

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHBURY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Hitchin

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117113

Headteacher: Mrs Deborah Currans

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Shine
24254

Dates of inspection: 13th - 14th January 2003

Inspection number: 252767

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery and infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Standhill Road Hitchin Hertfordshire
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Telephone number:	(01462) 630500
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Pocock
Date of previous inspection:	11 th - 14 th May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Highbury Infant and Nursery School has 141 pupils on roll. Another 8 children were being admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis at the time of the inspection and a further 12 will be admitted over the next few weeks. A new reception unit is currently being built. This will enable the school to increase its admission number to 60 (compared to the current 50) and avoid the need to have mixed-age classes. There is a similar number of girls and boys. In some aspects, attainment on entry to the nursery is average for the local education authority (LEA) but it is below average overall. About 20 per cent of the children in the nursery do not transfer to the reception but move to other schools. A similar proportion join the reception direct from other pre-school settings. Pupils' backgrounds, are varied but the majority come from homes in circumstances that are more disadvantaged, socially and economically, than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils are drawn from white UK backgrounds but seven pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and of these, five are in the first stages of acquiring English. The main languages spoken are French, Farsi, Arabic and Spanish. At just over 12 per cent, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is below average and there are no pupils with statements. Most of these pupils have general learning needs but some have emotional and behaviour needs that hinder learning, while others have speech and communication difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher, who has been in post for just over two years, is committed to raising pupils' standards. Standards are broadly in line with those expected. Under her direction, this is becoming an increasingly effective school. The headteacher is aware that there is much good teaching in the school but its quality is not consistent to enable pupils to make rapid progress. Pupils with SEN are integrated fully and achieve as well as their peers and the few pupils with EAL make good progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and children are achieving well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported very well by her deputy head.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.
- The school cares well for all its pupils, and supports them effectively.
- It provides well for pupils' personal development.

What could be improved

- The teaching in Years 1 and 2, where much is no better than satisfactory.
- The effective use of some learning support assistants.
- The amount of actual teaching time.
- The budgetary surplus is too large.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in May 1998, it has made good progress overall. The proportion of teaching that is good or better is higher than at the last inspection and there is less that is unsatisfactory. However, care needs to be taken when making these comparisons as there were far fewer lessons observed in this short inspection. Pupils' standards in the national tests have been raised significantly in recent years. Other improvements include curriculum planning, new systems to check on pupils' progress, and procedures to monitor formally the quality of teaching. These and other developments have followed in the van of improvements to the quality of the school's leadership and

management made with the appointment of the current headteacher just over two years ago, and subsequently that of the deputy head. The governing body is also much more involved in the management of the school than previously. The management team is aware that there is still much to be done, particularly in improving pupils' standards further by raising the overall quality of teaching. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	C	A	A
Writing	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	E	C	B	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The Year 2 test results in 2002 were well above the national average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Compared to the results in similar schools, pupils did very well in all three tests. The year group of 46 pupils did particularly well as there were 11 pupils with SEN, and all in the group achieved at least the national minimum standard. There has been a general upward trend in performance over the past five years but most notably since 2000.

Inspection findings show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the current Year 2 are in line with those expected and are not as high as last year's results would suggest. These findings reflect the school's view that the results for the 2003 cohort will not be as good as last year, although its targets are still higher than the results achieved then. Although there are fewer pupils with SEN in the current Year 2, some of these pupils have greater needs, and even with additional support are unlikely to achieve the expected standard by the time they are due to take the tests. In addition, some higher-attaining pupils could be given more challenging work. In music and design and technology, the two subjects where there is sufficient evidence to make judgements, standards are in line with those expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the nursery, children benefit from good teaching and achieve well in all the areas of learning. Children make good progress in the nursery and steady progress in the reception classes. They are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are good and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good both in and around the school. Pupils respond well to the school's reward system.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good amongst pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and personal development is good.
Attendance	This is broadly in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

In the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes), teaching is satisfactory overall. In the nursery it is good, with some being very good, and all children, including those with SEN, learn well. In the nursery and in the rest of the school, the few children with EAL who receive outside specialist support for two sessions a week also learn well. In the reception classes, teaching is satisfactory overall. The children learn satisfactorily, although at a less rapid rate than in the nursery. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is variable, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but there are instances of good teaching in all classes. In the one class in Year 1 that does not have mixed age groups, the teaching is consistently good. In the other classes, teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall, but there is not enough teaching of high quality to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The quality of the learning support assistants is inconsistent. Some give effective support to groups of pupils, including those with SEN, enabling them to learn well. Others require training if their contribution is to be fully effective. The school employs a specialist teacher for design and technology for one afternoon a week. This teaching is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the Foundation Stage, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The amount of time spent on teaching is below the recommended minimum. The range of activities outside of lessons is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good in the nursery, and satisfactory in the rest of the school where pupils make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Some pupils are supported well and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall. In addition to support from their teachers and learning support assistants, these few pupils receive additional support from specialists twice a week, funded both by the LEA and the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development enhances their personal development well. Spiritual development is satisfactory but it would be improved with better planning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good levels of care and looks after all its pupils well. Parents value this care and think well of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is supported very effectively by her deputy head. Management is good but the roles of some co-ordinators are not developed enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. The governors are supportive and increasingly effective in their role as a critical friend. They are not as involved as they should be in development planning and have built up an unacceptably large budgetary surplus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The head and senior staff check on and assess effectively the school's academic performance in English, mathematics, science, SEN and the areas for the Foundation Stage.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. The school uses its funds well for resources such as computers and makes sensible spending decisions. But it does not consistently review the benefits, such as the effectiveness of all learning support assistants.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • Pupils are expected to do well. • The school is well managed and led. • It helps their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right amount of homework. • The information about pupils' progress.

Inspectors agree with most of parents' positive comments but found that the overall quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress to be satisfactory rather than good. Although they found the information about pupils' progress to be broadly satisfactory, they agree it could be improved. Inspectors disagree with parents about homework, which they found to be appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and children are achieving well.

1. Assessment records of children's attainment when they enter the nursery show that it is broadly in line with the local education authority average in communication, language and literacy, but below in mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development and below the average overall. By the end of the nursery, children have made good progress and are in line with the standards expected of children at this age. In communication, language and literacy, many children are above those standards as the teacher pays great attention to language development.
2. Both the class teacher and nursery nurse are actively involved in the lessons and encourage the children to observe, listen and respond. A group of children worked with wax from candles and water-colours on paper: one child said *"Look, I've made it yellow"* to which the teacher replied, *"What colours have you used?"* Every opportunity is taken to develop children's language, taking individual's current attainment as the starting point. One boy played alone in the Home Corner and asked the teacher to write out all the children's names on a pad. The teacher encouraged him to name the children himself, wrote them down and asked him to count them. This child speaks English as an additional language (EAL) and gets a little confused with his tenses. On these occasions the teacher gently corrects him and develops effectively his language skills. Children are encouraged to respond and explain what they mean and offer suggestions. The teacher asked, *"What will the new children like to do?"* to which one child replied, *"Play 'I Spy,'"* and gave an example of how the game is played, helped by the teacher, *"to find an object beginning with 'd'".* Many such instances were observed where children's confidence and their social skills were promoted effectively.
3. The organisation and use of equipment is very good, providing an exciting environment for discussion. Children were grouped around the water tray covered with bubble-wrap to simulate the appearance of ice and were asked to search for 'animals' with their hands under the ice. The teacher and nursery nurse worked well as a team, with the nursery nurse placing concentrated food colouring into the water. The children looked on in wonder as the water turned blue. Good questioning was a constant feature of this effective teaching, with the teacher asking, *"How has the water turned blue?"* A child replied, *"You have put a mixture in it".* The teacher built on this line of questioning asking, *"Where did the mixture come from?"* *"The shop!"* exclaimed the child as he continued to develop confidence in using his language skills.
4. By allowing children to speak freely but purposefully, the teachers encourage them to develop their vocabulary effectively. Recalling the icy weather that had preceded the inspection by only a few days the children knew that the water was 'stilled'. *"No, 'frozen,'"* said another child. In another lesson, three children listened to taped sounds using headsets. Looking at the illustrations in an accompanying book, a child said, *"Look at all those fireworks in the picture!"* to which the nursery nurse replied, *"Let's listen then"* and asked, *"What was that banging?"* with the child replying, *"I think it's the storm,"* as she extended and enjoyed practising her vocabulary confidently.
5. The management of the class is good. Although children have personal and social skills that are generally below average when they enter the nursery, the adults support them well and are good role models. As a result, children feel secure in a positive learning environment, settle well to the activities provided and quickly become used to the routines and enjoy coming to school. The flying start children make in the nursery is not replicated in the reception classes. The two teachers in the reception classes are on temporary contracts and although their teaching is satisfactory, children's learning does not progress at the same rate. In addition, there are very few schools with nursery classes in the area. As a result, some parents send their children to receive a good start to their education in the nursery and then send them to the reception classes in schools nearer to their homes. For example, of the 56 children in the nursery last year, 10 children left and did not enter the two reception classes. This practice creates vacancies that other children who have not had the

benefit of the good nursery experience fill and tends to depress the general standard in the reception classes below what it otherwise might be.

The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported very well by her deputy head.

6. At the meeting, parents said that since the appointment of the current head, the school's sights have been raised. In their view, it now wants to improve standards, whereas before the appointment of the head, it was complacent. Inspection findings support these comments. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and has a clear vision of what sort of school Highbury Infant and Nursery should be. She has a strong vision driving school improvement and has high expectations. *"I expect this school to have high standards across the board – high academic standards"*. At the time of her appointment she felt that the school was cosy and coasting and the majority of teachers in this small school were resistant to change. The headteacher reports that in her first term at the school, just over two years ago, she found that there had been no attempt to introduce systems to monitor teaching or pupils' attainment and progress. She has done well to mould the culture to accepting change and has made a very good start in introducing rigorous systems. The chair of governors is very supportive and says the head is *"always looking for that next step – that incremental change"*.
7. With some teachers seen as resistant to change, she has faced an uphill struggle to persuade them to see the benefit of having their teaching monitored in order to identify both strengths and weaknesses. This process has led to some changes of staff, including some senior teachers, in order to forge a staff team with common goals. The chair of governors records that she hasn't shirked from giving difficult messages to some teachers – 'giving it straight'. The headteacher and the chair are aware that there are a few members of staff who, having accepted some major changes, are still coming to terms with the way this headteacher wants things to be done to raise standards.
8. It is a tribute to the leadership qualities of the headteacher that despite these factors there is a good ethos in the school, a warm welcoming atmosphere and high staff morale. Standards in the national test results have improved in recent years, and the head is determined to improve pupils' standards in the school further by raising the quality of teaching and making the school the first choice of parents. She says, *"I believe children have one chance and I want to give it to them"*.
9. A significant and key appointment has been that of a very capable deputy head last term, following the departure of the previous postholder. Besides her qualities as a good teacher, she is very supportive of the headteacher and they work very effectively together as a team. She is a good, positive strategic thinker, and is confident at problem solving. In the short time since her appointment, for example, she has introduced the 'Golden Time' reward system. At the meeting parents felt that this had had a positive impact on improving pupils' behaviour and inspection confirms that pupils value this initiative. One of her responsibilities is to work with the learning support assistants to ensure that they are part of the team and to monitor their work. This process had not been initiated yet, but both the head and deputy are aware of the disparity in the effectiveness of individuals in the team of learning support staff.
10. The head believes that this is an improving school and inspection supports this view. Together with the deputy, this is a strong leadership team capable of moving the school forward.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.

11. Two of the aims of the school are: 1) 'to ensure a high standard of behaviour and discipline in which pupils are able to develop self-discipline and a strong sense of moral values'; and 2) 'to help each child to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and independence'. As far as the vast majority of pupils are concerned, the school is successful in achieving these aims. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. When they first enter the school in the nursery, children are made to feel very welcome. When children are new to the nursery, parents are free to stay with their child as they settle in, but

most children readily leave their parents or carers as they respond to the warm, secure atmosphere provided by the teacher and nursery nurse. This positive introduction lays the firm foundation for the development of good attitudes and positive values, which pupils build on as they progress through the school. They are enthusiastic and most go to school eagerly and are confident that their views will be listened to and respected. In most lessons, they concentrate well and are fully focused on their work. In the questionnaire responses and at the meeting, parents said they were happy with the attitudes promoted and felt their children like school.

12. Similar responses were made about their children's behaviour, with the majority of parents believing that it is good. This confidence is generally well placed. As was suggested at the parents' meeting, the behaviour of a few pupils can cause disruption to the learning of themselves and others if it is not checked. However, these are pupils with needs arising from emotional or behavioural difficulties and for most of the time they are supported well. For the majority of pupils, in lessons and in and around the school, behaviour is good and helps pupils in their learning. In classes, as pupils agree their own rules, they are known to all and pupils respect them. At playtimes, lunchtimes and on other occasions such as assemblies, pupils are well behaved and are well supervised. Girls and boys mix well together.
13. The management of pupils is founded on good relationships between all staff and pupils. Pupils also have good relationships with each other and are often very thoughtful. This was illustrated in one lesson when a girl suggested that another should be entered into the Golden Book for working so hard. Children in the nursery quickly settle in well and soon begin to play appropriately with each other. Throughout the rest of the school, all pupils, including those with SEN and the few with EAL, work well together and are content to take their turn on the computers in the classrooms. Teachers value pupils who in turn are willing to show initiative and take responsibility when given the opportunity. For example, all are keen to be selected to take the registers to the school secretary after registration and they proudly select a companion to accompany them. Pupils' personal development is progressing well. Towards the end of one lesson, a girl was given the task of stamping the day's date in each child's work-book and she did this with care and very responsibly. At the end of the session, the team leaders collected all the books.

The school cares well for all its pupils, and supports them effectively.

14. One of the aims of the school, prominently displayed in publications such as the staff handbook, is: 'to provide a caring, happy, stimulating environment in which children feel safe and secure'. The school successfully achieves its aims of providing a caring community based on the good relationships pupils have with all staff. It has a positive and friendly atmosphere and encourages children to feel valued and secure and to become mature. In personal, social and health education and through circle time, the pupils are able to discuss a wide range of personal and general issues important to them. The staff know their pupils well, are good role models and pupils have respect for them.
15. New systems have been put in place to measure children's attainment and to check on their progress. These are in place for the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and SEN. A good start has been made in introducing these systems since the head has been in post, when previously there were none. However, more work needs to be done and the initiative extended to other subjects.
16. Due regard is paid to child protection issues, with the headteacher being the designated member of staff for child protection. There are four 'looked after' children in the school who have personal educational plans and these are regularly reviewed with an advisory teacher from the local education authority. The school has its own policy and the staff receive training in child protection on a reasonably regular basis and information about child protection forms part of the induction of new staff. There is a keypad system on the main door and visitors to the school are asked to sign a visitors' book in the entrance hall. Two members of staff have been trained in first aid. The school is well maintained by a capable site manager who provides helpful support to the school beyond the terms of his contract.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development.

17. Pupils' personal development is promoted particularly effectively through the school's provision for their moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is satisfactory and there are instances of good practice. For example, in the nursery children expressed wonder and amazement when the water in the water tray was made to turn blue. In a design and technology lesson in an ongoing topic on moving pictures on cards, the class was enthralled when the specialist teacher explained the mechanism by which the pictures were made to move. Work in pupils' books in Year 2 shows evidence of reflection when pupils completed entries in their diaries about the Christmas holidays, with fond memories expressed about the activities with their families. Time is given to reflect in religious education but, in the school as a whole, such moments are insufficiently planned throughout the curriculum.
18. Pupils' moral development is emphasised well. Teachers generally treat pupils in a consistent manner and are mindful of one of the school's aims: 'To ensure a high standard of behaviour and discipline in which pupils are able to develop self-discipline, and a strong sense of moral values.' Pupils are polite to all adults, including visitors and the site manager as he works around the school. The rules that each class has agreed are prominently displayed. Pupils respond well to the 'Sunshine and Clouds' behaviour management system and the linked 'Golden Time' reward initiative.
19. Good opportunities are given for pupils to develop their social skills as soon as they enter the school and they are taught to respond politely. In the nursery, two children give out milk to others, wearing particular colours to identify themselves. As they receive the milk, the children are encouraged to say "Thank you". When they enter the nursery, most children readily leave their parents or carers and choose their activities eagerly from the selection prepared by the staff. A few children who have just joined the nursery show a little anxiety and the staff sensitively and quietly allow the adults to remain behind until the children settle. In the reception year, children are guided to hang up their coats together before registration and then settle on the carpet and are taught to answer their names politely. In the reception classes, children behave well and are able to organise themselves. At lunchtimes, adults sit with the children, fostering good relationships and social skills and encourage good manners.
20. The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively through teaching pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions as well as the diversity and richness of other cultures. In a school with few ethnic minority groups, it is aware of the need to emphasise multi-cultural diversity to its pupils. There is evidence of strong emphasis on other cultures, such as life in the Caribbean and American Thanksgiving. Hindu parents have visited the school for the celebration of Divali, and the Chinese New Year has been highlighted. A Sikh parent has arranged a visit to a Temple, and one of the teachers is learning Japanese and is teaching her children key words and numbers. Links are being formed with children in Japan and in North Carolina, where the deputy head worked on an exchange visit. There are also frequent visits to local museums and the local community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The teaching in Years 1 and 2, where much is no better than satisfactory.

21. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses. If these were eradicated, the pupils' attainment would be raised, particularly in English and mathematics. Six of the 17 lessons observed were satisfactorily taught, rather than taught well or very well. In one lesson, the teaching was unsatisfactory.
22. Work in the mathematics books of pupils in Year 2 is not adequately challenging for higher-attaining pupils. The work set is very similar to that given to the average pupils, although there is more of it completed. There are very few mistakes, indicating that these pupils are not being stretched enough. It is clear that they have a very confident grasp of the concepts and are not benefiting from this work as much as they could. In one unsatisfactory lesson in English, some groups of pupils

were also insufficiently challenged. They were given too much time to finish the tasks and consequently the amount of work completed was less than might have been expected in the time allowed. This error was compounded by a lack of monitoring of pupils' work as the teacher remained with a group and did not oversee the work of the other groups. She was therefore unaware, until the final plenary, that some pupils had completed an unsatisfactory amount of work. In another otherwise satisfactory lesson in mathematics, while the class was working in groups, the teacher did not monitor their work sufficiently and some pupils in this lower-ability set (where classes are grouped according to previous attainment) made fundamental errors without them being identified.

23. On occasion the pace of lessons is too slow, with some parts of lessons being longer than they should be. In one English lesson the class spent too much time on the carpet and some pupils' attention tended to wander. As a result, not enough time was allowed for their written tasks and pupils were not given sufficient time to consolidate their learning. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and does not show consistently how pupils can improve their work. In a pupil's mathematics work book, for example, the pupil had wrongly calculated $57+28$ to be 84. The teacher had written "*Still doesn't understand*" without further comment, and there was no indication that follow-up work had been given to ensure that the pupil had finally understood the concept involved in making this calculation. Since her appointment, the headteacher has introduced a system of regular, although not frequent, monitoring of teaching aimed at improving teaching quality throughout the school.

The effective use of some learning support assistants.

24. Teaching support staff consists of two nursery nurses and seven learning support assistants. These assistants together work a total of 91 hours, with individuals working between five and 20 hours per week. The nursery nurses work well with the class teachers and provide effective support, helping children learn well in the nursery and one of the reception classes in most of the lessons seen. The quality of support from the teaching assistants is variable and inconsistent. This is mainly because not all have received training for their roles. About 40 per cent of the support in the lessons observed was ineffective and did not give the pupils the desired support, particularly for below-average-attaining pupils. Although the majority of support is therefore at least satisfactory, a significant minority is not, and in this respect, value for money is not being obtained.
25. Some learning assistants provide good, confident support to groups. One such example was observed during a lesson in a lower set for mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2. In this class, a learning assistant worked well with four pupils under the direction of the special educational needs co-ordinator, who was teaching the class. The support assistant's interventions were purposeful and helpful to the pupils. She intervened appropriately but was not over-directive, and encouraged the pupils to do most of the work themselves. As a result of this effective support, this small group made good progress. This good level of support contrasts with some that was observed, characterised by the support assistants working without direction or clear purpose. In one English lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils were asked to write a number of words on their individual whiteboards, the main task being to find appropriate definitions for the words in their dictionaries, and to write them up. The support assistant working with a pupil with SEN wrote the words on the boy's whiteboard for him, so denying him the opportunity to perform a task of which he was most capable. Similar examples of over-direction were observed during the inspection.

The amount of actual teaching time.

26. The recommended minimum level of total hours for lessons per week for schools of this type is 21. This calculation excludes time for registration, assemblies and breaktimes, including lunchtime. In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), the latest figures show that pupils in 91 per cent of schools received at least the minimum teaching time recommended by the Department for Education and Skills. Data from the school indicates that the total teaching time each week is 21 hours and 15 minutes. This is based on a teaching day of 4 hours 15 minutes. Inspection finds that in practice the teaching day is four hours, making a total teaching time of 20 hours each week. This is because

time is taken from teaching for pupils to drink milk after the morning break, and the last session in the afternoon tends to start at 2.30pm rather than 2.25pm. The total lost teaching time is approximately 15 minutes a day, or one hour and 15 minutes each week. This is a significant amount of time lost when the school is striving to raise standards further.

The budgetary surplus is too large.

27. The under-spend in the last financial year alone was just over five per cent, which is within the normally accepted limits of prudent budgeting. Indeed, the under-spend of £24,600 would have been reduced to approximately £3,600 had the staffing budget been used as planned. That it was not was because of vacancies that resulted in temporary or younger teachers being employed, with concomitant, although unplanned, budgetary savings arising. However, there are additional savings that have arisen in recent years, totalling nearly £52,000, in addition to the under-spend from last year. The total carry-forward is therefore over £76,500 – 17.2 per cent of last year's income. The chair of the finance committee, who is knowledgeable and capable, has been in this post for only a short while and has inherited the under-spend. There are plans to spend some of this surplus, including funds to fit out the new reception classroom and an expected claw-back from the local authority in respect of funds allocated for pupils that have not arisen. However, these sums are unlikely to exceed £15,000 and there are no clear plans to spend the rest of the surplus wisely. Whilst a prudent surplus is necessary for contingencies, these funds are allocated for the benefit of pupils at the school at the time. Building up such a large surplus represents unsatisfactory financial practice.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- improve teaching by monitoring it more frequently and targeting those teachers whose teaching is below a consistently good level;

(paragraph 23)

- improve the effectiveness of learning support assistants by providing training for them so that all are brought up to the level of the best;

(paragraph 24)

- review the teaching day to ensure it complies with the recommended minimum;

(paragraph 26) and

- ensure that the governing body has clear plans to spend the budgetary surplus.

(paragraph 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	1	9	6	1	0	0
Percentage	0	6	53	35	6	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 nearly six percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	46
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	26	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	46	46	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (91)	100 (85)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	19
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	46	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (87)	98 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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	87	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.4
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	444,552
Total expenditure	419,904
Expenditure per pupil	2,576
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,946
Balance carried forward to next year	76,594

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	163
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	36	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	50	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	61	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	29	18	2	4
The teaching is good.	55	41	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	39	16	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	29	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	39	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	50	7	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	45	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	39	11	2	18

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Inspectors agree with most of parents' positive comments but found that the overall quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress to be satisfactory. Inspectors disagree with parents as they found homework to be appropriate but agree that some improvement could be made to the reports about pupils' progress. These are detailed but some contain too much jargon and in Year 1 they do not say where children stand in relation to the standards appropriate for their age.