

INSPECTION REPORT

WOLVISTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolviston, Billingham

LEA area: Stockton-on-Tees

Unique reference number: 111534

Headteacher: Mrs L Welch

Reporting inspector: Mr J J Peacock
25344

Dates of inspection: 13–15 November 2000

Inspection number: 224091

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:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Green Wolviston Billingham Stockton-on-Tees
Postcode:	TS22 5LN
Telephone number:	01740 644374
Fax number:	01740 644374
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Walker
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mr J J Peacock 25344	Registered inspector
Mr J Griffin 12682	Lay inspector
Mrs T Aspin 4926	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

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

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33 Kingsway
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wolviston Primary School caters for pupils from three to eleven years of age and is smaller than other primary schools. There are 98 pupils on roll, 47 boys and 51 girls. In addition, 23 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis and on entry, most are of above average attainment. The number of pupils has remained virtually the same since the time of the previous inspection with about two-thirds of all pupils coming from outside the school's normal zone. All pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes. The attainment of the majority of four-year-olds when they start school in September or January in the reception class, is above average for children of this age.

There are no pupils from homes where English is an additional language. No pupils are eligible for free school meals at present, which is low compared to the national average. The number has decreased since the previous inspection when three per cent had free meals. The school has 5.6 per cent of pupils on its register for pupils with special educational needs, which has increased since the previous inspection. However, it is still well below the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs (0.8 per cent) is below average. The mobility of pupils is not a problem for the school. Last year, only one pupil was admitted and five left during term time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school where the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Standards in the national tests for seven- and eleven-year-olds have been maintained at well above the national average since the previous inspection in October 1996. This is largely due to the very good leadership provided by the experienced and dedicated headteacher and the quality of teaching. A high proportion of good teaching means that most pupils are interested in their work and keen to do well. Their behaviour in lessons is good. As a result, almost all are working at or near to their capacity and making good progress. When all these factors are considered, along with the well above average level of funding, the school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- Provision for pupils of lower attainment, including those with special educational needs, is very good.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, helping most pupils to learn effectively.
- Relationships and the personal development of pupils are both very good. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above average.
- The leadership of the headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school.
- There are very good procedures to monitor and evaluate the performance of staff and pupils.

What could be improved

- The use of assessment information to plan more appropriate work for individual pupils on a daily basis.
- The marking of pupils' work, giving guidance on how to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in October 1996 and since then, standards have consistently been maintained at well above the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Effective action has been taken to address most of the five key issues raised in the last inspection report. Financial planning is now very good. It involves governors and is closely linked to the priorities in the annual management plan. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and fully meets the spirit of the Code of Practice. As a result, most pupils on the special educational needs register make very good progress and almost all achieve the levels expected of them in the national end of key stage tests. Teachers' curriculum planning over the long and medium term is well established and this means that pupils who spend two years in a mixed age class do not needlessly repeat work in any subject. The issue over matching work to pupils of different ability levels, however, has still not been adequately addressed. The exception is for pupils with special educational needs as all teachers plan work which addresses their targets for improvement in their individual education plans. Teachers generally do not use the information from their detailed assessment of pupils to match work more closely to individual pupils' capabilities. Good support is now provided for the two teachers who work on a part-time basis in the nursery, with a full-time assistant, students from two local colleges and parent volunteers. Recently the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Overall, the pace of improvement has been good. The school has the leadership and committed staff needed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A	C	D
mathematics	A*	A	A	C
science	A*	A	C	D

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The good quality of teaching, together with pupils' positive attitudes, is helping to maintain high standards year on year. The exception in 2000 is wholly due to a higher than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Inspectors noted good progress by the age of eleven, from when pupils started at the school with above average levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are identified early and given good support in lessons. The table above shows that in 2000, in comparison to similar schools, standards in English and science were below average but in mathematics they were about average. This comparison needs to be treated with caution because of the relatively small numbers involved. If the results of pupils with special educational needs who entered the school at a late stage are excluded, the school's performance is as good as in previous years. Targets for English and mathematics are realistically based on a detailed assessment of pupils' potential. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve above average standards in English and science and well above average standards in mathematics. The 13

pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved very highly in reading, mathematics and science with results in the top five per cent nationally as every pupil achieved the expected Level 2 or above. In writing, standards were above average as nearly all achieved Level 2 or above. Children under five in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their schooling because of the overall quality of the provision they receive in the nursery and reception class.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive. They work hard and always try to do their best in class.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. All pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils play happily together and relate well to their teachers and to one another. All act responsibly, particularly when given jobs to do, and work well independently.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are punctual, enabling a calm and orderly start to lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall 18	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.

The quality of teaching has improved a great deal since the previous inspection when 20 per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory. Overall, it is now good. During this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching was very good in almost half of the lessons seen, with virtually all teachers producing some lessons of this high quality. In one lesson in the reception class, the teaching was excellent. Good or better teaching featured in almost three-quarters of all lessons. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the quality of teaching was good overall. Teachers, for example, effectively taught mental arithmetic skills at the beginning of numeracy lessons. The skills pupils gain in literacy and numeracy are well promoted in lessons other than English and mathematics. Teachers make good use of computers to support work in all subjects. The quality of teaching for children under five in the Foundation Stage is good and as a result, children appear happy and keen to learn. Throughout the school, the enthusiastic teaching staff show a good knowledge of the curriculum and an understanding of the way pupils learn. They carefully assess the effect of their teaching but do not use the results effectively to plan future work for individual pupils. Too often, all pupils are given the same work to do. All teachers are extremely conscientious and approach lessons with enthusiasm. Using their experience, teachers support pupils with special educational needs well and they make very good progress in their learning. Although there is some good practice, the quality of teachers' marking is unsatisfactory overall, as pupils are rarely given comments to help them to further improve their work. Activities are well planned but ongoing assessment information is not used consistently to match work to the needs of pupils with all levels of attainment. Homework is

used well to promote learning for children under five and pupils at both key stages. The quality of learning is good as pupils concentrate well and work hard in lessons. All make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding, because of the effective teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All subjects meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The locally agreed syllabus is followed in religious education and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good overall. Pupils are identified efficiently and supported well in lessons. Almost all achieve the nationally expected levels expected of them in the end of key stage tests and assessments.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good in all aspects. The concern for pupils' personal development has a positive impact on the way they conduct themselves in school. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to study other cultures and religions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Teachers know their pupils well and provide a caring and supportive environment. Attendance is monitored closely and procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are securely in place. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good and, overall, satisfactory use is made of the information to guide curricular planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher's leadership is very good. Her experience, knowledge and commitment to maintain high standards ensure a clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The chair of governors is very dedicated and works long hours for the benefit of the school. Overall, governors provide a satisfactory level of support. Spending is strictly controlled and checked monthly. Care is taken to get the best value and quality in expenditures.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching is closely monitored and pupils' national test performance is analysed in detail so that curriculum weaknesses can be quickly addressed. The commitment to improve is very good.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff are deployed effectively and learning resources are used to good effect. Specific grants are all spent appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school• Children make good progress• Behaviour is good• Teaching is good• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework• Information about how their child is getting on• The school working more closely with parents• The way the school is led and managed• The range of activities for pupils outside lessons

The school sent out 120 questionnaires and had 52 returned, giving a return rate of 43 per cent. Ten parents attended the meeting for parents prior to the inspection.

Inspectors' judgements wholeheartedly support parents' very positive views about progress, behaviour, teaching and the way pupils work hard. The school does work closely with parents but should explore ways to listen to commonly-held parental concerns. This was raised as an issue by parents at the meeting prior to the inspection. We found the range of activities outside normal lessons to be good for a school of this size and type, the amount of homework to be correct for the age of pupils and information about pupils' progress to be better than that normally provided. The inspection team disagrees with those few parents who feel the school is not well led or managed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science

1. Children enter the nursery class in the September or January after their third birthday, attending on a part-time basis. The level of attainment for most is above average for children of this age. A series of assessments carried out within the first two weeks of the term quickly identifies those who may need additional support. The inspection took place during the children's first term and most appeared to be settling into school well. The school plans work well, in line with requirements of the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage. As a result, the achievement of most children and the progress they make in language and literacy, mathematics, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and in their personal, social and emotional development is good. For example, children listen well to all adults, they respond to instructions and sit and listen attentively to stories. They answer questions politely, do not call out and listen to other children's answers in literacy sessions. In mathematics, most recognise numbers up to five and can count in order up to ten. In their physical development, their progress is also good as many show they can hold pencils or crayons correctly when attempting to write numbers, use scissors to cut out carefully and stick pictures in their books without getting glue everywhere. The good progress is maintained in the reception class where all children are expected to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they are five.
2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment, taking into account test results in reading, writing and mathematics and evidence of pupils' work in these subjects, is generally well above the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in October 1996, which judged pupils to be achieving standards which were in line with national expectations in writing and spelling, mathematics and science. Pupils' skills in reading and speaking and listening were above average. Since the previous inspection, the school has consistently improved standards and maintained them at least above average but mostly well above average. On occasions the results achieved have been very high. Results in the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that, in comparison with all schools, standards in reading were very high, and in writing and mathematics they were well above the national average. However, when the school's performance is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' results are well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The results for science, based on teacher assessments, were very high for pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above as every pupil attained this level. However, no pupil achieved the higher Level 3, which was well below average. Last year, teachers' assessments in science showed that pupils' achievements were in line with the national average for those achieving Levels 2 and 3. The relatively small numbers involved and proportion of pupils with special educational needs is the main cause for any differences from year to year. In 2000, only 13 pupils were involved. Their performance in reading, mathematics and science was in the top five per cent nationally. The results of the last three years show that both boys and girls attained equally well in all areas and that the school is successfully maintaining its high standards.
3. Work seen during the inspection indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the standards that pupils attain are above the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Overall, standards in English are above average so pupils are on course to do well in the subject by the end of the key stage. Pupils' listening skills are generally above average and they are provided with regular opportunities to express themselves in class discussions. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills from when

they start in the nursery class, using story tapes. Reading is well taught and with much parental involvement; pupils develop their technical skills quickly, reading with understanding. They are provided with many opportunities to write as they retell stories such as *The Little Red Hen* in the Years 1 and 2 class. In mathematics, standards of work show attainment to be well above average and most pupils appear to enjoy counting and using 'big numbers'. The mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of each numeracy lesson not only require pupils to get the right answer, but also to explain how they worked the problem out. This helps pupils' understanding of the value of numbers. Much work of a practical nature is undertaken in science as pupils test magnets or make simple electrical circuits. As a result of the good quality of teaching, standards at the time of the inspection were found to be above average in science.

4. Pupils make very good use of computers in all classes at this key stage and in the nursery. Children in the nursery, for example, use the mouse control competently to match letters or numbers and use tape recorders independently to listen to stories. In the reception class, the website for the royal family was used in a history lesson to show the Queen at various stages in her life and Year 2 pupils practise putting words in alphabetical order on their computer.
5. The above average standards that pupils attain at the end of Key Stage 1 are a reflection of how well they are taught and their very good attitudes towards their learning. Almost all parents who returned the questionnaire believe that their children are making good progress. Virtually all (91 per cent) agree that the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.
6. Pupils continue to make good progress in the Key Stage 2 classes. Inspection findings indicate that, by the time they are ready to leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment in English and science is above average and in mathematics it is well above average. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 showed that pupils' achievements were in line with the national average for all schools in English and science and well above the national average in mathematics. When these results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools, they are below the average in English and science and in line with the average in mathematics. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a marked effect on standards. This comparison needs to be treated with caution, as relatively few pupils were involved with the national tests and assessments. Moreover, the number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group was an additional factor affecting pupils' overall performance. All pupils of higher attainment achieved their potential and many lower attaining pupils did well. The trend for the past three years has been one of improvement with more and more pupils achieving the higher Level 5 each year. Each year, improvements have kept pace with improvements nationally. This shows that the school is effective, with the vast majority of pupils making good progress from when they entered the school with levels of attainment which were above average.
7. The consistently good quality of teaching is an important factor in the good progress most pupils make throughout both key stages. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to raise standards in English and mathematics. The partnership between home and school in reading is strong, particularly with younger pupils, and this also contributes effectively to the good progress pupils make. Lower attaining pupils benefit from the additional support they receive in the classroom from their teachers. Inspection evidence shows that pupils have good opportunities to develop their reading skills. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to put into practice the writing skills acquired in the literacy hour in other subjects of the curriculum. Year 5 and 6 pupils for example wrote letters of thanks following their visit to Eden camp as part of their history project. They used a computer competently to

add pictures in order to make the letters more attractive and interesting. This effectively developed pupils' skills in planning, drafting and editing their writing. Much emphasis is placed on the development of handwriting skills and work in pupils' books is invariably neat and tidy. In mathematics, the National Numeracy Strategy has had a significant impact on standards. Pupils are confident with four-figure numbers and are familiar with the addition and subtraction of decimals and fractions. Standards of attainment in science have improved since the previous inspection when they were found to be in line with the average. The opportunities provided for pupils to investigate and conduct experiments are very good and this is a significant factor in maintaining the high standards. The topic about barn owls showed pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class had a good grasp of scientific terms and a secure knowledge about habitats and the requirements of living things. Boys and girls both enjoy the practical approach and work hard in lessons to complete their work. As a result, there is no difference in the performance of girls and boys.

8. As in Key Stage 1, pupils have many opportunities to use computers as part of their work in English, mathematics and science. They use data handling programs, for example, to produce different types of graphs showing the number of cars on the roads each decade. As a result, standards of attainment in information and communication technology are generally above average by the end of Key Stage 2. They have improved since the previous inspection, when pupils generally attained expected national standards. Most pupils have computers at home and this helps with the development of basic skills. There has been much investment in new computers with more planned when the school creates its planned computer area. This shows that there is a strong commitment to using modern technology at the school.
9. In the school as a whole, the achievement of pupils is good. High expectations of teachers, good discipline and control in lessons and meticulous lesson planning result in effective learning in a large proportion of lessons. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by their positive attitudes and good behaviour. This creates a good atmosphere in which to learn for all pupils. As a result, standards have improved since the previous inspection. Targets for English and mathematics are being increased for the next two years. They are sufficiently challenging and realistically based on a detailed assessment of pupils' potential.
10. Pupils with special educational needs and those with lower attainment benefit greatly in this climate for learning and usually attain the nationally expected standards. In their lessons, most pupils make very good progress. Over the years there have been a few gifted and talented pupils and the school has made special provision for them by planning additional work in lessons. It was noted that higher attaining pupils, who often finish their work first, are given extra work to do, which is suitably demanding and challenging for them. The good quality of teaching affords all pupils every chance to reach their full potential in English, mathematics and science.

Provision for pupils of lower attainment, including those with special educational needs, is very good.

11. This was identified as an area of weakness in the previous inspection and the school had to provide better programmes of learning and support for pupils who were experiencing difficulties. In addition, statutory requirements in respect of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs were not being met. The action taken since then has fully corrected the situation and provision for all of these pupils is now very good. As a result, pupils make very good progress and virtually all achieve the levels expected of them in the national end of key stage tests. In the year 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests and teacher assessments, for example, every pupil achieved Level 2 or above in

reading, mathematics and science. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when their progress was judged to be satisfactory.

12. There are good procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and care is taken to give all of these pupils equality of access to the curriculum along with other pupils. Shortly after entry into the nursery, a detailed assessment is made of individual children and good support is provided for those who need it. On entry to the reception class, all children are again assessed carefully. This shows how far children have improved and identifies those who require further support. Teachers know their pupils well and help to prepare an individual education plan to correct their identified area of difficulty. All have specific targets set for them in their individual education plan and progress against these is regularly evaluated and recorded. When planning their lessons, teachers take care to plan work which helps pupils to meet the targets set for them. The clear information and regular contact with parents means that parents are also able to support their child's learning and this helps to bring about a more rapid rate of improvement.
13. During this inspection, many examples were seen of teachers ably supporting lower attaining pupils or those with special educational needs. The very good use of support staff in the nursery enabled children to work individually with an adult, or within a small group under close supervision. This was particularly helpful when the computer was being used to count and recognise numbers. In other classes, teachers make good use of parent volunteers, giving themselves time to concentrate on helping small groups of pupils. In the Year 1 and 2 class, for example, while the teacher spent time with a group helping them to retell the story of the Little Red Hen and comparing their version with the original text, a parent worked with one pupil at the computer, putting words in alphabetical order.
14. The school also makes good use of visiting specialist teachers from the local education authority's special needs department for advice and support. One of their structured programmes called Talk/Write, for example, is being used very effectively to help pupils identified with weak literacy skills. The ten short sessions have been devised to accelerate progress. The headteacher also provides additional support on a daily basis for pupils on the special educational needs register by teaching pupils individually or in small groups outside of the classroom. The session observed where two pupils were helped with numeracy skills was very effective as the specific targets in the pupils' individual education plans were being covered. The strong commitment by all staff to enable every pupil to reach their full potential is helping to maintain the high standards in the school.

The quality of teaching is consistently good, helping most pupils to learn effectively

15. In the previous inspection, 20 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The overall quality of teaching in the school has improved a great deal since then and is judged by this inspection team to be good. The good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum by teachers, their use of other adults to support them, and their careful assessment of the impact of their teaching are the key features which make teaching so consistently good at this school. In addition, all teaching and non-teaching staff are enthusiastic and show a strong determination to raise standards.
16. During this short inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In all 18 of the lessons observed it was very good in almost half of them. Examples of good, very good and excellent teaching were seen in about three-quarters of the lessons, which shows a commendable consistency and confirms that the quality of teaching has improved significantly. It is a strength of the school. Very good teaching, for example, was seen in

virtually all classes throughout both key stages. Detailed planning with clear learning objectives, interesting activities and lessons delivered enthusiastically at a good pace, were the main features of the very good teaching. In the one excellent lesson seen, an English lesson with reception and Year 1 pupils, all the above qualities were present and additionally, the teacher made learning fun, with sufficient challenge to successfully motivate pupils of all abilities.

17. The quality of teaching in the literacy and numeracy sessions was good throughout both key stages. Teachers use the skills that pupils have learned in these sessions effectively when teaching other subjects. Pupils in all classes are provided with many opportunities to write or use numbers in order to consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, for example, pupils research facts about owls using reference books and the Internet and check terms such as 'nocturnal' in dictionaries. Good opportunities to use a computer are built into most English and mathematics lessons.
18. The quality of teaching in science is good. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to work practically when conducting experiments or investigations. As a direct consequence to the quality of teaching, standards in science are generally above average. In information and communication technology (ICT), teaching is also good. Teachers have a good range of up-to-date resources available to them.
19. Pupils respond positively to all their lessons, showing much interest, behaving well and sustaining high levels of concentration. As a direct result, effective learning occurs in virtually all lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and virtually all achieve the levels expected of them in the national tests and assessments at the end of both key stages. Pupils of higher attainment make satisfactory progress and invariably achieve the higher levels expected of them.
20. The quality of teaching and learning for children under the age of five in the nursery and reception class is consistently good and on occasions very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when planning did not take sufficient account of the areas of learning for the under-fives and the lack of support limited some activities such as outdoor play. Lessons are now planned carefully with close reference to all areas of the curriculum for the under-fives. The two part-time teachers in the nursery and the reception class teacher have high expectations of all children and manage them well in a firm but friendly manner. As a result, there are no difficulties with behaviour and children work well together. The range of learning opportunities provided for children under the age of five is good overall. Close links between the two classes help to ensure a smooth transition into full-time education for all. Virtually all children achieve the Early Learning Goals well before they are five because of the good teaching they receive.
21. All teachers work hard to establish a good working atmosphere and promote effective learning. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are now a strong feature of most lessons. The pace of learning is good in almost all lessons, with little time wasted. Once pupils have finished the tasks set for them, teachers have additional activities planned but some of these fill time rather than extend pupils' knowledge further. Colouring in pictures on worksheets is a typical example. All teachers have effective strategies to maintain good behaviour and ensure that pupils keep working. As a result, noise levels are low and pupils of all ages concentrate very well on the tasks set for them. Pupils behave well in lessons and have a good attitude towards their learning. This results in a highly productive working atmosphere in most classes with all pupils making good progress. The criticisms in the previous inspection about the over-reliance of whole-class teaching methods and the weakness in planning for pupils of different abilities have only partly been addressed. Pupils now work more independently in pairs or small

groups. This was seen in many lessons from the nursery class, where children baked buns, to Year 6, where pupils helped one another to devise keys to recognise birds or small creatures. However, teachers still do not consistently use assessment information effectively to plan appropriate work for pupils of different abilities in lessons on a daily basis. When all pupils are given the same work to complete, some mark time waiting for others to finish. On these occasions, their rate of progress is adversely affected.

22. All pupils' work is marked thoroughly but there are few helpful comments to give guidance on how to improve it further. The school is just beginning to identify pupils that are gifted or talented. Higher attaining pupils are frequently given the opportunity to work independently. Their progress is satisfactory as they move up through the school. Planning is good in all lessons as teachers clearly set specific learning objectives. They are well prepared for their lessons with resources readily available for pupils. In most lessons, the variety of resources gives pupils the opportunity to use their initiative and choose suitable materials to use in their studies. In a Year 1 and 2 art lesson for example, pupils had a wide variety of materials to use when drawing portraits of one another. The abundance of computers in most classes means that pupils often use modern technology to support their learning. Examples of art work, graphs on the number of cars on Britain's roads each decade for a history project, and letters following an educational visit were just some of the many examples seen.
23. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting were unhappy with the amount of homework their children were expected to do. Inspection findings do not support parents' views expressed at the meeting or those who responded negatively on this aspect in the questionnaire. The quality and amount of homework are both good for the age of pupils. They are regularly given homework in most subjects and, overall, it makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

Relationships and the personal development of pupils are both very good. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above average.

24. When parents responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection, they were virtually unanimous in their view that their children like coming to school. This is reflected in the well above average attendance rates over the past two years. All staff who work at the school show a high level of interest in and care for their pupils and as a result, pupils thrive in the supportive and friendly environment.
25. Personal and social skills for children under five are planned and developed effectively by the class teachers. In a language and literacy session in the nursery, for example, children waited patiently for their turn to find a toy beginning with the letter 't', hidden with others in a bag. They know not to eat the five sweets they are counting in a mathematics lesson until the end and remember to put up their hand to answer. In all activities, teachers and supporting adults continually stress good manners and try to establish an orderly routine. As a result, children make good progress from when they enter the nursery and this continues in the reception class. Children are well on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals in the curriculum for the under-fives by the end of the Foundation Stage. Most children settle happily and confidently to a variety of tasks. Many begin to concentrate well and show perseverance with their work and play. Most are learning to play well together and some are ready to take turns, although many still want to play alone. In a creative session using musical instruments, most followed instructions well, but some simply enjoyed shaking or banging their instrument continuously. All relate well to adults and behaviour is usually good in the classroom. In a history lesson in the reception class, children enjoyed talking to and interviewing the class teacher's grandparents about the olden days, asking questions sensibly and maturely. Helpers are well briefed and deal with any incidents of over-excitement or

tears very effectively in a caring manner. Practical activities such as baking buns and using large equipment in the outdoor area are used well to promote children's social and emotional development. However, opportunities are limited in the outdoor play area as it lacks stimulation, being mainly covered with grass and concrete.

26. The previous inspection team noted that the quality of relationships was a strength of the school. In lessons, many examples were seen of pupils working together well and supporting each other's efforts. Pupils are encouraged to do their best and try hard to please their teachers. In the 19 lessons observed, for example, their attitude to work and behaviour towards one another was good in six, very good in 12 and excellent in one. At break times, most pupils play happily together. As a result, relationships throughout the school are very good. Effective teaching encourages pupils to work independently and act responsibly. Good examples of this were seen in the nursery, where pupils chose their own materials and tidied away equipment carefully when they had finished and in many lessons throughout the school. In the Year 1 and 2 class, pupils responsibly shared art materials and replaced things in the correct place when tidying away and pupils in the top class organised themselves well to take notes from a video on the impact of World War Two. When using musical instruments in the hall, pupils in Year 3 and 4 handled them with care. Older pupils from this class undertake various helpful duties about the school such as accompanying children from the nursery into assemblies and assisting the younger children at lunchtime. These responsibilities are a very effective way of promoting pupils' initiative and self-esteem. Pupils obviously enjoy coming to school, where they feel valued, and this has a very positive effect on the standards of work that they produce.
27. Attendance levels are well above average and there were no incidents of unauthorised absence in 1999. This represents a further improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' punctuality is also very good, enabling lessons to start on time.

The leadership of the headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school.

28. The previous inspection report stated that the school was led by a caring headteacher who had established an orderly and happy school community. However, substantial improvements were required in the leadership and management. Inspection evidence shows that these have been made. Overall, leadership and management are now good. The experienced and dedicated headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. She is ably supported by the extremely hard-working teaching staff. The headteacher is totally committed to raising standards and is fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Most of the issues raised by the inspection team, for example, are already identified for attention in the school's development plan for this year. The headteacher has a very good working relationship with all staff, pupils and governors. However, her clear vision and firm views, backed up by her excellent professional knowledge, has meant that, on occasions, the suggestions put forward by parents have not been fully considered or acted upon to their satisfaction. Some parents feel that common concerns over supervision at lunchtime or homework, for example, are not given the serious consideration which they deserve. This has adversely affected a few parents' views on the leadership and management of the school, as shown in their completed questionnaires.
29. Following the previous inspection, the headteacher and governors produced a detailed action plan. All five key issues have been addressed, with different levels of success. Financial planning is now very good. It involves governors and is closely linked to the priorities in the annual management plan. Outline plans for the next three years are also clearly defined. The above average contingency fund, which has prudently been built up, for example, is earmarked to provide a new computer area with enough computers for a

whole class to develop their skills. Teachers' curriculum planning over the long and medium term is well established and this means that pupils who spend two years in a mixed-age class do not needlessly repeat work in any subject. The issue over matching work to pupils of different ability levels, however, has still not been adequately addressed as teachers are not effectively using the information from their detailed assessment of pupils to match work set on a daily basis more closely to individual pupils' capabilities. Good support is now provided for the two teachers who work on a part-time basis in the nursery with a full-time assistant, students from two local colleges and parent volunteers. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Overall, under the direction of the headteacher, the pace of improvement has been good. The school has the quality of leadership, dedicated staff and commitment needed to continue to improve.

There are very good procedures to monitor and evaluate the performance of staff and pupils.

30. The school has successfully established systems to monitor and evaluate the way the curriculum is provided and taught, answering a criticism in the previous report. There are clear aims set out in the school's prospectus and these are designed to foster a healthy climate for learning. The good standards in learning, resulting from consistently good teaching, coupled with pupils' positive attitudes to school, result in a strong sense of purpose at the school. This has been achieved by the very good procedures for regularly monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school. The aims as set out in the prospectus, for example, are reviewed each year and all the results of the National Curriculum tests are analysed thoroughly before targets are set to raise standards further.
31. The headteacher involves her senior management team, governors and staff whenever possible. The responsibility for the management of the daily work of the school and for the development of the curriculum, for example, is effectively delegated to subject co-ordinators and teaching staff. The subject co-ordinators have made significant contributions to the development of their subjects in both planning and teaching. The senior management team and governors work closely with the headteacher, to determine priorities for the school development plan. Standards of pupil achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are monitored through regular assessments and results are used to set future targets.
32. Very good procedures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of teaching in all subjects. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators often visit classrooms during lessons, examine teachers' planning and evaluate pupils' completed work. All governors have a subject area responsibility and those responsible for English and mathematics were closely involved in the programme of monitoring teaching during the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Following each monitoring visit, governors or the headteacher complete a written report and share this with the teacher concerned so that improvements, if any, can be discussed.
33. The school is developing well the latest initiatives in performance management which all schools are busy implementing. Governors are attending training in performance management so they can play an effective role in evaluating performance and help to set future targets for improvement. Good systems are in place to support newly qualified teachers and the school is used on a regular basis for the initial training of teachers. The rigorous monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of the school's determination to raise standards and provide the best possible education for all its pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The use of assessment information to plan more appropriate work for individual pupils on a daily basis

34. In the previous inspection, assessment was found to lack depth and rigour and the assessment information was not being used well to plan future lessons. Much has changed since then. Good procedures are now in place to assess individual pupils' progress and their attainment level. This is having a positive impact on raising standards. Regular assessments take place during the school year using school, commercially produced and statutory tests. A careful analysis of results is giving a satisfactory direction to teaching and learning. In all classes, the day-to-day assessment of progress is also good. Teachers are skilled at using questioning to identify a range of needs and plan opportunities to assess pupils' work consistently well. However, all the information gathered about individual pupils is not fully taken into account and used to plan work on a daily basis for pupils of different attainment. It was evident from the scrutiny of pupils' finished work and the lessons observed, that pupils in most classes were being set the same task to complete, using the same worksheet. In the Year 3 and 4 class, for example, all used the same worksheet to change verbs into the future tense and in Year 5 and 6, all did the same work in the topic on barn owls. As all classes have pupils from two year groups and there are lower attaining pupils, some of average attainment and higher attaining pupils, it means that some find the work easy but others need the support of their teacher to complete it. Teachers are well prepared and always have additional work for pupils who finish early, but it is often undemanding and designed to keep pupils occupied until others have caught up. This adversely affects the rate of progress of many pupils, particularly those in the middle who could do better, if given more challenging work. It also means that the school is not getting as many average attaining pupils as it could up to the higher levels in the national tests and this makes the comparison of its performance with similar schools unfavourable. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and do well in relation to their prior attainment. Those of higher attainment work conscientiously and invariably achieve the higher levels in the national tests at the end of both key stages. The school is not effectively using the wealth of assessment information available to ensure teachers plan work which will maximise the potential of all pupils, but particularly those of average ability.
35. Systems to record assessment results are in place and are consistent across the school in all subjects. There are, for example, good systems to monitor and record progress in reading. Teachers know and record the level each pupil has achieved for English, mathematics and science and these are included in the annual report to parents. In good lessons, pupils are encouraged to undertake self-evaluation to assess their own progress against the learning objectives for the lesson. In literacy and numeracy lessons, for example, most teachers display the learning objectives for pupils and before the lesson ends, have a plenary session to evaluate progress and consolidate learning. In the Year 1 and 2 class, role-play was very effectively used to retell the story of The Little Red Hen, with pupils taking the part of the main characters.

The marking of pupils' work, giving guidance on how to improve

36. A close scrutiny of pupils' completed work was undertaken during the inspection and the overall quality of marking was found to be unsatisfactory. Pupils of all ages produce a good volume of written work in each subject of the National Curriculum and religious education and it is usually neatly presented. Teachers conscientiously acknowledge pupils' efforts, marking without fail, each piece of work. However, few add constructive

comments, which would help pupils to further improve their work. For the most part, a tick and, on occasions, a short comment praising effort are used.

37. The school has formulated a very good policy on marking which sets out clear guidance for all staff. However, the response to the policy is inconsistent from class to class. The best example of good practice was found in the Year 3 and 4 pupils' books, where comments regularly appeared which pointed out common errors and identified to pupils, weaknesses they should try to overcome. The marking policy needs to be fully implemented so that marking can be used more effectively as a means of raising standards and increasing the rate of progress for all pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should include the following key issues in their post-inspection action plan:

1. Make better use of assessment information to set work, which challenges all pupils more effectively.
(Paragraphs 21,29,34,35,36)
2. Fully implement the very good policy on marking pupils' work so that they are given clear guidance on how to further improve it.
(Paragraphs 22,36,37)

The following less important weakness, not included as a key issue for action, should be considered by the school:

1. Devise ways of regularly listening and responding to commonly-held parental concerns.
(Paragraph 28)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	35	35	24	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11.5	98
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	6

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	6	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (89)	100 (89)
	National	84 (82)	82 (83)	88 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	6
	Girls	5	5	3
	Total	12	12	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (94)	69 (89)
	National	84 (82)	87 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	15	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (95)	84 (89)	89 (95)
	National	75 (70)	71 (69)	84 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	8
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	16	17	16
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	84 (95)	89 (95)	84 (100)
	National	75 (68)	71 (69)	84 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	92
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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	266,147
Total expenditure	263,395
Expenditure per pupil	2,058
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,150
Balance carried forward to next year	16,902

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

43 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out

120

Number of questionnaires returned

52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	43	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	45	6	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	38	9	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	53	15	2	0
The teaching is good.	49	47	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	45	11	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	32	11	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	38	6	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	36	30	21	9	4
The school is well led and managed.	45	36	8	9	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	42	9	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	40	17	11	13

Parents should note that rounding up or down of figures can mean that the five columns do not always add up to exactly 100 per cent.