

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR FIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burgess Hill

LEA area : West Sussex

Unique reference number : 125930

Headteacher : Miss J. A. Edwarde

Reporting inspector: Mrs Elizabeth Camplin
3586

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd October 2001

Inspection number: 194771

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Manor Field Primary School Junction Road Burgess Hill West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Richard Ager
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
 WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	 11
 WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	 17
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 20
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Manor Field Primary School is a large primary school serving a mixed area of Burgess Hill, West Sussex. It has 574 pupils on roll. Eighty-two are reception children, 55 of whom attend part-time as the local education authority policy is to admit children to full-time education in the term prior to their fifth birthday. When children start school their achievement in early language, mathematical and social skills is broadly average. There are 23 children from a number of minority group backgrounds. These include Travellers, children of mixed cultural heritage, two asylum seekers and seven pupils with English as an additional language. Family circumstances, the number of pupils entitled to free school meals, and the percentage on the register of special educational needs are all broadly average. Twelve pupils have statements of special educational need and, in percentage terms, this is above the national average. They have a wide range of special learning difficulties, including autism, speech and language impairment, poor vision, and physical disability. There are some troubled junior pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. The school has initiated a special nurture project to help them. The school has had a low turnover of staff for a number of years but recently had difficulty filling a job-share vacancy. As a consequence, the headteacher teaches a Year 3 class for two days a week. Some of her administrative duties have been delegated to a newly appointed professional assistant.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful school where standards in English, mathematics and science are above average overall, and above average compared with similar schools. Pupils achieve particularly high standards in science. They benefit from good teaching, very effective leadership and management by the headteacher and her senior colleagues, and a strong sense of community. The staff team is wholeheartedly committed to continuous school improvement and they work hard to achieve it. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- It makes science lessons enjoyable. Pupils work hard and achieve high standards.
- From the Foundation Stage onwards, it fosters a climate for learning in which all children flourish and make good all-round progress, personally and academically, irrespective of their backgrounds and starting points.
- It has developed an imaginative and carefully planned programme of work that promotes very effective cross-curricular links in all three primary stages.
- It makes the most of the combined skills, expertise and aptitudes of its visionary headteacher, deputy headteachers and committed staff team.

What could be improved

- The school could now ensure that all lessons match the very good quality of the best and fully inspire and challenge pupils to achieve highly.
- The school could strengthen the improvement objectives in the School Development Plan and involve governors and parents more in evaluating action to achieve them.

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 June 1997. Since then, progress in addressing relative weaknesses has been good. Teaching and learning have been strengthened, as recommended, in mathematics, but have also improved in science and English. As a result, standards in national tests for eleven year olds have risen at a rate above the national trend. Curricular strengths, the high quality of care and leadership and management, and the constructive support provided by governors and parents, have all been sustained.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	B	B	B	
Science	B	A	A	A	

At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Results in science in 2000 were particularly good and are still being sustained at a high level. Standards in mathematics were, and remain, good. They were in need of improvement compared with similar schools in English, mainly due to boys' writing being below average compared with boys nationally. The 2001 results in English are better. They exceed the recently published national average and show a seven per cent improvement since 2000 in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5. The gap between boys and girls has noticeably narrowed. Inspection evidence confirms this positive trend. Standards in Key Stage 1 are good in English and most aspects of mathematics, and very good in science. Pupils at both key stages use their literacy, numeracy and computer skills well across the curriculum. Their progress is good in many subjects, but particularly in the performing arts where standards exceed national expectation. The school sets challenging targets and most are successfully achieved. It still has appropriate aims to raise standards further in spelling in Key Stage 2 and to extend all pupils' confidence to solve mathematical problems. Standards achieved by the school's four year olds exceed what is expected of them at this early stage of their foundation year. They are making sufficient progress to achieve beyond the goals for their age group by the time they complete their time in reception. Young children's progress is most evident in personal development and in acquiring communication, language and mathematical skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very positive and considerably aid their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall. Troubled pupils are making good progress towards very appropriate individual improvement targets.
Personal development and relationships	The quality of relationships is high. Most pupils are very polite, co-operate very well with each other and adults, and cheerfully take responsibility when tasks are delegated to them.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and has improved in the last year.

A particular strength of the school is the way reception children participate in activities with enormous confidence and expectation of enjoying learning. Also, older pupils are enthusiastic about contributing to school policy decisions through the newly formed school council. Occasionally, pupils are restless when teaching is less than good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is always at least sound and is good overall. It enables all pupils to make good progress from the reception class through to Year 6. Teachers in all three stages place a strong emphasis on personal development, and on the use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum. This judgement is confirmed by the scrutiny of work. Teachers' expertise in science, music and the performing arts ensures these subjects are particularly well taught and often result in high standards. In Year 2, where children were learning soundly about the purpose of the metric system and how to measure in centimetres, the concept of estimating was less well taught. This limited the progress pupils made in understanding this skill. In a small percentage of lessons throughout the school, teachers do not make the best use of time when pupils are together as a class group. Pupils then lose concentration and also some of their enthusiasm for learning. Marking is regular and positive, but it does not always show pupils how they can improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Planning is very thorough throughout the school. Programmes of work are imaginatively organised to make the most of cross-curricular links. The curriculum is enriched by visits and a variety of learning opportunities outside school time. Provision in the arts is outstanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils on the school's register is very carefully managed and organised so that pupils' wide-ranging needs are effectively met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for the small number of pupils with home languages other than English is good. Expert advice is sought from appropriate sources when extra help is needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school cultivates pupils' personal development well. It is working on a particularly innovative and effective approach to developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem, and ability to behave responsibly. Opportunities are sometimes missed for reflection during assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. Procedures are very thorough and carefully implemented by all staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school benefits from very skilled leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and second deputy. All three have the ability to inspire loyalty and respect. They delegate well. A committed staff team supports them very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors make a good contribution to school effectiveness. They are involved particularly well in ensuring high quality curricular provision, and in appointing high calibre staff. They do not plan explicitly their own and parents' involvement in measuring how well all groups of pupils achieve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This school has a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. It sets relevant improvement targets and action is carefully planned to achieve them. Assessment information is used well to track and guide each child's progress. Even better use of this information could help the school measure how well it is serving specific groups of pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is carefully matched to improvement priorities. There is judicious use of funds to support pupils' needs and to enhance staff skills through well-planned professional development opportunities. Very effective use is made of staff expertise and experience.

The school tries hard to provide parents and carers with all the information they need to help children settle happily and make good progress. Induction of new entrants is particularly good. The school does not do quite enough to consult parents and listen to their views about where and how it could improve. In this respect the school could improve upon the sound way in which it applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educational standards are good and pupils are very well behaved and responsible.• Teaching is good and based on fair and equitable provision for all children.• The quality of care and welfare is high.• The school is led and managed very well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would like more homework in mathematics and further guidance about how to help their children make progress.• Some parents would appreciate more opportunities to share their views about how the parent partnership could be developed.• Some parents would like more clubs for younger pupils.

The inspection team judgement is that parents have a good overview of the school's strengths, and of where it can still strengthen homework and consultation practices. The school already does much to provide pupils with a variety of educational opportunities outside of lessons. It could explain to parents the practical implications of extending the range of clubs for younger children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

It makes science lessons enjoyable. Pupils work hard and achieve high standards.

1. For three successive years pupils aged eleven have achieved high standards in National Curriculum science tests. All pupils perform even better in science than they do in mathematics and English. They know how to engage in discussion to explore problems. They are confident to make predictions and to establish hypotheses. They are able to plan and carry out fair tests and competently record information about the working processes involved. Many pupils write at length. They spell scientific words accurately and use language precisely. They also use a variety of graphs to illustrate findings. Lower achieving pupils do not write as much, but their achievement is very good. They make good use of a computer, for example, to record bullet points, produce charts and diagrams, and summarise conclusions. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and the effort they make is consistent in all classes. Their highly positive attitudes combined with some very good teaching enable pupils to achieve close to full capacity in most lessons.
2. Two such lessons in Year 6 involved testing and building on prior knowledge of forces and friction. In one, boys and girls used language effectively to describe the forces being applied in a tug-of-war experiment. Most pupils realised that the force exerted by pulling the rope and pushing their feet downward on the floor was significant. They had different levels of understanding of the significance of the type of footwear and floor surface as each team pulled on a rope. They went on to study the texture of different surfaces to extend their knowledge of friction. This helped them to explain how non-slip footwear influenced the amount of grip in the tug-of-war. In the other lesson, pupils set out to explain why a plastic storage tray might have broken. Some realised that the heavier the mass of material and objects in the tray the greater the friction on the drawer runners. When planning their tests one girl perceptively observed that weight distribution in the drawer might have been a significant factor and realised she would have to manage a series of tests to prove or disprove her theory.
3. A lesson in Year 2 indicated pupils' good knowledge for their age of a range of materials. Pupils already knew that some change permanently when heated, and could provide examples of irreversible change, such as tableware made from clay. They went on to extend their understanding of how water is absorbed in clay and affects its texture and malleability, even though it cannot be seen or squeezed out.
4. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrated a good grounding in the foundations of science, acquired in their reception year. In a lesson about living things they quickly described a variety of facts they already knew about plant and animal life, and what both need to grow healthily. Many could provide examples of the kind of food and drink humans, animals and other creatures rely on, and skilful questioning by the teacher enabled children to work out that another invisible but vital requirement is air. One boy observed thoughtfully, "Without air to breathe we would die." Most children, by the end of the lesson, could clearly distinguish between living and non-living things as they sorted objects provided by the teacher. Many could explain how they reached their conclusions. As they examined a piece of snake skin and some twigs from trees, a minority soon showed that they realised that some things were alive once but are no longer. Excellent group tasks, well supported by the teacher and classroom assistant, enabled the whole class to discover that they could sort objects into 'living', 'once alive' and 'never lived' sets. Their achievement was well above the standard expected.

5. The reason for pupils' success is easy to see. First and foremost it is excellent leadership and management by the very experienced and knowledgeable subject co-ordinator that inspires pupils and staff in equal measure. He has developed a comprehensive programme of work for use in all infant and junior classes. It builds in plenty of opportunities for practical activity. Pupils learn from an early age to observe, investigate and explore scientific ideas. The co-ordinator often works alongside colleagues. This helps teachers to manage practical lessons very effectively. It also ensures that the co-ordinator can identify where further professional support and coaching are needed to further enhance teachers' confidence, knowledge and skills. One Year 6 lesson was led by a newly qualified teacher and was an excellent example of how the collaborative approach met the needs of adult and pupils alike.
6. All teachers highlight the difference the co-ordinator's help has made to their ability to use questions very effectively. They carefully pitch questions and communicate expectations according to pupils' differing needs. In this way they probe to test depth of understanding and challenge pupils' thinking. It also supports teachers when the co-ordinator helps them to try out experiments themselves before they use them with the children. The friction experiment with the tray was one good example of this.
7. The very good performance of boys and girls compared with boys and girls nationally shows how successful the school is in catering for both groups equitably.

From the Foundation Stage onwards, it fosters a climate for learning in which all children flourish and make good all-round progress, personally and academically, irrespective of their backgrounds and starting points.

8. Children in the reception class have only been in school for a few weeks but have clearly made a very happy and confident start to learning as a result of good teaching. They are interested and motivated by the wealth of creative and practical activities provided for them. They are very willing to try anything out, such as experimenting with a mouse and computer keyboard, or moving a few simple word cards around to try to make and read a sentence. They enjoy practical play with construction equipment and can work well in pairs and small groups. They have made very good relationships with teachers and classroom helpers. They are quick to respond to adults' high expectations of them to listen, consider others, and conform to school routines. Their progress in all areas of learning is good, but particularly rapid in social, emotional and personal development, and in the early foundations of literacy, numeracy and knowledge of the world around them. During a morning session, for example, they made up and wrote an 'I can' story that illustrated their ability to sort, count, and reveal information about themselves and their families.
9. The positive response to the parent survey questionnaires highlights how appreciative many children's families are of the care taken by the school to induct reception children really well. One parent wrote, "I am very impressed with what the school offers my child and with the information I have been given. Everything is well organised." During the Parents' Meeting one mother praised the contribution the new second deputy is making to the quality of learning of her young child. Very good examples of improved communication and partnership are the information leaflets 'Ask me about my learning' and 'A Parent/Carers' Guide to Home Reading'.
10. Although Manor Field is a very large school it still manages to create a welcoming atmosphere and 'family' feeling. Its organisation into four separate units, with three year groups in each, enables children from Years 1 to 3, and Years 4 to 6, to get to know and support each other. Four unit leaders provide strong pastoral leadership and

guidance to pupils and staff. The system means that adults within these units soon get to know the children well and this helps teachers and support assistants to manage needs and behaviour effectively. The school identifies pupils' individual needs very well because the special educational needs' co-ordinator liaises with each unit leader constructively, and seeks external help when appropriate. Individual education plans are written collaboratively and they are regularly used in lessons. As a result, most pupils usually know and understand what is expected of them and are aware of their own progress. Constructive feedback during and at the end of lessons encourages many pupils, whether they have behaviour difficulties, are shy or bright. A child with a target to refrain from shouting out was obviously proud when the teacher remarked, "Well done. You used to shout out, but now you put up a hand to give yourself and others thinking time." Some good use is made of the local education authority support services for Travellers and pupils with English as an additional language to boost pupils' reading competence and encourage help at home.

11. A number of initiatives in the School Development Plan demonstrate the school's commitment to teaching citizenship in a more rigorous and constructive way. A 'pupils' voice' project is helping pupils throughout the school to learn to identify what it is about lessons that work best and least well for them. The senior management team is using information from the research to evaluate teaching and learning methods. Already teachers are gaining insight into the language children need to express with more fluency how, as well as what, they are learning.
12. Pupils spoke positively to inspectors about the growing ease with which they can discuss problems with adults. They particularly respect the way both deputy headteachers create opportunities for their voices to be heard and ideas acted upon. They are pleased with the decision to form a school council so that their ideas and views can be formally gathered and considered carefully. They now understand more clearly how committees function, and the importance of roles such as chair and minute taker. They are more willing to negotiate their next steps in learning with working partners. They take responsibility more seriously. They are, for example, helping to conserve energy in the building by turning off lights, and have devised a way of recycling paper to save waste.
13. The school is aware that it still has a lot to learn from the exciting and innovative current initiatives. One early benefit is that teachers are thinking in more depth about how they influence children's response to school unwittingly as well as in planned ways. The headteacher and her two deputies realise too, as they check progress with action plans, that other views can be sought from governors and parents about the appropriateness of school developments. They are right in feeling that future dialogue will be helpful to them in evaluating how well plans are working.

It has developed an imaginative and carefully planned programme of work that promotes very effective cross-curricular links in all three primary stages.

14. The school has maintained its significant strengths in curricular planning, highlighted in the previous inspection report. The headteacher and her colleagues are very well informed about non-statutory guidance for literacy, numeracy, citizenship and the Foundation Stage. They are up to date with changes in statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects. Teachers in each year group apportion time well to make the most of natural links between subjects. They cover a tremendous amount of subject content, and show pupils how skills developed in some subjects, particularly English, mathematics and ICT, can be practised enjoyably in others. The curriculum is, as a result, broad based and challenging for all pupils.

15. In reception, at this early stage in the academic year, teachers and classroom assistants make sure they emphasise social, emotional and personal development in their planning. They aim to understand as much as they can about children's previous experience in order to make the most of what children already know and can do. It is obvious, from reading their records and speaking with parents, that they have spoken to playgroup organisers and to parents. Teachers have learnt about children's likes and dislikes, mutual friendships, and how they learn most effectively. The information has helped them to settle each child and cater effectively for each one. Adults clearly support and challenge children according to need. For example, able children, who already know how to read and write their names and count and sort small objects, are encouraged to use these skills straight away. They put their own names on their paintings and models and help to 'write' captions and labels for classroom displays. Adults write for the many that cannot yet do this independently. They also suggest that pupils make their own marks so that they think they are doing it too.
16. In Years 1 to 6, teachers show they are carefully absorbing information about what pupils learnt in previous classes. Crucially, they take account of the analysis of the end of key stage tests in Years 2 and 6, and of voluntary tests in Year 3, 4 and 5. They establish where they are already catering effectively for the development of core skills. They also see where they need to give additional emphasis in their plans to specific aspects of children's learning. In 2000, for example, the school saw that boys did not perform as well as girls at either key stage in writing. They also realised that pupils needed to make wider use of their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.
17. Teachers have redoubled their effort to motivate boys as writers by asking them to identify books they enjoy most, and used these as a stimulus for group writing activities in literacy lessons. They allowed boys to bring newspaper articles and magazines from home about leisure pursuits that interested them. They also made wider use of school information books, CD-ROMs and the Internet, because many boys preferred these sources to fiction. This soon improved boys' attitudes to writing. As pupils became more interested, the standard of creative and factual writing got better and the gap between boys' and girls' achievement narrowed. This is easy to see when exercise books are compared with children's self-made topic books. Irrespective of their gender or capability, their spelling and handwriting is at its best, and their choice of vocabulary is often more imaginative, in individual or class topic books. These books also contain many good examples of mathematical investigations involving shape, measure and the handling of data.
18. The outcomes of the summer term's special week on countries around the world are a wonderful testament to the standards pupils of all ages can achieve. For example, the study of Japan inspired some sensitive haiku poetry writing in Year 2, whilst Year 5 wrote clear instructions for preparing for a holiday, and imaginative accounts of 'A Holiday to Remember' in St Lucia. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated high levels of skill in working with large numbers when they did some research about all the countries on the African continent. They ranked the countries in order of approximate area to the nearest 1000 square kilometres and then again by population size. They all found the average size of the countries. Additionally, the more able worked out which were above average in size but contained a below average number of people.
19. Music, drama, sports and the arts are outstanding features of provision and contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes excellent use of visitors and educational journeys to foster pupils' aptitudes in rewarding ways, and outside of normal lesson time. Parents very much appreciate the opportunities provided for pupils to develop sporting skills, and study the work of

famous musicians, artists and crafts people. One parent wrote, "The school should be praised for its excellent recorder groups, its after-school basket-ball, tennis and karate teaching by external coaches. The concert given in the summer term by pupils in the choir and orchestra was of an incredible standard." Her only regret was that her son had to choose between these activities because there was not enough time for them all! The inspection team was not surprised when they examined photographs, and read about the visit of Opera Brava and a violinist from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Hunch turned to certainty during a lesson in Year 5 when pupils demonstrated just how much they knew about the unique sounds of contemporary and Tudor instrumental music and in a lunchtime practice by boys and girls in the recorder group. On each occasion pupils' concentration and their ability to keep in time with each other and perform two parts were impressive. Pupils benefit from some excellent teaching methods.

20. Finally, by way of example, The Active-IT Portfolio, written collaboratively by Year 6 pupils, shows how well the school links subjects with personal development. The new experience of abseiling consolidated pupils' knowledge of geography, science, mathematics, literacy and computer technology, and much more besides. The book contains descriptions of experiments involving measuring pulse rates when they were abseiling or crossing a gorge on rope ladders. It provides instructions about how to measure precisely, and examples of line graphs. There are pieces of their efforts at promotional advertising for the adventure education venue on the Isle of Wight. "If you want Fun wrapped up in education," wrote one boy, "Little Canada is the place to be." His extract ends, "You sure want to come again!" This sums up how the vast majority of pupils feel about the quality of education and learning at Manor Field Primary School.

It makes the most of the combined skills, expertise and aptitudes, of its visionary headteacher, deputy headteachers and committed staff team.

21. The headteacher and deputy headteacher complement each other's skills and experience. In 1997, during the previous inspection, their vision for developing the school, and the emphasis they place on raising attainment, were both clearly acknowledged. There was evidence, at that time, of very good teamwork throughout the school. Together all staff translated sound policies into practical action that worked for pupils of all ages.
22. The headteacher continues to delegate very well and inspires the respect, confidence and loyalty of all staff. She has a thorough overview of the school's performance, and is quick to see what aspects of teaching and learning, or curricular leadership and management, are of high quality and where improvements are necessary, or desirable. She continues to consult with colleagues throughout the school to plan for continuous improvement. The headteacher is still highly committed to raising levels of achievement by concerted action by the whole staff team. This was amply demonstrated in their discussions with the registered inspector and the inspection team. The headteacher was able to explain quite specifically the reasons for priorities in the School Development Plan and changes in the staffing structure, since the previous inspection. The rationale was fully confirmed by governors who had been consulted and closely involved in policy developments and key appointments.
23. The re-establishment of the second deputy position was a pertinent example of a very astute strategic decision to enhance the staffing structure. The principal aim was to make sure that the school had, at senior management level, someone who would be able to implement successfully the new Foundation Stage curriculum for four and five

year old pupils. The second, longer-term aim was to raise expectations of reception and older infants to build on prior learning as effectively as possible. After just one year in post, the second deputy has fulfilled governors' expectations of her. She has raised the profile of the Early Years department and is enhancing provision significantly. Parents are quick to express appreciation of what is being achieved by the youngest children.

24. The headteacher places great store on the importance of professional development and career enhancement. She makes sure new staff are properly inducted and involved from the moment they are appointed. A newly qualified and another newly appointed teacher, for example, assured an inspector how very positive they are about their welcome, the effectiveness of the school's support systems, and the respect they are accorded by pupils. Classroom lessons are monitored regularly and all teachers receive constructive feedback on their teaching. A teacher in her second year at the school told the registered inspector, "I have no doubt in my mind I made the right choice of school. It is brilliant to work in; everyone wants to stay here, but it's never stagnant." Retention is as important to the headteacher as recruitment. She reviews responsibilities every year, and endeavours to match subject expertise to subject development. Music and science are very obviously subjects that benefit from specialists at the helm. The headteacher finds creative ways to extend and develop teachers, however experienced they are. In this respect, new statutory requirements for Performance Management are being planned and implemented very well. The targets set with, and for, the deputy head, for example, are not only enhancing his already highly developed skills, but also making a very positive difference to pupils' behaviour and attendance rates. Another teacher, who was clearly ready for promotion, was successfully appointed to a middle management position as a head of year and is already effectively managing the role. She is particularly good at sensitively managing the very specific needs of troubled pupils in an upper junior age group.
25. All heads of units, year groups and subjects, and the special needs co-ordinator, manage their roles competently. They meet frequently to review the success of their plans and teaching methods. They discuss the needs of pupils in turn, and moderate samples of work to check standards are being maintained, and that pupils are meeting their targets. They meet with members of the governing body to explain how they are monitoring children's progress and managing their individual action plans. Communication systems work very well.
26. The perspectives of classroom support assistants, administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors and the school caretaker are equally positive. They are consulted about school policy developments. They feel they can make suggestions when they think change should be considered. Classroom assistants help to plan and review pupils' progress and keep assessment notes to record significant information to share with teachers. Supervisory staff are vigilant in implementing care and welfare procedures, such as playground rules. They have high expectations of pupils for safe and sensible behaviour when out of class and feel that they achieve them. Support staff are adamant that the pupil exclusions that occurred last year, although few in number, were a measure of last resort and in the interests of all children. They are aware of individual children for whom the sanction, combined with praise and encouragement for effort, has turned their behaviour around.
27. Not one member of the staff team was critical of the way they are deployed. All expressed a high degree of job satisfaction. They are all committed to the school's key aims and priorities and clearly doing their best to advance them.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school could now ensure that all lessons match the very good quality of the best and fully inspire and challenge pupils to achieve highly.

28. During the course of the inspection there was much to show why the school had qualified for a short inspection as opposed to a full inspection. There was also convincing evidence of a few things that the school can do to build on its success to enable pupils to gain from learning even more than they already do.
29. There was one example of a teacher making an error in subject matter. It revealed a need to consolidate understanding of Standard English in order not to confuse pupils. This junior classteacher involved pupils in some excellent discussion about metaphors and personification. She enabled pupils to grasp these ideas very well and identify them in samples of poetry and prose. The teacher, however, accepted an inaccurate example of a part of speech from a child without drawing attention to the error.
30. Lesson planning is usually very thorough, but there are times when more thought should be given to pupils' learning styles, as well as to the learning objectives. Teachers work hard to get each lesson off to snappy and enjoyable start by concentrating on oral exchange of ideas and quick recall of prior learning. Now and again, however, in literacy and mathematics lessons, the balance of pupil and adult exchanges is weighted too much towards the teacher. Sometimes, questions and explanations are too hard for all pupils to understand. In these circumstances teachers need to take more account of little indications, such as wriggling and whispering, that point to a lack of pace or over-expectations in their introductions. Greater attention to this would help pupils to sustain concentration and interest. In some mental mathematics activities pupils have too few opportunities to explain working methods. Opportunities are then lost to assess strengths and weaknesses in pupils' calculating skills.
31. Teachers make good relationships with pupils. They note where they sometimes struggle and are keen to resolve difficulties identified in the previous lesson. They usually deploy adult helpers effectively and use stimulating equipment and task sheets. In some lessons it was observed that the teacher does not give sufficient guidance to adult helpers or make the best of opportunities presented to resolve problems, and celebrate success. In Year 2, for example, teachers accurately predicted the need to consolidate and extend pupils' skill in estimating and using metric rulers and tape measures. Pupils were eager to practise but the task sheets for the middle and lower achieving groups failed to stimulate them sufficiently. In one lesson they listened well and completed worksheets by following instructions. They did not, however, receive enough guidance from adults to enable them to discuss and develop their own ideas about how to make realistic estimates. The able groups, on the other hand, worked independently with enthusiasm and skill on paired tasks in which they measured their own body parts. They had no opportunity at the end of the lesson to share what they had found out.
32. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Their methods are almost always positive and never overtly negative. Marking is, however, inconsistent in quality. The best comments praise effort and achievement and are directly related to individual targets and specific skills. The weakest are not clear enough to make sense to pupils. In a Year 2 book, for example, advice to one of the brightest pupils to read what she had written to make sure it made sense was appropriate. A comment to a middle-achieving

girl acknowledged good features well, but made no reference to targets just three pages earlier in the book. These are to spell key words correctly and keep handwriting neat and tidy. The child concerned was not addressing these targets consistently. In the particular example, she copied the title incorrectly, using 'allititive sentences' instead of 'alliterative sentences' and her handwriting was careless. Another lower achieving child in Year 3 continued to make errors related to the use of double consonants and vowels. He spelt 'swimming pool' incorrectly several times over a period of many weeks and clearly needed to be shown where he was going wrong. In Year 4, comments are lacking to encourage lower ability boys to extend the detail in their creative writing. In Year 6, marking was far more constructive and provided a good role model for teachers who require additional support with this skill.

The school could strengthen the improvement objectives in the School Development Plan and involve governors and parents more in evaluating action to achieve them.

33. The school has a good development plan. It emphasises that the school exists to provide an excellent education for all the children. The school's systems for maintaining and developing the quality of the curriculum and supporting teachers' professional development are clearly explained. They are also carefully implemented with all teachers having a role to play in taking plans for action forward. The plan shows how conscious all members of staff are of the need to provide a balanced education covering the social, academic, creative and spiritual dimensions of learning.
34. There are, nevertheless, a few relative weaknesses, either in the plan's objectives or in the way success in achieving them is evaluated. Methods for achieving a rigorous match between some of the set objectives and the rate of pupils' learning are inadequately monitored by staff. The school does not make enough use of information about the performance of boys compared with girls, or about other, smaller, groups of pupils, such as those with English as an additional language or from Traveller family backgrounds. The information arising from the analysis of assessment results could therefore be used even more rigorously. The plan does not explain how governors are involved in monitoring progress with action plans, or in evaluating success in meeting them. Additionally, the way that the school consults with parents to bring about improvement could be better communicated.
35. Results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds show that standards in mathematics are above average, but not as high as in science. The school has identified the parts of the test in which pupils did not perform as well as others. Teachers have rightly decided to concentrate more on pupils' ability to solve mathematical problems and to become more agile in the use of tables. This is very clear in the subject development section of the action plan. Nonetheless, in some of the work examined, and lessons observed, teachers did not consistently ensure that pupils discussed their working methods. Pupils rarely describe how they work co-operatively to check answers involving multiplication.
36. The school's analysis of results in both the infant and junior stages shows that standards in core subjects have improved more than in most schools nationally. The school's tracking systems and forecasts for individual improvement contribute effectively to the school's success in meeting its statutory targets in English and mathematics. The analysis revealed, however, that boys did not perform as well as girls, or as well as boys nationally, in writing tasks. Tests for seven year olds also show that boys, up until 2000, lagged behind girls in reading. At the end of both key stages, as a result of sustained work on extending pupils' understanding of the purposes of

writing, boys' standards in particular have definitely improved. Overall, the standard at the age of eleven is above average now, but spelling is still an issue. The English action plan rightly focuses on raising standards of handwriting and spelling in order to improve pupils' performance compared with similar schools. It omits, however, a clear aim to address younger boys' reading skills. The precise shortcomings in the approach to teaching reading, handwriting and spelling skills are not so explicitly identified. There is not a clear picture either, through teachers' marking, or lesson plans, of the strategies they are using to address and overcome pupils' difficulties. This makes it difficult for governors to know what to look out for in lessons.

37. Overall, the school is good at identifying pupils who have special educational needs. It is increasingly effective in meeting these needs, and in identifying gender issues in teaching and learning. It has improved the performance of more able pupils in mathematics and English. The key thing it has not yet considered is how to use statistical and other information to evaluate the performance of minority groups within the school. These include Travellers, pupils with English as an additional language, late entrants and the reception children who receive only one or two terms in full-time education. Nothing emerged during the inspection to raise concerns about underachievement by any of these groups. Nonetheless, the school was unable to provide information to clearly show the progress made by these pupils from the time they were admitted.
38. When discussions were held with teachers and governors it was clear that training had not yet taken place to develop understanding of education inclusion principles. The school has a sound intuitive approach but could do more to demonstrate how it is critically evaluating the equity of provision. The chair of governors is active in evaluating standards and is particularly aware of how well pupils perform in music, the arts and humanities. He has not yet developed a regular programme of meetings with the headteacher, to help him lead governors towards a better understanding of how to use comparative data really effectively. More regular monitoring of the performance of groups other than year groups and pupils with special educational needs would assist governors to manage their statutory responsibilities to a high standard.
39. Parents are, overall, very supportive of the school and the way in which it is run. The high percentage of questionnaire returns was entirely positive. A significant minority was, however, constructively critical of some aspects of provision. They cite, in particular, the way information is shared about children's progress and the quality of working relationships with parents. In fact, the school does a lot, and indeed more than most, to provide parents with information about academic progress but reporting about pupils' personal development is relatively weak. The real issue, inspectors' decided, is more a matter of a mismatch in communication styles. The school aims to meet parents' aspirations, but plans to sustain and develop the parent partnership are not spelt out. More thorough consultation with parents would help to bridge the gaps in understanding.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. In order to continue to make progress in meeting its aims for excellence the school should now :

1. Build on its good overall quality of teaching by ensuring that in every lesson :
 - A. Teachers check the accuracy of examples of English grammar that they accept from pupils;
 - B. Introductions are timed well and provide pupils with a clear understanding of what they are to learn and how they can achieve their best work;
 - C. Pupils are encouraged to participate in class discussions;
 - D. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to devise and explain their own working methods;
 - E. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress at the end of lessons;
 - F. Teachers make effective use of their marking procedures to help resolve errors or misunderstanding and inspire pupils to try hard.

(paragraphs 28 - 32)

2. Strengthen the improvement objectives in the School Development Plan and involve governors and parents more in evaluating action to achieve them by :
 - A. Making more rigorous use of assessment information to evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils;
 - B. Identifying aspects of teaching that lead to differences in standards of achievement;
 - C. Identifying how pupils can be more involved in evaluating their own progress;
 - D. Consulting with parents to further develop the partnership between home and school.

(paragraphs 33 - 39)

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	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	5	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	40	25	35	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents five percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		543
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		130

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.65
National comparative data	5.20

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.19
National comparative data	0.50

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	41	26	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	40
	Girls	23	24	26
	Total	57	59	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (68)	88 (79)	99 (76)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	40	40
	Girls	23	26	26
	Total	58	66	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (71)	99 (81)	99 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	41	48	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	28	38
	Girls	45	41	47
	Total	69	69	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (70)	78 (75)	96 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	26	32
	Girls	42	44	46
	Total	66	70	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (72)	79 (73)	88 (87)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	4
White	472
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	9	2
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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	23.50
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.40
Average class size	28.65

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	390

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	1013270
Total expenditure	1040352
Expenditure per pupil	1872
Balance brought forward from previous year	29824
Balance carried forward to next year	2742

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.30
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.30
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.40
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.50
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	570
Number of questionnaires returned	258

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	48	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	52	5	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	50	13	3	6
The teaching is good.	48	47	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	46	19	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	41	5	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	41	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	26	52	16	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	48	43	2	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	47	5	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	40	10	4	15

Other issues raised by parents

A total of 27 parents made written comments on their questionnaires, outlining the reasons for their answers.

Other issues raised were concerns over the size of classes in Year 4, regret that school lunches are no longer available and that lunchtime supervision is now more difficult in classrooms than it was in the school hall.

One reception class parent did not complete the questionnaire but wrote at length about how very well the school is catering for her newly admitted child. Several parents wrote to express their appreciation for care arrangements before, and at the end of, the school day.