

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ROGER de CLARE FIRST SCHOOL AND  
NURSERY**

Puckeridge

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117406

Headteacher: Mrs S Rousell

Reporting inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 198509

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Road Puckeridge Ware Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG11 1TF
Telephone number:	01920 821363
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Roger de Clare First School and Nursery
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Backham
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Roger de Clare School is a C of E. Voluntary Controlled Nursery and First School which educates boys and girls aged from four to nine years of age. There are currently 193 pupils on roll, 92 boys and 101 girls. At the time of the inspection, 23 boys and 18 girls attended part-time. This is smaller than most schools of the same type. There are no pupils using English as an additional language and the majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin. Forty-three pupils are on the special educational needs register (22 per cent). Two pupils have statements of special educational need (one per cent). Both these are broadly average. This represents a significant decrease since the last inspection. In the last school year, 25 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 18 left other than at the usual time of transfer. This is high. Thirteen pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals (6.7 per cent). This is well below average. When they enter the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are average for their age.

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

Roger de Clare School is a very good and very effective school, where pupils at seven and nine years of age reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are consistently above and well above average. Standards achieved in English are particularly high. These high overall standards are achieved by the high quality teaching across the school and the very good leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body. Recent changes in leadership have been managed very well. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve standards in Year 2 and Year 4 that are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science because the school has high expectations of them. Standards of writing in Year 2 in 2001 were among the top five per cent of schools nationally.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and governing body ensures that there is no complacency in the school which is continually seeking further improvement.
- The very good teaching across the school, the effective contribution of teaching assistants and the thorough assessment and target setting procedures are important reasons why pupils learn very well.
- The very good curriculum and provision for children in the Foundation Stage give them a very good start to their time at school.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the relationships across the school are now very good and they support the good standards that pupils achieve.

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

- The standards achieved in information and communication technology across the school are not high enough because the pupils do not have consistent access to appropriate hardware and software.
- The roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators of subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are not sufficiently developed.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in November 1997, it has made very good improvement. The key issues for action that were identified have been addressed very well. The standards achieved in physical education at Key Stage 2 have been improved and the needs of the more able pupils across the school are now met well. The school has made very good progress in improving the standard of pupils' courtesy to all adults. This is now recognised as an important strength of the school. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The proportion of very good teaching has been increased and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Also since the last inspection, the standards pupils attain have been improved. Standards in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 had been above average. Now they are well above average. There has also been very good improvement in English in Key Stage 2 and good improvement in standards in mathematics and science. Leadership and management have further improved. Now they are very good. This has been achieved in spite of changes in senior management including the uncertainties caused by periods of absence caused by the ill health of the previous headteacher. These improvements have been achieved as a result of well targeted in-service training for staff, systematic monitoring of teaching and sharper assessment and target setting procedures. Taking into consideration the quality of the headteacher's leadership and the support provided by the governing body, the effective teaching and good curriculum management, the school is very well placed for these improvements to be continued.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
reading	B	B	A	A	well above A average above B average C below average D well below E average
writing	A	A	A*	A*	
mathematics	A	A	A	A	

The table shows that in 2001, standards achieved in Year 2 were well above the average of all and similar schools. In writing, standards were exceptionally high, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Teacher assessments in science were also well above average. The findings of this inspection are that the current Year 2 pupils are achieving standards that are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics and science. This is in line with the school's own target setting. By the end of Year 4, pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. This represents good improvement since the 1997 inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve good standards compared with their previous attainment. Across the school, pupils achieve well. Most make good progress as they move through the school. In all aspects of English, the achievement of children in the Foundation Stage and across the school is very good. However, there is some underachievement in information and communication technology, particularly at Key Stage 2. The school is aware of this and has already embarked on an ambitious development programme.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and they enjoy their lessons. They take a delight in their own and others' learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are consistently polite and friendly to visitors and other adults. They listen attentively and show impressive respect for all in the school community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are eager to please and undertake their several duties cheerfully and reliably.
Attendance	Good. The rate of attendance is above the national average.

Pupils are keen to come to school. The way the school promotes pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development enables its aims and ethos to be very well implemented and significantly influences the high standards that pupils achieve.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching and pupils' learning across the school is very good. During the inspection, teaching in 45 per cent of lessons seen was very good and in 80 per cent it was good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Strengths in teaching were seen across all year groups, but the strongest teaching was in the Foundation Stage where all the teaching was very good, and in Years 1 and 2, where nearly nine out of ten lessons were at least good. The teaching of English, including literacy, is very good and the teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is good. This good provision contributes significantly to the high standards achieved across the school. The main strength in teaching which has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning is the effective way that pupils are managed. Teachers understand clearly what they want the pupils to do and to learn, and this is shared with the pupils. Pupils are treated firmly but fairly and are encouraged to learn in a sense of fun and expectancy. As a result, pupils are well motivated, are keen to do their best. Other strengths in teaching are the detailed individual lesson plans, the careful use of questioning that develops and extends all pupils' understanding, and the interesting and challenging range of activities that are provided. The very good assessment procedures enable teachers to track the progress made by individual pupils and ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, are fully met. The way that teachers and support assistants work well together and create a positive working environment is a further strength of the school. There are few weaknesses in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. One is the lack of consistent access to appropriate hardware and software which limits the quality of pupils' learning in information and communication technology. A further minor weakness is where opportunities are missed in science to develop further and extend pupils' writing and recording skills by the overuse of photocopiable worksheets.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum are good and meet the needs of all pupils well. The school provides a wide range of in-school and extracurricular activities which enhance pupils' all-round development. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good. At the time of the inspection, provision of hardware and software for information and communication technology limited the effectiveness of curricular provision. However, new resources are due to arrive imminently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' individual learning plans are clear with appropriately challenging learning targets. A strength in provision is the good level of support provided by teachers and support assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school's caring, inclusive ethos and the opportunities provided for pupils' initiative and personal responsibility encourage pupils' moral and social development very well. Spiritual awareness is developed well through times of prayer and reflection, and pupils are made aware of the impact of a range of different cultures on our own society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has effective procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. The management of pupils' behaviour and the monitoring of their personal development are very good. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' work and setting achievement targets are also very good. These ensure that the school is always seeking for improvements.

The school works very successfully with its parents and the local community. Parents have a very positive view of the school and the effectiveness of the new headteacher. The work of the parent helpers in the classroom and the support provided by the very active School Association positively influence the school's ethos, the good quality of pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	In her work as acting headteacher and since her recent permanent appointment, the headteacher's leadership of the school has been very good. She has provided both continuity and challenge for both staff and pupils during a time of changing leadership. She is well supported by other senior teachers. A significant strength of the school is the vision and commitment to improve shared by the whole staff team. The good leadership exercised by co-ordinators of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology has not been sufficiently extended to include other curricular areas.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body supports the leadership and management of the school very well. Through the work of the full body and its several active committees, governors gain a very clear view of the school's effectiveness. They review the work of the school development plan rigorously and have instituted a very comprehensive procedure for monitoring teaching and curriculum development in the school. Governors are continually seeking ways of increasing their own effectiveness. All statutory requirements are met well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's very good assessment and pupil tracking procedures provide a clear view of the progress pupils are making and measure the effectiveness of teaching. The good application of performance management procedures has brought coherence to the whole school development process. The headteacher and the governing body monitor and evaluate the school's work rigorously and ensure that there is no complacency.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's developmental priorities are carefully costed. The carry forward in the budget is slightly above recommended levels, but has been earmarked for spending in information and communication technology and for the planned extension to the administrative area. The school ensures that it gets value for money when resources are purchased or when building maintenance or improvements are carried out.

The effective partnership between the headteacher and the governing body, and the rigour with which they undertake their responsibilities are major reasons for the success of this school.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils achieve good standards, especially in writing.</li> <li>• The school is very caring.</li> <li>• Behaviour is very good.</li> <li>• The provision of homework is appropriate for each child's age.</li> <li>• This is an open school where parents are welcomed.</li> <li>• Teaching assistants are valued and are effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection's findings fully support the parents' positive views of the school, but not the single area of concern. The school provides a good range of additional curricular and extra-curricular activities. However, most of the latter are available only for pupils in Years 3 and 4.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Pupils achieve standards in Year 2 and Year 4 that are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science because the school has high expectations of them. Standards of writing in Year 2 in 2001 were among the top five per cent of schools nationally.**

1. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, pupils achieved standards in reading and writing that were well above average in all and similar schools. Standards in writing were in the highest five per cent in the country. Thirty three per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Standards in mathematics and the teacher assessments in science were above average. Since 1996, standards have been consistently above and well above average. The rate of improvement in reading and writing has been above that expected nationally. The judgement of this inspection is that standards in reading and writing are well above average. Standards in mathematics and science are above average. These judgements are slightly lower than the 2001 tests results but are in line with the school's own assessments of the current Year 2 group. Since the last inspection, standards achieved in Year 4 have improved significantly. In 1997, standards were judged to have been average in all three subjects. Now they are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Most children enter the school attaining standards that are in line with those expected nationally and most achieve very well in their language work and make good progress in other areas. By the time they leave the school, most are achieving standards that are above and well above average.

2. Across the school, pupils achieve high standards in all aspects of English. The quality of pupils' writing is outstanding. This has been achieved and maintained by a clear, planned focus on the development of writing skills across the school. Staff have undertaken useful in-service training, including encouraging the further development of boys' writing skills. The school's work now ensures that the needs of pupils of all abilities and both genders are met well. Several features in a writing lesson to Year 2 pupils clearly illustrate why the school's approach is so successful. The focus of the lesson, 'Rainforest Adventure' provided an interesting extension to pupils' topic work. Clear objectives were planned and shared with the pupils. In the lesson, pupils were encouraged to be more adventurous and expressive in their use of vocabulary, to write interesting whole sentences and to use a simple dictionary to attempt their own spellings. Good use was made of the teaching assistant who ensured that all pupils were continually challenged and their learning reinforced. Pupils were keen to do their best and, as a result of the lesson, they made good progress in their appreciation and use of words. Their stories were vibrant and interesting.

3. Pupils also make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. This is also achieved by the careful targeting and development of skills across the school. Several pupils enter the school with poorly developed speaking and listening skills. The school has recognised this and has introduced planned opportunities for speaking and listening. All classes begin the day with a useful time when pupils can sit in a circle and talk about what concerns or interests them. There are good opportunities in class discussion, which are carefully managed by teachers, for pupils to ask questions or to make comments. Pupils have opportunity of speaking in a wide range of contexts. For example, in an assembly during the inspection, several younger pupils recited confidently in character in front of the whole school with obvious enthusiasm and pleasure. Standards achieved in reading across the school are also very good. Classes have separate guided reading times. These provide good opportunity for the development of word recognition and sentence construction skills. Reading texts are appropriately challenging and have been chosen to ensure boys' interest. In Year 4, pupils are reading very challenging texts such as *The Lord of the Rings*, with understanding and enjoyment. They read widely and use skills such as skimming and prediction to enhance their appreciation of books.

4. In mathematics, in Years 2 and 4, pupils have a good understanding of number for their age. Pupils in Year 2 deal confidently with numbers up to 100 and use their knowledge of number bonds up to 20 in addition and subtraction problems. They have opportunity of investigating number patterns as they devise magic squares and consider the sequence of number doubles up to 100. The progress made by the Year 2 group in the autumn term has been limited slightly by a change of teacher but there is evidence that pupils are making significantly better progress since the beginning of the current term. In Year 4, pupils extend their understanding of number to numbers up to 1000 and beyond and confidently apply written methods of addition and subtraction. Work on brackets in computations and the use of negative numbers in temperature scales extends some pupils' understanding into levels well above those expected for their age. Pupils collect and interrogate data gathered from different sources; for example, the frequency of different types of weather and the favourite crisp flavours of pupils in the class. Across the school, pupils are encouraged well to apply their investigative skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils investigate the number patterns in magic squares and in hundred squares. In Year 4, pupils investigate frequency data based on information about the number of sunny days in a week and the number of pupils receiving school meals.

5. In science, in Year 2, pupils are made aware of the importance of scientific procedures as they discuss, 'What a scientist does'. They are encouraged to investigate wherever possible. For example, they consider how cooking changes the composition of certain vegetables and they investigate and record how mustard seeds germinate and grow under different conditions. This work demonstrates how pupils are being encouraged to make predictions, observe closely and record findings accurately. These skills are developed and consolidated in Years 3 and 4. In Year 4, pupils have developed a secure procedure for undertaking their investigations as they analyse and record experimental work, such as discovering what happens when different materials come into contact with heat. They record their predictions, methods used, results and conclusions. They show good awareness of fair testing and develop a good appreciation of the different variables affecting their investigations. Good use is made of data handling skills as, for example, they use a thermometer to measure the temperature of different parts of the school and record the effect of exercise on the heart rate. A minor shortcoming in provision is the occasional over use of photocopiable resource sheets, particularly at Key Stage 1, which limits pupils' opportunity to extend writing and reporting skills.

**The very good leadership of the headteacher and governing body ensures that there is no complacency in the school which is continually seeking further improvement.**

6. The headteacher's management of the school is very good. The skill she has shown in securing the commitment and confidence of parents and staff and in her ability to meet successfully the challenge of the different roles and responsibilities she has assumed in the school, as class teacher, deputy headteacher, acting headteacher and now headteacher, is impressive. These features have been a major reason why the school has been moved purposefully forward during a recent time of potential difficulty and significant change in leadership and why the standards and clear ethos of the school have been maintained and strengthened.

7. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure the commitment of the full staff team. Teaching staff are well informed of school events through regular whole school staff meetings and staff meet regularly to review the effectiveness of teaching. This ensures that successful practice is shared and any problems are dealt with promptly. Regular meetings are also held with teaching assistants and midday supervisory assistants. These are appreciated and have ensured that all staff feel valued and are aware of their contribution to the whole work of the school. The school's application for an Investors in People Award is an indication of the positive way in which the whole staff team is viewed. The senior teachers, who are acting deputy headteachers, give good support to the headteacher.

8. The school development plan is detailed and relevant and is clearly at the heart of its work. It contains a useful evaluation of the school's previous work and makes helpful reference to the

school's overall aims and ethos. Detailed reference is made to developments in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology with extensions to cover the next three years. This is evidence of the fact that there is no complacency in the school, which is continually seeking to be even better. A further strength of the management of the school is the way in which the new performance management procedures are now an integral part of the school's work. There is a clear link between targets set for the headteacher, individual teachers and the priorities in the school development plan. A regular programme of monitoring teaching and learning is done by the headteacher. This provides good evidence for the effectiveness of this aspect of the school's work.

9. The governors' support for the management of the school is very good. This is another significant reason for the smooth change in leadership, despite the challenges posed during the last two years. Governors are well informed about the school and the headteacher's regular written reports ensure that progress through the school development plan can be carefully monitored and evaluated. The several committees are active and, through their work, governors have a very good understanding of the school's development. Governors have a clear view of standards achieved in the school and the results of the setting of pupils' targets. There is a high level of commitment by the chair, vice-chair and individual governors who bring a good range of professional skills and expertise to the governors' work. Procedures for inducting new governors are good. Governors too are not complacent. They are continuing to seek for more effective ways of supporting and challenging the school. An example of this is the way in which they have considered and tried out different methods of monitoring teaching and curriculum development. The most recent approach is very thorough. A clear policy has been agreed, individual governors and their link school co-ordinators are identified and an ambitious timetable for liaison, discussing planning, lesson observation and reporting is defined. A further example of the governors' commitment to constructive change is that, during the previous year, they commissioned an external review of their work and have responded positively to developmental recommendations which were made.

**The very good teaching across the school, the effective contribution of teaching assistants and the thorough assessment and target setting procedures which are followed are important reasons why pupils learn very well.**

10. Across the school, pupils learn well because of the high quality of teaching they receive. In the lessons seen during the inspection, nearly half were very good and eight out of ten were good or better. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when 11 per cent of teaching was very good or better and five per cent was unsatisfactory. This improvement has been achieved through targeted school in-service training and by the clear and rigorous monitoring programme of the headteacher. There is an established programme of observations of teachers each term and the results of these are used to identify weaknesses and develop strengths. The process of improvement is also supported well through the regular team meetings which are held. Features of effective teaching are the very positive way in which pupils are managed and the use of detailed lesson planning in which clear learning objectives are identified. Teachers now provide activities that are well matched to the abilities of all pupils. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. As a result of these positive features, pupils are clear about teachers' expectations, they all feel valued and accepted, and they develop a sense of fun and expectancy. These all help to increase their motivation and commitment and improve their capacity to learn. A science lesson to pupils in Year 4, where the processes of evaporation and condensation were being investigated, illustrates several further reasons why the teaching is so effective. The teacher demonstrated very good, confident subject knowledge as she explained the relevant physical processes. She maintained a very good relationship with her class through a combination of enthusiasm and good humour and she made good reference to the safety issues around boiling water. As a result, pupils were enthralled by the lesson and were amazed when they discovered that the whole process was cyclical.

11. The effectiveness of teaching is also enhanced by the quality of curricular planning and assessment procedures. There is a clear, overall curriculum plan and subjects follow detailed termly and half-termly plans. The quality of the daily lesson planning is very good. Assessment procedures are thorough and are an important reason why high standards are improving further. The school analyses the results of the test carried out on entry to the school and uses this as a baseline on which to track the progress that pupils make. Assessments of pupils' attainment are carried out termly during 'assessment weeks' and individual attainment targets are set for pupils in English, mathematics and science. In order to ensure that these are appropriately challenging, they are reviewed twice during the year. Work, which is assessed to National Curriculum criteria within the school, is compared with that from other local schools. This is enabling teachers to gain a good understanding of the match between pupils' work and the National Curriculum levels. Evidence of the success of this is the very high proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in the 2001 Key Stage 1 tests.

12. A further reason why pupils of all abilities learn well is through the effective support provided by the teaching assistants. Their work is highly valued by the school and they are well involved in all aspects of its work. They are fully committed members of the whole school staff team. Several have undertaken recent, relevant training. For example, one has gained a National Vocational Qualification certificate and another a certificate in Speech and Language Development. They are well prepared and well organised. Their teaching assistants' files helpfully contain their job descriptions, the behaviour policy and statement on bullying, staff handbook and relevant learning programmes for pupils with special educational needs. They relate to pupils well. One teaching assistant supporting a Year 2 mathematics group used her whiteboard effectively, encouraged pupils with challenging questions and supported individuals sensitively as they made up number problems relating to animals in the Rain Forest. Teaching assistants carry out useful assessments on individual pupils during each activity and these notes and other verbal comments are passed on effectively to the class teacher at the end of the lesson.

**The very good curriculum and provision for children in the Foundation Stage give them a very good start to their time at school.**

13. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. When they enter the school, most children are attaining standards that are average for their age. The quality of provision enables them to make good overall progress in the Foundation Stage, and several make very good progress in the speaking and listening skills. There is good liaison and co-operation between Nursery and Reception staff. The two Reception classes are taught together in an open-plan area, enabling children and staff to move freely between the two areas. The curriculum provided in both the Nursery and the Reception classes is very good. It is appropriately related to the recommended areas of learning and provides rich experiences and challenging opportunities for the children. A language session where the two Reception classes were working together illustrated several features which demonstrated this very good provision. A very good range of challenging activities was prepared and children were guided in the choices made about which to do. A teacher worked with a group which was programming a robotic toy to move to letter square that displayed an 'm'. Other children were gathering information from books in the reading corner, while another group was confidently using the tape recorder and the computer. Others were finger painting the letter 'm' to create 'messy monsters'; others were writing letters in sand and undertaking free writing in the 'Reception Office'. Overall, this created a very effective learning environment where children extended their confidence and expertise in using language very well. All the teaching observed in the Foundation Stage was very good. Every opportunity is found to reinforce and develop children's skills. For example, the Nursery children count confidently to 30 with their teacher as they line up for playtime and are encouraged to take part in a role-play activity in 'Cinderella's House'. Support staff are used well and an important strength in provision is in the good range of high quality equipment available for the children to use.

14. A physical education lesson in the Reception Year, where children were devising and practising sequences of movement, illustrated several features of very good teaching. The

teacher's management of the children was very good. They were treated kindly but firmly, with much praise and encouragement. As a result, they felt safe and secure and ready to try new things. They warmed up with appropriate twisting and shaking activities and were able to build up interesting sequences of movements on small floor mats involving jumps, rolls and balances. Children of all abilities were encouraged to participate at their own level and, as a result, all were challenged well and felt a pride in what they had achieved. These children had a high level of enjoyment in this successful lesson.

**Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the relationships across the school are now very good and they support the good standards that pupils achieve.**

15. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They settle to work quickly, enjoy their lessons and they are keen to do well. Across the school, pupils are encouraged well to value and appreciate others' work. Both teachers and support assistants clearly and consistently promote this. For example, during the summing up at the end of a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils were sharing their descriptions of incidents based on the Jungle Book story and, as individuals finished sharing what they had done, everyone spontaneously clapped each contribution. The contributors glowed with pride. Pupils concentrate well in their lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and other adults, try their best in activities and work well with others when required. For example, Year 1 pupils helped and supported each other well as they drew around each other to provide examples of hands, feet, heads and legs, for their scientific investigation.

16. Pupils' behaviour is now very good. They settle very quickly to their work and as they change groups. This ensures that no lesson time is lost and encourages effective learning. They handle resources sensibly and work co-operatively when required. Pupils' behaviour in a science lesson where the teacher was using boiling water and their response to her health and safety warnings were very good. In this area, the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection, when the behaviour of a minority of pupils significantly affected the learning of others. The key issue related to this weakness has been addressed very well. The very good improvement has been achieved through the introduction of an agreed set of 'Golden Rules' which are reviewed annually with the pupils. The school does not now rely only on external rules. The expectations of teachers and other adults in the school are clearly promoted, understood and accepted by the pupils. The high staff morale and the shared vision for the school provide a consistent message for the pupils and are a very good role model for the promotion of positive attitudes and behaviour.

17. The school promotes and monitors pupils' personal development well. All classes begin the day with a planned and structured opportunity for pupils to sit in a circle and talk about worries or achievements in an open and sensitive manner. Individual responsibility is encouraged through assemblies, such as one during the inspection which emphasised the theme 'valuing each other'. Pupils are keen to take responsibility. They take registers to the school office and older pupils act as lunchtime and corridor monitors. They take these roles and responsibilities seriously. An effective buddy system operates across the school and this provides good pastoral support. The school has a very good system, based on a local education authority model, for recording and monitoring pupils' personal development.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The standards achieved in information and communication technology across the school are not high enough because the pupils do not have consistent access to appropriate hardware and software.**

18. Across the school, pupils attain average standards in information and communication technology. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Although the school has made satisfactory progress, progress made in this subject has been less than that in English, mathematics and science. When they leave the school, pupils are not achieving high enough standards. Currently, planning follows a format recommended by the local education authority with additions based on the nationally recommended scheme of work. Much of the work in Years 1 and 2 is done through topics. While this helpfully reinforces cross-curricular links, it does not sufficiently emphasise the importance of teaching specific concepts progressively to all pupils.

19. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they have developed sound word processing skills. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 write poems for their book on 'My Alien' using capital letters and appropriate punctuation and print them. Pupils also program a robotic toy to move forwards and complete a 90-degree turn. In Years 3 and 4, pupils combine pictures and text in their Haiku poems and draw graphs to illustrate the favourite pets of pupils in the class. Some pupils used the Internet to discover information about the local area and used a drawing program to plot squares and rectangles.

20. The most significant weakness in current provision was clearly illustrated in a lesson to Year 3/4 pupils. Pupils were introduced well and enthusiastically to databases. They understood terms such as field, key words and drop down menus. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge as she showed pupils how to add data about themselves to a computer database. However, because of the current lack of appropriate computers, only one pupil had immediate access to a computer to practise and reinforce the skills that they had just learnt. A teaching assistant supervised a rota of pupils while the rest of the class was involved in further class-based work on databases. Thus the gap between the teacher's input and the opportunity of practising skills was too long and significantly reduced the impact of the lesson's introduction. Some of the existing class computers do not have up-to-date functions and lack memory capacity and those collected in the computer room are not networked. However, a significant number of new machines have been ordered and are due to arrive in the school imminently. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has produced a relevant and detailed subject development plan. Staff have attended and completed appropriate in-service training. These factors ensure that the school is well aware of the current shortcomings and has made appropriate plans for further developments.

**The roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators of subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are not sufficiently developed.**

21. School priorities for development have centred on provision in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. In these subjects, the co-ordinators manage their subject well and have a good view of standards achieved and priorities for development. The responsibilities of the co-ordinators of the other subjects are less well developed. Procedures for sampling pupils' work and for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are not sufficiently formalised. The school intends to review the system whereby subject co-ordinators also manage their own budgets. This would give them extra responsibility and enable them to gain a better view of value for money when purchases are made.

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

22. In order to continue to improve, the school should:

- (i) Raise the standards achieved in information and communication technology across the school by:**
  - i) improving the provision of resources;
  - ii) ensuring that specific concepts and skills are taught progressively across the school.
  
- (ii) Further develop the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (where they are already well developed) across the school.**

## 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	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	9	7	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	45	35	20	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 more than five percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	193
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	43

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	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	27	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	41	41	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (86)	95 (95)	98 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	42	42	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	98 (92)	98 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	153
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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 – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	24.1

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y4**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196.25

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
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)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	511154
Total expenditure	494364
Expenditure per pupil	2104
Balance brought forward from previous year	45583
Balance carried forward to next year	62373

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	55

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	40	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	53	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	55	7	4	7
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	65	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	64	2	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	42	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	38	25	0	18

### Other issues raised by parents

- Pupils achieve good standards, especially in writing.
- The school is very caring.
- Behaviour is very good.
- The provision of homework is appropriate for each child's age.
- This is an open school where parents are welcomed.
- Teaching assistants are valued and are effective.