

INSPECTION REPORT

WATER ORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Water Orton

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125620

Headteacher: Mr A P Richards

Reporting inspector: Mr C R Warn
4293

Dates of inspection: 12 and 13 June 2002

Inspection number: 067147

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Attleboro Lane
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Warwickshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body
at the above address

Name of chair of governors: Jonathan Gilbert

Date of previous inspection: 23 June 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Water Orton County Primary School is a large village school in North Warwickshire with 366 pupils aged between four and eleven years. The number of pupils attending the school is falling annually. This reflects the number of children living in the area, not the popularity of the school, which is high. There are 14 more girls than boys in the school. There is no nursery provision, but most pupils receive some form of pre-school education before entering the Reception Year. The general ability level of pupils entering the school at this stage is above the average for Warwickshire. The school draws about two thirds of its pupils from the local parish and the remainder from further afield, including the nearby town of Coleshill and parts of Solihull. The area served by the school is moderately advantaged in terms of social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals (4.3%) is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language (0.8%) is very low. Ninety-eight per cent of pupils are of white ethnicity. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs (28%) is slightly above the national average. There is a support unit for ten pupils who have specific learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very successful school where pupils receive a very good quality education within a secure and friendly environment. As a consequence they make very good progress and reach standards of attainment that are well above the national average, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school justifiably has a high reputation within the community that it serves and attracts over a hundred pupils from beyond the parish. It is very well led and managed and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in all the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above the national average for pupils aged seven and eleven.
- More able pupils are successfully encouraged to reach Level 3 of the National Curriculum or above by the age of seven, and Level 5 or above by the age of eleven.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make good progress.
- Children in the Reception Year make good progress and attain well.
- The quality of teaching has risen since the time of the last inspection and is now good: all pupils are suitably challenged and are exceptionally well cared for.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development and education for citizenship is very good; as a consequence personal relationships and the attendance record are both excellent.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and teachers with key responsibilities.

What could be improved?

- Pupils do not make enough use of computers and other information and communication technology (ICT) resources in their learning.
- Monitoring, review and evaluation activities are not used fully enough to support the planning of further improvements and to enhance the work of governors as 'critical friends'.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvements since the last inspection in 1997 have been rapid and significant. Standards of attainment have risen further from a strong position. There have been particularly impressive improvements in the standards reached by children in the Reception Year. The overall quality of teaching has improved from being satisfactory to good. Most of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report have been dealt with well. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adopted very successfully. Pupils' work is now assessed more diagnostically in relation to clear individual learning targets which pupils and parents are aware of. Considerable progress has been made in increasing opportunities for pupils to use new technology to enrich their learning, although there is much more that still could be achieved. The values that the school promotes are greatly appreciated by parents. The arrangements for supporting pupils' personal and social development are now very good.

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	A	C	A	B
mathematics	B	A	A	B
science	B	A	A	B

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

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and the great majority achieve all of the early learning goals by the **age of five**. The results in the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at **the age of seven** have risen since 1997 at a greater rate than in most schools. In 1997 test scores were just below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In 2001 the scores were well above average in all three tests. In the tests in English, mathematics and science taken by pupils at the **age of eleven**, results have risen from being in line with the national average in 1997 to well above it in 2001. The standards of work seen in lessons during the inspection were in line with those achieved in the 2001 tests. The standards reached in the other subjects by the age of eleven range from average to above average compared to all primary schools. Pupils are currently catching up with their ICT skills following the arrival of new equipment. Boys and girls achieve equally well. All pupils, including the most able ones and those with identified special educational needs, are encouraged to reach challenging personal learning targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy learning and are attentive, polite and enthusiastic in lessons. Most greatly enjoy their work in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are courteous, considerate and very well mannered, reflecting the spirit of the school and the example set by adults.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The opportunities available for pupils to accept personal responsibility and to think and act for themselves are very impressive. Personal relationships are outstandingly good.
Attendance	Excellent. Attendance rates are well above average and there are relatively few cases of unauthorised absence.

These aspects are very great strengths of the school and make a direct contribution to the high standards of attainment of pupils of all ages and abilities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching in the sample of thirty-four lessons seen was good, with examples of very good teaching in all years. There were particular strengths in Years 2, 5 and 6. In approximately three quarters of all the lessons seen the quality of teaching ranged from excellent to good. In the remaining lessons the quality of teaching was satisfactory in almost all instances. Teaching has greatly improved since the last inspection, particularly in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2. There were particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics, science, physical education, citizenship and personal, social and health education. Skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and practised. The needs of all pupils are well met by the teaching they receive. Teaching in many cases both challenges and supports pupils well. Teachers are not yet using new technology sufficiently to support learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. A broad, balanced and interesting curriculum is offered. There are particular strengths in the newly revised curriculum for the early years and in the organisation of the core subjects. There is an improving provision for the use of ICT, which is however yet to be fully exploited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs progress well and are given plenty of opportunities to reach challenging personal targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The arrangements for supporting pupils' personal, social and health education are outstanding. Education for citizenship is a notable strength. Opportunities for pupils' moral, social and cultural development are very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for in a safe but stimulating learning environment.

These aspects are especial strengths of the school. Parents are extremely pleased with the way in which their children are both supported and challenged.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has created a very strong sense of teamwork amongst all who work in the school. This includes a shared understanding of values, standards and targets.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school, but are still developing their responsibilities for planning, monitoring and review.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is a clear recognition by the headteacher and members of staff of the strengths of the school. However, there is a need for a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation that is linked to the school's development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Most resources are used extremely well, but there is scope for making fuller use of the ICT facilities that are now installed.

Very good leadership and management by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators have enabled a successful school to keep on improving. This has been recognised by the receipt of a School Achievement Award for two years in succession. Development planning and

self-review activities are undertaken thoroughly, but do not involve all staff and governors sufficiently in the processes. The buildings and grounds are well suited to their purpose and are well maintained. Despite being a popular school, reducing numbers of pupils in the locality is leading to a drop in income which in turn is requiring economy cuts to be made. This process is being handled well. This is a very effective school that uses the principles of 'best value' well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high standards attained in all years. • The good progress made by pupils of all abilities. • The safe, caring, pleasant ethos of the school. • Very high standards of behaviour and personal relationships • The quality of the information supplied to them, and the ways in which they are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning in school. • The ways in which the school continues to get better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents wanted their children to use computers more • The school should provide a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Parents were very enthusiastic about the many strengths of the school. At the parents' meeting there were very few points of criticism or concern. A few parents felt that pupils would benefit from making more use of ICT. In the questionnaire more than 80% of responses were positive to all questions except for the one on the range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors endorsed the parents' views except for the concerns over the range of activities outside school, which they judged to be satisfactory in comparison to similar schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment in all the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above the national average for pupils aged seven and eleven.

1. Children enter the Reception Year at the age of four with overall ability levels that are assessed by the school to be just above the average for pupils attending schools in Warwickshire. However, cohorts do vary considerably in ability from year to year from being just below the county average to being well above it. The current intake has a relatively low proportion of children that have high assessment scores.
2. During the Reception Year children make good progress and the great majority reach the early learning goals in each of the six prescribed areas of learning of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They then make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach overall standards of attainment by the age of seven that are well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
3. From 1997 (when the school was previously inspected) to 2001, the trend in the school's point scores in the national tests for seven-year-olds has been continually upward. The school's results have risen at a greater rate than nationally. In 1997 the average point scores per pupil were just below the national average in reading and writing and well below in mathematics. In 2001 they were well above average in all three tests. Boys and girls now achieve equally well. By the end of Year 2, in 1996 the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding the national benchmark of Level 2 in English was above the national average, but the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was below average. In mathematics the percentage reaching or exceeding Level 2 was well above the national average, but again the percentage reaching Level 3 was below average. There were therefore strengths in the ability of teachers to get pupils up to Level 2, but weaknesses in getting enough pupils up to Level 3 standard. In 2001 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 was well above average in all tests. Thus the standards achieved by pupils at the age of seven have risen significantly since the time of the last inspection.
4. The standard of attainment of pupils aged eleven was high at the time of the last inspection in 1997. In all three core subjects the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the national benchmark of Level 4 in the national tests for eleven-year-olds was higher than in most primary schools, as was the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science. These high standards have been improved upon still further in 2001, especially in terms of the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 in English. Pupils make very good progress in the core subjects from Years 3 to 6.
5. The standards of work seen in lessons during the inspection were comparable to those achieved in the national tests in 2001 in both Years 2 and 6. The current Year 6 contains a lower proportion of pupils in the upper ability range than in 2001. This is likely to lead to a small drop in the average point scores for Year 6 pupils in 2002 compared to 2001. This does not mean that overall standards of attainment are falling. Inspectors are satisfied that

pupils are working towards challenging personal learning targets and are achieving well compared to their previous test scores.

6. The standard of attainment of pupils aged eleven is in line with the average for all schools in ICT. Standards of attainment are above average in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music and are well above average in physical education and religious education. Increasingly, work in all subjects is being used as a context for applying pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
7. The following key factors that have been responsible for these high and improving standards of attainment since 1997.

- Improved subject and lesson planning, with a much greater emphasis on pupils gaining specific learning outcomes that are linked to their individual targets for attainment.
- Teachers now have much higher expectations of what pupils are able to achieve, leading to lessons that have a more lively pace and which extend pupils' thinking and enquiry skills considerably.
- A great deal of thought is now given to understanding and meeting the individual learning needs of all pupils.
- A much more detailed analysis is now made of how well individual pupils are progressing and the steps that need to be taken to deal with instances of underachievement.
- High standards of behaviour, attendance and punctuality plus excellent relationships help pupils to be fully engaged in their learning activities.
- The great majority of pupils enjoying learning within a friendly, supportive and stimulating environment.
- Parents are provided with detailed information each half term about what their children will be studying which helps them to support at home the work done in lessons.

8. These factors have been encouraged by very good leadership and management by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators.

More able pupils are successfully encouraged to reach Level 3 or above by the age of seven and Level 5 or above by the age of eleven.

9. In the previous inspection report, one of the three key issues for action was:
“setting more precise individual and group targets for attainment, with particular attention to devising more ambitious targets for able pupils.”
10. This key issue has been very well addressed to the extent that it is now an important strength. All pupils now have precise learning targets in English, mathematics and science that are related to National Curriculum level descriptions. These are demanding and challenging for pupils of all abilities. In 1997 there was concern that some work was being pitched at a standard that equated to the middle range of ability, so limiting opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to show their paces. This was particularly the case for children in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2. Today, lessons in all years are generally far more challenging and often teachers invite pupils to exercise high level thinking and reasoning skills. At the same time, those pupils who need any additional help in understanding key

facts and ideas receive it.

11. Pupils are often presented with tasks to do and resources to work with that are intellectually demanding. Pupils rise to the occasion and handle these situations well because teachers have high expectations of them and also provide them with the support needed to succeed. Pupils are sometimes grouped according to ability within lessons, with the most able pupils being given much more advanced tasks to complete. There are a considerable number of opportunities for pupils to undertake personal research to deepen their knowledge and understanding further, using the library and (increasingly) new technology. The following case studies illustrate these points well. In all of the lessons featured below it was also the case that the learning needs of middle and lower attaining pupils were well addressed.
- In the Reception Year children were able to use the ICT program *Splash* well to choose brushes and colours to make images on screen. The teacher had a high expectation that children would be able to recall and use their previous learning to make further advances in their ICT, numeracy and creative skills. They rose to the occasion well. In another session children were encouraged to estimate numbers. The more able children could count well beyond ten, could sequence numbers and estimate the number of stones in different piles.
 - In a mixed Year 1 and 2 lesson pupils were performing dance movements to illustrate the story of Noah's Ark. The pupils had devised some of these movements themselves to accompany musical sounds which they had also devised to fit into a commentary spoken by the teacher. The standard of performance was exceptionally high, with moments of considerable insight and inspiration. Pupils also gave some remarkable comments when asked by their teacher to evaluate how successful they had been and how they could make further improvements before they performed to another class. There was plenty of scope in this lesson for gifted pupils to excel, which they visibly did.
 - In a Year 2 literacy lesson pupils were learning to write questions from a non-fiction text. They could already understand the importance of chronology and could search for information on their own. After a very impressive activity session the pupils came together for a plenary session bursting with ideas that they were very eager to share. They reported back using a sophisticated range of vocabulary and concepts for pupils of this age.
 - In a Year 3 numeracy lesson pupils were looking for number patterns. They had been set the task of working out how many hands were joined when different numbers of children held hands. More astute pupils soon spotted the number pattern could be expressed in a formula "double the number and take away two". They could then apply this formula to different numbers of children holding hands, such as twenty or eighty. A few pupils were close to being able to express the formula algebraically as " $y=2x-2$ ".
 - In a Year 4 science lesson the teacher had an expert knowledge of living things and led a very interesting and demanding lesson on how owls and caterpillars adapted to the environments in which they lived. Pupils were able to describe with great precision why an owl had large eyes, acute hearing, strong talons, a sharp beak and a silent flight. When provided with examples of puss moth caterpillars, pupils were able to follow instruction from the teacher to identify which stage of growth the specimens were at

using precise observational skills and scientific terminology. The standard of attainment reached by many pupils in this lesson was much higher than is normal for pupils in Year 4.

- In a Year 5 literacy lesson pupils were encouraged by precise and insightful teaching to make accurate statements about how formal letters should be worded. They used difficult phrases such as “furthermore, ...” and “regarding my previous correspondence” correctly and imaginatively. They could use a thesaurus well, not only to find alternative words but also to consider which of the alternatives were most appropriate to use. Some pupils in this class were already working at Level 5.
 - In a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils were making very good progress in learning how to make notes from non-fiction texts. The teacher had planned the lesson exceptionally well with the help of a teaching assistant. Pupils were given clear guidance about the objectives of the lesson and worked very purposefully as a consequence. Both the teacher and the teaching assistant gave active tuition to pupils to enable them to work independently towards their own targets for attainment. Pupils stayed on task and in the plenary session were bursting with information and ideas that they wanted to talk about. Able pupils were given ample scope to extend their reasoning and deduction skills and their ability to synthesise and classify. Approximately 40% of the class were working at Level 5.
 - As a consequence of experiences such as these, the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels at the ages of seven and eleven has risen sharply since 1997. At the **age of seven**, in the 2001 tests 43% of pupils reached Level 3 in reading and 44% in mathematics. Both of these figures are well above the national average. In comparison, 11% reached Level 3 in writing. Although this is a much lower figure, it is still above the national average of 9%. At the **age of eleven**, in the 2001 tests, 43% of pupils reached Level 5 in English, 40% in mathematics and 57% in science. All three results are well above the national average.
12. The work of the headteacher in providing the vision and drive for these improvements to take place is important to acknowledge, as is the role of subject co-ordinators in helping teachers to meet the needs of able pupils so well. Improvements in the way that pupils’ progress is tracked has also helped teachers to identify which teaching approaches work best. Similar strategies have also worked well for middle and lower ability pupils with suitable adjustments in the pace, factual content and the amount of conceptual understanding required.

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

13. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven, only 9% of pupils failed to achieve the national benchmark Level 2 in English, 4% in mathematics and 7% in science. This is a much lower proportion in each test compared to most infant and primary schools in England. In the tests for pupils aged eleven, the comparable figures for the Level 4 benchmark were 10% for English, 15% for mathematics and 3% for science. These figures indicate that the school has been very successful in enabling the great majority of its pupils to

reach or exceed the expected standard for their age. As 28% of pupils are judged by the school to have identified special educational needs, it follows that many of them reach Level 2 at age seven and Level 4 at age eleven.

14. Inspection evidence from lesson observations shows that pupils with special educational needs make good, and sometimes very good, progress towards reaching challenging personal learning targets. They are given plenty of scope to develop their conceptual thinking and to express themselves well orally, even where they have difficulties in writing. So, for example, by the age of seven, 94% of pupils are up to Level 4 in speaking and listening and 93% are up to Level 2 in experimental and investigative science. In many cases pupils in lessons are given specific tasks to perform that accord with well-designed personal learning targets and individual education plans.
15. There is a provision for ten pupils with specific learning difficulties to be assigned to a specialist support unit within the school which is known as the 'literacy centre'. At present seven pupils are based within the literacy centre. These pupils spend some of the school day within the centre receiving individualised help, but the majority of their time is spent within mainstream classrooms amongst other pupils of their age. Within the centre, staff use specific strategies to strengthen pupils' basic skills and to boost their confidence. One instance was observed where a teaching assistant was successfully helping some Year 4 pupils to spell target words, to identify odd and even numbers and to count forwards and backwards.
16. Pupils with identified learning difficulties are provided with specific help in most lessons. They often have additional guidance from a teaching assistant and are provided with resources and tasks that are skilfully designed to match their learning targets. Lessons are generally pitched at a high level in terms of concepts and ideas. Pupils who need additional help are enabled to gain access to the essential elements of these. The following case studies illustrate these points well.
 - In a Year 2 physical education lesson, pupils with relatively weak skills of dance, physical co-ordination and movement were fully involved in all activities and were progressing well as a consequence.
 - In a Year 3 numeracy lesson, lower attaining pupils were given a simpler task to perform that exemplified the same number patterns that other pupils were exploring through experimentation.
 - In a very sophisticated presentation on the stages of life of a caterpillar in a Year 4 science lesson, pupils with special educational needs were able to participate fully in the observations and then received help in recording their findings.
 - In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, lower attaining pupils received very effective help from a teaching assistant who enabled them to use a *Textease* program to visualise fractions and percentages. This helped them to overcome some perceptual problems and to feel more confident about recognising number patterns. The classroom teacher was very skilled at spotting where blockages to learning were forming during practical work and

dealing with the problems swiftly.

17. These examples reflect very thoughtful leadership by the headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and subject co-ordinators. They also illustrate how well the pupils assigned to the literacy centre are integrated into classroom learning activities. Pupils are intellectually challenged and are enabled to understand relatively sophisticated concepts even if they have some difficulties with their reading, writing or number skills. The increasing use of new technology is demonstrating new avenues for learning for pupils with special educational needs.

Children in the Reception Year make good progress and attain well.

18. The provision for reception aged children in the school has been completely revised and upgraded since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage produced by the government in 2000 has been fully and imaginatively adopted. New teachers are in post who have brought with them a sense of enthusiasm, commitment and innovation. The teaching rooms have been reorganised and an impressive ‘outdoor classroom’ has been built. Parents are fully involved in the learning process through meetings, home visits, publications and frequent conversations with teachers. There are very good arrangements for ensuring continuity of learning from the Reception Year into Year 1. The curriculum is very carefully planned to take account of the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and the ‘stepping stones’ that children should move across in order to achieve the defined early learning goals.
19. As a consequence of all of these features, children make good progress in each of the six areas of learning and the great majority reach the prescribed early learning goals by the age of 5.

<i>Area of learning</i>	<i>Examples of how pupils are progressing</i>
<i>Personal, social and emotional development</i>	As in the rest of the school, this area of learning is especially strong. Children work well together, are encouraged to try new things and are extremely well cared for within a safe but stimulating environment. ‘Circle time’ is used well to help children understand how to make sense of moral and social issues that they encounter.
<i>Communication, language and literacy</i>	Children are taught basic reading, speaking and listening skills very well. As a consequence they can quickly match words with images and objects and so rapidly expand their vocabulary. Teaching strategies that use phonics are employed to good effect. Children make good use of their phonic knowledge to write simpler words accurately and to attempt more complex words credibly.
<i>Mathematical development</i>	Most children can count to ten and many can go beyond this. Some can recognise simple number patterns, saying which is more or less than another number. Some children are benefiting

	<p>from individual tuition to enable them to see and respond to number patterns shown in computer programs. For example, one child was seen to be able to interpret bar charts showing different numbers of different types of fruit.</p>
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<i>Area of learning (contd)</i>	<i>Examples of how pupils are progressing (contd)</i>
<i>Knowledge and understanding of the world</i>	Children benefited from a very imaginative thematic approach to people, animals and plants in Africa. They could begin to understand how animals were adapted to living in different conditions through story, music, images and play. They also gained an understanding of the locality through models of street layouts and large scale plans. Older residents have helped children to appreciate living conditions in the past.
<i>Physical development</i>	The newly built outdoor classroom has provided children with plenty of scope for creative play and games. They are able to explore and experiment with different types of equipment well. Children work in small groups on different apparatus to develop their skills of co-operation with others as well as their own physical co-ordination and strength. Parent helpers sometimes are present to provide additional supervision, enabling the full range of outdoor space and equipment to be used safely.
<i>Creative development</i>	The reception classrooms are full of good examples of children's art, music and design work. At the time of the inspection many children were contributing to a stunningly designed cloth mural that depicted different kinds of fruit. There was an excellent display of African music with opportunities for children to use some of the instruments.

20. The school is rightly proud of the recent improvements made in the Reception Year. These have been recognised by the Local Education Authority as an example of good practice. The policies, plans and strategies that have been employed have been very beneficial. The school recognises that these are still evolving and that there is scope for even more improvement yet, for example in supporting the literacy development of lower attaining boys and in making fuller use of new technology.

The quality of teaching has risen since the time of the last inspection and is now good: all pupils are suitably challenged and are exceptionally well cared for.

21. From the sample of lessons seen during the inspection it is clear that there have been very significant improvements to the overall quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. In 1997 just one lesson in twenty was judged to have very good or excellent teaching. That proportion has changed to nearly two lessons in five. In 1997 just over one lesson in ten was characterised by unsatisfactory teaching. That proportion has greatly reduced to less than one lesson in thirty. Improvements have been particularly spectacular in the proportion of teaching that is good or very good. Every teacher was seen to teach at least one lesson where the quality of teaching was good or very good. Very good teaching was seen in every year group. In the Reception Year three lessons in five were judged to have very good teaching. At the time of the last inspection the overall quality of the teaching was satisfactory: it is now good. In 1997 there were some weaknesses in the teaching of pupils aged four to seven. This is no longer the case.

22. The lessons where the quality of teaching was very good (nearly two lessons in five) were characterised by the following features.

- Lessons were very well planned and were carefully linked to National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and subject guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).
- Lesson objectives were clear, precise and shared with pupils so that they knew exactly what they were expected to achieve.
- Lessons had effective introductions which included varied tasks for pupils to perform and good plenary sessions to consolidate and summarise new learning.
- Teachers had good, and sometimes very good subject expertise and also knew the learning needs of each of their pupils well.
- Much of the teaching was lively and enthusiastic, so that it energised pupils very well.
- Teachers had high expectations of their pupils' academic performance, maturity and social skills.
- Teachers had high levels of competency in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy in all subjects.
- Effective questioning skills encouraged pupils' conceptual understanding and prompted reasoning and deduction.
- Good use was made of time and available resources (except for the computers located in classroom areas), including the school grounds.
- Effective assessment is made of pupils' progress during the academic year and their attainment at the end of each year.
- A strong emphasis is placed on social inclusion, especially in the ways in which teachers boost pupils' self-esteem, encourage boys and girls to work together and enable pupils to share ideas.
- Effective support for pupils' learning from teaching assistants who worked co-operatively with the class teacher.

23. These important strengths are in contrast to observations made by inspectors in 1997 about problems of poor pace, weak planning, too much repetition and insufficient challenge for more able pupils in some lessons. Currently, in approximately one lesson in five some of the strengths listed above are less apparent although pupils still make satisfactory progress in their learning and respond well to the tasks that they are set.
24. The substantial improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection can be attributed to effective leadership by the headteacher and other teachers with major areas of responsibility. This has enabled the following actions to occur.

- A major programme to improve lesson and subject planning has been successfully undertaken.
- Schemes of work have been drawn up that fully reflect current national requirements and guidelines and which have clearly defined targets for attainment for pupils of differing abilities to achieve that are linked to National Curriculum levels.
- Well designed opportunities are provided for teachers' continuing professional development. These have focused on the ways in which pupils learn and on how to set personal learning targets for pupils.

- A strong emphasis has been placed on training subject co-ordinators to work with other teachers to apply new schemes of work and teaching strategies in everyday classroom situations to a consistent standard.
- The introduction of much more diagnostic assessment procedures has enabled the progress of individual pupils to be tracked closely. This has made it possible for teachers to identify quickly any cases where pupils are underachieving and also to find examples of good practice.
- There is a very impressive sense of teamwork and common purpose amongst all members of staff. This has led to a willingness to share ideas, observe each other teach and to work hard for the benefit of pupils.
- The appointment of capable new members of staff has enabled valuable new approaches to teaching and learning to be introduced into the school, for example in the Reception Year.
- Providing parents with details of what their children will be learning in each subject every half term is a very astute approach to involving them in the learning process.

25. These lines of action have led to each of the three key issues for action from the last inspection being addressed very thoroughly. They have also contributed directly to the upward movement of standards of attainment since 1997. Pupils are very well cared for within lessons and during other times of the school day. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. There remains valuable work to be done to increase staff expertise in the use of ICT to support learning and in marking pupils' work in ways that enable pupils to see how well they are progressing towards their own learning targets. Both of these priorities feature within the school's current development plan.

The provision for pupils' personal and social development and education for citizenship is very good; as a consequence personal relationships and the attendance record are both excellent.

26. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Particularly outstanding is the way in which pupils are encouraged to take a high level of personal responsibility for their actions and their learning. Parents warmly approve of this. There are considerable strengths in the ways that multi-cultural understanding is promoted through art and design, music, literacy and religious education. There are some very effective special events such as visits by dancers, an Islamic artist and local history specialists. There remain some uncertainties about how best to support pupils' spiritual development. In practice much more is achieved than the school recognises and some of these uncertainties are apparent rather than real, as practice is ahead of written policies. For example, there are some good aspects of the promotion of spiritual development, such as reflection on the qualities of communal responsibility and class rules, and on what to do if you get frightened or upset.
27. The arrangements for pupils' personal development were judged to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection in 1997. Moral and social development was promoted well. Pupils often took responsibility for themselves. Work was in hand to develop an understanding of citizenship through community involvement. There was a satisfactory policy for multicultural education.

28. The previous strengths have been built upon well. The work undertaken to support pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is excellent. The approaches adopted to education for citizenship are equally excellent. The planning of the PSHE and citizenship coverage is first class, with very clear cross-curricular links. Very sophisticated work is done by pupils to develop rules and codes of action. This helps them to understand how individuals can contribute to collective goals. In Years 1 and 2, 'circle time' is used well to enable pupils to express ideas, feelings and opinions. Very mature responses to discussions of moral issues in Years 3 to 6 were seen, with many links to actual situations that pupils might encounter at school or at home, such as what to do if a person finds a valuable item that somebody else has lost. Year 5 pupils were being very well prepared socially and emotionally for a residential week in mid June in Wales through 'circle time' and a special assembly. The same pupils were learning extremely well in religious education where they considered moral dilemmas and how different responses led to different reactions. Here pupils shared ideas very readily and could understand contrary viewpoints.
29. Personal relationships within the school are excellent. Pupils work extremely well together within groups and are very mature and responsible for their ages. They are courteous and well mannered. They often reflect the courtesy and respect shown to them by the adults working in the school. Parents are very appreciative of these important strengths of the school. The great majority of pupils enjoy their learning and the social climate of the school. They feel secure, valued and understood. As a consequence, attendance figures are well above the national average and there have been no instances of permanent exclusions in recent years. Last year there was only one instance where a pupil was excluded for a fixed period. All of these outcomes reflect the very capable leadership provided by the headteacher and members of staff with a responsibility for managing the provision for pupils' personal development.

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and teachers with key responsibilities.

30. There are abundant signs of very good leadership and management by the headteacher and post holders within the work and achievements of the school. These include high standards of attainment in the core subjects and most other subjects by pupils of all ages and capabilities. The standard of behaviour is very high and the attendance rate is well above average. The quality of teaching is good and is continually improving. New curriculum and assessment arrangements have been welded onto previous good practice imaginatively. Very good arrangements for pupils' welfare and guidance are in place. The school enjoys exceptionally strong levels of parental support, with nearly a third of pupils coming here in preference to another school situated nearer to their home. There are many well considered policies, which have been recently updated with the help of members of staff and governors. Staff morale is high. Exceptionally good teamwork and a friendly ethos encourages people to do their best.
31. The headteacher is held in very high esteem by members of staff, governors and parents. The school has many features that are recognised by Warwickshire Local Education Authority as examples of good practice. Curriculum co-ordinators and key stage managers

now perform their roles very well. There is very good staff support for colleagues, which enables good practice to be shared across classes. This helps to ensure a smooth transition for pupils between year groups and key stages. Performance management has been successfully introduced and is proving to be a valuable catalyst for improving teaching and learning strategies. Teaching assistants are fully involved in lesson planning and operation. The budget is well managed and is used to good effect and expenditure reflects the key principles of 'best value' well. The school provides very good value for money in terms of the outcomes achieved using the available financial, physical and human resources. The need to adjust to the effects of falling roles by reducing expenditure is being thoughtfully done by the headteacher and governors. Parents are very supportive of the way in which the school is led and managed.

32. The school is very efficiently managed and administered. The management structure of the school is well defined and is clearly understood by all members of staff and governors. The quality of the administrative support is very high. The roles and responsibilities of senior and middle managers are thoughtfully designed to cover all of the key aspects of school management. Subject co-ordinators work extremely hard to ensure that lesson planning reflects ambitious learning targets for pupils of all abilities. Some teachers have several management roles to perform in addition to their class teaching. They achieve success in these roles despite considerable pressure on their time. The strong sense of teamwork within the teaching and support staff enables some tasks to be shared by several people. This enables teachers to use each others' expertise constructively. Teachers are open to new ideas and are willing to adopt improved ways of working. There is a collective desire to see the school continue to improve. These constructive features reflect the headteacher's own philosophy and style of working.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils do not make enough use of computers and other ICT resources in their learning.

33. The school had relatively few modern personal computers until January 2001 when a new ICT suite was installed. The school was not connected to the Internet until September 2001. Teachers received ICT training funded by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) by Easter 2002. The deputy headteacher has worked hard to introduce the new equipment along with a revised scheme of work in 2001. The relatively recent introduction of new equipment, schemes of work and the associated staff training has meant that there has been a lot of catching up to be done to ensure that pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with average national standards. This is close to being achieved. Although still slightly below average, standards are higher than at the start of 2001. Staff and pupils are still at a relatively early stage in exploring the potential of the new equipment and software that is now available. Computers located within classroom areas are still under-used. All pupils now spend at least an hour per week learning basic ICT skills in the new suite. Lessons seen here were purposeful and productive, but were sometimes characterised by slow progress because of pupils' lack of experience in using keyboards. Pupils enjoyed using computers and were prepared to persevere even when they were frustrated by their limited expertise.
34. Pupils make relatively successful, but limited, use of computers for individual learning

activities. When pupils receive tuition from teachers and assistants they often progress well, as in a Reception class where children were helped to interpret bar charts on a screen by a teacher; or in a Year 5 geography lesson where they were learning about map symbols. When left alone they sometimes flounder because of a lack of keyboarding skills or knowledge about how to use the software. New technology is not used frequently to support whole-class learning outside the ICT suite. The electronic whiteboard is not used very frequently to support teaching in classrooms, mainly because it is in demand within the ICT room and because of a lack of laptop computers. A Year 5 science lesson provided a taste of what is possible when the teacher used *PowerPoint* displays to illustrate the features of flowers. This gave very clear information that enabled pupils to undertake detailed observation of specimens with precision.

35. Pupils are using data logging equipment, spreadsheets, digital cameras and control equipment increasingly frequently, but there is plenty of scope for this kind of work to be extended further. Pupils have recently had access to the Warwickshire Internet Gate System for individual enquiry work. The school has rightly identified the need to extend the use of ICT to support learning across all subjects within the school's current development plan. There are ambitious plans to make much greater use of ICT. The school now possesses most of the equipment needed to do this, apart from laptop computers, digital projectors and electronic whiteboards. Staff are gaining confidence and expertise in using new technology both within their teaching and for producing learning resources and schemes of work. There is now the capacity and the will to raise pupils' standard of attainment in ICT to a level that is comparable to that found in the other subjects of the curriculum.

Monitoring, review and evaluation activities are not used fully enough to support the school development planning process and to enhance the work of governors as 'critical friends'.

36. During the last two years members of staff have become much more closely involved in monitoring the progress of pupils, analysing test result patterns and in observing the lessons of colleagues. There has been a high level of debate about the features of successful lessons and about how pupils learn. The expectations of what pupils can achieve have risen as a consequence. However, the many instances of discussion, analysis and evaluation that have resulted from these activities have not been brought together within a systematic framework for self-review.
37. The school's development plan contains a very large number of points for action, but the rationale for identifying them has not been written down as a starting point within the plan. It was very hard for readers, such as staff and governors, to pick out the major areas for school improvement from more minor areas for action. In the self-review statement produced by the headteacher for the inspection (Form S4) a much clearer and more succinct summary of the strengths, weaknesses and development points for school improvement were identified than appeared in the school's development plan. The plan itself contained relatively little detail about the criteria for success. Without a clear picture of what improvements were envisaged to be like and how they might be measured or assessed, it was hard for staff and governors to see the exact part that they could play in achieving the desired outcomes. The details of the time scales and costs involved and the lines of

responsibility were sometimes rather vague.

38. As a consequence, teachers and governors were somewhat uncertain about the key areas for improvement for the school over the next two years and the role that they could play in carrying out these improvements, and planning further priorities for action. Teachers spoke about the value of having a smaller number of major school improvement targets that they could relate their own performance management objectives to. Governors expressed a keen interest in being more centrally involved in the cycle of planning, monitoring and review for the whole school and were eager to receive training to help them to do this. They were anxious to get a clearer overview of the main features of the way the school currently operated and the agenda for improvement.
39. The fine record of school improvement since the last inspection indicates that the strong central direction of the planning and review process by the headteacher has been effective. Staff, governors and the headteacher all agree that the time is now right to widen the process to include more fully all members of staff and governors. This would help governors to undertake their role as ‘critical friends’ in a far more informed way and would increase their participation in the strategic management of the school. It would also help hard-working and busy teachers and support assistants to prioritise their work more successfully and to share responsibility for major tasks in a planned way.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. This is a very successful school that continues to improve. To encourage this process further, staff and governors should:
- (1) increase the opportunities provided for pupils to use ICT to support, enrich and extend their learning in all subjects and in all years;
(see paragraphs 17, 22, 25, 33-35.)
 - (2) make fuller use of the findings from monitoring, review and evaluation activities to improve the planning of further improvements and to enhance the work of governors as ‘critical friends’.
(see paragraphs 20, 25, 35-39.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	13	7	1	0	0
Percentage	6	32	38	21	3	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 two percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	366
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	103

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
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	24	30	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	24
	Girls	27	27	28
	Total	49	50	52
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (92)	93 (90)	96 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	22
	Girls	27	28	28
	Total	49	52	50
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (94)	96 (96)	93 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year [i.e. 2000].

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	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	32
	Girls	26	24	26
	Total	54	51	58
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	90 (80)	85 (88)	97 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	25	27	29
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	51	53	55
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	85 (80)	88 (81)	92 (90)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year [i.e. 2000].

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	315
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.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)	14.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	190

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	726803
Total expenditure	742203
Expenditure per pupil	2034
Balance brought forward from previous year	47862
Balance carried forward to next year	32462

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	366
Number of questionnaires returned	139

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	44	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	47	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	45	11	4	1
The teaching is good.	57	38	4	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	12	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	26	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	0	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	46	12	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	50	44	0	5	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	48	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	41	28	9	10

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

41. Parents are extremely supportive of the work of the school and are very satisfied with the standards being achieved, the progress that their children make, the behaviour, the teaching, the links with parents and the quality of leadership and management. Parents are also very pleased with the arrangements to support their children's personal development. They are impressed with the ways in which children are encouraged to become mature and responsible. The only significant area of concern relates to the range of activities provided outside lessons. Parents are generally very pleased with the arrangements for homework, but some would like to see their children using computers more during the school day. Inspection evidence supports these views except for the concerns expressed about the

provision of learning activities outside lessons, which were judged to be at least satisfactory.