

INSPECTION REPORT

MILLBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Shevington, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106436

Headteacher: Mrs E Tyrrell

Reporting inspector: C.D.Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 13 – 14 June, 2000

Inspection number: 188720

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Elmfield
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Wigan

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G.N.Billings JP

Date of previous inspection: 10 June, 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Shevington district of Wigan in Lancashire. The surrounding houses are all privately owned. The school is an infant and junior school and there are 218 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 years. This is average for schools of this type. Most of the pupils live in the immediate area. The reception class has 29 full time children who all started school when they were four years of age at the start of the current school year. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is approximately 6%, which is below the national average. There are 46 pupils on the school's special educational needs register (21%), which is average. At the time of the inspection most of the children in the reception class were five years of age. Their attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range of ability but is generally above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school which enables the pupils to achieve above average standards. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, the school has made very good improvements. The teaching is good throughout the school and in a large proportion of lessons it is very good. The pupils build on the very good start made in the reception class and make good progress throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good management and leadership. There is a purposeful working atmosphere and this is reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The school is clearly committed to raising standards further. The pupils are very well behaved, attentive and courteous towards each other and towards adults. The parents believe this to be a very good school for their children. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, art and religious education are above average because these subjects are well taught. The headteacher, governors and teachers are strongly committed to raising standards so that all pupils reach their full potential.
- The youngest children in the reception class achieve very well because the teaching is usually very good and the provision for them is of high quality.
- The teaching is usually good and often very good because it is well planned, purposeful and well organised. Teaching was good or better in eighty-seven percent of lessons observed. It was very good or better in forty-three percent of lessons.
- The curriculum is very well planned and there are well established and effective assessment procedures that help teachers to monitor the progress of their pupils.
- The school provides a wide range of stimulating activities and creates a very positive climate for learning. These activities extend beyond normal lessons and include school assemblies, information technology, library skills, music, sport and the creative arts.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership. She is very well supported by her deputy headteacher, staff and governors. Together they have established excellent monitoring and evaluation procedures which are used to measure the school's performance.

What could be improved

- More able pupils could do better in National Curriculum tests. The school does not sufficiently target the more able pupils to enable all of them to achieve higher standards.
- The teachers' marking does not always help the pupils to improve or understand what to do next.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors have successfully managed to address all of the issues raised in its last inspection in 1996.

The leadership and management of the school is strong with appropriate systems in place to enable the curriculum co-ordinators to monitor their subjects well. The staff effectively monitor the progress that the pupils make throughout the school using the much improved assessment procedures. Standards have improved significantly in art and religious education which were found to be weak last time. The teaching has improved since the last inspection. The school's planning and assessment procedures are very good and they help the teachers to match the work they provide to the capabilities of the pupils. More now needs to be done to challenge the more able pupils in each class so that the work they are provided with is clearly set at a higher level at all times. The headteacher has managed to successfully co-ordinate the way that the staff and governors are involved in the process of school improvement. This has improved the way that governors, through their committees and individual responsibilities, are able to monitor the work of the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	A	B	B
Mathematics	B	B	B	B
Science	A	B	B	B

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

The results of the 1999 end-of-key stage national tests for eleven-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science was above the national average. It is also above average when compared to similar schools. The results in all three subjects were close to the school's own challenging targets. In English and mathematics the girls performed better than the boys in last year's tests. However, over the last three years the differences have fluctuated with boys doing better than girls in some years. The school has rightly identified this as an area to focus on and has put in place measures that help the staff to monitor any variations. The number of pupils taking the tests each year is approximately 30 and the ability levels indicate that a large proportion of these have the potential to achieve standards that exceed those expected for their age. For example, in last year's tests, a higher than average proportion of pupils reached the expected level of attainment (Level 4) in English, mathematics and science and a significant number of these were close to the higher level (Level 5).

Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. These standards resulted from the good standard of the teaching. The school has identified the need to focus more sharply on higher attaining pupils, especially in their development of extended writing so that more of them achieve higher standards in writing. Reading is well taught and the work provided in English lessons is challenging for all pupils. However, the range of extended and unaided writing could be more challenging for the more able so that it includes more poetry, note-taking and re-drafting. Good use is made of information technology to enable the pupils to organise their writing. In mathematics, the numeracy strategy is being used well to improve the pupils' knowledge of number facts and mental arithmetic. In some mathematics and science lessons the introductions are not always aimed at all the pupils and the practical tasks are not challenging enough so that the pupils plan their own investigations and experiments. This leads to the more able pupils marking time as the teacher goes over previous work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils show interest in their work and try hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils are courteous, trustworthy and they respect other people's point of view.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between the pupils and with teachers and support staff are excellent. The pupils work independently and show initiative. They co-operate well in groups or when working with a partner.
Attendance	Very good. There is very little unauthorised absence.

The pupils are keen to come to school and attendance levels are above the national average. They are very attentive in lessons and their behaviour is usually very good both in lessons and around the school. The pupils are polite and considerate, they listen to other pupils during class discussions and they respect the views of others. Relationships are strong throughout the school and this is having a very positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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 teaching is good throughout the school with a large proportion that is very good. The children under five are provided with very good teaching because it is always well matched to the needs and capabilities of the children. In all the lessons observed it was never less than satisfactory and in eighty-seven percent it was good or better. Forty-three percent of the lessons seen were very good or better. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is well planned and the teachers use very good assessment procedures to help them monitor their pupils' progress. Literacy and numeracy skills are very well taught. The staff have identified extended writing as an area for further improvement so that all pupils are engaged in a broader range of independent writing. The school now needs to improve the way that teachers target the more able so that lessons always start with challenging, crisp introductions where the questioning clearly involves and challenges the pupils of all abilities. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes marking time when worksheets or investigations start with work that is too easy before moving on to more challenging and extended activities or problems. This affects the quality of learning during parts of lessons. The most effective teaching starts with challenging activities that are very well matched to the abilities of all the pupils with extension activities that are much more challenging for the more able. The marking of pupils' work varies across the school. It does not always inform the pupils how to improve their work nor is it helpful to the teachers in planning what comes next for individuals and groups of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Throughout the school, including the provision for under-fives in the reception class, the curriculum provides interesting and relevant activities. The curriculum in art and religious education has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a very good range of activities provided beyond normal lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The pupils are monitored closely and provided with appropriate support that meets their specific learning needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The strong relationships and positive ethos of the school help the pupils to reflect on their experiences and to share their feelings with others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very good level of care. There are very good monitoring and assessment procedures to measure the progress that pupils make.

The curriculum for the under-fives in the reception class is a strength. The very good quality of teaching and planning, and the effective level of support provided by classroom support staff, help the children to make good progress. The school has successfully implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies and this helps the pupils in their reading, writing and number work. Assessment procedures are now well established enabling the teachers to monitor the progress their pupils make as well as helping them to plan future work. The teaching does not always use the assessments made of the more able pupils to enable them to achieve even higher standards. The art and religious education curriculum has improved and this is borne out by the high standard of art work displayed around the school and the good quality of work completed in the pupils religious education workbooks.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. She is very well supported by all the teaching and administrative staff. All the staff work well as a team, creating a purposeful working environment for the pupils and are committed to raising standards further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide very good support. They fulfil their responsibilities well and are now much more involved in monitoring the work of the school and the standards achieved. The governors' curriculum committee is particularly effective in monitoring and supporting the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are excellent monitoring procedures in place. The headteacher has ensured that teaching and learning are monitored so the performance of pupils and staff continually improves.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of the school's budget and the school applies the principles of best value. It has improved the quality and range of information technology resources and the library is well stocked and well used.

The leadership and management of the school is strong and very effective. There is a clear focus which aims to raise standards further. Monitoring procedures involve the headteacher and senior staff in classroom observations, the scrutiny of the pupils' recorded work and extensive analyses of the pupils' performance in national tests. The senior staff work as a team to ensure that the performance of the teaching and the quality of learning are improving. The school is fully engaged in self-evaluation and has skilfully managed to utilise the expertise of its staff to ensure that lessons are clearly focused on raising standards further. There is a good level of staffing and resources. The governors, through their committees, are now more clearly linked to the curriculum and the work of the school. They are well placed to help the headteacher monitor the improvements that the school has targeted in its school development plan.

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 behaviour in the school. • The quality of teaching. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve well. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework provided by the school. • The range of activities provided outside lessons.

The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors judged that the homework provided by the school was satisfactory. During the inspection the school was involved in the district athletics events after school hours. The range of activities provided by the school outside lessons was judged to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in English, mathematics, science, art and religious education are above average because these subjects are well taught. The headteacher, governors and teachers are strongly committed to raising standards so that all pupils reach their full potential.

1. Throughout Key Stage 1 reading standards are above average because reading is very well taught. The teaching ensures that the pupils have a very good understanding of letter sounds, read accurately and are able to self-correct using a range of techniques as well as recognising a range of words that appear frequently in a range of texts. In Key Stage 2 the pupils read with expression and they enjoy reading a wide range of literature and non-fiction. Teachers ensure that the reading books are challenging for all abilities and the pupils respond well to the range of reading provided for them.
2. The pupils throughout the school achieve above average standards in writing because there is a wide range of different purposes for writing, including factual accounts, letter writing, instructions, descriptive passages and creative story writing. There are regular spelling tests and formal grammar is covered very well. Handwriting is taught throughout the school but results are better in Key Stage 1 where a new system has recently been introduced.
3. Standards in mathematics and science are above average throughout the school because the school monitors closely the progress that the pupils make and ensures that they achieve the challenging targets set for them in tests. In the reception class, the pupils are provided with many opportunities to explore magnetism. They can sort and classify materials using sensible predictions which establish what is likely to attract a magnet and why some materials do not. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils are able to use a number line with numbers up to 20 and beyond with confidence. They can sort, match and sequence numbers, with many pupils able to count in twos and fives. Year 2 pupils recognise common plane shapes and have a good understanding of their properties. In Key Stage 2, the pupils have a good grasp of numbers because the teaching of numeracy is well planned. As a result, the pupils use a range of effective mental numeracy strategies to calculate number problems quickly. For example, Year 3 pupils halve and double numbers quickly to calculate “half of 80” and they can quickly round numbers up or down accurately to the nearest ten.
4. The pupils make very good progress in art and achieve high standards because the art curriculum enables them to use a broad range of materials and experience a variety of techniques. The pupils make good progress in religious education now that the school has improved the curriculum and ensured that the subject is taught systematically across the school every week. The pupils recorded work shows that they are achieving good standards in relation to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The standards achieved in both subjects are a significant improvement since the last inspection. The religious education curriculum is well planned and time is given every week in all classes for the pupils to study Christianity and other major world religions. There are good links with other subjects, for example, in Year 1 the pupils were designing their own Arabic patterns using books and pictures about Islam. In art lessons, a clear and progressive scheme of work helps the teachers with their planning. Close observation to detail is seen in Year 5 as the pupils study, draw and paint plants and flowers using the design and style of “William Morris”. Great sensitivity is shown in the way pastels and watercolours are used. A good range of materials is used in Year 1 which allows the pupils to experiment with crayons and fabric as they copy Arabic symbols using books and pictures about Islam. The reception class exhibit interesting collages using simple weaving techniques. Very good quality Batik prints adorn a wall outside Year 3. There are competent portraits of Tudor Kings and Queens in Year 4, and “Ancient Greek” plaques in Year 5.

5. The school uses every opportunity to improve the provision of artistic experiences for the pupils. The services of an artist in residence and a local textile artist have been used to enhance the teaching in all classes. Visits are made to the Drumcroom Art Centre and the Lowry Centre in Salford. Original paintings by professional artists have been loaned by the Drumcroom Centre for display in the school. There has been an extensive up grading of resources for art in the last three years. These improvements have raised standards and developed the school further since the last inspection.
6. The high standards achieved in reading, writing and numeracy, as well as the very good progress made in speaking and listening skills, make a significant contribution to the progress made in learning in all subjects.

The youngest children in the reception class achieve very well because the teaching is usually very good and the provision for them is of high quality.

7. At the time of the inspection there were five children under the age of five in a reception class of twenty-nine pupils. The class teacher is supported by a full-time nursery nurse who shares all aspects of planning and teaching. The pupils are well prepared for school by their parents, local playgroups and nurseries and the results of baseline assessments indicate that their attainment is generally above average. The inspection findings indicate that these children are making very good progress because the teaching is very good. As a result, they are already achieving the early learning goals in all areas of learning for children in the foundation stage.
8. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in the provision made by the school for children who are under five years of age. Resources have improved significantly, for example, as a result of a "Gender and Literacy Project" set up by local schools. Additional funding has provided for a small play area adjacent to the reception classroom to which the children have ready access. The teacher changes the theme for this area each term, for example, a garden centre, them park, camp site, and this provides a rich learning environment in which the children are able to develop speaking and listening skills, imagination and physical dexterity. Sand, water, paint, games and large toys are all stored where they are readily available for the children to use. The classroom is conveniently located next to the school's library and, from the beginning of their time in the school, the children are given "hands-on" experience with books in a real setting. They quickly learn how to find the books which interest them, know the signs which indicate the content of different subjects and are well grounded in the system for returning books to the correct shelves. There is a secure and friendly atmosphere where the contributions of all the children are valued and where they quickly learn to share and care for each other.
9. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good and has a direct impact on the children's learning. The children make very good progress, including those with special educational needs because they are well supported by a nursery nurse and are fully integrated in the main activities planned for the under-fives. Both the class teacher and nursery nurse have an excellent understanding of the way that young children learn, they plan lessons together to suit individual needs and co-operate so well that it is possible for either of them to work in a leading or supporting role in the teaching. This level of planning and teamwork is helping the children to become familiar with routines, enables them to develop confidence in reading, writing and numeracy as well as improving their understanding of the world around.

The teaching is usually good and often very good because it is well planned, purposeful and well organised. Teaching was good or better in eighty-seven percent of lessons observed. It was very good or better in forty-three percent of lessons.

10. In Key Stage 1, the teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. The most effective aspects of the teaching include the planning and assessments made of pupils' progress. In Year 2 the pupils are usually set challenging work and the pace of the lessons are very good and appropriately matched to the capabilities of the pupils. Throughout Key Stage 1, the teachers are clearly committed to raising standards as they ask pertinent questions and expect the pupils to respond thoughtfully setting high expectations for them in the activities they provide.
11. In Key Stage 2 the teaching is good overall, ranging between satisfactory to excellent. In an excellent Year 3 mathematics lesson the work was clearly set for all ability groups and the tasks were both challenging and varied. Throughout the key stage good use is made of computers to encourage the pupils to use word-processors and spreadsheets to enhance literacy and numeracy work. In a very good Year 5 numeracy lesson the teacher questioned the pupils well at the beginning, evoking good class discussion to enable all the pupils to be clear about their thinking when working out the likelihood or probability of an event occurring. In Year 4, the planning, control and delivery of the lessons are good features.
12. Throughout the school the teaching is usually clear and purposeful and sets high expectations for behaviour and learning. Some teachers provide clear explanations and praise the pupils with clear statements which enable them to distinguish between what they are doing right and why it is good quality. The overall quality of the teaching is effective in maintaining good behaviour and attitudes to learning. It is having a positive effect on standards as the school ensures that the large majority of pupils achieve standards that are above average in the core subjects. The improvements to the planning have the effect of providing clear and purposeful lessons across the school. These improvements have ensured that there is more consistency so that the pupils in all lessons are provided with relevant and practical activities that reinforce their understanding. The teaching, together with the teachers' enthusiasm, contribute significantly to the high proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standards for their age in national tests.

The curriculum is very well planned and there are well established and effective assessment procedures that help teachers to monitor the progress of their pupils.

13. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which meets all statutory requirements. This includes the very good curriculum provided for children under five in the reception class which helps the children to develop effective reading, writing and numeracy skills. The literacy and numeracy strategies in the rest of the school have been successfully implemented and built into the school's overall planning so that teachers are using more effective teaching methods to improve standards in reading, writing and numeracy. This is having a very positive effect on reading and writing standards across the school in all subjects and as a result there are very good examples of the pupils' writing evident in their workbooks across a range of subjects.
14. The headteacher and key staff have established clear and consistent curriculum planning and, with the agreement of all staff, adopted long and medium term curriculum plans that are aimed at targeting the abilities of all the pupils. The school has successfully adapted the literacy strategy to incorporate more extended writing as they identified this as a weakness in the early stages of using the strategy in English lessons. A consistent handwriting policy was also adopted across the school together with new reading schemes so that the school has improved its resources to match the demands of the National Curriculum together with the national literacy strategy. There are now schemes of work in place for all subjects, with clear teaching and learning objectives, which is a

very good improvement since the last inspection. These procedures have helped to provide more consistent teaching across the school so that in all classes the pupils make good progress.

15. Through its very effective evaluation procedures, the headteacher and staff identified strengths and weaknesses of all the different assessment procedures used in classes throughout the school. This enabled the school to devise a common policy and format which would help the teachers to measure the performance of their pupils and then to interpret the information to aid their planning. A variety of tests are used, including standardised commercial tests and National Curriculum voluntary tests in year groups other than the end of the key stage. The results are then collated by the headteacher and senior staff which provides an effective management tool that helps the school to measure its performance and the progress that pupils make. Systematic procedures have successfully been adopted to help the teachers organise their assessments. For example, folders of assessed work are kept; careful records about the progress that pupils with special educational needs make are recorded and monitored; the pupils have reading diaries which record their progress in reading as well as the range of reading experienced; baseline assessments are made when children first enter the school and records are kept of ongoing assessments to enable the class teacher in the reception class to monitor the progress the under fives make; the headteacher and senior staff analyse and monitor the overall progress of the pupils by collating assessment information and picking up any weaknesses or areas for further improvement. This assessment information is also used to identify particular trends, for example, in Year 1 the school has recognised that boys are making less progress than the girls with phonic skills. This has led to the re-organisation of the class so that in the mornings the class is split with groups of pupils receiving intensive word recognition work to help them identify the sounds of letters and words. The headteacher also uses assessment information to identify any differences in performance between boys and girls so that the school can adapt and plan the most appropriate provision and monitor the pupils' progress more closely.

The school provides a wide range of stimulating activities and creates a very positive climate for learning. These activities extend beyond normal lessons and include school assemblies, information technology, library skills, music, sport and the creative arts.

16. The newly established information technology suite enables groups of pupils to work on computers, effectively enhancing their understanding of information and communication technology. Good quality provision is made so that intensive support is provided, sometimes by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, for groups and individuals when investigating data, working on desk-top publishing programs and word processing, or interrogating spread-sheets in numeracy sessions to produce graphs, tables and charts. The pupils are becoming more adept at using computers for a variety of purposes as well as learning how to communicate with other schools using electronic mail and the Internet. As part of an ongoing programme for all year groups in the school, Year 2 pupils were taken to the local secondary school to use their information technology facilities. The pupils were shown how to access the Internet and how to use simple data handling programs to organise and present information. This is helping the pupils to develop a better understanding of modern technology and enhances their understanding further when using the school's own improved facilities.
17. The library is used well to support pupils' reading and it enables them to access a range of non-fiction during lessons. The pupils learn to use the library as a source of information as well as developing further their library skills and appreciation of books. From early on in their school career, reception children learn to handle and use books and are developing good techniques to help them use fiction and non-fiction books and materials.
18. Daily assemblies enable the school to come together in groups or as a whole school community. The assemblies themselves are varied and contain a very good balance of music, song, prayer,

thoughtful reflection and informative interaction between adults and pupils. The school orchestra and musical ensembles often accompany the singing and the pupils are often involved in stories, presentations and reward ceremonies. Music features strongly throughout the school. This is reflected in the way that the pupils sing and play a range of musical instruments.

19. The headteacher and staff ensure that all the pupils have opportunities to improve and develop. There is a good range of after-school clubs, sporting and musical activities which help to enhance the curriculum and provide a variety of activities outside school hours. These activities help to improve relationships between staff and pupils as well as improving the ethos and commitment of the school towards the needs of its pupils, recognising that every pupils has something to offer and is valued.
20. The aims of the school are reflected in its daily work and this helps the pupils to achieve above average standards. There is a clear expectation that the pupils are to try hard, to be fair and tolerant of others and to show independence and co-operation in equal measure. A great deal is done to encourage the pupils to be purposeful and involved in their learning. The school has successfully enabled the local community and parents to feel that they are playing a part in the pupils' learning.

The headteacher provides very effective leadership. She is very well supported by her deputy headteacher, staff and governors. Together they have established excellent monitoring and evaluation procedures which are used to measure the school's performance.

21. The school's focus on evaluating its own performance is having a very positive effect on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching across the school. Planning and organisation are sharp, focused and consistent across the school so that all the staff are clear about how they monitor their pupils, how to set attainment targets for them and what to do next in terms of planning. The deputy headteacher sets a very good example in her teaching and she helps the headteacher to monitor lessons, evaluate performance and to identify aspects of teaching and learning that are both strong and weak. This is helping the governors to become much more involved and informed about what the school does well because all governors are now linked to curriculum subjects. This provides a clear agenda for the headteacher and governors which sets out the areas for further improvement.
22. The headteacher has developed the role of curriculum co-ordinators so that they are better able to monitor the performance of the pupils use assessment information to inform their planning. In this respect the headteacher, in a very short period of time, has successfully put in place in-service training programmes that enable all the staff to interpret assessment data and to organise pupils so that the teaching is much more focused on raising standards. The senior management team, meet regularly to collate and evaluate assessment information. Monitoring visits are also planned so that the school is much more focused on what constitutes effective teaching and learning. Parents are informed about their pupils' attainment targets, for example, optional national tests are administered in every year group in Key Stage 2, and this helps the teachers to set realistic and challenging targets for all the pupils. The deputy headteacher and headteacher have observed lessons so that they can make judgements about the most effective aspects of the teaching and identify areas for further improvement. This has helped the school to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and to identify how best to organise the pupils in order that they all achieve higher standards.
23. There is an effective working relationship between the staff and governors of the school. The governors' curriculum committee has well established links so that informal and formal monitoring visits are set up to help inform the governors of improvements and changes to the school's curriculum. As a result, the involvement of the governors is much more focused on standards and

is committed to raising the quality of teaching and learning further. The governors' curriculum committee is particularly effective in monitoring the way that changes are made to the school's curriculum. The headteacher informs governors and meetings are set up between the staff and curriculum committee to establish the most effective aspects of the curriculum and how the planning is to be improved consistently across the school. She sets a very high standard to which the staff have responded very positively. The school is now well placed to target the more able so that a larger proportion of pupils achieve high standards. The school development plan and the process leading up to its formulation clearly sets out the intentions and priorities of the school. These priorities are costed and managed effectively so that all the staff are involved in school improvements, for example the establishment and use of the information technology room. In all areas of school management, including the day to day administration and finances of the school, there are effective and efficient procedures in place to improve the school further. The headteacher is very well served by the school administration officer who provides an effective and extremely efficient level of support.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

More able pupils could do better in National Curriculum tests. The school does not sufficiently target the more able pupils to enable all of them to achieve higher standards.

24. The results of National Curriculum tests show that although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard for their age at 7 and 11 years is above average, more pupils could be achieving higher standards. When the pupils start school in the reception class, a large proportion are achieving the standards expected for under fives well before the end of their first year in school. The majority of pupils make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 but more able pupils could do better if the work provided was always more challenging and they are particularly targeted from an early age so that their progress is tracked throughout their time in the school. The school's recently established assessment and monitoring procedures mean that the school is now very well placed to be able to track the progress of all pupils with a particular emphasis on those who are likely to exceed the expected standards. In English, the school has reviewed the literacy strategy and rightly focused on improving the range and extent of writing across the school. In Key Stage 1 the books lack a range of poetry and extended writing for the more able. In Key Stage 2 handwriting is not as consistent as it is in Key Stage 1.
25. During class discussion, in some lessons, the teachers do not always ask questions which are particularly challenging for the more able. In some lessons the questioning is sometimes slow and laborious with few opportunities for the more able to improve further so that in some of the lessons they are marking time during class discussions. In one excellent lesson, Year 3 pupils were asked to devise questions for other pupils. During the class discussion the pace was challenging and the questions were clearly aimed at all the pupils, leaving them little time to stray off task with an expectation that they were to finish after a reasonable amount of time. In other lessons the introductions varied from good to unsatisfactory as in some cases the teacher asked the same question, or repeated the same point or went over old ground for too long leaving little time for the plenary or feedback to other pupils. This has the effect of slowing down the pace of the lessons so the more able are not always being sufficiently challenged.
26. During practical mathematics and science lessons the activities and tasks provided offer the pupils opportunities to practise what they have learned and apply their knowledge. In Year 5 the pupils are planning how best to organise their experiments when investigating the properties of insulating materials. This is a very good example of the teaching enabling the pupils to be responsible for organising their thinking and planning how to use the resources. However, in some year groups the investigations and tasks are not always challenging enough to enable the pupils to organise their

thinking so that they can devise the most appropriate methods when solving a problem. For example, during some mathematics lessons the teacher provides a problem which is sometimes too easy. There is a lack of complexity in the practical tasks set so that the pupils are not always being tested to see if they understand what they have been taught. In Key Stage 1, during a numeracy session the teacher led all of the discussion about what makes Ten More and carefully asked each child to describe the properties of a two-digit number. In Key Stage 2, older pupils are very secure with numbers and can calculate differences in money quickly using good strategies. The basic skills have been well taught but there are too few opportunities for them to plan and organise their own investigations or to put into practice their knowledge of numbers, shape, space and measures. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 can use a bus, coach or train timetable to investigate spans of time, but little time was given for them to devise their own tables or to ask questions of other pupils.

The teachers' marking does not always help the pupils to improve or understand what to do next.

27. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and there is some evidence that teachers are using the information to inform their planning. This is not consistent across the school and some of the marking is cursory, with little to show the pupils what needs to be done to improve. Some teachers keep detailed records of their marking scores and this is helping them to monitor the pupils' progress more closely.
28. The school has now established good procedures to help them set attainment targets for every pupil at the end of each term. The teachers' marking is sometimes used to inform these ongoing assessments but the lack of a coherent marking policy means that this is not consistently applied across the school.
29. There is some evidence that teachers provide the pupils with some time to go over previous work and to self-correct. The comments made in the pupils' books also refer to specific errors but these comments are not always helpful or they just refer to corrections and mistakes, for example in mathematics work. Teachers also use their marking to praise the pupils for good work but it is not always clear to the pupils what it is that was particularly strong or effective in their work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the very good work being done, the school should now:

*** Improve the standards achieved by the more able pupils by:**

- improving the way that teachers question pupils during class discussions so that the questions are aimed at all ability groups;
- ensuring that more practical investigations and problem solving tasks in mathematics and science lessons provide more opportunities for the pupils to organise and plan their work choosing the most appropriate methods and resources;
- providing more opportunities for higher attaining pupils to produce extended pieces of writing.

*** Improve the quality and consistency of teachers' marking so that:**

- it clearly informs the pupils what they need to do to improve their work;
- it sets the pupils clear targets for improvement;
- the information gained from marking helps the teachers plan future work, taking into account the progress that the pupils make.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

23

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

6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	39	44	13			

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

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)	218
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	46

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.01
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	6	9
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	22	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (100)	69 (100)	79 (100)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	11
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	21	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (100)	66 (100)	86 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	12	24	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	11
	Girls	22	20	23
	Total	29	30	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (67)	83 (73)	94 (92)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	11
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	28	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (65)	83 (65)	92 (71)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	218
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	31.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	392,016
Total expenditure	402,564
Expenditure per pupil	1,846
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,196
Balance carried forward to next year	2,648

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	215
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	25	3	2	
My child is making good progress in school.	53	41	5	2	
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	41			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	39	9	3	2
The teaching is good.	55	42	2	2	
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	44	8	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	39	2		
The school works closely with parents.	44	43	8	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	36	3	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	5		
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	50	8	5	5