

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BALTONSBOROUGH CE(VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Baltonsborough

Near Glastonbury

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123740

Headteacher: Mrs J. Snow

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper  
23239

Dates of inspection: February 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> 2000

Inspection number: 194031

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Boys and girls
School address:	Ham Street, Baltonsborough, Glastonbury, Somerset,
Postcode:	BA6 8PX
Telephone number:	01458 850526
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. J. Smith
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Baltonsborough Church of England (VC) Primary School admits boys and girls aged 4 - 11. There are seventy-nine pupils on roll. They are taught in three mixed-age classes. Most pupils come from favourable home backgrounds, with the number of pupils eligible for free school meals being below the national average. There are twenty pupils on the special needs' register. This is broadly in line with the national average. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school varies significantly from year to year but, overall, it is broadly average. The current headteacher was appointed shortly after the last inspection in 1997. There is a recently appointed teacher working with pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school with many very good features and it provides good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. The school is well led with both the headteacher and the governing body committed to maintaining and improving standards. Pupils' standards of attainment are good in Key Stage 2. The appointment of a new teacher for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 is already having a good impact on standards in these year groups, with higher attaining pupils beginning to achieve at appropriate levels. The degree of parental satisfaction is very high and the school plays an important part in the local community.

#### **What the school does well**

- Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average and pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attainment in religious education and design and technology is good throughout the school.
- The headteacher is a very effective and strong leader and is well supported by governors and members of staff in developing and managing the school.
- The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- The school very effectively promotes pupils' personal development.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's work and are very pleased with the quality of education provided for their children.

#### **What could be improved**

- In Key Stage 1, test results in English and mathematics are lower than for similar schools, with few pupils achieving the higher levels.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work.
- The use of the whole class session at the end of numeracy and literacy lessons to assess and extend pupils' learning.

*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 good progress since the last inspection. The move to a new building has been very beneficial and means that all aspects of the curriculum are now being taught. The quality of teaching has improved and the school is benefiting greatly from the very rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher. Key issues for action from the last inspection have been successfully addressed and standards have risen in Key Stage 2. Recent staff appointments have strengthened the teaching staff and the school is well placed to further raise standards throughout 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	A	E	A	A
mathematics	B	C	A	A
science	D	C	A	A

**Key**

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

Standards of attainment vary considerably from year-to-year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group.

Test results for the last four years show that, overall, pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is good, with test results that are above average. The work seen during the inspection confirms these findings, with the majority of pupils in Year 6 on target to meet national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year.

Results in national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are not as high, with attainment in English, mathematics and science broadly average. In 1999, whilst the number of pupils achieving Level 2 in national tests was above average, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well as in similar school. However, inspection evidence shows that attainment is rising in Key Stage 1 with more pupils on target to achieve Level 3 in the current Year 2. The good quality teaching of this year group is having an impact on standards, particularly of higher attaining pupils.

Children under five achieve good standards in literacy and numeracy, with many writing and counting independently. Throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in religious education and design and technology.

Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils' attainment is rising at a rate that is broadly in line with the national average. The school has set realistic targets for improving standards of attainment throughout the school based on a careful analysis of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic and consistently work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are responsible, articulate and confident. They care for each other and play well together whatever their age.
Attendance	Excellent. Pupils are keen to come to school and attendance rates are very high.

There is a purposeful buzz of activity in classrooms with pupils behaving well. They are keen to discuss their work with the teacher and share ideas with each other. Pupils' willingness to work hard means that they make good progress and their developing maturity enables them to try new activities confidently without fear of failure. Older pupils take good care of younger pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching is good with all lessons being satisfactory or better. Teaching is good in forty-four per cent of lessons and very good in sixteen per cent of lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school.

The quality of teaching ensures that all pupils are now learning well. Teachers have high expectations and work is suitably challenging for all pupils. This is beginning to have a good impact on the work of higher attaining pupils in Year 2, where test results show that there has been some underachievement in the past.

All teachers have an infectious enthusiasm for their work and this provides good role models for the pupils. Teachers are courteous and caring and manage pupils effectively. This enables pupils to become confident and mature. The sensitive management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties has a positive impact on their development of social skills. Lessons are well organised to provide a range of stimulating experiences and to maintain a good working atmosphere in the classrooms. Resources such as books, artefacts and worksheets are carefully prepared in advance to ensure that a swift pace is maintained and time lost between activities is kept to the minimum.

The teamwork between all members of staff is a significant strength of teaching. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They are well informed and give pupils good support both in and out of lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is broad and balanced. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to extend their work beyond the classroom.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans are detailed and pupils are given good support in class. Management of provision is very good, with record keeping thorough and informative.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about different cultures. There are very good procedures for promoting pupils' social and moral development. Members of staff act as good role models and pupils are encouraged to behave responsibly and show initiative. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school successfully promotes the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils.

Extracurricular activities make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has introduced effective assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science. These have not

been in place long enough to have a significant impact on standards of attainment.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has established an excellent ethos in the school, with all members of staff working together to support pupils and achieve high standards. The very good emphasis on developing the expertise of all members of staff is a strong feature of the headteacher's leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive of the headteacher and have played an important part in establishing the ethos of the school in the new building.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching and learning is very rigorous, identifying clearly what the school does well and where the school could improve further. Test results are carefully analysed and the detailed tracking of individual pupils' progress from year to year has helped the school to set challenging targets for raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of its budget and available resources. Priorities for spending are carefully considered and are effectively targeted.

The headteacher sets high expectations for what can be achieved by members of staff and pupils. She has a very clear vision of what the school should be like, with the need for high standards throughout the school her main focus. She has been very successful in moving the school forward, taking advantage of the move to new accommodation to establish an ethos that promotes good standards whilst maintaining the family atmosphere which is a feature of the school.

The headteacher has been successful in establishing a strong and supportive team around her, who work well together and share the commitment to high standards. The happy and relaxed atmosphere amongst members of staff makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. All members of staff are given very good opportunities for further professional development through in-school training and local authority courses. Accommodation is very good and is cleaned to a very high standard.

Governors are fully involved in financial planning. They carefully target spending to help raise standards and improve the quality of education provided by the school. The principles of 'best value' are successfully applied, for example by seeking competitive bids for services and the purchase of resources.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are happy at school</li> <li>• The quality of teaching</li> <li>• The effective leadership</li> <li>• Members of staff are very approachable</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements for homework</li> <li>• More opportunities to meet formally with teachers to discuss their children's work</li> </ul>

Parents are very positive about the work of the school. The inspection team agrees with both the strengths and weaknesses identified by parents. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, but some parents are unsure of the school's expectations of how much work pupils should

do each evening. Parents have many opportunities to meet informally with teachers but there is only one formal parent/teacher meeting per year. The inspection team agrees that it would be beneficial to hold an additional parent/teacher meeting earlier in the year.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average and pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science**

1. Although there is some variation from year to year because of the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year group, National Curriculum test results indicate that overall pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection when they were found to be broadly average.

2. In 1999, when compared with all schools and similar schools, pupils' attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 tests was well above average in English and mathematics. In science, pupils' attainment was well above average when compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. In English, mathematics and science, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average.

3. Taking the test results for the last four years, which are a more reliable indicator of overall attainment given the small size of the cohort taking the tests each year, attainment was well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are rising in line with the national trend.

4. The standards of work seen during the inspection indicate above average attainment in English, mathematics and science, with the majority of pupils in Year 6 on target to achieve national expectations by the end of the year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have well-developed literacy and numeracy skills. They write confidently for a range of purposes, adapting their style according to the audience. They use punctuation confidently. Higher attaining pupils write in paragraphs with speech marks and apostrophes accurately placed in sentences. Lower attaining pupils produce less work and make some mistakes when spelling common words. Pupils have a good knowledge of the conventions of languages, for example talking confidently about when it is appropriate to use a 'metaphor' or 'simile'.

5. In mathematics, pupils are good at explaining the strategy for working out a problem and are confident about applying skills to problem solving. This was shown to good effect in a lesson where pupils were learning different ways of finding the area of irregular shapes. Pupils adapted different strategies by dividing the shapes in various ways and then applied previous work on the 'partitioning of numbers' to help them solve the problem. Most pupils are confident about working with fractions and decimals and are able to solve quickly in their head mathematical problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils are very positive about working with numbers. There is a genuine air of excitement in lessons as pupils reach solutions and make new discoveries.

6. Pupils develop good skills in science and successfully apply their scientific knowledge to investigations. They have a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet and can categorise food according to whether it is protein, carbohydrate or fat. They know which foods are good for the body and why exercise is important. Pupils can explain clearly the properties of different materials and understand why they are used for different purposes. Pupils carry out a range of investigations such as those that tested the absorbency of different papers. They understand the need for a fair test, with higher attaining pupils able to explain why it is important to change only one 'variable' at a time. Pupils successfully predict the outcomes of their investigation using their scientific knowledge and they record their findings carefully and accurately

#### **Pupils' attainment in religious education and design and technology is good.**

7. Standards have improved in these subjects since the last inspection when standards in religious education were in line with the agreed syllabus and standards in design and technology were

below national expectations.

8. In religious education, the youngest pupils understand the moral teaching contained in several Bible stories and the importance of different members of the community. They know that we celebrate various important festivals and that some events are particularly important in our lives. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils increase their knowledge of bible stories and develop an understanding of the importance of worship in Hinduism. Key Stage 2 pupils carry out very detailed studies into the beliefs and traditions of major faiths such as Islam and Hinduism. They have a good understanding of the importance of different types of sacred writing and major festivals. They make collections of their own versions of Rama and Sita stories and these are very carefully presented in handmade books to show the value placed on the beliefs and traditions of others. The recent purchase and careful display of some very good quality resources has done much to raise interest in the subject. A newly introduced assessment record is beginning to provide a thorough picture of pupils' progress towards the targets set in the locally agreed syllabus.

9. In design and technology, Key Stage 1 pupils successfully experiment with previously learnt skills in cutting and joining materials when making mechanisms for their good quality pop-up books. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils carry out careful evaluations of commercial products such as types of bread. They design and make their own interesting sandwich fillings and identify in their designs what materials and tools they intend to use. The school's effective links with local industry helps to enrich the pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject. For example, a visitor from a local shoe factory showed pupils how slippers were manufactured before pupils carried out their own designs. This led to some very well thought out and expertly finished end products. A popular cookery club is well attended and contributes well to pupils' learning.

**The headteacher is a very effective and strong leader and is well supported by governors and members of staff in developing and managing the school.**

10. The headteacher has maintained the very good level of leadership found at the time of the last inspection. She is well informed and sets high expectations for what can be achieved by members of staff and pupils. She has a very clear vision for the work of the school, with the need for high standards throughout the school her main focus. She has been very successful in moving the school forward, taking advantage of the move to new accommodation to establish an ethos that promotes good standards whilst maintaining the family atmosphere which is a feature of the school.

11. The monitoring of teaching and learning is very good. The work of the school is evaluated in a systematic and effective way. The headteacher has implemented a programme of regularly observing teachers at work in the classroom. She uses the information gained from this to identify strengths and weaknesses in the work of individual teachers and overall provision in the school. Teachers are given good quality feedback on their work and are helped to improve. Data from National Curriculum test results and other ongoing assessments of pupils' work are carefully analysed by the headteacher and other members of staff. The headteacher's observations and the analysis of test results lead to very clearly focused developmental work in the school. For example, the need for teachers to plan more carefully for the different ability groups in each class has been identified and staff meetings and support have focused on this area in the last year. Inspection findings indicate that this has been effective in improving standards, with the needs of higher attaining pupils being more closely met in Key Stage 1.

12. The headteacher has been successful in establishing a strong and supportive team around her, who work well together and share the commitment to high standards. The happy and relaxed atmosphere amongst members of staff makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. All members of staff are given very good opportunities for further professional development through in-school training and local authority courses. Staff development is properly financed and the professional needs of individual members of staff are identified through a careful review of their work. Teachers and learning support staff report that they feel empowered by the leadership of the headteacher and everyone is *'pulling in the same direction'*. The comments of a learning support assistant summed up why the headteacher is a successful leader: *'We are given good quality support and feel valued by the school for the work we do'*.

13. As at the time of the last inspection, the governing body makes a good contribution to the

overall effectiveness of the school. They perform the function of a 'critical friend' successfully and are also very supportive of the headteacher and other members of staff. Governors have a good awareness of where the school has strengths and weaknesses. They visit the school regularly to monitor its work and receive detailed feedback at each meeting from the headteacher on how well the school is performing. A particularly strong feature of the governor's work is their self-awareness of how they could improve. For example, they spoke of the need for further training to help them prepare for the responsibility of reviewing teachers' pay. Governors are fully involved in financial planning and play a good part in this. Whilst they rely to a large extent on the professional judgement of the headteacher, they rightly challenge spending where necessary in order to ensure that it is focused on raising standards. The governing body is beginning to review the effectiveness of its spending and has identified the need for further training to help them do this more effectively.

### **The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning throughout the school**

14. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in three out of five lessons. This is a considerable improvement from the time of the last inspection, when 14% of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. At that time, there was insufficient direct teaching and higher attaining pupils were not always provided with challenging work. These weaknesses have been successfully rectified through the careful targeting of effective staff development and the well considered appointment of a highly skilled teacher to fill the recent vacancy. All teachers now work effectively with the whole class and groups of pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to think carefully. For example, in mathematics teachers ask probing questions to encourage pupils to explain how they have worked out their answers and in English pupils are expected to consider possible meanings of unfamiliar words. Teachers make their expectations clear to the pupils by explaining the purpose of the work at the start of the lessons. This enables pupils to understand what they are expected to learn and its application in life. For example, in one class, pupils were asked to design pop-up books for younger children to enjoy. The careful use of the correct vocabulary by all members of staff enables pupils to learn and use appropriately terms such as 'split digraph' and 'simile', when discussing their work.

15. There are a good number of well-qualified and experienced teachers with a good knowledge of the subjects taught and of the needs of children under five. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching at the school is good and that this enables pupils to work hard. The additional appointment of a teacher to support numeracy teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, by reducing the number in each group. All teachers have an infectious enthusiasm for their work and this provides good role models for the pupils. Teachers are courteous and caring and manage pupils effectively. This enables pupils to become confident and mature. The sensitive management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties has a positive impact on their development of social skills. Lessons are well organised to provide a range of stimulating experiences and to maintain a good working atmosphere in the classrooms. Resources such as books, artefacts and worksheets are carefully prepared in advance to ensure that a swift pace is maintained and no time is lost between activities. This means that pupils' interest is maintained and they are keen to work hard and learn quickly. Teachers plan the content of their lessons well, although written lesson plans do not always give specific detail of what they expect pupils to achieve. This makes it difficult to assess what individual pupils have learnt at the end of the lesson.

16. The generous provision of well-trained and enthusiastic learning support assistants makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Members of support staff work effectively with groups of pupils and carefully follow the clear guidance provided by the teachers. Support provided for pupils with special educational needs is unobtrusive and effective in enabling them to take a full part in all activities. The effectiveness of this support is evident in the high number of lower attaining pupils achieving the expected levels in national curriculum tests. The good commitment of learning support assistants to their work is demonstrated by their willingness to give up their own time to attend training and to help run after school clubs.

17. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires, expressed concern about the excessive amount of homework provided. The school has set a time limit for the older pupils of thirty minutes each day and this is a realistic expectation.

### **Pupils' attitudes towards school are very good**

18. Pupils' very positive attitudes towards their learning are reflected in the excellent levels of attendance recorded at the school. This has improved since the last inspection when attitudes were good and attendance very good. Almost all parents state that their children like coming to school and pupils' enthusiasm is evident in class.

19. Pupils are very keen to answer the teachers' questions and to take part in discussions. They make thoughtful suggestions and concentrate very well when working with adults or independently. They work constructively with each other and persevere on the tasks set. For example, younger pupils show particular enjoyment of practical activities and handle and share resources sensibly and carefully. Older pupils work well in pairs on various tasks such as agreeing answers to a science quiz and when resolving problems using the computers. All pupils are prepared to listen to the views and ideas of others and sustain interest in lessons for a long time.

20. There is a purposeful buzz of activity in the classroom with pupils keen to discuss their work with the teacher and share ideas with each other. Pupils' willingness to work hard means that they make good progress and their developing confidence enables them to try new activities without worrying about the outcome.

### **The school very effectively promotes pupils' personal development**

21. This shows an improvement from the time of the last inspection when provision was good. All parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school is effective in helping pupils to become mature and responsible. The older pupils have been heavily involved in establishing the 'golden' rules and new aims for the school since its move to a new building. Extensive discussions on what would make playtimes and lunchtimes happy, have given pupils an insight into the importance of considerate behaviour for the smooth running of a community. This has also enhanced pupils' confidence and sense of belonging.

22. The respect and trust shown by members of staff teaches pupils to show very good respect for the feelings of others. Pupils demonstrate very good relationships with members of staff and other pupils. They listen intently when other pupils give their views or talk about their interests. 'Circle time' is used effectively to encourage pupils to respect each other and this coupled with the very good role models provided by members of staff results in very high standards of personal development.

23. There is a well-structured system for encouraging pupils to act responsibly. Year 6 pupils have specific responsibilities as prefects including setting a good example for the younger pupils. They are expected to consider what makes a good prefect and what qualities they can offer the role before being given this responsibility. There is a strong family atmosphere in the school promoted by collaborative work, shared picnics and mixed age groups for socialising at lunchtimes. Parents and the wider community are welcomed into school and become fully involved in school life. For example, as part of the millennium celebration, every family took part in making a panel for a decorative wall hanging. Pupils' achievements are regularly celebrated at the school and these successes are recorded on an 'awards' board in the school entrance. This helps pupils to feel valued as members of the school community.

24. Good quality opportunities exist for pupils to learn outside lessons. This further enhances pupils' social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity of taking part in a residential school journey and all pupils visit places of educational interest such as a local Tudor building. Provision for pupils to learn about other cultures was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. This has improved significantly with effective use being made of visitors from different cultures. For example, a sitar player worked with pupils to demonstrate this style of music. Displays of artefacts such as a collection of musical instruments from various cultures also raise pupils' awareness of diversity. The cultural development of pupils is further increased by the opportunity to take part in traditional activities such as country dancing and the celebration of major festivals.

25. At the time of the last inspection, pupils had few opportunities of working independently. This is no longer the case. Younger pupils are given opportunities of applying skills they have learnt to develop their own ideas and older pupils carry out individual research projects in aspects of the topics being studied that particularly interest them.

**Parents are very supportive of the school's work and are very pleased with the quality of education provided for their children.**

26. Parents are very interested in the school and support it well. This was demonstrated by the very positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaires. Parents are encouraged to help in and around the school and the school maintains a register of particular skills that might be used in support of learning. The school effectively consulted with parents prior to introducing the home/school agreement both through a meeting and a questionnaire. These gave parents valuable opportunities to contribute to this aspect of the school's work.

27. The headteacher and members of staff value parents' support. They work hard to foster this and are largely successful. Where a parent has a concern they are listened to and their ideas are respected. Parents help with after school clubs and an active 'friends' association' raises funds for the school in order to purchase resources.

28. A few parents raised concerns about the provision for homework and the limited number of opportunities that parents have to meet formally with teachers. Inspection findings support parental concerns in these areas. Whilst provision for homework is good and it makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, the school has not made its expectations clear to all parents. As a result, some parents are unsure about whether homework has to be completed or whether they should stop after the time allocated for that year group.

29. Teachers are always happy to talk to parents and they are available at the start and end of each day. However, the school only holds one formal teacher/parent meeting per year, towards the end of the summer term. The inspection team agrees that it would be beneficial to hold an additional parent/teacher meeting earlier in the year.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**In Key Stage 1, test results in English and mathematics are lower than for similar schools, with few pupils achieving the higher levels.**

30. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are not as high in Key Stage 1 as they are in Key Stage 2. They remain broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Test results show that when compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment is lower than it should be.

31. Test results vary significantly from year to year because of the small size of individual year groups and the impact of differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year. Taken over four years, pupils' attainment in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests was broadly average in reading and mathematics and was below average in writing.

32. In 1998, when the number of pupils with special educational needs was high, pupils' attainment was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In contrast, in 1999, pupils' attainment was above average in reading and mathematics and was average in writing when compared with all schools nationally. Whilst the number of pupils achieving Level 2 in national tests in this year was above average, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading, writing or mathematics was well below average. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well as in similar schools. In 1999, when compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. The reason for this underachievement when compared with similar schools is the low number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. No pupils have achieved this level in writing for the last three years.

33. The school is very aware of this weakness and over the past two years has begun to focus on the issue by ensuring that work for higher attaining pupils is suitably challenging. In addition, the quality of teaching of the recently appointed teacher for pupils in Year 2 is good, with detailed

planning showing clearly what pupils of differing prior attainment should achieve in lessons. The standards of work seen during the inspection confirm that this is beginning to have an impact on attainment, which is improving in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, the number of pupils on target to achieve Level 3 in the current Year 2 is still lower than it should be in reading and writing. Particular weaknesses in writing are pupils' poorly developed handwriting skills, which limits pupils' fluency when writing longer pieces of work. Pupils use a limited range of vocabulary and most are not yet beginning to use conjunctions to join sentences in order to make their writing more interesting. In reading, whilst higher attaining pupils read with reasonable fluency their level of understanding of what they are reading is limited. The quality and range of reading books is a key factor in this. Many of them are getting tatty; they are poorly stored and are not attractive or inviting to developing readers. As a result, pupils read '*mechanically*' rather than with a real '*feel*' for what they are reading.

34. In contrast, in mathematics, the provision of an extra teaching group for numeracy has had a good impact on learning. The smaller group has enabled the teacher to focus very closely on the individual needs of pupils and, as a result, the needs of higher attaining pupils are being successfully met, with most pupils achieving as well as they should.

### **The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work.**

35. Whilst the quality of teaching is good throughout the school, there are some weaknesses in the quality of day-to-day assessment. The quality of marking is not consistent from teacher to teacher or subject to subject and the plenary at the end of literacy and numeracy lessons is not always used effectively to assess and extend pupils' learning.

36. Teachers mark work regularly and the practice of marking some work alongside the pupils is good. However, the quality of written comments varies considerably and they are not always helpful in identifying to the pupil what has been done well and what could be improved. Marking was best when it was closely linked to the focus of the lesson and it clearly showed the pupil what they needed to do to develop their learning further. However, on many occasions marking concentrates too much on the attitude of the pupils, rather than their learning, and whether it is good or not. Similarly, in reading records and diaries, comments do not give enough detail on what pupils can or cannot do. As a result, reading records are limited in their usefulness as an aid for improving reading.

### **The use of the whole class session at the end of numeracy and literacy lessons to assess and extend pupils' learning.**

37. The effectiveness of the whole class session (the plenary session) at the end of lessons to assess what pupils have achieved is variable. It is used most effectively in Years 5 and 6, where high quality plenary sessions at the end of literacy and numeracy lessons help to develop pupils' understanding as well as assessing what they have learnt. In a numeracy lesson, the teacher very effectively linked together work on 'partitioning numbers' and dividing irregular shapes to help pupils learn a new strategy for measuring area. This plenary time was based on a good understanding of where problems arose in the lesson and it helped to identify clearly what skill pupils needed more help with. In contrast in some lessons, too little time is allocated to the plenary and, as a result, it is limited in its usefulness.

38. On occasions, the plenary becomes a 'show and tell' session rather than being used to help teachers assess or develop learning. At the start of lessons, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils. The target for the lesson – what the teacher expects the pupil to learn in a particular lesson - is often written on the whiteboard. However, too little attention is given to the purpose of the lesson during the plenary; '*This is what we intended to learn. How far have we gone in our learning? What do we need to do in our next lesson?*' As a result, the effectiveness of identifying the purpose of the lesson to the pupils is limited.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- Continue to focus on raising attainment in Key Stage 1 by
  - a) Monitoring the attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 and setting challenging

- targets for what they should achieve by the end of the key stage;
  - b) Ensuring that the good quality of teachers' planning in Year 2 is maintained so that higher attaining pupils continue to be consistently challenged in lessons;
  - c) Review the school's procedures for teaching handwriting in Key Stage 1
  - d) Review the quality of reading resources and the use of reading records;
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking by
  - a) Sharing good practice so that the quality of marking and the use of the plenary is consistent;
  - b) Ensuring that written comments help the pupil to understand how work could be improved and reflect what pupils are expected to learn in that particular lesson.
- Improve the use of the plenary session in literacy and numeracy lessons by
  - a) Ensuring that sufficient time is allocated to the plenary session and that it focuses on assessing or developing pupils' learning;
  - b) Using the plenary session for pupils to review how far they have gone towards achieving the target given at the start of the lesson.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	44	40	0	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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	79
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	15	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94( 63)	94(73)	94(72)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(71)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(55)	100(82)	100(55)
	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	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	9
	Girls	5	6	5
	Total	15	16	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94(50)	100(63)	88(63)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	5	3	3
	Total	13	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81(50)	75(63)	75(75)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	76
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*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)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25.3

**Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	88.5

**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	1998-99
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	£
Total income	176189
Total expenditure	172036
Expenditure per pupil	2048
Balance brought forward from previous year	12232
Balance carried forward to next year	16385

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

57

Number of questionnaires returned

39

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	31	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	28	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	36	15	3	2
The teaching is good.	72	28	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	66	6	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	59	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	82	18	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	62	13	0	4