

INSPECTION REPORT

HURLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hurley, Nr Atherstone

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125515

Headteacher: Mr G J Morgans

Reporting inspector: Mr M H Cole
3369

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th March 2002

Inspection number: 198091

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Heanley Lane
Hurley
Nr Atherstone
Warwickshire

Postcode: CV9 2HY

Telephone number: 01827 872207

Fax number: 01827 872207

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Neaves

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
3369	Mr M H Cole	Registered inspector
12289	Ms S Burgess	Lay inspector
18537	Mrs S Derrick	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset TA8 1AN

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33 Kingsway
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
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	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small infant/junior school of 156 boys and girls aged four to eleven. The school currently has seven classes; they are mostly small by national standards, with an average size of 22. Pupils start at the school in the September preceding their fifth birthday, almost all having transferred from an independent nursery situated on the school site. A very small number of pupils is of minority ethnic background but none need help to use English. The school mainly serves the former mining village of Hurley but some parents bring children from further afield. Pupils represent a wide range of social backgrounds. Overall, though, the social and economic circumstances of parents are average. This is illustrated by the average proportion of pupils (15.4 per cent) which is eligible for free school meals. Pupils' attainment when they enter the school also varies widely, and fluctuates from year to year, but is usually average overall. Twenty-nine per cent of pupils, an above average proportion, have been identified as having special educational needs. Two of these pupils, an average proportion by national standards, have a statement of special educational needs. The school has a new headteacher who began at the school nine weeks before the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Pupils generally achieve well in their work and they show good personal gains in attitude and maturity. This is made possible through good teaching and the dedication of school staff. The school is led and managed well and it represents good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and within the Foundation Stage¹ curriculum.
- Pupils develop very positive attitudes to school and good provision for their moral and social development helps them to become very mature and responsible and to behave very well.
- Teaching is of good quality.
- A good range and quality of opportunities for learning are provided within and beyond lessons.
- Parents are pleased with the school, have good links with it and support it well.
- The school is well led and managed.

What could be improved

The school has no significant weaknesses but standards could be further raised and the quality of education further improved in relation to:

- precision in assessment of younger pupils' progress in reading and its use to plan teaching of specific skills to individual pupils;
- the use of day-to-day assessments of individual pupils' progress to set short-term targets for their next steps in learning;
- provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

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

¹ Foundation Stage: education before Year 1. In this school this applies to the reception class.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since it was inspected in October 1997 the school has shown satisfactory improvement. Because year groups are small and the profile of ability varies considerably from year to year there are corresponding fluctuations in the oldest pupils' test results in English, mathematics and science. The long-term picture, though, is of improved standards of work since the previous inspection. Standards of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, which were previously judged to be good, are now very good. The good quality of teaching in Years 3 - 6 has been maintained while teaching in the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes has improved from the previous satisfactory quality to become good. Whereas ten per cent of lessons at the previous inspection were judged unsatisfactory none were so judged at this inspection.

The previous inspection identified three areas of particular weakness: teaching of reading; precision in lesson planning and organisation of teaching in Years 1 and 2. The school has made a number of changes to the teaching of reading leading to some improvement in standards, especially for more able pupils. The standard of reading is satisfactory but some further improvement in teaching of young less able readers is desirable. Lesson planning has improved so that objectives for learning are now clear and firmly linked to the National Curriculum. Reorganisation of Years 1 and 2 into separate classes has effectively answered the concern expressed at the previous inspection. The school continues to be well led and managed and it shows a willingness to evaluate itself and seek improvement. The capacity for further improvement is therefore good.

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			
	all schools			similar schools*
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	B	C	D
mathematics	A	A	B	A
science	A	C	C	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

* Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

Care is necessary in interpreting the English result for 2001. The group taking the test included more than twice as many boys as girls and nationally girls do better than boys in this subject. Only eight girls, an unreliably small number, took the tests. Whereas boys' results were as good as the previous year, the small group of girls achieved an average result well below those for recent years. Lessons and samples of present Year 6 pupils' work seen during the inspection pointed to good achievement in English and science and especially in mathematics. Comparisons between pupils' attainment in these subjects at age eleven with their earlier attainment and test results show most pupils making at least the progress expected and a significant minority doing better than this. These observations are consistent with the pattern in most recent test results for the school to perform better than similar

schools. The 2001 test results in mathematics exceeded the target the school had agreed with the local authority but in English two pupils fell short of the targeted level of attainment.

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests of reading, writing and mathematics for pupils aged seven, they achieved average results in reading and mathematics and above-average results in writing. Results in writing were also better than in similar schools. Several pupils scored highly in these tests but this was balanced by a small number of low scores for pupils with a high level of special educational needs. Work seen during the inspection supported the overall picture of standards provided by the test results.

Throughout the school, work sampled in information and communication technology was above the national standard. Lessons in other subjects throughout the school showed pupils generally achieving well. Pupils in the reception class were making good progress and a significant number are likely, by the end of the year, to exceed the early learning goals officially defined for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils come keenly to school and are interested in school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave sensibly without the need for close supervision.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are significant gains in pupils' maturity, independence and ability to take responsibility for their work and behaviour.
Attendance	Good. The rate of attendance is above the national average.

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 in all parts of the school shows all-round strength. Teachers use their good knowledge of subjects to plan precisely, explain clearly and question pupils well. They set high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils respond with effort and concentration. These qualities are especially evident in lessons in mathematics and information and communication technology. English is often well taught but teaching of reading lacks some precision in matching work to individuals' progress. Pupils are well managed so that they take a responsible attitude to their work and behave well. There is generally a good pace to their learning. Teaching provides well for the range of pupils' abilities and needs. Pupils who experience difficulty or have special educational needs benefit from extra help from teachers and the effective work of support staff. In the spring term, all Year 6 pupils, working in small groups, receive weekly after-school 'booster' sessions in English and mathematics. All teachers contribute to these.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes good provision for personal, social and health education. A good range of well-supported optional activities outside lessons valuably extends learning opportunities. Many educational visits and visitors, together with links with business organisations, enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their work is guided by well-designed individual education plans. Support staff designated for this work give conscientious and effective help.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, thorough and effective provisions are made for moral and social development; provisions for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' health, safety and welfare. There are strengths in management of behaviour and assessing pupils' progress.

The school's good relationships and close partnership with parents enhance provision for the care of pupils. Parents support the school well and raise substantial funds to improve resources for teaching and learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has quickly made some valuable improvements and gained a clear picture of the school's performance. The school shows a clear sense of direction and purpose and a good commitment to improvement. Staff members are very hardworking and undertake aspects of management delegated to them well. Senior management give strong support to the teaching and promote staff development and training to good effect.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil responsibilities well and are actively concerned for the school. They have good knowledge of the work of the school and they support evaluation of its performance and planning for improvement well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. A range of checks on teaching and learning, together with thorough assessments of pupils' progress, is well used to identify school strengths and areas for improvement. All staff make a good contribution to these processes.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial planning is carefully considered and adopts principles of 'best value' in endeavouring to make maximum use of funds to benefit pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Almost all parents say that their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like school • make good progress • behave well at school • become more mature and responsible <p>and, that the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is well led and managed • provides good teaching • expects pupils to work hard • works closely with parents and is approachable • provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority of parents does not think pupils get the right amount of homework and a few parents are entirely satisfied with homework • A small minority would like more information about pupils' progress

Inspectors' observations support all of parents' positive views. Inspectors consider the school's homework policy to be generally satisfactory and examples of good practice were seen during the inspection in the case of the oldest pupils. A few parents attending the pre-inspection meeting expressed concern with irregular setting of homework rather than the amount. Inspectors consider written reports on pupils' progress to be satisfactory and note that parents say the school is approachable and responsive if parents choose to ask for more information.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve well in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and within the Foundation Stage curriculum.

1. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in **mathematics**. As a result, in most recent years they have achieved above average results in National Curriculum tests in the subject at ages seven and eleven. At age eleven their results look even better when compared with those for similar schools. Test results have risen since the previous inspection.
2. Results were not as good in the 2001 tests for both seven- and eleven-year-olds as in the previous two years. Results fluctuate from year-to-year reflecting significant differences in the composition of year groups. They arise because year groups are relatively small and the school takes in pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and with very varied abilities. In some year groups a high level of special educational needs amongst some pupils and the ratio of boys to girls affect results.
3. By the age of eleven the great majority of pupils have sound mathematical understanding which they can apply to solve practical problems. Their knowledge of multiplication tables is generally sound and they know when to use them. A strength of their understanding is their ability to use a range of strategies to solve problems. More able pupils have an impressive ability to see strategies for quick mental calculation. One Year 6 pupil, for example, was very quick to respond to the teacher's quick-fire question '90 per cent of 140?' and to then explain her method of subtracting ten per cent from the number.
4. Standards are good in mathematics because the teaching is good and because provision for the subject is led by an energetic and effective subject co-ordinator. Teachers have been given good guidance and support and they have benefited from a substantial amount of recent training. This has made for lively, confident teaching that sets high expectations for what pupils can achieve. The determination and commitment of the teachers is also seen in the after-school booster-group teaching of Year 6 pupils in the spring term.
5. Pupils develop good factual knowledge in **science** which they express using correct technical terms. The oldest pupils also show some good understanding when, for example, they explain the parts played by seed dispersal and pollination in the reproduction of plants, or when they explain how to separate a mixture of sand and water. When asked to evaluate a hypothetical investigation they show a good understanding of the need to control variables to make a scientific test fair. They can use this understanding to design a suitable test to solve a scientific problem. In the 2001 National Curriculum test in science pupils aged eleven achieved results above the average for similar schools. Teachers' own formal assessments for pupils aged seven in 2001 placed them above the national standard, a view supported by inspection observations. The one science lesson seen during the inspection showed high expectations of pupils' ability to acquire new knowledge and understanding. Pupils' past written work shows them to have successfully undertaken a good deal of challenging investigative work. Such approaches help to explain the good achievement pupils demonstrate in the subject.

6. In **information and communication technology (ICT)** there have been many very effective developments in recent years. Taking advantage of national funding for the subject, but also adding to it, the school has established excellent resources for the teaching. A computer suite enables pairs of pupils to share a computer in lessons dedicated to the subject. Teaching is much aided by an interactive whiteboard² bought with funds raised by parents. This is well used by teachers to demonstrate skills and procedures which pupils can then try out for themselves at the desktop computers. There are also two computers in each classroom. By the time they leave the school almost all pupils are very confident and knowledgeable users of computers and related equipment such as a digital camera and apparatus for sensing temperature that is used to generate graphs. They know how to use a wide range of programs effectively to suit a variety of purposes. They show considerable independence in gaining access to the Internet and searching for sources of information or images they require. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils worked in pairs to construct their own websites about favourite animals. They had already constructed attractive 'home pages' and a series of 'hyperlinks' to further web pages. These incorporated text they had wordprocessed from information researched via the Internet with pictures, photographs and sound effects. Teachers and pupils alike show enthusiasm for the subject. This is seen in the large numbers who, after lessons, attend two computer clubs, one for younger and one for older pupils. Every lunchtime a limited number of pupils is given a pass allowing them to work in the computer suite on their own, an opportunity fully taken up. The excellent, well-organised and well-used resources, very good teaching and pupils' enthusiasm are leading to good achievement, with a good many examples of pupils working above the level of attainment expected for their age.
7. During the inspection, reception class children at the **Foundation Stage** were seen achieving well in various aspects of their work, including basic skills of language and numbers. The most able read and spell familiar words and are beginning to use them in writing simple sentences. Others copy writing legibly and then read what they have written. The children are developing good knowledge of letter sounds and numbers. They are enthusiastic learners who are attentive to their activities and progressing well in response to the teachers' high expectations.

Pupils develop very positive attitudes to school and good provision for their moral and social development helps them to become very mature and responsible and to behave very well.

8. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lives and work at school. Children in the reception class show that they have quickly come to enjoy learning and to feel secure and valued at school. Throughout the school pupils attend well, and many stay after school or give up lunchtimes to take part in clubs and optional activities outside lessons. In Year 6 during the spring term every pupil agrees to stay for an extra forty-five minutes after school on two days each week for additional small group teaching so that they can achieve as well as possible in English and mathematics before leaving the school. In discussion with an inspector, Year 6 pupils spoke of their regret at the prospect of soon leaving the school and talked warmly about how caring, helpful and hardworking they found school staff to be. Pupils were seen taking interest in their lessons and often working with enthusiasm and an endeavour to do their best. Through house points and commendations at a weekly school assembly pupils are systematically encouraged to work and behave well. The school promotes pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem

² A large touch-sensitive screen on which images are displayed by a projector linked to a computer, as an alternative to a conventional monitor. By touching the screen, teacher or pupils can control events instead of using a keyboard or mouse.

well.

9. The school provides well for pupils' moral and social development. Every parent completing the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps pupils become mature and responsible. By involving pupils in agreeing school and classroom rules the school effectively encourages them to think about the reasons for rules so that they learn to be responsible in their actions. The new headteacher has introduced a school council and a prefect system. These have been welcomed by pupils and parents and are a valuable addition to processes for encouraging pupils to think responsibly about their contribution to the life of the school community and to act accordingly. Pupils' understanding of right and wrong is enhanced by the firm expectations of behaviour set by school staff and effectively reinforced with rewards. The clear example of care and consideration consistently shown by the headteacher and all school staff is also very effective in showing pupils how to behave. Opportunities for pupils to show they can behave responsibly are also an effective part of the provision for social development. For example, pupils are given the opportunity to show they can be trusted at lunchtime to use the expensively equipped computer suite unsupervised. Those seen so doing during the inspection were behaving entirely responsibly. Charitable activity and a link with a school in The Gambia help pupils to be aware of their responsibilities within the wider world.
10. All of these effective measures taken by the school lead to the very good behaviour shown by pupils. In lessons they listen to teachers, get on with their work and follow instructions co-operatively. When working in pairs or small groups, often sharing apparatus, they do so harmoniously. Behaviour in assemblies and in the dining hall is very good and pupils move about the school in orderly fashion. No misbehaviour was evident within the school building during the inspection. In the playground pupils almost always behave well. Very occasional incidents here are effectively managed by staff.
11. The very positive attitudes and very good behaviour the school promotes make for a relaxed but orderly and purposeful environment in which pupils are able to progress well in their academic and personal development.

Teaching is of good quality.

12. During the inspection the majority of lessons observed by inspectors were well taught and a significant minority showed very good teaching. None was unsatisfactory. Evidence from examination of teachers' planning and pupils' exercise books support the view from lessons that teaching is of good quality. Teachers are conscientious and hardworking. These characteristics are seen in their thorough planning of lessons, careful marking of pupils' work and systematic setting of homework, especially for older pupils.
13. Teachers' planning of lessons shows a sure sense of the exact learning they intend to promote and the objective for learning is generally stated to pupils, encouraging them in a mature and responsible attitude to their learning. Teachers do not often, however, ask pupils to say how successfully they feel objectives have been achieved when lessons end. In ICT though, pupils are invited to assess their own skills from time to time. Marking of work often gives encouragement through remarks and the awarding of house points. Sometimes the marking also gives pupils clear pointers on how to improve their performance. Some good practice in these terms was particularly evident in Year 4. Conscientious marking means that teachers have a sound appreciation of pupils' progress which they then use to design tasks well suited to the range of pupils' abilities and needs. The work planned is suitably challenging and expectations of what pupils can

achieve are commendably high in the reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6. The school has established a register of its most able pupils and those with talents in particular areas, as a basis for checks that their progress is as good as it should be.

14. Teachers' good planning, the clear explanations they provide and their careful questioning of pupils all reflect their good knowledge of the subjects they teach. The good teaching and the good achievement of pupils, in mathematics and ICT particularly, reflect teachers' expertise in these subjects, both of which have benefited from the substantial training in which teachers have participated in recent years. The school makes effective use of particular teachers' expertise in certain subjects. In Years 3 - 6, teaching in art and design, design and technology, ICT and music is undertaken largely by teachers specialising in these subjects. Examples of very good teaching of art and design, ICT and music were seen during the inspection. All teachers, however, are involved in supporting teaching of ICT by incorporating computer work in their teaching of most subjects of the curriculum. Teaching of ICT often benefits from the effective work of a member of support staff who is skilled in the subject and always deployed to assist in the computer suite.
15. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods including direct teaching of the whole class and independent, individual written and practical tasks. When appropriate, pupils are given opportunities to work in pairs or small groups, as when they compose and perform music. Whole-class teaching is usually well done and many lessons get off to a brisk, lively start in this way. When pupils are set to work independently they generally respond well, concentrating on their work and making progress. Occasionally, though, the pace of learning slackens for some pupils in this situation because the work is not sufficiently stimulating or challenging, targets for pupils to achieve are not made sufficiently clear or there is some confusion about what to do.
16. Teaching in a good many lessons benefits from the effective work of support staff. Often they are deployed to give close support to individuals or small groups of pupils with special educational needs, generally in the classroom but sometimes outside. This makes it possible for these pupils to be fully included in the opportunities to learn given to pupils generally. Work for pupils with special educational needs is usually well guided by the detailed individual education plans written for these pupils. The effectiveness of the support given to pupils who find learning difficult and the good progress they make, are evident in the fact that by the time they leave the school most achieve the level of attainment expected for their age in most subjects. Those who have emotional or behavioural difficulty are also well supported and make good progress. The school strives to ensure all pupils, whatever their background, ability or needs are fully included in opportunities to learn and to develop personally.
17. The attitudes and behaviour of all pupils are well managed throughout the school, as pupils' very good standards in these respects show. A particular strength of teaching in the reception class is the successful promotion of pupils' independence, interest, enthusiasm and attention to activities.

A good range and quality of opportunities for learning are provided within and beyond lessons.

18. The school provides a broad and well-balanced curriculum to comply with the

requirements of the National Curriculum, with national guidance on the Foundation Stage and with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Detailed planning of the curriculum makes good use of national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is effectively supported by links made across the curriculum so that basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy are practised and consolidated in work in a range of subjects. A history lesson seen, for example, succeeded not only in teaching pupils about an aspect of World War Two but also provided very good opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills. Similarly work in science, geography, ICT and mathematics sometimes shows mutually beneficial links with each other.

19. The legally required curriculum is supplemented by a number of valuable features. A substantial programme of personal, social and health education is provided. With the help of a commercially produced scheme of work, regular lessons help pupils practise skills of negotiation and decision-making and to begin to understand concepts such as citizenship and democracy. This work effectively complements the school's good provision for social development and the activities of the school council.
20. Learning opportunities are further enriched by a good range of good quality activities outside lessons. These include several sports (with opportunities to play in inter-school competition), computers, chess, recorders and cycling proficiency. Parents may also pay a small fee for their children to attend a Before and After School Club. The proportion of parents completing the questionnaire who expressed satisfaction with the activities provided is a good deal higher than in most schools. Pupils also benefit from many opportunities to make educational visits, for example to museums, historic buildings and a pantomime, while each year pupils in Year 6 take part in a residential visit where they can try out a range of activities. There is also a good number of visitors to the school who enhance learning opportunities. They include artists, theatre groups, musicians and 'the animal man'. The new headteacher has introduced good links with the local Education Business Partnership and plans are in place to use these to support development in technological aspects of the curriculum. At the time of the inspection the school was preparing to take pupils to visit the Land Rover testing centre.

Parents are pleased with the school, have good links with it and support it well.

21. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting and/or completing the questionnaire showed that the school is well regarded by parents. Parents see the school staff as hardworking, caring, approachable and responsive to their concerns. Almost all of those completing the questionnaire gave positive responses to almost every question. The question about homework attracted the greatest level of discontent, from 18 per cent of parents, but this represents a lower level of concern than that usually found in inspection questionnaires.
22. The good relationships between school and parents and the parents' keen support are seen in the good level of funds they raise to support the school. Their donations allowed the purchase of the interactive whiteboard which is proving very beneficial in the teaching of ICT. They have more recently donated £3750 for redevelopment of the library. Parents have also helped to redecorate the school and improve the grounds. Currently twelve parents help on three or more mornings each week to hear pupils read.

The school is well led and managed.

23. Good leadership of the school is seen in its clear sense of direction and purpose and in the commitment and energy of its team of staff. Good management is evident in the

thorough approach to keeping a check on the school's performance, evaluating strengths and relative weaknesses and in commitment to improvement.

24. The school was seen to be well led and managed at the previous inspection. Under its acting headteacher last term and its new headteacher this term the positive picture of leadership and management has been maintained. In a very short time the new headteacher has introduced a number of valuable changes, for example the school council and the prefect system, which pupils and some of their parents have welcomed, and links with the business world to enrich the curriculum. Pupils and some parents also comment on the more effective management of pupils' minor misdemeanours and upsets. The headteacher gives visible and clear support to the school's atmosphere of positive relationships between staff and pupils, caring concern for pupils and promotion of good standards. He has also, in a short time, carried out substantial checks on lessons and on teachers' planning and analysed the school's test results, to arrive at a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and of areas where improvement should be sought.
25. In his checks on the school's performance the headteacher is building on the school's existing strength in evaluating its own performance. Almost all teachers have responsibility for leading and managing one or more areas of the school's work and they fulfil these responsibilities well. There is a shared willingness to examine practices critically and look for improvement. Every subject co-ordinator prepares a termly review of work in their subject, highlighting strengths and weaknesses. Some reviews are impressively detailed and trenchant in identifying relative weaknesses that need to be tackled. The school makes good use of standard tests and other assessment procedures to find where learning is most and least effective and then to plan action to promote improvement. These supplement checks on planning, lessons and sampling of pupils' work as means for evaluating teaching and learning. By such means staff training needs are identified. Teaching in the school is well supported with training appropriate to individuals' and school needs, with both teaching and support staff involved.
26. Governors, too, join in this concern to keep a check on how well the school is doing and to plan improvement. They are actively concerned for the school, well organised and closely in touch with staff. Governors are well informed about the work of the school and aware of how well it is performing. They are effective in taking a long-term strategic view of the school and its financial position.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Precision in assessment of younger pupils' progress in reading, and its use to plan teaching of specific skills to individual pupils.

27. At the previous inspection the school was recommended to improve strategies for the teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2 and to broaden the range of reading material throughout the school. Since then a good deal has changed. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy which has led to more focused teaching of skills in phonics (the relationships between sound and letters or combinations of letters) and to regular lessons where the teacher works intensively on reading with small groups of pupils. Parents have also been recruited to work with selected individual pupils who need more practice (see paragraph 22). Extra book resources have been acquired, with account taken of the need to provide books that appeal to boys. Further development of book resources is also planned to take place soon with redevelopment of the library.

28. Following the previous inspection the results of pupils aged seven in National Curriculum reading tests rose sharply in 1998 and again in 1999. However, in the last two years results have dipped to a level similar to that in 1998. Some of these fluctuations reflect variations in the profile of ability, the level of special educational needs and the mix of boys and girls from year-to-year. In 2001 the group of seven-year-olds taking the national reading tests included more than twice as many boys as girls. This is significant, as nationally girls do much better in reading than boys. In addition, the small group of girls taking the tests included some very able pupils, while the boys included several with significant special educational needs in relation to learning difficulties.
29. Taking all of these factors into account, pupils' attainments in reading throughout the school are satisfactory. However, the school's own assessments of pupils' long-term progress show that progress in reading is not as good as in writing, mathematics or science. The school has rightly identified reading as an area where further improvement should be sought.
30. Inspectors find that while pupils' long-term progress is systematically measured their day-to-day progress in reading is not assessed with sufficient precision. Nor does assessment adequately diagnose pupils' difficulties as a basis for planning teaching that focuses intensively on individuals' needs. Resources other than books for reinforcing early reading skills are also in short supply.
31. The involvement of parents in hearing some pupils read each morning in the school is a commendable innovation which both expresses and reinforces the school's good partnership with parents. During the inspection parents were seen helping pupils conscientiously and establishing a good rapport with them that helped to build pupils' self-esteem and a positive attitude to reading. Parents were helpful to young pupils in encouraging them to use pictures in their books and context to work out unfamiliar words. However, although parents have been given some guidance on hearing pupils read, they are not able to diagnose specific difficulties pupils may experience, for example in phonics skills, or to respond with appropriate teaching. Parents briefly record what pupils have read but there are not sufficient written or oral means for communication with class teachers whereby specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' reading can be identified.
32. The school's response to its concern with early progress in reading has been, essentially, to give more time to hearing pupils read but this has not resulted in teaching that is sufficiently focused on individual pupils' specific needs.

The use of day-to-day assessments of individual pupils' progress to set short-term targets for their next steps in learning.

33. Teachers frequently start lessons by sharing with pupils their intentions for what pupils are to learn. This builds on and further develops pupils' responsible attitudes to their learning. This is also true of the way teachers agree with pupils a target for progress in the forthcoming year, which is recorded in the annual written reports to parents. A start has also been made to reminding pupils of subject-specific targets in literacy which are pasted in the front of older pupils' exercise books. These targets are general rather than specific to individuals and they are expressed in abstract language. As such, they have limited value in reminding pupils of specific practical things they can do, day in day out, in

order to make progress. At present the best guidance pupils get is when teachers occasionally give specific pointers to next steps in progress when they mark pupils' work.

34. The new headteacher agrees with inspectors that teaching and learning would benefit from linking assessments of short-term progress more precisely with clear, specific, individual targets to challenge pupils and give incentives.

Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
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35. Present provisions for pupils' spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory but they are not as thorough or effective as provisions for moral or social development. There are occasions in assemblies, in lessons, during educational visits or through the input of visits, when spiritual and cultural development are effectively promoted but these aspects of the school's work are less well planned than other aspects. As a result some opportunities for spiritual or cultural development are missed. These forms of development are incidental rather than a regular aspect of the school's work. During the inspection, for example, pupils in a science lesson dissected daffodils as part of their learning about processes of plant reproduction. Although they were effectively encouraged to appreciate scientific aspects of the work, an opportunity was missed to encourage pupils to experience wonder at the intricacies of the natural world. In religious education, a good deal of work is done on the variety of religious faiths but opportunities to exploit this fully in support of spiritual development through visits to places of worship, or through meeting adherents of faiths other than Christianity, are not taken. Sometimes pupils encounter representations of cultures other than their own which they may then appreciate and understand, but it is not a frequent or routine feature of their education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 1) Assess younger pupils' progress in reading more precisely and use the findings to plan teaching that is more accurately focused on the specific skills individual pupils' need to develop.
 - Use assessment procedures that provide for diagnosis of the nature of pupils' difficulties.
 - Plan teaching that precisely tackles individual pupils' specific difficulties.
 - Ensure that all resources necessary to teach the full range of skills are available.
 - Ensure that all who are involved with reading, including support staff and volunteers, are given opportunities to contribute to these developments.

(Paragraphs 27-32)

- 2) Improve the use of day-to-day assessments of individual pupils' progress to set short-term targets for their next steps in learning.
 - As far as is manageable, make targets
 - individual
 - short-term
 - specific
 - realistic
 - Express targets in simple language and check that pupils understand and remember them.
 - Give pupils frequent feedback on their progress towards their targets and refer to them when marking pupils' work.
 - Help parents to become aware of their children's targets so they may support the process of encouraging and rewarding their children.

(Paragraphs 33-34)

- 3) Provide more thoroughly for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
 - Raise the awareness of school staff about the full range of ways in which pupils can be helped to:
 - have knowledge and insight into values and beliefs
 - reflect on life's fundamental questions
 - appreciate their own cultural traditions
 - be aware of the diversity and richness of other cultures within and beyond their own society.
 - Require subject co-ordinators to identify ways in which development may be promoted within work in their subjects and to ensure any necessary resources are available.
 - Include reference to provisions in teachers' weekly planning.
 - For activities and displays beyond the work of the National Curriculum and/or outside of lessons, plan a programme for the whole school for each term.
 - Monitor the provision and evaluate its effectiveness.

(Paragraph 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	8	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	40	32	28	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 four 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)	N/A	156
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	46

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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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
	2001	15	7	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (84)	91 (89)	91 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (84)	91 (100)	95 (100)
	National	84 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

*Boys' and girls' results are not shown separately as the number of girls was too small to be significant.

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
	2001	18	8	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (89)	92 (93)	96 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (82)	88 (89)	92 (89)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

**Boys' and girls' results are not shown separately as the number of girls was too small to be significant.*

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	136
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	22.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	106

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	379,396
Total expenditure	340,665
Expenditure per pupil	1,969
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,025
Balance carried forward to the next year	55,756

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	156
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	36	7	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	55	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	9	70	16	2	2
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	45	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	39	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	55	36	0	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	55	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	39	7	0	2