

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **WEST WOODBURN FIRST SCHOOL**

West Woodburn, Hexham

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122190

Headteacher: Mrs A Blades

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret Hulme  
OFSTED Inspector Number: 3609

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2000

Inspection number: 224545

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West Woodburn Hexham Northumberland
Postcode:	NE48 2RX
Telephone number:	01434 270220
Fax number:	01434 270220
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Professor M. P. Young
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
3609	Mrs M Hulme	Registered inspector
13450	Mrs J Madden	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Education Associates  
The Innovation Centre  
Europarc  
Grimsby  
N E Lincolnshire  
DN37 9TT

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

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>10 - 15</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>17 - 19</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Woodburn is a very small, rural first school on the edge of the Northumberland National Park. It serves the villages of West Woodburn, East Woodburn, Ridsdale, the Corsenside parish and a number of outlying farms. Some children come from outside this area because of the school's good reputation, choosing it in preference to their designated school. Currently there are 26 children on roll aged from 4-9 years, which is higher than at the previous inspection. The area, though beautiful, is one of rural deprivation. Much of the work on offer is poorly paid and there is no public transport resulting in some children being very isolated. This hampers their social development and communication skills. The variety of intake means that when children start school there is a wide range of ability that is reflected in their early assessments. Some children have limited experiences in language skills, reading readiness and social skills but there are others who are brighter and more able. The school is doing its best to provide for a wide range of needs on entry to a class with three age groups. There are 31 per cent of children who are on the special educational needs register. This is well above average but at present none have statements of specific need. There are 12 per cent of children known to be eligible for free school meals which is higher than at the previous inspection but which is below average nationally.

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

This is an outstanding school where the very strong leadership from the headteacher, together with the effective support of staff and governors, succeeds in enabling children to reach the highest standards of which they are capable. The excellent relationships that exist between teachers and children is a motivating force for learning and children make exceedingly good efforts that have a very positive effect on standards. Children benefit from the very good teaching and small classes. The local community rightly holds the school in high esteem and celebrates such successes as its award of the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. The value for money provided by the school is excellent.

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

- The school is constantly successful in raising attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Overall, the teaching is very good and in a third of lessons it is excellent.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership in which she is very effectively supported by staff and governors.
- The school fosters very good behaviour and children have very good attitudes to their work. This makes a considerable impact on the standards achieved.
- Parents have very good views of the school and are extremely satisfied with the quality of education it provides.

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

- The work required to match the curriculum currently provided by the school against that now required by Curriculum 2000 and the new Foundation Curriculum for children under five is needing completion.

*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 1996 it has made very good progress in addressing the two main issues for action and in those additional developments which it considered necessary. The governing body has worked hard with the headteacher to ensure that the school development plan and the effects of spending decisions can be more effectively monitored. Governors are now involved at all stages of development planning, target setting, budget planning and policy review. Governors have agreed responsibilities for curricular areas. They are taking a lively interest in subjects and are knowledgeable

about the progress being made. A designated governor co-ordinates training and the main focus this year is monitoring and evaluation. The issue relating to health and safety has been dealt with effectively. A minor issue, not included in the report but suggested by the previous inspection team, of more recording and practising of mental arithmetic at Key Stage 2, has been addressed. In addition to the key issues other developments have been undertaken. The children are now taught joined writing as soon as they have mastered printing resulting in a common approach before they join the middle school. The small school hall has necessitated the prioritising of the use of space and planned improvement is linked to the community project. Staff training in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved the teaching of this subject and resources have been extended to improve standards.

## STANDARDS

The table showing standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests has been omitted as the year group undertaking those tests in 2000 was only seven pupils. Every year the school has less than ten children undertaking National Curriculum tests at the age of seven. When numbers are below ten, the effect of one pupil on a school percentage measure can be considerable. The use of percentages tends to exaggerate results, particularly when, as in this school, one child is the equivalent of 14.3 per cent.

By the time children leave the school at the age of nine the high standards achieved at seven have been maintained and in some cases improved. In a school with 31 per cent of children on the special educational needs register it is often difficult to achieve a percentage of pupils who achieve the expected Level 2 or above that is in line with the national average. Pupils' performance in the 2000 tests at the end of Year 2 show that in reading and writing almost all pupils reached the nationally expected level and almost a third of the group did better. Standards in mathematics are particularly high as most children reached the higher level. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the results are very high in mathematics, putting the school in the top five per cent nationally. It was well above average in writing and close to average in reading. At all stages, children are making good progress and some are doing very well. The regular monitoring of pupils' work has resulted in particularly good support for children with special educational needs. This is enabling them to do better than might be expected for their stage of learning, especially in the National Curriculum tests. Recently the school was awarded the Basic Skills Award because it is constantly successful in raising attainment in literacy and numeracy, uses analysis of assessment data to set targets for improvement and has a whole school approach to it. This school is now one that is an exemplar for small schools nationally.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Enthusiastic pupils are keen to succeed and work diligently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good and at times exemplary. Pupils are courteous and polite, they show respect for adults. There have been no exclusions. The very good behaviour results in pupils working well in class.
Personal development and relationships	The excellent relationships that exist between teachers and pupils motivate most children to work hard and do their best. They co-operate very well, take care of equipment and willingly take responsibility for tasks allocated by teachers because they enjoy doing them.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average. Children arrive punctually and come willingly to school.

The excellent relationships that exist between children and all the adults working in the school have resulted in the very good attitudes that pupils have to their work and to the school generally. This is a strength of the school and forms the foundation for good learning. The very good behaviour is a key factor in the sustained work and good efforts.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	very good	excellent

*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 is very good which is an improvement since the last inspection. In a third of the lessons teaching was excellent and none were unsatisfactory. This high quality of teaching is having a very positive impact on the children's attitudes to learning and ultimately on standards. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently very good and at times outstanding. Teachers have a very good understanding of the skills that children need and find imaginative ways to keep the subject interesting.

Children benefit significantly from the small classes as the teachers know every child so well that they are particularly effective in meeting each individual's needs. They have a very good understanding of how each child learns and achieves and every day they assess what has been learned and what they need to learn next. This is shared with the children who talk easily about the targets they need to improve and how this can be achieved, particularly in the class of older pupils. Very effective use is made of questions to challenge children to think hard and to use what they already know. Whole class teaching is effective even with three age groups within it for younger ones often have the ability of older ones and can tackle more difficult tasks. The very good relationships that exist between children make the older ones very willing to help younger ones and give the younger children confidence in seeking support when working in groups.

Pupils' learning is very good overall. They make relevant comments and ask pertinent questions that help them improve their understanding of work. They make good efforts to do the best they can because they are eager to please their teachers and show them they can do well. They often have to think hard, particularly when they are given very challenging tasks but many children say they like hard work and find it interesting. They are very capable of working at a good pace and sustain concentration even when not directly supervised.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The high quality of the previous inspection has been maintained. The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities, seeking expertise from the local community and from other professionals to assist them in this task.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The work designed especially for them, together with the additional adult support, enables them to make good progress and reach standards that are better than expected for their stage of learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school is very good at developing pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness, moral understanding and social responsibility. Teachers are very good role models and the school actively promotes a respect for others, truth and justice. There is dedicated teaching time to examine emotional and moral issues.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The concern which adults show for children is based on the excellent relationships that exist between them.

All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. Since the school is very isolated and the village has few amenities the school is keen to provide a very good range of learning opportunities outside lessons to address these limitations.

Procedures for the care of pupils are very good. The welfare of the children is of paramount importance to the school and everything is done to keep children from harm. The headteacher gets to know each child well before they start school and she and the staff take a personal interest in them and their families.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong, purposeful leadership and is effectively supported by all other staff and the governing body. The whole team contributes to the leadership that provides very clear direction for the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are now very clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are well organised, knowledgeable and thorough in the work they do. They use a number of ways to keep themselves well informed resulting in effective decision making and the right level of support for the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good view of its work and teachers understand what works well and why. The analysis is used well to maintain strengths and avoid weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Very effective use is made of all resources and the finance available. Particularly good use is made of expertise within the local area and of the experienced staff from other schools.

An outstanding headteacher leads a very hardworking staff and governing body to create a school that encourages effective learning. There are well-developed procedures for understanding how well the school is succeeding but the headteacher is constantly working to make the school even better. In this all staff, particularly the only other full-time teacher, effectively support her. Teamwork is excellent.

Governors have a good awareness of the principles of best value. They compare the school's achievements with others, consult with parents about any changes and have established effective systems to ensure value for money in making purchases.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaviour in the school is good;</li> <li>• teaching is good;</li> <li>• children are expected to work hard and achieve their best;</li> <li>• the school is well led and managed;</li> <li>• they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem;</li> <li>• children are helped to become mature and responsible;</li> <li>• the school works closely with parents who are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there were no issues that the majority of parents would like to see improved</li> </ul>

kept well informed about how their children are getting on	
--	--

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Responses to questionnaires were very good with almost all parents returning a response. There were only two parents at most who tended to disagree with any question posed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **The school is constantly successful in raising attainment in literacy and numeracy**

1. In the previous inspection report the children were judged as making good progress despite the fact that levels of attainment on entry to school vary considerably. This is still the situation now. When children enter the school they have a very wide range skills in literacy. A few children have great difficulty communicating and sometimes are incapable of responding in other than one word, grunts or other noises. Others are very articulate and communicate their needs and wants very well. Some children come from backgrounds where they are familiar with books and know that print conveys meaning while others have to be taught how to handle books and look at pictures for clues about the story. Although some children control pencils and try to form letters there are others who have had little opportunity to develop this skill and who need more time to learn how to hold pencils before they are expected to write.
2. In numeracy children have usually seen numbers but some do not know their names and have to learn what they represent and their place in relation to other numbers. A few children can count to ten and occasionally beyond that but most have to learn how to count, estimate and measure. Sometimes children have experienced games using numbers and often come to school with better numeracy than literacy skills.
3. It is not unusual for some members of the new intake to have special educational needs and the early assessments undertaken when they enter school help teachers identify who is going to need additional support right from the beginning. The school sees this as an essential element of enabling all children to achieve as well as they can. Their progress is monitored daily as they work but is also discussed by staff each week. This often leads to changes in lesson planning. Earlier in 2000 the school used commercial tests for Year 2 and Year 4 pupils. There were three children with special educational needs and it was considered that, with the right support, they could achieve better results in the May National Curriculum tests in May. This proved to be the case and these children achieved a better standard than had been thought possible. The designated governor keeps up to date on how well they are progressing so that the governing body is aware that the school is constantly reviewing each child's achievement and has the necessary resources for support. The governors have allocated money from the school's budget to ensure that there is always some additional adult support for these children.
4. When teachers organise lessons they usually have to plan for three age groups and all the stages of learning within each of those age groups. Since classes are small they are able to plan lessons that are of interest to all children but the group tasks are designed to meet specific needs and stages of learning. Age is ignored and children work happily together at tasks that, although challenging, allow them to succeed. No child is held back because others have not reached that same stage and those who need more time are given it. This particularly allows slower learners to progress at the same rate as others although they may not be able to achieve the same standard. Younger children are often interested in the tasks that are allocated to older ones and want to try that too, such as joined writing, and older children help younger ones when they are working without direct supervision. Some of the younger children are capable of doing work that is usually provided for older ones and those older pupils who are slower learners can tackle less difficult tasks in a secure atmosphere. This works well because the teachers' planning provides objectives for learning that allow pupils to work at the most appropriate stage.
5. Recently the school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for primary schools. The portfolio of evidence shows that the school has worked hard to achieve this award and the

time invested has brought about improvements in processes and performance. They have received this award because they have a whole school strategy, including an action plan, to improve performance in the basic skills. They have a target for the improvement of the school's performance, an assessment of pupil performance and improvement plans for pupils who are under attaining. There are regular reviews of the progress of each under attaining pupil. The school is committed to improving the skills of teachers so that they use a range of ways and resources that will enable children to extend their skills. The involvement of parents in developing their children's basic skills is another feature of the strategy that is working well. There are effective procedures in place for monitoring the action plan and assessing improvements in performance. Both teachers are totally committed to seeing that all children achieve the best standard they can. This school is now used nationally in helping other small schools that are trying to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.

**Overall, the teaching is very good and in a third of lessons it is excellent**

6. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good which is an improvement since the last inspection. In a third of the lessons, teaching was excellent and none were unsatisfactory. This high quality of teaching is having a very positive impact on the children's attitudes to learning and ultimately on standards.
7. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently very good and at times outstanding. Teachers have a very good understanding of the skills that children need and find imaginative ways to keep the subject interesting. In one lesson where children were using a story, to learn how the writer had made imaginative use of words for meaning, the teacher had written a true story about her own life for them to use. Realisation of the writer dawned when they read the name of the author and establishing it was their own teacher then tried to confirm whether it was true. They wrestled with the categories of *biography* and *autobiography* that resulted in it becoming their research homework. The teacher's inspirational approach caught their interest immediately and they were very eager to respond to such terms as '*desperately longed for*' and '*my mind raced*' to give meaning to the story. The lesson organisation led to children working very effectively in pairs to establish the meaning of several phrases. As they worked together they made notes to remember the points they wished to raise in the whole class discussion. The Year 2 children found the work very challenging but had the ability to cope with the teacher's expectations and made as many contributions to the discussion on the use of powerful verbs as those at the Year 4 stage. Their literacy skills were used extremely well towards the end of the main part of the lesson when they worked in three ability groups, speedily producing ideas for the end of the story. One pupil acted as scribe and others in the group expressed their thoughts and feelings about the story giving insights into the need for moral understanding and social responsibility. Their suggestions showed a good understanding of the content of the story and they created suitable endings that used a wide range of interesting vocabulary.
8. Children benefit significantly from the small classes as the teachers know every child so well that they are particularly effective in meeting each individual's needs. Whole class teaching is effective even with three age groups within it for younger ones often have the ability of older ones and can tackle more difficult tasks. The very good relationships that exist between children make the older ones very willing to help younger ones and give the younger children confidence in asking for help when working in groups.
9. Teachers have a very good understanding of how each child learns and achieves and every day they assess what has been learned and what children need to learn next. This is shared with the children who talk easily about the targets they need to improve and how this can be achieved, particularly in the class of older pupils

10. The maintenance of high standards in numeracy is the result of the teachers' very good knowledge of the subject, the excellent relationships they have with pupils and the ways that they use their knowledge of each child within the class. Both classes started with a quick mental session that was modified or extended for each child's stage of learning enabling all to take part and achieve success. One teacher created just the right atmosphere with the words, "Let's get to the fun" and there was both excitement and eagerness to take part. In the younger class the teacher and support assistant work well as a team with groups working first with one adult and then with the other. In this way the teacher introduces new learning and probes their understanding and progress throughout the lesson. In the older class the children are allowed to progress to the extent of their ability, regardless of age with some younger children realising that they can count in 4s as well as 5s, 10s and 100s. They look for patterns and when they find it hard there are strategies to assist them. The teacher is challenging them all the time and it is evident that they enjoy it. When pupils were asked for number sentences for 24 there were a wide range of responses including: double 14 and decrease 4, 100 minus 76, 48 divided by 2, 9 more than 15, zero plus 24 and 1,000 minus 976. When 20 number sentences were recorded they moved on with the teacher changing the topic to maintain interest. Pupils extended their knowledge of clockwise and anticlockwise movements relating it to points of the compass. Work on shape completed the session and Year 2 pupils had no difficulty identify such descriptions as a 'two-dimensional shape with three equal sides' as an equilateral triangle while an older pupil described a tetrahedron.
11. The teachers' very good knowledge of a subject is often seen in the way that the subject is presented and discussed. Maintaining the interest of a class who range from those who have just entered school to those who have had two years in the same class is very challenging and in seeking new approaches for the lessons teachers become inspirational at times. In a science lesson, children aged four to seven were intrigued with an introduction about the 'ice swan' who had laid an egg and which was being kept in the school freezer for safety. Their imaginations took hold as they observed the ice egg very carefully, even stroking it gently. There was excitement, interest and curiosity as they discussed how to keep it safe until it could be returned to the 'ice swan'. This imaginative introduction now put the children in the right frame of mind to experiment with small lumps of ice and fabrics to determine which fabric is the best insulator. Each fabric had a label and the correct terminology was learned as they worked. They explored and experimented with the fabrics understanding that they must cut a piece the right size. The teacher made very effective use of questions to challenge children to think hard and to use previous knowledge such as, "Do we need to put the ice on each fabric to cut the right size". Having resolved this problem they also learnt that all pieces cut must be the same size if it was to be a fair test. The teacher had provided a suitable format for recording this experiment that allowed an opportunity for pupils to record if the outcomes were as they expected.
12. Teachers use the skills of the support assistant very effectively and her contributions are having a positive effect on standards, particularly in the class of younger children. The teachers provide clear directions and check that the supporting adult understands what has to be learned. Particularly good work was seen in the science lesson using ice when the group activity was different for the younger children and linked well to the area of learning known as knowledge and understanding of the world. Their task was to find out about ice and the adult encouraged children to see if they could squeeze, squash or stretch ice. They tried to change it by blowing it with straws, and putting salt on it or food colouring. They observed each experiment carefully and provided a simple explanation of what happened. This activity was then extended to make comparisons with ice when in water. The very good relationships between the children and the adult made them confident and eager to try experimenting with substances that float and sink.
13. Pupils' learning is good overall and sometimes very good. They make relevant comments and ask pertinent questions that help them improve their understanding of work. They make good

efforts to do the best they can because they are eager to please their teachers and show them they can do well. They often have to think hard, particularly when they are given very challenging tasks but many children say they like hard work and find it interesting. They are very capable of working at a good pace and sustain concentration even when not directly supervised.

**The headteacher provides outstanding leadership in which she is very effectively supported by staff and governors**

14. The headteacher has a clear vision of what the school is about. She wants it to be one of the most successful but not just for academic results. Both she and the governing body are intent on preparing children to be good citizens of the future. They need to be well-rounded individuals who are capable of relating well to others, whatever their background, showing tolerance and understanding, whatever their values and beliefs and showing concern for those less fortunate than themselves. With these qualities she feels they will be able to fully contribute to their own community and hopefully beyond it.
15. She has a positive view of the governors as 'critical friends' who are active, questioning and supportive. There is recognition of the importance of consultation with parents who she seeks as effective partners with the staff and governors in the education of their children. The headteacher's monitoring probes how effectively subjects are taught and when weakness has been identified, there have been targets for improvement. As a full time class teacher she has encouraged the only other teacher to help her in this monitoring role. She is far from complacent and knows that her work needs monitoring too. Governors have used some money from the school budget very effectively to make time for staff to observe teaching and share the expertise of one another and that of other teachers in other schools. A concern to constantly improve standards has led to considerable work with children with special educational needs. The school celebrated its success in helping such children to achieve higher standards last year and this year.
16. She knows how to delegate effectively and although helping her less experienced colleague allows her to get on with the tasks for which she is responsible. Both teachers have considerable responsibilities and divide the subjects so that they each co-ordinate half, discussing progress each week. There is no deputy but the excellent relationships that exist between the two teachers mean that the management tasks are shared whenever this is possible. One will willingly cover responsibilities for the other at such times as absence or when the headteacher has to be present at meetings outside school. All staff work well together as a team with some even having more than one role in the school. For example, the ancillary assistant is also the clerical assistant and playgroup worker. The cook takes a major role in supervising children at lunchtime.
17. The headteacher's role as a class teacher puts her in a good position to monitor the work of individual children and note progress. She emphasises the need to work closely with other schools in the area in monitoring progress and looking for trends. She uses this partnership for target setting, working regularly with other headteachers to discuss weakness and find ways of remedying it. The school does not ignore the broader picture and national trends are noted and compared. Monitoring and evaluation is planned in a systematic way that involves all staff and governors. There are achievable goals for school improvement. The plans for literacy and numeracy are scrutinised and reviewed very effectively to find the implications for teaching and learning.
18. Governors contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school. They have good levels of expertise and are very well organised and thorough in their approach. They are open to new

ideas and willing to adapt quickly. They grasp opportunities to bid for any additional funds and seek ways to cut costs without losing quality. They have trust in the headteacher and expect accountability in return. They work very closely with her and appreciate the way that she keeps them up to date. They work hard to do their best for parents and try to respond quickly to suggestions or concerns. Most are able to make regular visits to the school and some are very industrious supporting the school in a wide range of activities. Reports on what individual governors do in school are discussed at full meetings thus keeping everyone fully informed about the life of the school.

**The school fosters very good behaviour and children have very good attitudes to their work, which makes a considerable impact on the standards achieved**

19. The aims of the school provide a happy, stimulating and safe place for children to learn. The whole school team, that includes governors, is dedicated to the task of promoting attitudes and values that enable the school community to work and play in harmony.
20. When children enter the school they often have short concentration spans and respond in a physical way to minor confrontations. The teachers work hard to promote positive attitudes to learning, establish good work routines and encourage children to share with and care for one another. By the time they leave school at the age of nine they are much more mature, responsible, independent learners who have the skills to begin engaging in personal study.
21. In 66 per cent of lessons children's attitudes to their work were very good. In 17 percent of lessons they were excellent and the rest were good. The very good relationships established between teachers and pupils were a key factor in their attitudes to school and their work. Children appreciated the efforts made by teachers to make the lessons interesting responding with good intellectual effort. This made for a very productive working atmosphere. The work ethos is well established and undoubtedly contributes to the high standards achieved.
22. All parents who returned the inspection questionnaires considered that behaviour in the school is good and they were absolutely right. The school is an orderly community. The governing body has policies to promote good behaviour and minimise bullying. All children know the rules and understand them. They say they can talk to teachers about problems if they arise. Children take care of equipment, keep classes tidy and show respect for the environment. At lunchtimes and playtime they were seen co-operating well in small groups, caring for those suffering minor accidents, showing concern for younger children, helping to clear tables after lunch and offering to help teachers prepare for lessons.
23. The school aims to help children develop positive relationships through the example of others and this works well in practice. The relationships formed between teachers and children are excellent. Teachers listen carefully to what children say; they are interested in them and in any problems they may have. This is a strength that provides a very good foundation for pupils' learning. All adults who work in the school are very good role models and demonstrate the courtesy to pupils that they expect them to show to others. The children reflect this good example in the way that they relate to one another.

**Parents have very good views of the school and are extremely satisfied with the quality of education it provides**

24. The school has very good links with parents; they are interested in the school and most support their children very effectively. They successfully help in and around the school whenever this is possible as well as raising large sums of money to support the school with learning resources and other projects. There is a thriving parents group that understands that there is a need to

prioritise spending in educational developments and that there are insufficient funds to do all the school would wish.

25. Most parents support their children at home and 96 per cent considered that their children had the right amount of homework. They say that this is very well organised and that they understand what children have to do although a few considered they knew less about mathematics that they would like to be effective at home. During lessons a range of homework was seen depending on the age of the children and parents described it as very focussed. All the parents who returned inspection questionnaires expressed satisfaction with the standards the school achieves. At the parents meeting there were comments about children aged six reading the Harry Potter stories, Year 2 children writing in a joined up style, a Year 1 child having very good skills in mental mathematics and children with special educational needs coming on by leaps and bounds. Parents were particularly pleased with the progress made in mathematics that they considered was a school strength and they are right.
26. The parents made some comments about improvements since the last inspection. They thought that the school had maintained its very high standards and were pleased to note that the headteacher is not a person who 'rests on her laurels'; she is constantly setting targets that have positive and measurable results.
27. Overall, the parental responses to the inspection questionnaires were very good and with almost all parents returning them. There was a very low response in those who tended to disagree with one or two at most selecting this category. However, in the table at the end of this report percentages are given rather than numbers of parents and one parent is the equivalent of four per cent. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. All parents said that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The work required to match the curriculum currently provided by the school to the new Curriculum 2000 and the Foundation Curriculum for children under five needs completion.**

28. Although the school has a very good curriculum that meets statutory requirements the national requirements from September 2000 are that schools should plan lessons based on the new Curriculum 2000 and, where there are children aged 3-5 years, the Foundation Curriculum for areas of learning.
29. The school did not wait until September to begin this work but immediately began to compare what was being offered at present with that required in the new National Curriculum. Teachers worked together as they began to change their curriculum planning and then the lessons to meet the new requirements. Both teachers have undertaken considerable work on this already making governors aware of changes and indicating where documentation will need revision. The lessons reflect the changes made and practice is very good but the work is incomplete, as subject policies do not yet reflect the changes or the good practice seen. Governors are aware that several school policies relating to the National Curriculum will need some revision and their approval to this documentation but they have already observed that practice is well on the way to meeting the new requirements.
30. Teachers are particularly aware of the need to look carefully at the learning resources and facilities needed for National Curriculum subjects and the areas of learning for children under five. Their concern about the limited space for physical education has led to the prioritisation of

the use of space and there are plans linked to a community project that they hope will alleviate this situation. The new Foundation Curriculum has emphasised the lack of outdoor facilities for the physical development area of learning for the youngest children. This particularly needs attention but again links with a community project should improve the situation in the near future.

31. In view of the good progress and considerable efforts already made there are no main issues for improvement other than to complete that begun.

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

**There are no main issues for improvement other than to complete the curriculum work currently being undertaken to bring the school into line with the new requirements for Curriculum 2000 and the Foundation Curriculum for children under five.**

32. The school has a very good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It is very aware of the new requirements for the National Curriculum and Foundation Curriculum for children under five. The school has already undertaken considerable work in this area but it is not yet complete as written subject policies do not reflect the changes although practice is very good.
33. As this work progresses the school needs to look carefully at the implications for learning resources and facilities, particularly for physical education and the outdoor space for the physical development area of learning.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
41	41	18	0	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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	26
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		8

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

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.2

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***

The table showing attainment at Key Stage 1 in 2000 has been omitted as only seven pupils undertook the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments. The use of percentages with numbers below ten tends to distort results and therefore have not been used. Almost all pupils achieved Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics with some reaching the higher level. Those reaching the higher level in reading did as well as those children in all other schools. In writing the same number of children reached the higher level as in reading but the school's performance here was better than all other schools nationally. In mathematics, the pupils' performance was much better than other schools nationally with almost all pupils reaching a higher level. No tests were taken in science but the teachers' assessments show that pupils' performance is on a par with other schools nationally. The results this year were an improvement on last year in all subjects.

### ***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	23
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)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	13

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	91608
Total expenditure	92395
Expenditure per pupil	3300
Balance brought forward from previous year	5437
Balance carried forward to next year	4650



## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	26
Number of questionnaires returned	25

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	20	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	32	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	28	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	48	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	88	12	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	24	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	20	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	76	20	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	92	8	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	92	8	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	24	8	0	0