction bricks. Their speaking skills were skilfully advanced as they were encouraged to focus on the smaller component parts of their vehicles and to discuss the ways in which the models moved. Regular whole-class stories provide very good opportunities for the children to listen as a large group, and to take part in discussion sessions. Role-play areas provide a meaningful context for the children to practise their language and mathematical skills. For example, in the nursery 'market-stall', the children make shopping lists, using marks effectively to denote words and letters. In the reception 'camp-site', children 'read' destination cards, and talk with good levels of understanding about the places they might visit.
14. The reception and nursery staff are particularly effective in the way in which they build upon the children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Recently the reception children have been studying polar bears and pandas, and they talk excitedly about where these animals live, what they eat, and the higher attaining children are beginning to see how animals adapt to their habitats.

15. The ongoing promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional skills is a priority in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers and other adults with whom the children come into regular contact, give consistent messages to the children in terms of their behaviour and work routines, and this unified approach helps the children to have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The vast majority of children have very good levels of confidence and enjoy coming to school. Children work well with one another, and by the end of the Foundation Stage have very good social skills. Activities such as 'snack-time' are instrumental in helping the children to co-operate, as they pass drinks around, or share fruit, and the children often spontaneously engage in conversation with one another.
16. The very good provision in the nursery and reception classes has been successfully maintained and strengthened since the last inspection, and ensures a very good start to the children's education, and prepares them well for their transfer to the infant classes.

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. It is very good in English, mathematics and science.

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection, the teaching was very good in 53% of the 15 lessons seen, good in 33% of lessons, and satisfactory in 13% of lessons. Very good teaching was seen in all key stages.
18. The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science is very good overall, and makes a significant contribution to the high standards pupils attain and the good progress they make. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning, and most teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in their work in other subjects. This means that the pupils have good opportunities to practise these skills in meaningful contexts, such as when writing factual accounts in history or taking repeated measurements in science. Teachers' planning is thorough and this leads to well-paced lessons which have a clear purpose that is often shared with the pupils. Literacy and numeracy lessons have been regularly monitored by the headteacher and co-ordinators over the past few years, and this has led to a good improvement in the quality of teaching in these areas.
19. In the infant and junior classes, a particular strength of teaching is the way in which many activities are carefully matched to the different levels of age and ability in the class, so that all pupils can achieve their potential. For example, during a Year 1/Year 2 mathematics lesson seen during the inspection, all pupils were asked to write 'number sentences' about the same given number, but Year 1 pupils were asked to use the operation of addition in their 'sums', and Year 2 pupils were asked to use multiplication. This strategy was not only very successful in meeting the needs of the two age groups, but also enabled the higher attaining Year 1 pupils to be stretched as they listened to some of the Year 2 suggestions. Teachers are also very effective in the way in which they use open-ended problem-solving activities, which have many different approaches and outcomes, to challenge all pupils at an appropriate level. This approach was seen several times during the inspection, especially in mathematics and science, where pupils chose their own methods of working and recording. Often teachers are very subtle in the way in which they meet the pupils' individual needs, and this means that lower attaining pupils do not feel in any way inferior to the more able pupils. For example, in

a Year 1/Year 2 geography lesson seen during the inspection, the activity of planning transport to and from different locations seemed at first glance to be the same for all ability groups. However, the size of maps and globes the pupils were using were in different scales, the places were more difficult to locate for some groups, and the wording on the work cards took further account of the varying levels of ability.

20. Discussions at the start and end of lessons are often used very well to help pupils to recall their previous learning, and to provide opportunities for them to consider the extent of any new learning that has taken place. Teachers are very skilled in using questions during discussion sessions, both to probe the pupils' understanding, and to extend their learning. Teachers often effectively vary the level of questions to meet the particular needs of individual pupils, and where the teaching is at its best, teachers give the pupils some valuable 'thinking' time. This is especially helpful for the lower attaining pupils who can often come up with the correct answer, or make a pertinent suggestion, but need a little more time to formulate their ideas.
21. A notable strength of teaching in Year 5 and Year 6 is the excellent quality of marking. Marking is at its best in English and science. Pupils are given excellent guidance on how they might improve their work further, and fulsome, but justifiable praise encourages them to maintain very high standards in their work. In most classes, teachers provide good ongoing encouragement to pupils through dialogue with the pupils whilst they are working. This practice is effective, and pupils are keen to take on board suggestions for improvement.
22. Teachers are very effective in managing the pupils, and have extremely high expectations of achievement and behaviour to which the pupils respond well. Classroom organisation is generally effective, and there is a good combination of whole-class activities, and small group and individual activities which are very effective in promoting independent learning skills. Pupils are very confident about taking responsibility for aspects of their learning, and pupils of all abilities make good progress in acquiring and refining skills of independent learning as they move through the school. This ongoing development of independent learning skills means that older junior pupils are very well prepared for their transfer to high school, and are keen and confident about making decisions about their work.
23. The quality of pupils' learning is good overall, and it is very good in English, mathematics and science. The vast majority of pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and try hard to do their best. They listen well, and follow instructions and requests carefully. Pupils take an active part in class discussions, and are keen to put forward their ideas. They are often very confident in their learning, and particularly enjoy solving problems in a creative way. This was very evident in an information and communication technology lesson seen during the inspection, where Year 5/Year 6 pupils were writing instructions to control the lights in a lighthouse. When they encountered problems, they showed very good levels of perseverance, and tried to find ways of overcoming the difficulties. A strength of the pupils' learning is the way in which they work together on joint tasks, generously helping those who are experiencing difficulties, without prompting by their teachers. Behaviour in class is very good, and means that teachers can be adventurous in the types of activities they present. Pupils can

be relied upon to work productively, and older junior pupils in particular use their time very effectively, pacing their work well.

24. The good overall quality of teaching and learning, and the pupils' very good attitudes to work, ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, as they move through the school.

Pupils of all ages have very good attitudes to work, and their behaviour is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and amongst pupils, are very good.

25. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to work. From an early age pupils take an active interest in their learning, and in the nursery and reception classes approach new tasks and activities with high levels of enthusiasm and motivation. As they move through the school pupils develop very good levels of concentration, and the vast majority are prepared to persevere when they encounter occasional problems with their learning.
26. Older junior pupils show very good levels of investigative skills, and these skills are most evident in their mathematics and science work. Pupils of all abilities approach problem-solving tasks with very high levels of enthusiasm and confidence, and often show genuine delight when they achieve their aim, or make a discovery. When working on computers, these high quality investigative skills often serve the pupils very well, as they learn through a 'trial and error' basis.
27. Pupils throughout the school work very well together in small groups and pairs, and show good skills of negotiation from an early age. Pupils take turns very well, for example, when they are working in pairs on computers in the computer suite, and quickly and spontaneously offer support to any classmates who are struggling. When working on practical tasks, pupils quickly nominate group leaders, and 'scribes', and do so with a minimum amount of fuss.
28. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils of all ages show good observance of the school's few rules, and treat one another with high levels of respect and tolerance. Pupils are kind and thoughtful, and relationships are very good. The pupils' very positive attitudes to school, work and play, contribute significantly to the high standards they achieve, and the overall quality of life in the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history is below the expected level. Pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects.

29. Overall, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history are below the expected level for the majority of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils do not make enough progress as they move through the school.
30. The teaching of art and design, design and technology, geography and history is satisfactory overall, and some good and very good examples were seen in individual lessons during the

inspection. However, because not enough time is allocated to these subjects, the National Curriculum programmes of study are not covered in enough depth, and pupils do not have enough regular practice of newly acquired skills. Assessment procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress and attainment have not yet been implemented in these subjects, and as a result, teachers do not always take enough account of pupils' previous learning when planning lessons.

31. Although art and design, design and technology, geography and history are taught throughout the year in all classes, these subjects are taught in half termly blocks. This means that pupils often forget some of their learning in the intervening period. In individual lessons, pupils often show high levels of interest, such as in a Year 2 geography lesson seen during the inspection. However, in discussion, their recall of their previous learning is often patchy, and pupils have difficulty in remembering topics they have studied.
32. The school has devoted much of the available teaching time in recent years to English, mathematics and science, and has been very successful in raising standards in these subjects. However, there is now an urgent need to restore balance to the curriculum for infant and junior pupils so that they can make the progress of which they are capable.

The governing body is not sufficiently proactive in finding out about the school's life and work, and is not involved enough in the strategic planning of the school.

33. The governing body is supportive of the school's life and work, and is well informed by means of regular reports from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. However, governors rely too much on the information the school provides, and they do not take a sufficiently proactive role in finding out about the school's life and work for themselves. This means that the governing body is not in a position to fulfil its role of 'critical friend' to the headteacher. Individual governors visit the school regularly on an informal basis, and a number of governors work in the school, but currently there is no regular formal programme of visits to ensure that governors see the school's work at first-hand.
34. The governing body's involvement in strategic planning is unsatisfactory. Although governors consider the School Development Plan, the plan is largely generated by the headteacher and staff, and governors are not sufficiently involved in discussing and agreeing the targets and priorities. The governing body does not consistently apply the principles of best value, in terms of consulting, challenging, comparing and competing, when making important decisions about the school's life and work. As a result, some important decisions are not considered from all angles, such as the recent issue about the relocation of the computer suite.

The monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.

35. Co-ordinators are in place for all subjects and for some important aspects of the school's work. However, most co-ordinators do not have enough non-contact time to enable them to carry out their monitoring role effectively, and some of the responsibilities are not fairly distributed amongst staff. For example, the acting deputy headteacher currently has

responsibility for the Foundation Stage, assessment and literacy, as well as a range of managerial responsibilities.

36. Regular monitoring of classroom practice has been carried out in English and mathematics over the last two years, and the outcomes have been used successfully to drive standards up, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, not enough monitoring has been carried out of pupils' work, and some whole-school issues such as the quality of marking, and the presentation of pupils' work have not been identified and addressed. Very little has been done in the way of monitoring standards in subjects other than English and mathematics, and co-ordinators therefore do not have a sufficiently clear overview of standards in their subjects, or a picture of the quality of teaching and learning.

Relationships within the staff, and between the staff and the senior management team, need to be improved so that the school can continue to move forward.

37. Individually, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff are very committed to the life and work of the school, and share the common goal of wanting to provide the best education possible for pupils of all ages and abilities. However, there are currently tensions amongst the staff, and between the staff and the senior management team, that are preventing the school from moving forward in important areas such as curriculum development. The headteacher and governing body have not been sufficiently active in identifying and resolving the areas of dispute, and this is now of paramount importance if the school is to continue moving forward.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to raise standards in the school.

(1) Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history is below national expectations. Pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects. To raise standards the school should:-

- ensure that an appropriate amount of time is given to each subject to enable the full National Curriculum programmes of study to be covered in enough depth and breadth;
- ensure that curriculum co-ordinators for these subjects take an active role in monitoring curriculum delivery, and the standards pupils attain;
- implement assessment systems that will enable the school to track and monitor the progress and attainment of pupils in these subjects.

(See paragraphs 39, 32)

(2) The governing body should become more proactive in finding out about the school's life and work, and become more involved in the strategic planning of the school.

(See paragraphs 33, 34)

(3) The monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators should be developed further, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics, by:-

- ensuring that all co-ordinators have regular non-contact time to enable them to carry out their duties;
- providing training for co-ordinators so that they are skilled in monitoring standards, teaching and learning through classroom observations, and also through the scrutiny of pupils' work.

(See paragraphs 35, 36)

(4) The headteacher, staff and governing body should ensure that relationships within the staff, and between the staff and the senior management team, are improved by:-

- identifying and addressing the individual concerns and tensions of staff;
- ensuring that important whole-school decisions are made as a staff group, and not between individuals.

(See paragraph 37)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

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

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	5	2	0	0	0
Percentage	0	53	33	13	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 six 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)	33	227
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	26

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	2001	20	17	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	20
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	35	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (97)	97 (97)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	19
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	35	37	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (100)	100 (100)	97 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	17	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	23
	Girls	16	14	17
	Total	34	35	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (88)	88 (68)	100 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	22
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	34	35	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (88)	88 (85)	98 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	208
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, 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)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	622812
Total expenditure	645492
Expenditure per pupil	2390
Balance brought forward from previous year	38867
Balance carried forward to next year	16187

**Qualified teachers and support staff:
nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

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)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	260
Number of questionnaires returned	167

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	32	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	40	5	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	3	2	
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	52	16	4	8
The teaching is good.	52	43	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	41	20	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	26	7	7	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	44	13	4	2
The school is well led and managed.	39	45	7	8	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	5	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	53	10	2	6