

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tunbridge Wells

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118712

Headteacher: Maureen Harniman

Reporting inspector: Gulshan Kayembe
2901

Dates of inspection: 20th – 22nd November 2000

Inspection number: 225343

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:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Broomhill Park Road Southborough Tunbridge Wells Kent
Postcode:	TN4 0JY
Telephone number:	01892 529682
Fax number:	01892 512619
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Lesley Grice
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Gulshan Kayembe 2901	<i>Registered inspector</i>
Terry Clarke 9115	<i>Lay inspector</i>
Sandra Baxter 20550	<i>Team inspector</i>
Maurice Leyland 20864	<i>Team inspector</i>

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	6
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	12
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	14
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school caters for 404 boys and girls between the ages of four and eleven. There are 24 who are under five and who attend part-time. It has grown significantly in size since its last inspection in November 1996 and is larger than most schools of its type. The majority of pupils are of white UK heritage. Less than 5 per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils have English as an additional language, but few of them are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds but the low proportion eligible for free school meals reflects the favourable economic circumstances in the local area. Attainment on entry to the school is variable, but in most years it is significantly lower than usually found. The school hosts a special educational needs unit for children with language and speech difficulties. This currently caters for 18 full time pupils all of whom have a statement of special educational need. The school has a further 86 pupils on its register of special educational needs in addition to this. The overall number of statemented pupils at the school, inclusive of the unit, is well above the national average and the proportion with an identified special educational need is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which provides an effective education for its pupils. The quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress. The leadership and management of the school are well focused on achieving high standards and maintaining a good working partnership with parents in the education of their children. A calm and caring ethos serves to nurture pupils' personal and academic development, and overall the school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make secure gains in their learning.
- Pupils make good progress over time, which leads to good achievement given the above average number of pupils with special educational needs.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and management, and this results in equally strong commitment from staff to the school's aims and values and to securing further improvement.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with very good integration into mainstream classes of pupils in the unit.
- The attitudes of pupils, their independence and confidence as learners, and their relationships with staff and with one another are very good.
- The partnership with parents is well developed and as a result parents' views of the school are very positive.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in writing and science
- Consistency in marking of work and in setting work at different levels of difficulty for pupils of differing ability in the same class
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards of attainment have continued to improve, especially at Key Stage 2. There has also been a marked improvement in the quality of the teaching. The key issues from the last inspection have been tackled well. The improved provision in music and history has led to pupils making good progress in these subjects. There is a good focus now on the implementation of policies and on curricular planning so that issues raised previously are no longer evident. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress also now effectively inform future planning.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key	
	all schools			*similar schools		A
	1998	1999	2000	2000		
English	C	C	C	B	above average	
mathematics	C	C	C	B	B	
science	C	D	D	C	average C	
					below average D	
					well below average E	

The table above shows that the results attained by eleven year olds in the National Curriculum tests were broadly in line with national averages in English and mathematics in 1999 and 2000 but below in science. In science, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard for eleven year olds was similar to the proportion nationally in 2000 and above in 1999, but, in both years, fewer reached the higher standard than 11 year olds nationally. The school compares favourably with other similar types of schools with achievement being good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science.

Inspection evidence reflects the test results in English and mathematics, and indicates that pupils make good progress in these subjects and achieve well by the time they are 11 given their low starting points. In science, the standards found were also broadly in line with national expectations. Standards of attainment are above average in design and technology. In the remaining subjects, they

are broadly in line with national expectations, with some good work in aspects of art and history. Pupils are developing well their skills in using computers and standards are broadly average.

In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, the results over the past four years have fluctuated between being below and being similar to national averages in reading and being below or well below in writing and mathematics. The fluctuations reflect the varying abilities of the year groups and the proportion of pupils from the special educational needs unit who happen to be taking the tests in any one year. Overall, though, pupils' achievements given their prior attainment are good in reading and mathematics. However, writing results are too low, especially in relation to handwriting and spelling, and could be better. Inspection evidence confirms these views. Children under five also make good progress and are well in line to meet the early learning goals for the foundation stage. Children currently in the reception classes have started school with much better developed skills in literacy and numeracy than pupils in most previous year groups.

Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. Although there are fluctuating differences between the results of boys and girls in national tests for seven and eleven year olds, overall, the girls tend to perform better than the boys, particularly in English. This disparity was also very pronounced in the tests for 11 year olds in 2000. This reflects the higher proportion of boys in the special educational needs unit and on the school's register of special educational needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons and around the school. Often pupils behave very well in lessons. However, very occasionally, they take a while to settle. Behaviour in the playground is good with pupils playing happily with one another.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others and show respect for others' views. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are very good.
Attendance	The attendance rate is well above the national average. Pupils' punctuality to school and to lessons is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 is good overall with no unsatisfactory teaching being seen. In 90 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching was good or better, and in about twenty per cent it was very good or better. Teaching is good in English and mathematics, with some very good teaching in the literacy hour in Key Stage 2. As a result of the good teaching, pupils generally make good gains in their learning. Thorough preparation and planning with clear identification of the desired learning outcomes are a key feature of the vast majority of lessons. Pupils know what they are expected to

do and thus make a good effort to meet these objectives. Stimulating and interesting activities engage pupils' enthusiasm and make learning fun. Probing questions help to extend pupils' thinking. Questioning by teachers is invariably handled with great skill so that all pupils are involved. Numeracy skills are well taught. There is a good focus on reading and on helping to develop pupils' skills in finding information, but, although the emphasis on developing pupils' skills in writing is increasing, it is still not strong enough. Marking of work is inconsistent and often pupils are not given enough feedback on how to improve their work. The match of work for pupils of differing abilities in the same class is also inconsistent. There is some very good practice, but also lost opportunities for providing work that is pitched at different levels for different groups of pupils. Whilst individual support and help from class teachers or learning support assistants ensure that pupils make at least satisfactory progress, some groups of pupils in some lessons could be making more progress if work was more effectively matched to their particular needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The curriculum is well-balanced providing a rich and varied programme of study for pupils except that science has too little time, especially in Year 6. A good range of extra-curricular activities is on offer and sporting activities are very well developed. The school has achieved a nationally recognised award for its physical education curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for special educational needs both in the unit and in the school. Learning support assistants provide good help to pupils and are well aware of the targets in their individual educational plans. The match of work to each individual pupil's needs is well organised through daily plans in the unit. In the main school, teachers do not use individual education plans to match work to individual needs as effectively, although support staff are well aware of the targets within them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. It is very good for social development. For example, every pupil in Key Stage 2 has the opportunity to go on a residential visit. However, the opportunities for taking on responsibility are limited. Assemblies provide useful opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development. There are many examples of good provision for cultural development. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to share and talk about their cultural traditions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral support for pupils is very good. Very good attention is paid to health and safety, and effective child-protection procedures are in place.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides clear-sighted leadership and her very good management of the school ensures that all staff work effectively as a team towards commonly agreed and understood goals. There are reasonably well-developed roles for co-ordinators, particularly in English, mathematics and science, and they have a clear idea of how they want to develop their areas further. However, opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate work in their areas are limited, particularly in non-core subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are actively involved in the work of the school. They cast an astute and critical eye over the school's policies and procedures, asking relevant and searching questions about its performance. They bring useful expertise to bear on their roles, such as financial expertise. Overall, the governing body fulfils its responsibilities exceedingly well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher monitors the work of staff, including the quality of teaching, regularly, though mostly on an informal basis. Data relating to pupils' performance is monitored and evaluated very closely.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school is very good at obtaining funds from a variety of sources. This has enabled it to improve its accommodation significantly since the previous inspection. Spending is carefully monitored and evaluated with respect to how it impacts on the standards achieved; how well the school's performance matches with that of other schools; how cost effective the education provided is and how monies available can be spent most expediently in order to give the best value for money for pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good leadership provided by the headteacher. • Children like school. • Good relationships with parents and the school's approachability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework – mostly that there is too much.

Parents at the meeting and in their responses to the questionnaire give very positive endorsements to the school in nearly every aspect of its work. The one main area of concern was in relation to homework, and parents' views where indicated tend to point to too much being given. Inspection evidence indicates that homework is provided regularly and that it is seen by staff as an important aspect of pupils' work. However, it may be the case that too much is given to older pupils and the school needs to review its practice in order to ensure that pupils are not given too much.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make secure gains in their learning

1. The quality of teaching was good or better in about ninety per cent of lessons. In none was it less than satisfactory and only in ten per cent was it not better than satisfactory. It was very good in about 17 per cent of lessons and in a further three per cent it was excellent. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and very good teaching, or better, was seen in a third of lessons in the foundation stage and Key Stage 2. There were no significant differences in the quality of teaching in subjects. Literacy and numeracy hour lessons were almost always good, with some very good teaching of literacy in Key Stage 2. As a result of good teaching in lessons, pupils make tangible gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills across all subjects of the curriculum.

2. Thorough planning with a detailed outline of learning objectives is a key feature of the majority of lessons. Teachers are clear what they want pupils to learn and how they are going to enable them to develop relevant skills and knowledge. These learning objectives are usually shared with pupils and, as a result, they know what they are expected to learn. In the best lessons, teachers refer back to the learning objectives and identify with children what has been learnt. Basic skills of numeracy are effectively taught through subjects. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson on reflection, pupils' knowledge and understanding of angles were extended and developed further when they were asked to look for and identify a pattern in the number of reflections produced when an object was placed between two mirrors positioned at various angles to one another. Teachers use skilful questioning quite deliberately to help to develop pupils' oral skills. Pupils are effectively involved, and are pressed to give full answers and encouraged to use correct subject specific vocabulary. Questioning also effectively probes and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding or is used to develop new ideas. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, close questioning of pupils' own ideas for a poem based on one they had just read together led to the production of a whole class poem. In a Year 1 physical education lesson, good use of questioning at the start of the lesson encouraged pupils to think about how they could improve and evaluate their performance. They were then able to put some of their ideas into practice during the practical session. Although good attention is also given to the development of reading skills, not enough emphasis is placed on developing writing skills. Whilst there are some good examples of extended writing, such as the tree diaries in Key Stage 1, where pupils note down observable changes over time in an identified tree, and the letters written by Year 6 pupils between a Victorian schoolboy and his grandmother, there are not enough opportunities for sustained and extended writing across the curriculum.

3. Lively and stimulating activities in most lessons engage pupils' enthusiasm and produce enjoyment in learning. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils were stimulated and well challenged by being asked to find fiction books hidden amongst non-fiction books on display. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and this is evident in the challenging level at which most tasks are pitched, although lack of differentiation means that at times low attaining pupils are challenged too much and able pupils not enough. Nonetheless, well-structured activities with well-targeted support by teachers and learning support assistants mean that most pupils are effectively stretched. In the best lessons, the tasks are so well presented and put together that pupils are successfully encouraged to apply creative and intellectual effort in order to produce new and original

ideas, such as war poems written from the perspective of a soldier or a nurse. In a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson, the tasks on using a spreadsheet were so well put together that pupils made considerable progress in developing their skills in putting a formula into their spreadsheet and in producing a variety of graphical displays of their data. There was very good potential for creative and intellectual effort through exploration of a wide range of spreadsheet functions.

4. Brisk pace and good use of stimulating and interesting resources are also characteristic of most lessons. Teachers time lessons very well and this enables the school to maximise its use of the teaching time available over the day. Good management of pupils results in a good, work-centred ethos in the classroom, with pupils being well focused on tasks and working at a good pace themselves.

Pupils make good progress over time, which leads to good achievement given the above average number of pupils with special educational needs

5. When pupils start at the school, their overall attainment varies from year to year but is usually significantly below average, and this is particularly so in mathematics, where baseline tests indicate very low performance. In some year groups, for example those currently in their reception year, attainment on entry has been broadly in line with national averages. Attainment on entry to the school was also better for those currently in Year 5, although there is no baseline data available for that year group.

6. Given these low starting points for many pupils, the standards they achieve by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, other than in writing, are good. Even in science, where the results in the tests for pupils aged eleven are below average, the majority achieve well in reaching the standard expected for their age.

7. The school carries out annual tests in English and mathematics (these are tests produced by NFER) for each year group in Key Stage 2. The results of these tests are carefully tracked alongside their results in the National Curriculum tests they took at the age of seven. An examination of the NFER test results shows that pupils are making good progress in improving their test scores. Pupils currently in Year 5 have made very good gains annually and this has led to targets for their performance in the National Curriculum tests for 2002 being revised upwards on several occasions.

8. Examination of pupils' written work and observations of lessons confirm that they make good progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. In English, there is evidence of good improvement in handwriting and in reading. Pupils' speaking and listening skills also develop well, and many pupils are articulate speakers who express themselves clearly and fluently by the age of eleven. Writing skills do not develop at such a good rate. Although pupils do produce some good work, overall, there is not enough evidence of extended writing. The school has itself identified that the quality of pupils' writing is in need of further development. Analysis of National Curriculum test results for 11 year olds points to pupils' performance in writing being weaker than in reading. In mathematics, pupils' are developing good skills in numeracy and also in solving problems. Confidence and competence in handling large numbers and in dealing with mental arithmetic problems grow as pupils move through the key stage. Good progress was also evident in shape and data handling. Pupils in Year 6 calculate perimeters and draw shapes accurately. They have sound

knowledge of a range of graphical forms and how to interpret information displayed graphically. In science pupils make particularly good progress in developing their experimental and investigative skills. For example, pupils in Year 4 made very good progress in planning a science experiment to illustrate the principle of evaporation. They demonstrated good knowledge of fair testing and made accurate predictions, convincingly explaining their reasoning. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific facts are sound and they make good progress. However, the standard is not as good as that of their experimental work, and this may be a reason why they are not doing as well in terms of the proportion gaining the higher levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6 as pupils nationally. In contrast, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics is better than in science when compared against the proportions of 11 year olds gaining higher levels nationally.

9. Use of computers is developing well, with most classes beginning to make reasonably regular use of ICT. This is being helped by the recent development of a computer suite, which was seen being very well used to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of spreadsheets in Year 6.

10. In history at Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well and their overall standards are in line with national expectations, but with examples of above average work. The most interesting and lively work is produced as a result of visits, such as the visit to the Ragged School which enabled pupils to gain valuable insights into Victorian schooling. This is made all the more real by participation in role-play activity. Pupils in Year 6 wrote realistically imaginative letters between a Victorian schoolboy and his grandmother as a result of the visits. The letters capture well the flavour of life as a schoolboy in Victorian Britain. Visits to a local stately home also provided the stimulus for Year 5 pupils to produce good quality reports on their observations.

11. Some excellent examples of work in art, craft, and design were seen on display, illustrating very good progress and achievement. Carried out in conjunction with a publisher, so that the work done by pupils was led by trained artists and craftspeople, the three-dimensional pottery and clay work is lively, very well made and finished, and visually stunning. It incorporates and draws on ideas and imagery reflecting a variety of cultures in colourful and attractive patterns designed by pupils.

12. In Key Stage 1, most pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading and mathematics. By Year 2, pupils read accurately with sound grasp of meaning. They can discuss characters and events in books with confidence. The ablest pupils are developing the capacity to cope with sustained reading and to hold in-depth discussions about characters. Girls particularly enjoy poetry and give well-argued reasons for poems that they like. Good progress is made by lower attainers in punctuation and spelling. Pupils' speaking and listening skills, particularly listening skills, develop at a good rate. In mathematics, good progress is made in numeracy by the majority of pupils, although lack of sufficient attention to providing work especially tailored for their needs hampers progress for lower attaining pupils. In science, the majority of Year 2 pupils demonstrate their good progress in observation skills through the tree diaries they are currently keeping. They also develop well their skills in experimental and investigative work. Some good work in recording what happens before and after taking exercise was seen in pupils' books. This indicates that they are developing a secure understanding of the impact of exercise on different parts of the body, for instance that the heart rate increases, cheeks and face go red and the body needs to breathe faster.

13. Children under five are developing literacy and language skills and numeracy skills at a good rate. In reading, good progress is being made in linking sounds of letters to their names. Those who are already five or are going to be five soon recognise a good range of common words such as 'had', 'and', 'in' and 'come'. Even the youngest children are making good progress in developing early reading skills, and they recognise common words or words that are repeated many times in the big books they are reading. The ablest are beginning to write simple sentences. When engaged in role-play activities, most children are able to make up interesting and imaginative stories and scenarios, indicating a lively imagination and keen observation skills. Most are increasing their knowledge of simple numbers and beginning to develop good understanding of 'taking one away' from a given number.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and management and this results in equally strong commitment from staff to the school's aims and values and to further improvement

14. The headteacher has a very clear view of the direction the school's future development should take. There is a strong emphasis on high standards in every aspect of the school's work and on providing the best quality of education for all pupils. Through good leadership and management, these aims and values are effectively shared with staff and governors so that they have an equally strong commitment towards achieving the best for pupils and from them. The clarity of direction extends to subject co-ordinators, particularly in English, mathematics and science, so that they too set clear targets for development and have good strategies to secure further improvement. The roles of co-ordinators are mostly well developed and there is good delegation of responsibility. The good improvement in the provision for music and history since the previous inspection has been well led by the respective co-ordinators, who have taken appropriate action to address the weaknesses identified. The development in the use of computers is moving forward at a good pace due to the good work of by the co-ordinator.

15. Good strategies for consultation with staff have resulted in the development of good teamwork. A good focus on teaching and learning has had a good impact on the overall improvements in these areas since the previous inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2 where teaching was weakest. The school actively encourages the sharing and discussion of new ideas, and of effective or improving practice in teaching. Planning together in year teams has had a good impact on the quality and consistency of delivery of the curriculum.

16. Staff, parents and governors are involved very fully in the production of the school development plan and all subject co-ordinators make their own contribution to it as well. Analysis of performance, both in national tests and NFER tests, is very effectively used to inform development planning so that this is well-focused on areas most in need of improvement. Overall, strategic thinking and planning are very good. The headteacher provides a very firm steer to the school's work and how it could be improved.

17. Governors are provided with a good range of information about the school and its performance. This enables them to make a very good contribution to the work of the school and to ask relevant questions. Governors' committees are well structured and work effectively in ensuring that the school is accountable for its performance. Governors also have a good strategic overview of where the school is heading.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with very good integration into mainstream classes of pupils in the unit

18. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, both in the unit and in mainstream classes. As a result of this, their progress is good. The quality of teaching in the unit is good, and planning is particularly detailed. In the Key Stage 2 class for example, each pupil has an individual teaching programme. Learning support assistants provide good support in lessons, working with great sensitivity and skill with individual pupils or small groups. In the unit, learning support assistants receive excellent guidance and play a full part in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. In mainstream lessons, support staff are also involved in planning and delivery, but are not given quite such detailed guidance and support as in the unit.

19. Pupils with special educational needs are given full access to the curriculum. Those being educated in the unit have a carefully planned programme of integration with mainstream pupils. The success of integration is very carefully monitored to ensure that it is well timed and helps pupils to continue to make good progress. Learning support assistants are provided with very good guidance on how to support and help the pupils they are accompanying to mainstream classes. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school receive specialist help as appropriate and are withdrawn for short periods of time for intensive literacy work. The booster classes for literacy and numeracy in Year 6, where pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups or individually, make a very good contribution to their skills in these areas. When being taught in class, the group work in literacy and numeracy usually focuses well on those with an identified need, although sometimes work is not sufficiently or effectively adapted for the differing needs of pupils of different abilities. There is overuse of worksheets, particularly in numeracy work in Key Stage 1, and this was most evident in the examination of samples of pupils' written work. In the case of special educational needs pupils in mainstream classes, teachers and learning support assistants are aware of the individual educational plans, but they do not always refer to these to when planning lessons.

20. The individual educational plans are useful documents with detailed targets and helpful activities to support pupils' progress. For example, the plans for pupils in the Key Stage 2 unit provide detailed descriptions of pupils' needs and show long-term as well as short-term targets. Special educational needs reviews are held every half-term and annually with input and involvement of relevant outside agencies, such as educational psychologists. Parents are invited to annual reviews and their views are taken into consideration in annual reviews and the formation of statements.

21. The special needs co-ordinators manage the administration for special educational needs well. The organisation and management of paperwork in the unit are carried out to a very high standard. The range of expertise of staff in the unit is wide and is very usefully shared with staff in the main school. The special needs co-ordinators for the school lead school staff well and ensure that teachers organise individual educational plans effectively. They maintain good liaison with external professionals.

The attitudes of pupils, their independence and confidence as learners and their relationships with staff and with one another are very good

22. In the majority of lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are good, often very good. That they are eager to come to school is reflected in the well above average rate of attendance. There is good co-operation with teachers and pupils respond with enthusiasm to the work they are given. The vast majority of pupils enjoy their work and enjoy learning. They collaborate well and work effectively in pairs or small groups. The school's caring attitude and the well-developed assertive behaviour policies help to instill positive and mature attitudes amongst pupils. Around the school a well-established, calm and work-centred ethos is very much in evidence.

23. Most pupils are able to take considerable responsibility for their own learning and have the skills and strategies to work on their own when necessary, or to ask one of their peers before disturbing the teacher. This has a particularly good impact on work in literacy and numeracy, where teachers are able to focus on a specific group in the secure knowledge that the rest of the pupils in the class are getting on with their work effectively on their own. It is also a tribute to the skill with which teachers have trained pupils to work independently.

24. Effective collaborative work in lessons also makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. They willingly help one another and engage in purposeful discussion and debate about their work. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school community and relationships between them and other pupils are very good. Overall, pupils get on very well together and are always prepared to work with others in class. This extends to their relationships outside lessons. At playtimes, for example, pupils play happily together.

25. Pupils place a great deal of trust and confidence in their teachers and much of this reflects the care and respect they receive from staff. In turn, this results in very good relationships being established between staff and pupils.

26. The good attitudes towards work seen in lessons are extended to extra-curricular activities where pupils display similar levels of enthusiasm. After school clubs, for example, are well attended.

The partnership with parents is well developed and as a result parents' views of the school are very positive.

27. The headteacher places a high priority on establishing and maintaining a good working partnership with parents. A wide range of good quality information is made available to them. This information includes newsletters provided by the school and by governors in addition to a well-produced school prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents. Parents come in to help on a regular basis, and their help and support are particularly valued on school trips and excursions. In school, parents help with the library and in art and craft activities.

28. A very active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) raises useful additional funds for the school. Last year it raised £6000, which helped to fund the new computer suite and resources for the infant playground. Events organised by the PTA are well supported by staff and other parents.

29. The school effectively promotes the partnership with parents through thorough and detailed reporting of pupils' progress. There are, for example, three consultations with parents each year. The meeting in the summer term is used to introduce the pupil's new class teacher to their parents and this is very good practice. Each day after school, staff walk the pupils to the gate so that, if parents want to talk to them or discuss any concerns, they are readily available. This serves to make teachers readily accessible to parents, who feel that teachers are approachable. The headteacher's door is always open and parents have easy and ready access to her should they feel they need to discuss any matter concerning their child with her.

30. Partly as a result of the very good opportunities for consultation with staff and the good quality of written information, and partly as a result of the good quality of educational provision at the school, parents' overall views of the school are very good. This is confirmed by the views expressed by parents at the pre-inspection meeting and in their responses to the inspection questionnaires. In eight out of the twelve questions, over ninety per cent of parents agreed with the statements. The headteacher is always willing to listen to suggestions for improvement and, for example, is willing to examine the issue of too much homework raised by some parents in the run-up to the inspection.

31. The inspection evidence largely confirms the positive views held by parents.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing and science

32. The school recognises there is work to be done in improving the standards of writing in the school, particularly at Key Stage 1, where there is some overuse of worksheets and where at times opportunities for extended writing are missed. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson focusing on writing, the ablest group of pupils finished their worksheet based task that they finished quite quickly because it did not have sufficient challenge. Meanwhile, an average ability group in the same class faced the harder and more open-ended task of writing a poem. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, able pupils were well challenged by being given the opportunity to write at length unaided. They produced confident writing in coherent sentences. Although they made spelling errors, words were phonetically recognizable and these pupils effectively communicated their ideas. However, they were not provided with aids to help their spelling.

33. There are examples of good writing, especially in Key Stage 2, and evidence of progress, especially in handwriting and spelling for lower attainers. Nonetheless, many pupils are not making as much progress as they should in developing spelling and handwriting, and in widening their range of vocabulary and range of types of written material. There is for example, good opportunity in Year 2 for pupils to record observations and produce extended written notes of changes in trees as the seasons change. However, the same pupils are then given rather undemanding worksheets at other times.

34. The school, having recognised the issues, is making more use of the literacy hour to develop written work and supplementing this with other opportunities to produce extended writing, especially through use of literacy in other subject areas such as history. Much scope remains, however, to

increase the opportunities for extended writing and the frequency with which pupils are asked to write at length on a particular topic.

35. Some good use is made of computers to develop pupils' writing, but this is not as extensive as it could, or should, be. The recent development of a computer suite puts the school in a much better position to make more effective use of information communication technology to develop pupils' written work.

36. Work in science is of a sound quality in Key Stage 1. However, in the national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' performance is below average and below their performance in English and mathematics. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected was in line with the average nationally in 2000 and above in 1999, a much smaller proportion reached the higher standard in both years than was the case at the national level. Inspection evidence does not clearly identify where the problem lies, as the quality of teaching seen was at least good, with some very good teaching also being seen. Pupils' skills in investigative and experimental work in particular are developing well and there is a good focus on this aspect of science. The weekly time allocated to science is low, particularly in Year 6, and this may lead to pupils not covering some aspects of science in sufficient depth. The science co-ordinator also feels that the extent and depth to which pupils engage in interpretation of data and graphical displays of information may be too limited to enable enough of them to reach the higher standard in tests. In the last two or three years, girls have not done as well in science as the boys, and it may be that they need more encouragement to read non-fiction texts in science. The school needs to examine these potential issues in order to help raise the attainment of abler pupils in science.

Consistency in marking of work and in setting work at different levels of difficulty for pupils of differing ability in the same class

37. Whilst some good practice in marking gives pupils clear guidance and support in order to understand how they might improve their work, this is not consistent across the school. Examination of pupils' work revealed a variety of different practice with respect to marking. Teachers did not often give pupils clear written guidelines for improvement, although in some lessons guidance provided orally was good. In some cases marking picked out common spelling errors, whilst in other cases all spelling errors were ignored. At times, there was over emphasis on praise rather than constructive pointers for further development.

38. Whilst the school sets targets for improvement in terms of the levels pupils should be achieving in tests, the setting of individual targets for improvement in specific pieces of work or subjects is at an early stage of development other than for pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes, teachers miss opportunities to help pupils to evaluate their work at the end of a lesson. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson, the teacher did not ask pupils to consider at the end of the lesson how much their performance had improved and how they might improve even further.

39. The school's assessment policy contains too brief an outline for marking. It does not provide teachers with clear enough guidelines for the purposes for marking and what they should be doing in terms of on-going assessment of pupils' work, including marking.

40. Similarly there are inconsistencies in practice with regard to how effectively work is matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. For example, in samples of mathematics work examined,

Year 2 pupils of different abilities had been given the same worksheets to complete. There is good practice within the school with regard to different work for pupils of differing abilities, but it is not extensive enough. Teachers and support staff usually provide a good level of help to lower attaining pupils and have extension work available for more able pupils, so that overall they all make at least satisfactory progress. However, the opportunities to stretch and challenge pupils at a more appropriate level by providing work that is more finely tuned to their needs are missed. Hence opportunities to ensure consistently good or very good progress for all pupils are also missed.

Role of co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility

41. Overall, subject co-ordinators in foundation subjects are given a good level of responsibility for managing their areas and they have a reasonably good idea of what the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects are. Co-ordinators can ask for, and are usually given, extra time for developing their areas should they feel they need it. They show a good level of initiative in working towards improving the quality of provision for their subjects. However, there is no regular time built into the school's strategic development plan for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate how effectively each class teacher is delivering their subject. This limits their opportunity to influence change and improve the quality of delivery. The co-ordinators for core subjects have had more opportunity for monitoring and evaluation, particularly for literacy, but it is not a regular or systematic feature of their work. They are given regular non-contact time for development. Foundation subject co-ordinators have some involvement in monitoring planning and pupils' work, but this is again not as extensive or regular as the monitoring or planning and pupils' work carried out by core-subject co-ordinators.

42. The co-ordinators for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 co-ordinators run key stage meetings and keep their colleagues informed of whole-school developments. They monitor planning but have little involvement in monitoring teaching and learning. Key stage co-ordinators also have little time for strategic managerial duties.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further, the headteacher, senior staff and governors should:

- Improve the standards in writing throughout the school, and in science at Key Stage 2 by:
(*Paragraphs: 8, 32-36*)
 - * Providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length;
 - * Improving the quality of spelling and handwriting for all pupils;
 - * Ensuring that able pupils are given sufficiently challenging work in writing;
 - * Developing greater cross-curricular use of extended writing;
 - * Reducing the use of worksheets in Year 2;
 - * Increasing the time spent on science, especially in Year 6;
 - * Developing pupils' skills in interpreting data and graphically displayed information;
 - * Monitoring the progress of girls in science more closely.

- Ensure that the tasks pupils are asked to do are matched to their varying needs, and that the work they produce is effectively marked by:
(*Paragraphs: 12, 37- 40*)
 - * Developing an effective marking policy which gives teachers clear guidance on what is expected of them;
 - * Ensuring that marked work identifies for pupils what they need to do to improve;
 - * Developing an effective system for setting short-term and subject specific targets;
 - * Ensuring that opportunities for evaluating progress with pupils are effectively used so that pupils become more aware of their progress and how to improve further;
 - * Developing greater consistency and effectiveness in match of work to pupils' differing needs and abilities in all lessons;
 - * Making use of on-going assessment to guide planning for lessons in order to achieve good match of work to pupils' needs;
 - * Making use of information from marking and on-assessment to set short-term targets for pupils.

- Create systems and procedures within the school which will help to further develop the roles of co-ordinators, particularly in the monitoring and evaluation of work in their areas of responsibility by:
(*Paragraphs: 41- 42*)
 - * Allocating time to subject co-ordinators for this purpose;
 - * Developing the role of key stage co-ordinators so that they have greater responsibility and involvement in the strategic development of the school as well as in monitoring and evaluating the work in their respective key stages.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	17	69	10	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	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	392
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	23
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	104

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	22	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	28
	Girls	19	19	20
	Total	42	41	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	76 (69)	75 (76)	87 (78)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	24	28	28
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	43	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (73)	87 (78)	87 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	27	27	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	22
	Girls	26	23	26
	Total	44	40	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	81 (84)	74 (78)	89 (87)
	National	75 (71)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	23
	Girls	26	23	26
	Total	43	40	49
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	80 (87)	74 (84)	91 (91)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	1
White	334
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	28

Education support staff:

YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	299

FTE means Full Time Equivalent

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	------------------

(Figures in the table include finance for the special educational needs unit)

	£
Total income	789273.00
Total expenditure	767813.00
Expenditure per pupil	1896.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	50477.00
Balance carried forward to next year	71937.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	404
Number of questionnaires returned	183

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	45	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	58	39	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	39	2	9	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	37	8	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	28	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	40	8	2	12