

INSPECTION REPORT

GARDEN SUBURB JUNIOR SCHOOL

Hampstead Garden Suburb

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101281

Headteacher: Mrs Janice Gribble

Reporting inspector: Margaret Dickinson
12373

Dates of inspection: 20 - 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 194007

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Childs Way London
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Telephone number:	020 8455 3269
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Shamash
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Garden Suburb Junior School is a community school situated at the southern end of London Borough of Barnet, on the Hampstead Garden Suburb. It is large in comparison with other junior schools nationally and has 335 pupils on roll. There are more girls than boys in the school, especially in Year 4. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds and just over a half of the children come from homes where English is not the first language. Just under a quarter of pupils are identified as having special educational needs (SEN). Whilst this is above average, the number of pupils in the school who have a statement of special educational need is below average. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent, due to ill health, and the deputy headteacher had taken on the role of Acting Headteacher as a temporary arrangement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, which is led and managed well. Pupils' standards far exceed those normally found by the age of eleven in English and mathematics. In science, standards are above average. Pupils benefit from good quality teaching and, as a result, achieve well as they move from year to year. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils reach very high standards in English, mathematics and high standards in science by the time they leave the school because teaching is often of good quality and the school has focused carefully on aspects that could be improved to raise standards further;
- The recent emphasis on improving writing has had a positive effect upon pupils' standards in this aspect of English, which have improved;
- The staff in the school are very effective in nurturing pupils' moral and social development, which means pupils very much enjoy school, like learning and behave exceedingly well;
- A lot of the teaching is of good quality and this helps pupils to learn effectively and made good progress;
- Pupils who have particular needs, either because they speak English as an additional language (EAL), or because they have been identified as having special educational needs, are effectively supported and do well.

What could be improved

- In some lessons, the quality of teaching could be better and the satisfactory teaching could be improved in order to raise achievement still further;
- Some parents have well founded concerns over how well the school works in partnership with them;
- There are flaws in the way the school collects and monitors information about pupils' attainment as they move through the school. This means teachers cannot be sure that pupils are making the progress they should, or are being challenged sufficiently.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then, there has been clear improvement. Pupils' performance in English and mathematics, whilst broadly mirroring the national trend, has been consistently much higher than the national averages, apart from 1998, when a less able year group took the tests and their performance was not as good. In this year's tests, the school is likely to exceed the targets it set for the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels in English and

mathematics. Not all subjects were observed but, based on work seen during the inspection, standards are better than they were at the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, with more good, very good and excellent teaching than at the time of the last inspection, and a much lower incidence of unsatisfactory teaching. On balance, there has been good improvement in tackling the key issues from the last inspection report. For example, pupils are given more opportunity to work independently than they were at that time; the library provision has greatly improved and the timetable arrangements are now satisfactory. One area where there is scope for further improvement is in the way the school collects, records and uses information on individual pupils' progress, to monitor how well they do over time and make absolutely sure each one is making sufficient progress. The school was judged to give very good value for money at the last inspection, when the cost per pupils was low in comparison with national figures. This is now slightly above average. Nevertheless, additional funding is used well; EAL pupils and those with SEN benefit considerably from the additional support. Value for money is now good.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	A	A	A
mathematics	B	A	A	A
science	C	B	B	A

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

In 2000, pupils' performance in the national tests for eleven-year-olds was well above average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools nationally and schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In 1998, pupils' performance dipped because the year group was generally less able than other recent years. Over the last five years, whilst results were normally above or well above national averages, the dip in pupils' performance means that the overall results across the three subjects have not risen in line with the national trend although those in English and science have. The school's targets for English and mathematics are likely to be exceeded this year but they could have been more ambitious, given pupils' potential.

Pupils enter school with above average standards. As a result of good teaching, they learn well and make good progress over time. Not all subjects were observed during the inspection but well above average work was seen in English and mathematics. Examples of above average work were evident in science, history and art. Work sampled in design and technology and pupils' singing was in line with what is expected for pupils of this age. Taped examples of pupils' compositions in music were below average. Given their attainment on entry, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. This is a strong aspect. They like school and the vast majority show interest and enthusiasm in lessons. They concentrate well, even when classrooms are unbearably hot and airless.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent in lessons and when moving around the school. Pupils are considerate and very quick to offer help.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are friendly and mature and make good friendships. They are respectful to one another, as well as to staff and visitors. They work well with one another in lessons.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance figures are similar to the national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

During the inspection, the teaching in 95 per cent of lessons was judged satisfactory or better. It was very good or excellent in 34 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in only five per cent. Outstanding teaching occurred in drama and mathematics; pupils were inspired by these lessons and make great strides in their learning. Literacy and numeracy are well taught in the school and the majority of the very good or excellent teaching was seen in English and mathematics. This high quality teaching was clearly having a strong impact on pupils' learning in these lessons. They worked hard and gained a lot from them. The teaching meets the needs of pupils very well but, on occasions, higher attaining pupils find work too easy.

Satisfactory teaching was seen in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and music. The single unsatisfactory lesson occurred in music because the pupils learned very little; they were not actively enough involved in music-making and the main activity was inappropriate. The teaching of pupils with SEN and EAL is often good or very good which helps them learn and do well. In many lessons, teachers make a point of asking SEN and EAL pupils questions to involve them fully in lessons, which is typical of the way in which much of the teaching meets the needs of all pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is good emphasis on developing literacy skills through other subjects, outside English lessons. Pupils also encounter a good range of texts and writing tasks. In art, they have experience of 3D as well as 2D work, including textiles. In music, some of the planned activities are not relevant and pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their composing and performing skills. There are a good number of clubs arranged for pupils but not all pupils have access to some of these because they are only available for some year groups, or pupils are selected. This causes some frustration amongst the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is well organised and effective. These pupils are encouraged by teachers and learning support assistants and this has a positive effect on their motivation.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The pupils are given effective support and analysis of how these pupils perform in national tests shows many make good progress. Most teachers include these pupils effectively in class discussions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school is very effective in encouraging pupils to develop positive attitudes to school and behave very well. The provision for their moral and social development is a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual and cultural development are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Pupils receive good pastoral support and a lot of encouragement. There are weaknesses in the way the school collects and records data on individual children to track their progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a clear commitment to ensuring pupils reach high standards and identifying ways to improve. The staff work well together as a team. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics are particularly effective in leading these subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school. They do not have enough involvement in monitoring the effectiveness of the school and acting as a 'critical friend'.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Test results are analysed well by the headteacher and assessment co-ordinator. Co-ordinators are becoming more involved in this. Monitoring of teaching could be more systematic.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Special funding, such as that for SEN and EAL, is used well and is helping these pupils to make good progress. The new library is a good resource from which pupils are beginning to benefit. The new ICT suite, although not quite finished yet, and not in use, is a good specialist facility.

Several classrooms on the first floor have poor ventilation and, on hot days, the temperature soars; consequently, pupils struggle to keep alert towards the end of lessons. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school and make good progress • The quality of teaching is good • Children are very well behaved • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way the school communicates with parents, welcomes them and listens to their concerns; • The information they receive on how well their child is getting on; • The arrangements for homework; • The provision for extra curricular activities; • From questionnaires, 15 per cent feel the school is not well led and managed.

Inspection findings confirm the strengths highlighted by the analysis of the parents' questionnaire and reinforced by parents' comments at the pre-inspection meeting. Inspectors agree with most of the parents' concerns listed above, many of which were reinforced at the parents' meeting and in the letters parents sent to the registered inspector. The school's partnership with parents is not wholly effective. Annual reports satisfy statutory requirements but there is room for improvement because they are often too general and could give a more individual picture of how well pupils are doing. Homework is regularly set but there are inconsistencies between classes; some higher attaining pupils find they are set undemanding homework, which they complete quickly. The school organises a good range of extra curricular clubs but these are more often for older children. Children are tested for suitability for several of them, which bars some from taking part. The inspection team judged the leadership and management of the school to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils reach very high standards in English, mathematics and high standards in science by the time they leave the school because teaching is often of good quality and the school has focused carefully on aspects that could be improved to raise standards further.

1. Over the last two years, pupils' performance was well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, when compared to all schools nationally and to other schools with an intake of pupils from similar backgrounds. Girls perform particularly well and the school is now looking at ways of bringing boys' standards up to the same level as girls' and to improving the performance of boys from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. This is a good example of how the school focuses on aspects that can be improved further in striving to raise standards further. In the 2000 tests, a much higher proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics than was the case nationally. On occasions, one or two pupils attain Level 6 in English or mathematics and this is far above the expectations by the age of eleven. Inspection evidence suggests that, in this years' tests, pupils are likely to maintain these high standards; the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 in mathematics and science is likely to be even higher than in 2000. Although pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment, these results show that the pupils are achieving well during their time in the school. There are a number of reasons for this: the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established; lessons are well planned; the subject co-ordinators are providing strong leadership; and pupils with SEN or who speak English as an additional language are well supported.
2. Standards in science are improving. Through analysing test results, the school recognised that test results were not quite as high as English and mathematics and brought about a number of changes. The timetable arrangements were changed to make sure that pupils had a regular science lesson each week, the way the curriculum was planned was reviewed and improved and the co-ordinator set up a programme of training for teachers to support them in their teaching of science. All these have had a positive effect on standards in science. Pupils write up their experiments independently and show a good grasp of the key factors. They understand and use scientific vocabulary when recording their observations.
3. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average for this age; this is particularly good considering the number of pupils in the school for whom English is not their first language. Many pupils are articulate and confident speakers. They sustain conversation well and, when outlining their ideas or opinions, they structure their speech well, using extended sentences, good vocabulary and varied intonation to hold the attention of the listeners. In one very good Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils showed a very good understanding of the common recurring themes of myths: they identified the dilemma in relation to various myths and came up with some imaginative ideas for alternative endings. They had a good grasp of phrases and clauses and how phrases could be placed differently in relation to the clause. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and enthused the pupils with her lively pace and animated approach. Another very good lesson occurred in Year 6. Through a well-planned series of activities, and well-chosen texts, pupils had gained a very good understanding of the difference between writing in the first as opposed to the third person. They clearly understood the effect of changing between the first and third person and the impact this has upon the reader.
4. Scrutiny of pupils' work in mathematics shows many attain very good standards across all aspects of the subject. In one very good lesson on decimals, the teacher led a highly effective question and answer session. The pupils were encouraged to reflect whenever their mental calculations were incorrect and this helped them to think and come up with the correct answer. Many were confident with decimals, when dividing numbers by 1000, and they showed a good knowledge of technical vocabulary and mathematical symbols.

The recent emphasis on improving writing has had a positive effect upon pupils' standards in this aspect of English, which have improved.

5. The teachers have worked hard to improve pupils' standards in writing, which is a current target in the school development plan. The indications are that their efforts have raised standards in writing. The subject co-ordinator has played an important role in this, for example, through training to help teachers broaden and develop their strategies for teaching writing.
6. During the inspection, many effective lessons were observed that focused on writing. One good strategy is the use of writing frames, prepared by the teacher, to help pupils plan and organise their writing. In one lesson, the teacher worked with the whole class to draft out ideas for an alternative ending to a myth. Through taking some of the pupils' ideas and refining and developing them herself, she demonstrated the benefits of planning first, before setting pen to paper. Another effective technique was asking pupils to talk to a partner to come up with ideas. This kept the pupils very involved in the lesson and they responded with great enthusiasm and energy each time they were asked to do this. In another effective lesson, the teacher used good questioning techniques to encourage pupils to respond to two contrasting excerpts of text: questions such as, 'Can anyone pick out a word in particular that shows this is informal writing?' This made the pupils look at the text carefully and in an analytical way and it broadened their understanding of how authors use various stylistic elements to increase the impact of their writing. In another effective lesson on science fiction writing, the teacher again phrased questions well to help pupils understand this genre. There was a good balance between open-ended questions that encouraged the pupils to respond to the text and challenging ones that really made them think: for example, 'What is an anti-climax?' None of them knew this but, through the teacher's careful explanation, learned what it meant.
7. The teachers make sure that the pupils have plenty of writing opportunities through other areas of the curriculum. On displays around the school and in pupils' books, there is much evidence of writing in subjects such as history and geography. This means pupils are experiencing a wide range of writing, in different formats and styles. In one science lesson, pupils had to carry out a research task on different materials. The format of the sheet provided by the teacher meant that pupils had to put the information into their own words and not copy directly from the source. This clearly developed their note-taking skills and made them focus on the key points. In Year 6, pupils produced some effective writing on comparing the rich and poor in a historical context. Teachers often use marking well to improve standards in writing. In the case of one higher attaining pupil, for example, the teacher had identified that the pupils needed to use stronger words than 'said' in order to improve the quality of writing. This was a helpful and pertinent suggestion that gave the pupil clear guidance on how to improve.

The staff in the school are very effective in nurturing pupils' moral and social development, which means pupils very much enjoy school, like learning and behave exceedingly well.

8. The pupils have very positive attitudes to the school and clearly enjoy being there. They respond well in lessons, in the playground and in assemblies.
9. Pupils enjoy talking about their work, the school and their achievements. Inspectors interviewed many pupils, both informally and more formally, and their attitudes shone through as a clear strength of the school. Many pupils show maturity beyond their years and they make some perceptive comments. For instance, one group reflected carefully on how hard they thought they worked when at school; they confirmed they all worked hard but they thought girls probably worked harder than boys. They talked about times when they had witnessed or experienced bullying but were very quick to add that it was dealt with very well by the school.
10. One of the reasons for pupils' very good attitudes and outstanding behaviour is the commitment all the staff have to encouraging pupils to work hard and feel a member of a whole-school team. During the inspection, there were many examples of teachers being good role-models for pupils: fostering good relationships, using humour, or gently cajoling them to have another go. All staff in the school

place great emphasis on valuing pupils' work and the contributions they make in lessons and to school life in general. As a result, pupils have a genuine and strong loyalty to the school and their teachers. They are proud of the school and all play a part in making it a happy place in which to work. Pupils are appreciative of what the school does for them. Two Year 6 pupils spoke warmly, for example, of how much they enjoyed the school journey and taking part in school productions.

11. During the inspection, pupils gave inspectors a warm welcome. They spontaneously open doors for teachers and visitors. One inspector recounted walking down the long corridor and, each time she came to a door, there was a pupil holding it open and smiling. Regularly, pupils asked if inspectors were 'OK' and if they needed any help in finding the right room or carrying things.
12. Pupils listen very attentively in lessons and keep their concentration well, even when the temperature rises to almost unbearable levels. They organise themselves efficiently and handle resources carefully. They are a credit to their school, their teachers and parents.

A lot of the teaching is of good quality and this helps pupils to learn effectively and made good progress.

13. Of the 21 lessons seen, 95 per cent were satisfactory or better and 34 per cent were very good or excellent. The majority of the very good or excellent lessons occurred in English and mathematics and this is an important factor in why the pupils perform so well in these two subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very well and there is some very effective teaching and learning taking place as a result. Some of the particular strengths noted by inspectors were teacher' very good subject knowledge, their careful and well-targeted planning and their ability to ensure the lesson proceeded at a good pace to keep pupils alert and involved.
14. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson on decimals, the teacher showed excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject. The teaching was dynamic and every opportunity was maximised to challenge the class whilst at the same time give clear and sensitive guidance for individual pupils. The teacher was quick to pick up points that the pupils were finding difficult and gave constant, effective feedback to encourage them to persevere, such as 'Now you can do that!'
15. In another outstanding lesson, in drama, the teacher had excellent subject knowledge and very high expectations of the pupils. Through using a wide range of drama techniques, the teacher helped the pupils to learn very effectively. They considered some complex aspects, such as different centres of energy in relation to different characters in 'Midsummer Night's Dream'. Throughout the lesson, pupils were enraptured and highly motivated. This lesson had a powerful impact upon them.
16. Teachers often have a very good rapport with the pupils and this means they enjoy the lesson and gain a lot from it. This was evident in a Year 4 English lesson where, again, the teacher had very high expectations of how hard the pupils would work; they rose to this admirably. They clearly enjoyed the teacher's enthusiastic approach and the varied activities, which helped to keep them on their toes. The whole-class writing activity was very successful because the teacher transmitted her enthusiasm to the pupils and they were extremely eager to offer ideas, hands shot up, and there were audible sighs of disappointment from individual pupils when they were not asked for their suggestions.
17. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan challenging tasks for the higher attaining pupils, or expect more of them in the plenary sessions. A good example of this occurred in a Year 3 science lesson, where the teacher expected more detail from these pupils when they shared what they had found out about the properties of and changes in different materials.

Pupils who have particular needs, either because they speak English as an additional language, or because they have been identified as having special educational needs, are effectively supported and do well.

18. The school has a very high percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) in comparison with schools nationally. In the 2000 tests, well over three quarters of pupils who had received additional support from the school at some point during the key stage either met or exceeded the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. Almost a half of this group reached the high Level 5 in English, or mathematics, or both, and two EAL pupils attained Level 6 in mathematics. This shows that the school provides very well indeed for these pupils. One Year 6 EAL pupil who was interviewed by inspectors confirmed this by saying how pleased she was that, on coming to the school, she could speak very little English, but had been told she was working at around Level 4 in English. She was clearly delighted by this and appreciated the help she had received from the teachers in order to have made such good progress.
19. During the inspection, some effective sessions were observed where pupils received additional support, either within their class situation, or when withdrawn individually or in small groups. Learning support assistants play a valuable role in helping pupils with special educational needs to succeed. They do this through encouraging, prompting and cajoling. In one lesson, for example, a learning support assistant worked alongside a child with a statement of special educational need. She gave sensitive support, encouraging him to respond and sustain eye contact with her when talking to her, which was something the pupil found difficult. Whilst very little writing was produced, the pupil contributed some ideas as a result of the learning support's assistant's perseverance. They are aware of the targets in pupils' individual educational plans and often help the pupils to take small but important steps in achieving these.
20. In one Year 4 and 5 small group session, the teacher was very effective in helping pupils to write. She gave them time to think and respond, helped them to express themselves when they found this difficult. During this group session, the pupils really learned how to refine their first ideas and develop them, which helped them to improve their fluency of expression. The teacher was highly aware of the needs of the EAL pupils in this group and led a good oral session, together with good resources to help them to improve their writing. For instance, their early drafts had been laminated so that pupils could write on them with non-permanent pens to try out alternative ideas and make amendments.
21. On many occasions, teachers pay particular attention to making sure all pupils have a chance to participate in whole class discussions. They do this by asking boys as equally as girls, pupils of differing abilities and they also check that pupils with EAL also have an opportunity to be involved in any question and answer sessions.
22. The school is eager to help SEN pupils beyond the additional support they receive in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. A Nurture Club takes place, and special sessions are organised weekly for some pupils who need extra help with their motor skills and co-ordination. Another good initiative is Circle Time sessions, again for identified pupils, to give them strategies for handling anger and promoting their social skills. All these are examples of how the school strives to enable all pupils to succeed whatever their difficulties.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

In some lessons, the quality of teaching could be better and the satisfactory teaching could be improved in order to raise achievement still further.

23. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or better, teachers often have an overly brusque manner with pupils, which means pupils become subdued. In one mathematics lesson, the teacher was quite sharp with the pupils and spent a lot of time telling them to 'shush' although this was not always necessary because they were talking about their work. This slowed down the pace of their learning and several stopped listening carefully. In an English lesson, the teacher intervened to control the pupils too much, again sometimes unnecessarily. As a result, the pace of pupils' learning slackened and they did not produce as much work as they could have done.
24. Scrutiny of mathematics books shows that in some classes in Year 3 and 5, pupils of different abilities do the same work over a series of lessons. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils' books show

they sometimes do more work in mathematics, in terms of quantity, but there are occasions when tasks are not always challenging enough and pitched at Level 5 standards, which they should be. Discussions with higher attaining pupils highlighted that they find some of their mathematics work too easy.

25. In one unsatisfactory music lesson, the pupils sang a song for a short while and spent a very long time sitting listening to the teacher talking about a piece of music before filling in a worksheet. There was too much emphasis on the formal, historical and cultural background to the piece and this was inappropriate for 8 year olds. Many pupils became bored and a few started to become cheeky and call out, which was a very rare occurrence during the inspection.
26. The headteacher and deputy headteacher visit classrooms regularly on an informal basis. There has been some more formal monitoring of teaching but this has not focused enough on examining the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and helping teachers to identify areas where they can improve. Where lessons have been observed, the feedback has been descriptive rather than evaluative. Several teachers have not been observed formally by senior staff for some time. However, the school has recognised that this is an important area for development and teachers are currently receiving training on this from the local education authority's inspection and advisory service.

Some parents have well founded concerns over how well the school works in partnership with them.

27. The registered inspector received a higher than usual number of letters from parents expressing concerns. Whilst many parents are clearly supportive of the school, there are certainly areas where parents' concerns were found to be valid.
28. There are weaknesses in how the school communicates with parents. They can meet teachers at parents' meetings or curriculum evenings and can make an appointment to see them after school but there are several things that militate against the valuable, more informal opportunities for parents to talk with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff. For instance, senior staff and teachers are not seen around the school and playground before the start of school because there is a staff briefing at 8.50am upstairs in the staffroom. Similarly, staff are not regularly seen around the entrance and playground at the end of the day, which is a good time for parents to raise any queries or concerns they may have on an informal basis. Some parents expressed their frustration that they receive information too late or do not hear from the school if, for example, they have offered to help with a school event, so they do not know whether their help is needed or not. Scrutiny of newsletters shows that only a few days' notice is sometimes given about events, such as consultation meetings. There is a tendency for written communications to be rather formal. For example, letters to parents convey information but are not always warm in their tone. The notice-board in the playground could also have a more friendly and welcoming 'feel' to it.
29. The entrance to the school does not give the impression of a warm welcome. There is no member of the administrative staff to greet parents and visitors when they enter the school. The secretary's office is on the first floor with access via a steep and narrow staircase, which would pose problems for anyone with a disability or mobility difficulty. It is important for visitors or parents to receive a warm welcome on entering the school but the secretary is unable to do this as present arrangements stand. The siting of the headteacher's office on the first floor also limits opportunities for parents to see the headteacher in anything other than a formal context.
30. The school keeps a record of parents' positive letters but there is no system for recording their concerns, or the action taken. This makes it impossible for anyone to check whether complaints or concerns have been appropriately addressed, to the satisfaction of all parties.
31. The school does not keep a register of parents who would be interested in helping in school. Some parents outlined instances where they had offered to help but had been turned down. Although these may well be very isolated examples, they have clearly caused some frustration. The governors and

the staff could be more proactive in gauging and welcoming the views of parents, many of whom are clearly supportive of the school and keen to be more involved.

There are flaws in the way the school collects and monitors information about pupils' attainment as they move through the school. This means teachers cannot be sure that pupils are making the progress they should, or are being challenged sufficiently.

32. The teachers in Year 4 keep good information on progress in English and mathematics and set targets for pupils to achieve each week. This is effective in pinpointing areas that need improving and is helping pupils to make good progress but this good practice is not seen across all year groups.
33. The main weakness lies in how pupils' academic progress is tracked and monitored from the time they come into school to the time they leave. The tracking sheets that move with the pupils from one year to the next do not record their performance in the Key Stage 1 tests. Consequently, there is no easy way for teachers, co-ordinators or senior management to check that each pupil is making the progress that could be expected. This information is held in the school but is not readily available. There are also inconsistencies in how teachers record this information for themselves. For example, some teachers make a note of whether, at the age of seven, a pupil has gained Level 2c in, say, writing as opposed to Level 2a. Others just record Level 2. The first system is far more useful than the second in gauging how much progress could be expected by the end of Key Stage 2 and helping the school to set suitably challenging targets.
34. The quality of teachers' assessment at the end of the key stage is inconsistent. In one class, there is clear information about how each child in Year 6 is performing in relation to each separate attainment target. For instance, the teacher may assess one pupil as working at the expected level in science in the attainment target that relates to Materials and Their Properties but exceeding the expectation in Life Processes and Living Things. In another class, every pupil is assessed at the same level in each of the separate attainment targets in all three core subjects, which is inappropriate.
35. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator carry out some helpful analysis of pupils' performance in the national tests and this highlights areas where pupils have performed well and areas where further improvement could take place. Co-ordinators need to be more involved in this process to help them lead their subjects more effectively and give them a useful focus when they are collecting in samples of pupils' work or observing lessons.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

36. In order to build upon its strengths and improve further, the governors, headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching, by:
 - Putting in place a system for monitoring the quality of teaching and providing guidance for teachers on aspects of their teaching that could be developed further*;
 - Ensuring the work that teachers plan for higher attaining pupils builds upon what pupils already know, understand and can do;
(Paragraphs 23 - 26)

- (2) strengthen the school's partnership with parents, by:
 - setting up strategies for determining and welcoming parents' views on the strengths of the school and areas that could be improved;
 - making the entrance to the school more welcoming to parents and prospective parents;
 - increasing the number of occasions when the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of school;
 - broadening the opportunities whereby parents can come into school to offer support, see it at work, and play a part in celebrating its ongoing successes.
(Paragraphs 27 - 31)

- (3) Improve the procedures for assessing and recording information about pupils' attainment so that their progress over time can be monitored and appropriate targets set for them.
(Paragraphs 32 - 35)

* denotes an area already recognised by the school as requiring improvement

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	24	29	29	5	0	0

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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	335
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	26
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	76
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	173
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	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	45	43	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	36	36	40
	Girls	40	36	42
	Total	76	72	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (88)	82 (86)	93 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	36	37
	Girls	40	39	39
	Total	75	75	76
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (86)	85 (86)	86 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	16
Black – other	8
Indian	31
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	15
White	181
Any other minority ethnic group	64

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8:1
Average class size	27.9

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	106

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	746,853
Total expenditure	756,698
Expenditure per pupil	2,193
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,155
Balance carried forward to next year	26,310

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	338
Number of questionnaires returned	138

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	38	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	51	9	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	43	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	39	27	14	1
The teaching is good.	38	51	7	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	40	22	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	36	11	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	44	8	2	3
The school works closely with parents.	26	47	18	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	36	48	12	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	41	7	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	38	23	12	1

Other issues raised by parents

Twenty parents wrote letters to the registered inspector or added written comments on their questionnaire. A few of these were highly supportive and praised the work of the school. The great majority, however, were of a negative nature. Parents' concerns fell mainly into the following categories:

- the school is not welcoming to parents when they want to offer help or wish to raise concerns;
- the communication between parents and the school is not good
- some teachers are too firm in the way they influence and control pupils' behaviour.