

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LITTLE CHALFONT COMBINED SCHOOL**

Little Chalfont

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110271

Headteacher: Mrs C Lewis

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn  
15676

Dates of inspection: 8 - 10 May 2001

Inspection number: 196517

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oakington Avenue Little Chalfont Amersham Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP6 6SX
Telephone number:	01494 762109
Fax number:	01494 765210
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Heritage
Date of previous inspection:	15/04/97

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
15676	J G Quinn	Registered inspector
8992	J P T Vischer	Lay inspector
20224	D J Morgan	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

**Full Circle**

The Brow  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

Telephone: 01934 412260

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Little Chalfont Combined is a slightly smaller than average primary school with 224 boys and girls aged between four and 11 years of age on the school roll. Although the school was originally designated to take pupils up until age 12, due to changes in the local authority admissions policy pupils now leave at the end of Year 6 in line with most primary schools nationally. Pupils sit selection examinations for secondary education at age 11. The majority of pupils come from privately owned homes in the immediate area. Few pupils are from families of ethnic minorities but 22 speak English as an additional language which is above average. The main languages spoken in addition to English are Cantonese and Urdu. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs is below average at ten per cent although this has doubled since the last inspection. One pupil has a Statement of Special educational Need. No pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Most pupils have attended local playgroups prior to being admitted to the school's reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they will be five years of age. Attainment on entry is generally above that normally found.

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

This is a very good school, which rightly enjoys the confidence of its parents and the community which it serves. Through a combination of strong purposeful leadership and teaching of high quality the school is effective in achieving well above average standards and provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science and standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. Standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection.
- There is a high proportion of very effective teaching characterised by good planning, high expectations of pupils, and good provision for group work.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. In partnership with the deputy headteacher and other key staff she has created a very positive ethos for learning to which staff, pupils, governors and parents contribute.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and their excellent attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the progress they make.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and their involvement in their children's learning at home and at school make a strong contribution to standards attained.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities enrich the school's curriculum and contribute positively to pupils' personal development.

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

- A consistent approach to individual target-setting across the school which can be used in conjunction with teachers' marking to help pupils develop a clearer view of how they are progressing both in their work and in their personal development.
- Existing arrangements for improving the performance of the highest attaining pupils by developing additional strategies to raise standards further.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and to take increasing responsibility for their work and for their personal and social development as they pass through the school.

The school's strengths strongly outweigh its weaknesses. The areas for improvement will form the basis of an action plan which will be circulated to parents.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection in April 1997 and has been successful in maintaining high standards in national tests even though there have been major changes in teaching staff and leadership. The headteacher, appointed since the school was last inspected, provides a very positive direction to the school's work and the quality of teaching has improved further. The action plan arising from the previous inspection is well constructed and as a result good progress has been made on the key issues identified. The structure and management of the curriculum has improved and is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Resources, management and teaching of information and communication technology have improved resulting in raised standards. There is now a more productive partnership with parents. All statutory requirements with regard to health and safety, teacher appraisal and sex education are now met.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Results were very high and were in the top five per cent of all schools nationally in all three subjects. They were also very high in English compared to similar schools. In mathematics and science results were well above those in similar schools. In all three subjects results have improved over the past five years at a rate similar to that found nationally. Improvement was most marked between 1996 and 1997.

At Key Stage 1, national test results were very high in reading, writing and mathematics and were in line with the top five per cent of schools both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Teacher assessments in science shows standards to be well above average. Although there was a dip in results during 1998, there has been a steady improvement since then, most noticeably in mathematics.

Statutory targets for pupils in Year 6 were appropriate in numeracy but were a little too modest in literacy where they were exceeded by eight per cent. Those for the current Year 6 have been modified in the light of previous testing and realistically reflect the abilities of pupils.

Standards of work seen during inspection broadly correspond to test results for Key Stage 2 but are slightly lower for Key Stage 1 reflecting the school's expectation that pupils currently in Year 2 will not do quite as well as those last year. The majority of children in reception make sound progress in all areas of their work and attain above average standards by the time they begin Year 1.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are excellent and make a strong contribution to the standards attained. They are extremely well motivated and apply themselves conscientiously to the tasks that are set, often working with very good concentration for sustained periods.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Consistently very good throughout the school and a significant strength. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff in this respect.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils relate very well to one another and to the adults with whom they work. They are considerate towards each other and listen respectfully to the views of their classmates in lessons.
Attendance	Excellent. Pupils enjoy school. They arrive punctually and lessons begin promptly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

In 95 per cent of lessons teaching was at least good. In 60 per cent teaching was very good or better and in ten per cent it was excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The very high proportion of effective teaching is the single greatest contributory factor to the high standards attained. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, they plan thoroughly with clear learning objectives for lessons and meet the needs of all pupils well through a variety of methods, including the effective use of additional teaching and support staff. There is room for the highest attaining pupils to be extended still further in mathematics and science. The large majority of pupils are challenged well as a result of the very good teaching they receive and as a result make good progress in their learning.

The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well throughout the school, both within classes and where pupils are supported individually and in small groups.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is planned very well and the range of extra-curricular clubs is a particularly strong feature which enhances that provided during the school day and contributes significantly to pupils' personal development.
Provision for pupils with	Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and as a

special educational needs	result they make good progress towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils whose first language is other than English take a full part in all lessons and make similar progress to that of their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall but opportunities for pupils to take initiative and to increase personal and social responsibility as they pass through the school are underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.

The active interest and involvement of parents in their children's work at home and at school contribute strongly to pupils' 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 overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and works closely with the deputy headteacher to give a strong and purposeful direction to the work of the school. She has created an effective ethos with a strong commitment to maintaining and raising standards, which is widely shared by staff, pupils, governors and parents.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their functions well. They support the school strongly and have successfully steered the school through a period of significant change.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school regularly evaluates the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve the standards of provision further. Staff identify targets for individual pupils but this is not consistently applied throughout the school and has yet to influence the way in which staff respond to pupils' work in their marking.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of its resources and has been imaginative in its use of additional staff and teaching space to reduce the size of large classes. This has a positive effect on learning and on the progress that pupils make.

## 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>• Their children like school.</li><li>• Children make good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour of pupils is good.</li><li>• Their children are taught well.</li><li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li><li>• Management and leadership are good.</li><li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework.</li><li>• The information which they receive about their children's progress.</li><li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li></ul>

Inspection findings endorse the very positive views of parents but do not support the areas which they would like to see improved. The amount of homework is appropriate for the ages of the pupils. Expectations which are clearly laid down in the governors' leaflet for parents - *Working at Home* - are based on government guidelines. Parents receive regular good quality information on their children's progress and the range of extra-curricular activities is now a strong aspect of the school's provision.

Many parents speak highly of the improvements which have been made to the school since the last inspection.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science and standards of attainment are well above average at Year 6. Standards in information technology have improved considerably since the last inspection.**

#### *English*

1. There is a culture of courteous and attentive listening throughout the school which contributes very effectively to the way in which pupils express themselves and listen to the views of others. For example, children in reception listen carefully during whole-class sessions and respond eloquently and with a good vocabulary in discussion; this was evident during a literacy session where they were sharing a large book about snails. They volunteered ideas readily when asked about how a snail felt to the touch. Pupils build well on the skills they have learnt earlier throughout Key Stage 1 and reach above average standards in all aspects of English by age seven. Pupils express themselves clearly in class discussions and explain quite complex ideas lucidly as in a history lesson in Year 1 where pupils were comparing beaches today with those of 100 years ago. At Key Stage 2 pupils discuss their work confidently and explain methods of working thoughtfully, often using technical terms correctly and with good understanding as in science and English lessons in Years 3 and 6. Pupils relate stories clearly and expressively as in Year 5 where a small group contributed to work on a class adventure story.
2. Throughout the school pupils read regularly to adults and this has a marked effect on the good progress that they make in their reading. Reception pupils share books with adults and use their knowledge of letter sounds to read simple words and phrases. In Year 2 pupils read with increasing confidence and expression. They predict events in their stories and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Pupils begin to read more widely at Key Stage 2 and use their skills to gather information from reference materials to support topic work.
3. Pupils' grasp of the technical aspects of written work such as punctuation, handwriting and spelling is very good indeed and contributes strongly to the quality of written work overall. Children take care with their writing. They begin to form letters correctly from an early age and can copy beneath the writing of an adult and some begin to write independently. Handwriting is very good throughout the school. It is well formed and joined at Key Stage 1, which reflects the strong emphasis that the school places upon its development. Spelling of simple and some more complex words is good in Year 2 and pupils begin to incorporate a wider variety of punctuation into their writing. Written work is of a high standard at Key Stage 2. Pupils write in an increasing range of forms, such as letters, poetry and narrative. They also write widely in connection with other subjects for example science and history. Spelling and the use of paragraphs, expressive language and sophisticated punctuation are very good but handwriting suffers where pupils are expected to work at speed and under pressure.

#### *Mathematics*

4. Pupils' ability to work with numbers confidently and competently, contributes very well to the standards they achieve in the subject. Also pupils are regularly asked to explain their methods of calculation to their classmates. The fact that so many are able to do

this thoughtfully, confidently and accurately is a clear indication that they understand what they are doing. In reception, pupils progress from simple colour matching and number matching activities, to sequencing and writing numbers to ten or 20, eventually attempting simple addition and subtraction sums successfully. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils develop their computational skills and their understanding further. In Year 1 they calculate mentally how to compile different numbers and enjoy the challenge that this provides. Pupils in Year 2 identify shapes by various attributes and take part enthusiastically in a related game which demands much of their concentration and skill. They have a sophisticated understanding of the properties of shapes and can name 'nonagons' and 'dodecagons' correctly. Pupils employ their skills of recording and representing information well in science.

5. Pupils at Key Stage 2 increase their understanding significantly. In Year 3, pupils are adept at working out, mentally, hypothetical purchases using different coinage and many can explain the methods they use. Higher attaining pupils calculate percentages on larger amounts and begin to work out discounts on purchases which challenges their thinking well. Pupils in Year 4 understand inverse operations and use their knowledge effectively to calculate missing numbers. In Year 5 work on proper and improper fractions extends most pupils well. Work reaches a particularly high standard in Year 6, where, for example, in preparation for imminent national tests pupils explore the relationship between a graph and changes in an equation. Pupils apply the skills they have acquired to other subjects such as science and history.

### *Science*

6. A significant feature of science throughout the school is the attention given to investigational work, particularly at Key Stage 2 and the way in which skills of literacy and numeracy are used to plan experiments and to measure and record results. For example, in reception children are encouraged to observe closely and comment in relation to natural objects and creatures such as snails and tadpoles. At Key Stage 1 pupils begin to develop a systematic approach to their investigations with the help of an adult. They carry this forward into Key Stage 2 and develop it further. By the age of 11 pupils' understanding of what makes a test 'fair' is well developed. They select from a range of materials and equipment and decide in small groups how these should be used.

### *Information and communication technology*

7. The use of information and communication technology has improved considerably since the previous inspection when teaching did not meet statutory requirements. All aspects of the subject are now taught regularly and some aspects, such as controlling devices and events by entering instructions and the use of graphic software, feature strongly.
8. Improvements in standards have arisen as the result of greatly improved resources, very good leadership by the deputy headteacher as subject co-ordinator, and the commitment of staff. The school now has an information and communication technology suite and the co-ordinator has improved staff confidence by monitoring, supporting and demonstrating the use of resources. Planning for further development of the subject is very thorough.

**There is a high proportion of very effective teaching characterised by good planning, high expectations of pupils, and good provision for group work.**

9. The quality of teaching was at least good in 95 per cent of lessons and in 60 per cent it was very good and occasionally excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The consistently effective teaching is the strongest contributory factor to high standards.
10. The strongest feature of teaching common to the majority of lessons was teachers' high expectations of pupils. These arose from teachers' consistently good and occasionally very good subject knowledge. It was particularly evident, for example where the literacy co-ordinator was working with a group of higher attaining Year 3 pupils on the use of adverbs to make writing more interesting and where the design and technology co-ordinator worked with Year 4 pupils designing torches for a specific purpose. High expectations were apparent in teachers' skilfully probing questions in all classes and the way in which they planned to meet the needs of different ability groups. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses and often built on these very well to ask supplementary questions which deepen pupils' understanding further, or prompt them to clarify their thinking. In an excellent mathematics lessons with Year 6, for example, the class teacher was particularly adept at building on pupils' knowledge through questioning to extend their understanding to a high level on the relationship between algebraic equations and a parabolic curve. This positive feature to teaching was clearly apparent from reception through to Year 6 and made a very significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
11. Throughout the school teachers prepare and plan very well by identifying precise learning objectives which they share with pupils as 'targets' for the lessons. They then revisit these at the end of the lesson to assess how far objectives have been met. This reflects the work that the school has recently undertaken on identifying and communicating learning intentions. Targets are expressed in a way that is most relevant to the ages of the pupils. For example in Year 1 each written objective on the whiteboard is preceded by *'Today, we are getting better at...'* Teachers ensure that additional teachers and support assistants are aware of the objectives when they are working with small groups and often provide helpful notes to guide their work. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and there is a sufficient variety in approach to sustain pupils' interest. In a Year 2 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils enjoyed the class teacher's frequent good-humoured exhortations to respond *'quick as a flash!'*
12. Although some classes are large the school is enterprising in its use of additional teaching space, of teachers available and of learning support staff to reduce the size of teaching groups in order to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. This makes a strong contribution to the individual attention that pupils receive and the progress that they make in their learning. It was particularly effective, for example, in a very good English lesson in Year 5. Here the teacher had planned that a particular ability group should be helped by a learning support assistant in the production of part of a story in pictorial form, to be shared with the whole class. The support assistant provided very good guidance and encouraged pupils to contribute well through her lively and animated approach. As a result, their presentation to the rest of the class was marked by confident and expressive narration. Similarly in a Year 6 science lesson the learning support assistant was used very effectively in order to divide a large class into smaller teaching groups. The assistant worked closely to the lesson planned by the class teacher and provided a very productive session on *Forces*.

**The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. In partnership with the deputy headteacher and other key staff she has created a very positive ethos for learning to which staff, pupils, governors and parents contribute.**

13. The school's mission statement - *Bringing out the best in us all* - is clearly evident in all aspects of its work and makes a strong contribution to high standards. Although the ethos of the school was good at the time of the last inspection the quality of leadership has improved significantly. Under the headteacher's clear direction the school's key functions of teaching and learning are given paramount importance. She has successfully built an effective team of professionals and earned the confidence of staff by teaching regularly herself, consulting them on important decisions and supporting them well in difficult situations. The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher, who is also proactive in developing the school and has been responsible for major initiatives. For example, he has introduced the arrangement whereby teachers in Years 5 and 6 teach their classes for two continuous years, thereby building a more complete picture of pupils' strengths and areas where they might need additional help, prior to embarking on their secondary education.
14. Staff, parents and governors identify strongly with the school's values and have a clear sense of what it means to be part of Little Chalfont School community. Pupils also are aware of the part they play and understand the school's expectations that they will always do their best. The school's effectiveness is clearly reflected in the quality of relationships, the high emphasis placed on supporting learning and maintaining high standards and a strong sense of common purpose.
15. Although standards are high, the school is not complacent about its achievements. This is evident in the high expectations expressed by the headteacher which percolate throughout the school. Through her regular teaching commitment and her ubiquitous monitoring presence the headteacher knows the pupils and the school well. This places her in a strong position to determine what needs to be done to improve the school further and to decide priorities for the school development plan in conjunction with staff and governors. She checks the quality of teaching regularly and has provided feedback to all staff on what works well and what needs to be improved in their lessons. Common areas for development have been identified and have been discussed as part of staff training. As a result, the setting of lesson objectives and teachers' questioning skills have improved. Together with the deputy headteacher she evaluates carefully pupils' academic performance in statutory and non-statutory tests and plans how their performance might improve further.
16. Although the school places considerable importance on academic achievement and prepares pupils very thoroughly for National Curriculum tests at ages seven and 11, the headteacher is keen to support pupils' accomplishments in a range of activities and even their particular successes in out-of-school pursuits are celebrated. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, which increases pupils' opportunities to excel further. Parents value the way in which they are encouraged to be involved in their children's schooling in a greater spirit of partnership than previously and appreciate that the school actively seeks their views and opinions. Although many governors are new to their roles, they support the school strongly and, as a body, has steered the school successfully through a period of considerable change since the last inspection.

**Pupils' behaviour is very good and their excellent attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the progress they make.**

17. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at other times around the school. During lunch and break times they play amicably together and disagreements are few. Lunchtime in the school dining hall involves large numbers of pupils but is an orderly occasion.
18. Pupils respond very well indeed to the stimulating and challenging teaching they receive in classes and in small groups. They are sensible in carrying out responsibilities and discuss their work politely with one another and with adults when the situation arises. In all classes pupils are highly motivated and are determined to do their best.
19. Pupils pay close attention during the introductory sessions to lessons and respond eagerly to teachers' questions. There is a climate of respectful, interested listening throughout the school, which reflects the example set by teaching and support staff. They listen carefully to pupils' ideas and pupils express themselves confidently as a result, secure in the knowledge that they will be listened to and that their views are valued. This sends a strong and positive message to pupils and influences the way in they behave towards others.
20. Pupils apply themselves conscientiously to the tasks they are set and seldom allow themselves to be diverted. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson pupils maintained concentration very well whilst they sat together at the beginning of the lesson and responded eagerly to the class teacher's very positive and thoughtfully challenging questions. In Year 2 pupils rose well to the gentle teasing of the class teacher - *'This is strictly for whizz kids; I'm not sure you can do it!'* - they settled to work enthusiastically, anxious to prove the teacher wrong. Pupils co-operate sensibly with one another when required to do so. In science lessons in Years 3 and 6, for example pupils discussed how they would carry out investigations using resources available, to investigate the strengths of different magnets and methods for insulating against heat loss.
21. Pupils' excellent behaviour and their interest and good concentration in lessons contribute significantly to the school's success.

**Parents have very positive views of the school and their involvement in their children's learning at home and at school makes a strong contribution to standards attained.**

22. Fifty nine per cent of the questionnaires distributed were completed in response to the parent survey prior to the inspection. Overall the responses were very positive. Parents have particular confidence in the important aspects of teaching, leadership and management, pupils' progress, behaviour, and the school's expectations that pupils will work hard. Those areas which parents would most like to see improved further - the amount of homework, the information which they receive on their children's progress and the range of activities provided - were not supported by evidence available during inspection. The expectations for homework are clearly set out in the school governors' leaflet *'Working at Home'*. Parents receive regular information on their children's progress. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and trips to supplement the curriculum.

23. Parents appreciate that they are now kept better informed than was the case at the time of the last inspection and as a result are in a better position to support their children with their schoolwork. Several welcome the efforts the school makes to provide curriculum evenings in order to enable parents to better understand the school's work. Many express approval of the changes that have taken place since the previous inspection and acknowledge that the school has improved in many respects. Several speak highly of the headteacher and appreciate her high profile presence within the school. In the words of one parent '*...she seems to be everywhere!*'
24. Parents are keen for their children to succeed and share the school's high expectations for pupils to do well. Some are concerned at the inordinate pressure upon their children in preparation for National Curriculum and secondary school selection tests. There is unquestionably pressure for concentrated periods, but this does not detract significantly from other aspects of pupils' education.
25. Many parents take an active interest in the work their children are asked to do at home and a considerable number help in school regularly in a variety of ways. The school welcomes the assistance that they are able to provide in such aspects as reading, cookery, needlework and games. In these areas teachers plan and direct their work. In this way, parents not only provide invaluable assistance but also gain a useful insight into the workings of the school, which enables them to improve the support they give. Still other parents provide a dance club during lunch breaks in preparation for the school's summer fair. The hardworking members of the school association provide a range of events throughout the year. These are well supported and raise considerable amounts of money to support their children's education.

**There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which enriches the school's curriculum and contributes positively to pupils' personal development.**

26. There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities to enhance that which pupils learn in class and which provide opportunities for pupils to excel in a variety of ways. This is in keeping with the school's mission statement to develop the full potential of all.
27. The school has been resourceful in drawing upon expertise within the community, including parents, to supplement clubs provided by staff. As a consequence many pupils enjoy the opportunities to compete and co-operate in physical activities, such as football provided by members of a local football team, short tennis, country dancing under the supervision of staff and a dancing club provided by parents. In addition there are clubs which encourage the development of skills in art, chess, gardening and computing as well as opportunities for pupils to learn to speak French and Spanish.
28. In addition there are regular educational visits to places of interest to support topics undertaken in class. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are currently looking forward to a residential visit to another part of the country. This will form the basis for a geographical study and also provide important opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills associated with living together as a group, self-reliance, consideration and co-operation.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

**A consistent approach to individual target-setting across the school which can be used in conjunction with teachers' marking to help pupils develop a clearer view of how they are progressing both in their work and in their personal development.**

29. Targets for lessons are shared with pupils well, in a form that they clearly understand thereby providing a clear focus for learning. The school has taken this further by developing personal targets for individual pupils based on the careful tracking of their progress. As a result there is good practice in several classes but there is not a consistent approach across the school. For example, in Year 2 pupils have small booklets in which they record their mathematical targets well and the progress that they make towards achieving them by colouring in 'smiley faces'. After they have successfully met the objective on five subsequent occasions the target is changed. In other classes targets appear in the back of exercise books and the methods of recording success are different. There are written targets for some subjects, but not for others, and no way of assessing important related personal skills and attributes such as co-operation, independence and the use of initiative. In Year 6, pupils set their own literacy targets based on statutory test practice papers. Targets for mathematics are short term and for science there are unwritten objectives. Many pupils understand their targets clearly and appreciate their significance. This was evident in a mathematics lesson in Year 3 where the class teacher referred to individual objectives for particular pupils, associated with calculating denominations of money. As a result pupils were clear about what they were expected to achieve and set to work enthusiastically. However, the school has no policy for marking pupils' work, which incorporates in permanent form, regular feedback to pupils on their success in achieving their individual objectives.

**Existing arrangements for improving the performance of the highest attaining pupils by developing additional strategies to raise standards further in mathematics and science.**

30. The school gives high priority to providing for pupils of all abilities and has identified in its development plan, the need to extend the highest attaining pupils. Teachers plan work for different groups of pupils in many lessons and, where pupils are supported by additional teachers or by support assistants, the quality of their learning is often good. Higher attaining pupils succeed especially well in reading and writing at Key Stage 2, for example, where they receive particularly effective teaching from the English co-ordinator whose good subject knowledge contributes to challenging work. As a result the highest attaining pupils in Year 6 understand different poetic forms such as limerick, sonnet and haiku. They incorporate personification, figurative language, simile and metaphor into their writing to good effect, with a clear understanding of any differences that exist. Pupils write broadly for a variety of purposes with a good awareness of audience and often a sophisticated style that captures the attention and sustains the interest of the reader. This was so, for example, in letters written in defence of hares and in narratives based on Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalot*. Pupils' writing is often well structured with spelling and punctuation of a high standard.
31. Pupils are often presented with demanding work in mathematics, and in many lessons the material is challenging. This was clearly evident for example in very good and excellent numeracy lessons in Years 5 and 6 where the content was planned well to extend most pupils. Similarly, where two high achieving pupils in Year 3 were set

separate work, they had to think hard about the application of percentages to large amounts of money and were particularly challenged when calculating discounts on products. However, there is insufficient regularly planned opportunity across the school for the most gifted and talented pupils to broaden their thinking and so reach the very high levels of which they are capable. Occasionally, adherence to the published scheme means that pupils are expected to work on more advanced work intended for older pupils rather than applying their knowledge broadly to practical situations and problems. Also the expectations of the secondary school, to which most pupils transfer at age 11, emphasise the importance of computation and so time and opportunity for the highest attaining pupils to deepen their thinking by working independently on a range of complex tasks and open-ended problems are limited.

32. Similarly the content of work in science challenges most pupils well and a very high proportion achieve above average standards. This was clearly apparent in the two lessons observed and in the evidence of pupils' past work. Pupils have a very good understanding of the areas which they study and the attention which is given to investigative science, particularly at Key Stage 2, features strongly. However the opportunities for the most able pupils to broaden their understanding and to deepen their knowledge further through independent work which involves identifying and pursuing their own lines of enquiry are underdeveloped.

**Opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and to take increasing responsibility for their work and for their personal and social development as they pass through the school.**

33. Pupils take responsibility well when given the opportunity to do so and most carry out daily tasks and chores willingly. Pupils in Year 6 have a range of responsibilities across the school which they fulfil on a rota basis. For example, during two assemblies, older pupils were responsible for organisational arrangements and assembling the audio and visual equipment that was needed. Younger pupils take responsibility for tasks to facilitate daily class routines where they act as 'class helpers'. These all promote pupils' personal development effectively but are not planned systematically to provide opportunities for pupils to question and make increasingly important decisions and choices as they progress through the school, about their work and about their role as members of the school community. For example, the range of practical tasks which involve solving real mathematical problems are too limited. Also pupils at Key Stage 1 do not readily turn towards dictionaries to assist them in their writing, even though they are capable of doing so and the dictionaries are available to them.
34. As pupils become more mature and sensible so their ability to use their initiative and take responsibility increases commensurately. Through their very good behaviour and excellent attitudes to school pupils have the capacity to become resourceful, independent learners with the potential to contribute significantly to the work of the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

35. The governors, headteacher and staff should address the following:

- (1) Develop a consistent approach to individual target-setting across the school, which can be used in conjunction with teachers' marking, to help pupils develop a clearer view of how they are progressing both in their work and in their personal development. *(see paragraph 29)*
- (2) Build on existing arrangements for improving the performance of the highest attaining pupils by developing additional strategies to raise standards further. *(see paragraphs 30 - 32)*
- (3) Plan opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and to take greater responsibility for their work and for their personal and social development, as they pass through the school. *(see paragraph 33 and 34)*

## 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	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	50	35	5	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

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	224
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	18	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	32	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	100 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	15	14	13
	Total	33	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	97 (97)	94 (100)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	33	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (94)	91 (92)	100 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	32	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (94)	97 (94)	100 (92)
	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	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	2
White	188
Any other minority ethnic group	8

*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	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.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	32

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	373,953
Total expenditure	439,186
Expenditure per pupil	1,846
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,137
Balance carried forward to next year	9,884

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	136

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	38	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	47	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	10	1	2
The teaching is good.	60	39	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	49	10	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	31	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	21	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	51	7	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	35	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	35	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	49	9	1	5

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents at the meeting held prior to the inspection expressed the view that the school pressurised pupils too much and gave inordinate attention to preparation for National Curriculum tests.