

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Camden, London

LEA area: Camden

Unique reference number: 100027

Headteacher: Ms E R Evans

Reporting inspector: Mr M Thompson  
25372

Dates of inspection: 28 - 29 October 2002

Inspection number: 246029

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lupton Street

London

Postcode: NW5 2JA

Telephone number: 020 7485 2155

Fax number: 020 7267 3694

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms C Whittaker

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
25372	Mike Thompson	Registered inspector
19322	Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector
20614	Donald Kimber	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle division of Parkman  
The Brow  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

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</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>12</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Eleanor Palmer Primary School is of average size, with 193 full-time pupils on roll, and a further 25 children in the nursery class. The school serves an area of mixed housing, and its pupils come from a wide range of social and economic circumstances. Just over ten per cent of pupils are from refugee families from a wide range of countries. About 30 per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language and receive extra help with this. Both of these proportions are high in relation to the national average. Thirty per cent of pupils have special educational needs (SEN), and about a third of these pupils have more severe special needs which entitle them to extra help, including five with Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupils' SEN are wide ranging, but principally comprise learning, emotional, communication or physical difficulties. About a third of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportions of SEN pupils and of those entitled to free meals are both above average.

Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis for their first half-term. Children are then admitted to the reception class in either the September or January before their fifth birthday. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is above average overall.

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

This is a good and effective school that gives good value for money. Its success is built on very good leadership, the richness of its curriculum, the very effective assessment of pupils' academic performance and the ways in which it ensures that all pupils are fully included in its work. It builds on the pupils' good standards on entry and further develops its pupils' potential through good teaching, so that by the end of Year 6 pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. Its pupils are keen to learn and are very well behaved.

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

- Pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain good standards in mathematics and very good standards in English and science. In particular, pupils' very good skills in literacy help them to achieve well in other subjects.
- Teaching is good or better in two-thirds of lessons. Teachers are particularly skilled in providing work that interests their pupils and helps them to sustain high levels of concentration.
- Pupils behave very well, standards of personal development are high, and relationships within the school are very good.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. Music is an exceptional strength.
- The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher is ably supported by her hardworking and committed staff and governors.

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

- Some aspects of the teaching of mathematics in Years 3 to 6: in particular, the quality of marking and the way in which work in mathematics lessons is sometimes matched to pupils' abilities.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Overall, the key issues for improvement identified in the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed as follows:

- communications with parents have been greatly improved;
- curriculum planning is now secure in all subjects, especially English, mathematics and science;
- strategic financial planning is now sound;
- provision for swimming has been improved.

However, the governors' annual report to parents needs further improvement since it does not contain all of the information required by law.

In addition:

- standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have risen;
- provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is better;
- the high standards reported in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have been sustained;
- teaching remains good, despite changes in personnel;
- the quality of leadership provided by the governors has improved, and the very good leadership of the headteacher continues.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	C	A	A	
Science	C	C	A*	A*	

Overall, the attainment of children on entry to the school is above average. Children are given a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes, and by the time that they transfer to Year 1 most have achieved the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>. Inspection findings show that pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and by the end of Year 2 attain very good standards in English and satisfactory standards in mathematics and science. Results of the national tests for pupils in year 2 show that, in reading and writing, attainment in most years is above or well above average. Standards in mathematics are more variable, but when test results over the past few years are viewed as a whole, they are about average. Pupils' good progress continues

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three. Children complete the Foundation Stage at the end of their 'reception' year.

from Year 3 upwards and, by the end of Year 6, overall standards are high. Results achieved in the national tests for English over the past five years have usually been above or well above average. In mathematics, as in Year 2, results in Year 6 have varied considerably from year to year. Taken together over the past few years, they have been just above average, and in the most recent tests were well above average. In science, results have never been less than average, and in the most recent tests were among the highest five per cent nationally. When compared to schools with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, National Curriculum test results are well above average in English and mathematics and among the highest five per cent of these schools in science. The school's performance in the most recent National Curriculum mathematics tests for pupils in Year 6 improved significantly because the proportion of pupils attaining the national target of Level 4 rose by about 20 percentage points. This was the result of very good assessment leading to the careful targeting of individuals, helping them to achieve very well. Another reason for the school's strong performance in the 2002 tests is that the proportions of pupils attaining levels above the national target of Level 4 in English, mathematics and science was high. The school successfully achieved the demanding targets set for its performance in 2002 and is well on course to achieve the slightly lower, but equally demanding, targets for 2003.

Inspection findings reflect the overall pattern of test results, with standards in Year 6 judged to be well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils' skills in literacy, and their high standards of behaviour and keen interest in lessons are significant factors contributing to the good progress that they make. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) develop steadily throughout the school, and pupils' sound attainment in elements of the subject such as word processing, data handling and research make a satisfactory contribution to their work in most subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy being at school. They sustain their concentration very well and work busily and purposefully.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond to the school's high expectations of their behaviour in a tolerant and mature way.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils make good progress in developing social skills and confidently work with their classmates. Particularly noteworthy is the way in which pupils from very diverse backgrounds work and play together.
Attendance	Satisfactory. However, too many pupils are late, and holidays taken in term-time are a problem.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and reception	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

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

Of the 20 lessons observed, six were very good, seven were good and seven were satisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In the Foundation Stage, teachers have a very good understanding of the way in which very young children learn. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good because teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and because they are particularly good at ensuring that their explanations are clearly understood. Overall, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of what they teach, and basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught. They have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour, manage their pupils well and use a very good range of teaching strategies. However, on some occasions, introductions to lessons are too long. When this happens, there is not always enough time left at the end of lessons to fully review the impact of learning. The teaching of English is particularly good. Lessons in mathematics are of variable quality, but are good overall. Evidence from samples of pupils' previously completed work shows that in Years 3 to 6, in mathematics, pupils of different ages and abilities are sometimes given very similar work to do, and teachers are not good at using corrections as a tool for improving pupils' work. All teachers are skilled in giving clear explanations of what pupils have to do and, because class routines are good and materials easily accessible, the pupils quickly set to work on their tasks. Teachers are good at making their lessons lively and interesting, in response the large majority of their pupils are keen to learn and have an appetite for work. Learning support staff also make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, and provide good quality help for pupils with SEN. They are well trained for what they do, and provide skilled help when working with individuals or with small groups of pupils. Very good support is also provided for pupils for whom English is not the first language spoken at home, and this enables these pupils to play a full part in all class activities.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Particular strengths of the curriculum are the ways in which it is enriched through the use of visits, and by visitors to the school. The school's strong commitment to inclusion is exemplified in its excellent provision for music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The way in which they are supported ensures that their emerging skills in English are not a barrier to learning in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Arrangements for the moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. Particularly noteworthy is the work of the school council in developing pupils' social awareness and sense of citizenship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. Overall, pupils flourish within the school's caring environment.

In ICT, skills in sensing technology are not yet being taught. The school has already identified this weakness, and is actively engaged in addressing the situation. While the school's day-

to-day care of pupils is good, the quality of health and safety record-keeping does not match the expectations of the school's new policy.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very clear direction for the school. The work of the school is closely monitored to ensure high standards through effective teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised, and this enables the governors to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development because they are well informed and monitor the work of the school carefully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at reflecting critically on its work and shows a clear commitment to continuous improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its staff and accommodation exceptionally well. Good strategic planning ensures that funds are carefully spent. The large budget surplus accumulated over recent years is the result of careful planning, and these funds are being spent on projects designed to further improve the quality of education provided. The way in which the school provides funds for specialist music tuition is excellent.

The governors apply the principles of 'best value' very well when decisions are made.

### 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>• Their children like coming to school</li> <li>• Their children are well taught and make good progress</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good</li> <li>• Teachers are approachable</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ways in which the school keeps them informed</li> <li>• The way in which homework is set</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements fully support all of the positive views expressed.

With regard to the areas that some parents would like to see improved:

- Overall, the quality and frequency of information provided for parents are good;
- The school has consulted parents about homework, and has a clear policy about homework, which appears in its informative prospectus. Homework is set regularly, although practice regarding the quantity varies from class to class.
- The school has limited use of its own premises at the end of each day, but does what it can to provide activities for its pupils, for example by providing basketball and cooking

activities on Saturdays. Overall, the range of activities provided outside lessons is typical of most schools.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**Pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain good standards in mathematics and very good standards in English and science. In particular, pupils' very good skills in literacy help them to achieve well in other subjects.**

1. Standards attained in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English and mathematics, and among the top five per cent nationally in science. Inspection evidence suggests that the school's performance in the national tests for 2003 is not likely to be quite as good, but is, nevertheless, likely to be better than that of most other schools. Currently, standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Teachers make good use of pupils' previous learning as a firm base for the teaching of new skills, and the very good standards attained in literacy help pupils to achieve well in other subjects.
2. The success of the school's work in raising standards of literacy is evident in the results achieved in the national tests over the past two years. Its focus in future terms is to be on the further development of pupils' skills in numeracy.
3. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress because they are well taught and because teachers are particularly skilled in ensuring that all pupils, regardless of prior attainment, play a full part in all lessons. From an above average starting point, children achieve well in the nursery and in the reception class because the adults working with them have a very good understanding of the ways in which young children learn and because the working environment provided is particularly stimulating. When they move from the Foundation Stage to Year 1, children have very positive attitudes towards school and a firm platform of early skills in literacy and numeracy on which teachers can build. This is because most children achieve the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development by the end of the reception year. From Year 1 to Year 6 pupils continue to achieve well because of the good structure and richness of the curriculum and because their progress is carefully monitored.
4. Skills in speaking and listening are developed very well. Children have well-planned opportunities to develop confidence in speaking and self-discipline in listening. In all classes, pupils use a wide range of vocabulary specific to the subjects being studied. For example, pupils in Year 2 confidently explained the meaning of the term '*anthology*' when studying poetry, and in a Year 6 science lesson, almost all pupils showed a good knowledge of the different parts of a flower and confidently used terms such as '*stamen*', '*stigma*' and '*style*'. When answering teacher's questions, most pupils clearly articulate their views.
5. Skills in reading are well developed. As they move through the school pupils acquire a wide range of strategies to decipher unknown words. This begins in the Foundation Stage, where teachers are skilled in making learning enjoyable. For example, in a reception class lesson the teacher used a 'Big Book' effectively to help pupils to learn initial letter sounds and to find objects beginning with certain sounds. Techniques such as challenging children to find missing letters in words, helped to develop skills

---

<sup>2</sup> The Early Learning Goals are standards for each of the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Most children are expected to have achieved these by the time they start Year 1.

in spelling and, by the end of the lesson, higher-attaining children were able to spell simple words such as 'dog'. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils read fluently and expressively. Pupils of higher, average and lower attainment all read well, with some of the higher-attaining pupils at a level well above that expected. For instance, a higher-attaining pupil in Year 4 was on her second reading of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. She displayed excellent fluency and expression as well as a very good ability to determine the meaning of new words from their context. All of the pupils interviewed enjoyed reading, and said that they are given regular opportunities to read, either in literacy lessons or privately. However, the library skills of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are relatively underdeveloped. Year 6 pupils said that they do not use the school library very much, and Year 4 pupils have very limited knowledge of the colour-coding system for classifying books. To some extent, this occurs because books used for research about the various topics studied tend to be kept in the classrooms and, therefore, pupils have less reason to use the library.

6. Writing skills are well taught across the school, and pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills through their work in other subjects. A firm basis for the development of pupils' writing is provided in the nursery, where children are encouraged to think of themselves as writers, and to attempt their own 'writing'. Teachers are very good at developing a wide range of pupils' writing for different purposes and in different forms through all areas of the curriculum, and provide very good opportunities for pupils' imaginative writing. Key skills are well taught and good opportunities are provided for pupils to practise them. For example, pupils in a Year 5 science lesson developed their competence in the important skill of note taking by conducting research about our solar system. A particularly good feature of this lesson was the way in which pupils for whom English is not the first language were fully included in the task through the skilled help provided by an additional teacher. A good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' skills in handwriting. By the end of Year 2, pupils generally produce writing that is well formed and of consistent size, and by the end of Year 6 writing is usually fluent.
7. Results of the national tests show that most pupils with SEN or those for whom English is an additional language attain nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.
8. The impact of pupils' very good skills in literacy is seen in all subjects. For instance, pupils work with high levels of independence in subjects such as mathematics, science or history because they generally read fluently and with good understanding and are therefore more easily able to solve problems, follow instructions or conduct research. Their ability to write fluently enables them to express their thoughts clearly, for instance when describing the features of a village in a geographical study or when writing about the features of a mask as a homework assignment.

**Teaching is good or better in two-thirds of lessons. Teachers are particularly skilled in providing work that interests their pupils and helps them to sustain high levels of concentration.**

9. The good quality of teaching observed at the time of the last inspection in 1998 has been sustained. About two thirds of the lessons observed were good or better, and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed.
10. Lessons are generally very well planned, and the structure provided by this planning gives the basis for good learning to take place. In the best lessons, planning ensures

that a good balance is achieved between time for direct teaching, time for pupils to concentrate and to develop their skills, and time for learning to be reviewed. However, on some occasions teachers' introductions are too long and when this happens, opportunities to consolidate learning at the end of lessons are lost.

11. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and are good at teaching the core skills of literacy and numeracy necessary for pupils to make progress. Expectations are often high. Teachers are particularly good at developing pupils' vocabulary, and do not shy away from using technical terminology when required. They know their pupils very well, and are skilled in using information from their day-to-day observations and questioning of pupils. In lessons that are good or better, teachers use this knowledge to find the right starting point for their pupils. Work is planned at different levels around a common theme, so that the introduction is relevant to all pupils and everyone can contribute to the important plenary session at the end of lessons, when learning is reviewed. For example, the focus of a mathematics lesson for lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 was the development of pupils' skills in counting on or back in twos from different starting points. The teacher conducted the plenary through the use of a counting game in which every second number in the chosen sequence was replaced by the word 'buzz'. This technique ensured that all pupils concentrated hard, enjoyed taking part, and learned well.
12. Where teaching is good or better, teachers are often good at exciting and interesting their pupils, and use a wide range of strategies to sustain a crisp pace throughout their lessons and to keep all pupils actively involved. For instance, the use of 'Forgetty Teddy' added anticipation and enjoyment to the learning of number sequences in reception, and helped pupils to develop skills in predicting the next number in a 'number line'. While in the same lesson the use of a 'Feely Numbers' game, in which rigid plastic numbers were put inside socks for the pupils to feel, helped lower-attaining pupils to remember the correct way to form their numbers.
13. The quality of the partnership between teachers and learning support staff is another important factor contributing to the good quality of learning throughout the school. Teachers are good at ensuring that their support staff know clearly what they have to do. The skilled help given by these adults helps to ensure that the individual needs of pupils, such as those with SEN, are fully met, or that small groups of pupils are given extra help in practising skills in activities such as manipulating numbers or using computer programs.
14. The school's strategy for supporting pupils who have English as an additional language and those with SEN is highly effective and results in very good progress for these pupils. Additional teachers, who have specific responsibility for the support of English as an additional language and SEN pupils, work closely in partnership with teachers in lessons and ensure that they have the same experiences as their classmates. In addition, a bilingual learning support assistant provides good quality help for children in the Foundation Stage.
15. In almost every lesson observed, teachers' skills in managing their pupils were good or better and as a result pupils are able to concentrate on what they have to do. The very good attitudes of pupils resulting from teachers' skills in motivating them make a significant contribution to the quality of learning throughout the school.

**Pupils behave very well, standards of personal development are high, and relationships within the school are very good.**

16. The school's very effective arrangements for promoting pupils' moral and social development result in high standards of behaviour and very good relationships between pupils, a situation similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.
17. The school provides pupils with a clear moral code as the basis for behaviour, and this is carefully promoted throughout the life of the school. Adults are very good role models through their courtesy and respect for pupils and in their interest in what pupils are doing or in what they have to say. Pupils' behaviour is very good overall, and is sometimes exemplary. Pupils move about the school sensibly and show consideration for others, even when not directly supervised by adults. For example, some of the pupils in Year 2 were observed taking their lunchboxes to the school hall at the start of the school day. They did this without disturbing other classes, walking sensibly in line and following their 'leader' even though no teacher was present.
18. The school's provision for pupils' social development is very good, and pupils are friendly, polite and well mannered. The results of the high quality relationships are seen in lessons, where pupils work together very well in paired or group work, share tasks equally, and organise their work without fuss. A particularly noteworthy feature is the school council, which comprises two 'councillors' from each year group from Year 1 to Year 6, and which helps to promote pupils' understanding of social responsibility. For instance, as part of the school's involvement in the local community 'Home Zone' project, the school council recently surveyed pupils' opinions to find out what they liked and disliked about the locality. Information and communication technology skills were used in collating this information, which has now been passed on to Camden Borough Council.
19. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into all activities, and their classmates show high levels of patience and understanding of their needs. For example, these pupils were sometimes slow to answer teachers' questions, or needed considerable prompting to do so. However, others in the class waited patiently and showed appreciation of their efforts.
20. The good emphasis placed on the spiritual development of pupils also contributes strongly to the quality of behaviour and relationships, and to pupils' own perception of themselves. For instance, during an assembly for the youngest pupils celebrating black history, pupils were asked to think about a quotation from the story 'Amazing Grace': '*You can do anything you want to Grace - if you put your mind to it.*' Well-planned acts of collective worship, such as this one, give pupils very good opportunities for reflection. Pupils' work is valued and celebrated through good quality displays around the school and in weekly 'achievement assemblies'.

**The curriculum is rich and varied. Music is an exceptional strength.**

21. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, and enables pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding to be developed systematically from year to year. Very good links are made between subjects, so that pupils have regular opportunities to develop skills learned in one subject to their work in another.
22. A good programme of educational visits and high-quality experiences provided by

visitors to the school enrich the curriculum and provide valuable stimuli for pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils took part in a residential visit to a Field Study Centre in Ewhurst. This visit is an annual feature, and gives pupils very good opportunities for practical work in geography and history as well as outdoor and adventurous pursuits, which are an important element of the curriculum for physical education. Work produced as a result of this visit shows its value in developing pupils' skills in writing and their use of ICT. Visitors to the school, such as the Nigerian author Ifeoma Onyefulu, help to inspire pupils and broaden their horizons.

23. A unique and exceptional feature of the school's curriculum is the use of specialist musicians to provide instrumental tuition in violin or cello to all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 and weekly, creative 'music-making' sessions for all pupils in all classes. Evidence from video recordings of concerts and from discussions with parents shows that pupils' musical performances are of an exceptionally high standard, and are greatly appreciated. Most of the cost of the school's provision in music is met from funds carefully managed by the Eleanor Palmer School Association.
24. A strong ethos of inclusion and of respect for differences in beliefs and cultural traditions permeates all of the school's work. Pupils learn to have care and consideration for one another and to develop good skills in citizenship. Staff know their pupils very well and provide a secure environment in which all pupils flourish.

**The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher is ably supported by her hardworking and committed staff and governors.**

25. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who is ably supported by her deputy, senior staff and governors. She regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms, knows her pupils and staff well, and has a very clear view of the future development of the school. Teachers are committed to improving pupils' attainment and are good at critically analysing the impact of their teaching. There are very good relationships within the school and a strong sense of teamwork among all staff. The work of the staff is clearly guided by shared values, particularly the commitment to ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. Day-to-day routines are well managed by an efficient administrative team in the school office.
26. In common with other schools in the area, the school has had to manage a high turnover of teaching staff. This situation has been caused by a combination of circumstances beyond the control of the school, such as the high cost of local accommodation. Nonetheless, work in improving areas such as the curriculum and the assessment of pupils has proceeded at a good pace, and the pupils have continued to be well taught and to make good progress. To a large extent, this has occurred because of the commitment and professionalism of the headteacher and her senior staff, who have been willing to take on additional responsibilities.
27. A clear commitment to continuous improvement is evident in the way in which curriculum developments are managed and the very good way in which additional, specific support for pupils is carefully targeted. The members of the senior management team are very active in monitoring the quality of provision throughout the school, particularly in English, mathematics and science, and have ensured that the knowledge and skills of their colleagues are regularly updated.
28. The governing body is very well organised, and its committees enable it to provide

effective support for the school. Governors are strongly committed to the school; many have regular contact and all are kept very well informed about its work. Three members of the senior management team are also members of the governors' curriculum committee and keep governors up to date on developments. Discussions with representatives of the governors showed that they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and of its priorities for future development.

29. Financial planning is good. Funds designated for specific purposes, such as SEN, are well spent, and grants for pupils with English as an additional language are augmented from school funds. Data from the 2001-2 financial year, contained in Part C of this report, shows that the proportion of funding carried forward from the previous financial year is well in excess of what is recommended. However, governors provided clear evidence that this large surplus has been very carefully planned to fund a number of initiatives, including improvements in the provision for ICT and a building project. The building work has recently been completed, and has significantly improved the quality of the outdoor learning area for pupils in the Foundation Stage as well as providing a better link between some of the classrooms and the rest of the premises. Clear financial projections drawn up by the chair of the governors' finance committee show that the amount carried forward from year-to-year should fall to an acceptable proportion by 2004.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Some aspects of the teaching of mathematics in Years 3 to 6: in particular, the quality of marking and the way in which work in lessons is sometimes matched to pupils' abilities.**

30. Evidence from a scrutiny of samples of pupils' previously completed work shows that it is generally carefully marked, and that the marking broadly complies with the school's clear policy guidance. However, in mathematics, there is little evidence of teachers making effective use of their marking as a tool for improving pupils' work. During the course of their marking, teachers often make their own corrections of pupils' inaccurate calculations, and do not expect their pupils to correct their own work. As a result, opportunities to improve and consolidate pupils' understanding are missed. Sometimes, pupils' work is left unfinished, and therefore possible gaps in pupils' learning are not addressed.
31. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment for lessons in mathematics. These 'sets' are formed by combining two classes, such as the Year 5 and Year 6 classes, and then dividing pupils into three teaching groups. The advantage of this system is a reduction in the size of teaching groups and the range of abilities within each group. Within each set, teachers typically divide pupils into smaller groups so that work can be even more closely matched to pupils' potential. However, work in pupils' books shows that sometimes, within these small groups, and occasionally within the entire set, pupils are engaged on the same tasks and are developing the same skills even though they are from different year groups.
32. Given the quality of the monitoring systems evident in other subjects, it is likely that these shortcomings would have been previously identified had the co-ordinator for mathematics not left the school a year ago. A replacement has been difficult to find, and so responsibility for the subject has been taken on temporarily by a member of the senior management. The school has already identified mathematics as its next focus for improvement through its performance management procedures.



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

33. The school should now:

- Make better use of pupils' own corrections of their work in mathematics, and ensure that greater attention is paid to the different levels of skills expected of pupils of different ages within each ability group.
- In addition, the school needs to ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all of the information required by law.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	7	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	30	35	35	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents five percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	193
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	55

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	12	13	10
	Total	27	28	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	93 (97)	86 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	13	11	9
	Total	28	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	90 (100)	80 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	10	18	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	16	14	17
	Total	24	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (97)	82 (63)	96 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	15	14	17
	Total	23	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (87)	82 (80)	96 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	77	0	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	36	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	10	0	0
Black or Black British – African	15	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	6	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **Teachers and classes**

### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2
Average class size	27.8

### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	717,679
Total expenditure	699,366
Expenditure per pupil	2,989
Balance brought forward from previous year	88,646
Balance carried forward to next year	106,959

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	193
Number of questionnaires returned	123

### Percentage of responses in each category (rounded to the nearest whole number)

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	40	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	42	20	2	1
The teaching is good.	51	43	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	41	20	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	41	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	44	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	37	38	23	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	41	49	5	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	50	0	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	37	27	5	5

Sixty-four per cent of parents or carers returned their questionnaires

Twenty-three people attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. The views expressed at this meeting broadly reflected those found in the response to the questionnaire (above).