

INSPECTION REPORT

DITTON C of E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hough Green, Widnes

LEA area: Halton

Unique reference number: 111293

Headteacher: Mr T H Leather

Acting Headteacher: Mrs J Timmis

Reporting inspector: Mr S Hill
21277

Dates of inspection: 17th to 19th March 2003

Inspection number: 247103

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Spinney Avenue Hough Green Widnes
Postcode:	WA8 8LD
Telephone number:	0151 424 4234
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Lee
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized, voluntary controlled, Church of England primary school, catering for 195 boys and girls aged from 4 to 11. Most pupils come from the areas of Hough Green and Ditton, in Widnes. Numbers have fallen since the last inspection, because of changes in the local population. Although the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low, overall pupils' social circumstances are no better than average. All pupils have English as their home language and almost all are of white United Kingdom heritage. An average number of pupils have special educational needs, but a below-average percentage have statements. The majority of these pupils have speech or communication difficulties, or have specific learning problems (dyslexia). Pupils' attainment on entry covers a wide range, and varies from year to year, but overall is below average. This is lower than the attainment on entry at the time of the last inspection. During the current inspection, and for most of the year preceding it, the school was led by the deputy, as the headteacher was away ill.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, where pupils achieve well because of good teaching. The very positive ethos ensures that behaviour and relationships are very good. The attendance rate is high, and pupils enjoy school. Leadership and management are good, and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain good standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the school.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, form very good relationships, and behave very well.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The school is well led and managed.
- Systems to track how well pupils are doing are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing for seven-year-olds could be better.
- Assessments of how well younger pupils are doing could be more accurate, and better used to help them make progress.
- More could be done to teach pupils about the cultural diversity in modern British society.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in November 1997, improvement has been good. Standards attained by the time pupils leave, at age 11, have gone up and at a faster rate than standards nationally. The key issues identified for improvement last time have been addressed well. Standards in design and technology and in information technology have been improved. The quality of teaching has been improved, and is now good. Systems have been established to monitor teaching and learning. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed and training needs of staff have been identified. The school development plan now addresses priorities clearly, sets targets, and is linked to financial planning. Good systems have been developed to monitor pupils' attainment, although there is still a need to improve their accuracy, and their use. The quality of writing by younger pupils, however, still needs to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	A	C
mathematics	A	A	B	C
science	A	A	A*	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

A means the results were in the top 5% nationally*

Pupils in the reception class make good progress from a below average base, and most are on line to meet nationally expected standards by the time they get to Year 1, although a substantial minority will not do so.

Results of tests for seven-year-olds indicate that pupils achieve generally average standards by the end of Year 2, except in writing. Results for writing have been weak for several years, and were well below average in 2002. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are generally average for seven-year-olds, except in writing. Standards in writing are now better than last year, but are still below average.

Pupils aged eleven obtain very good results in national tests for English, mathematics and science in comparison with schools nationally, and good results overall in comparison with similar schools. In 2002, the results were particularly good in relation to how these pupils had scored in the tests they did when they were seven. Results have improved over the last few years, and at a faster rate than nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that 11 year olds continue to do well in these subjects. Current standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, and are above average in mathematics and science.

Standards in other subjects of the curriculum are generally at least in line with what is expected for all pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Inspection evidence shows that in some instances standards are above this level, such as in pupils' understanding of history in Year 6, or their skills in art in Year 3.

The school sets careful targets for 11 year olds, based on assessments of their ability, and is successful in meeting them.

Pupils' achievement during their time in school is good, as they attain much better standards at age 11 than their starting points would suggest. All pupils achieve well regardless of gender, ethnic background or ability.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils enjoy school, take a pride in their achievements, and join enthusiastically in a wide range of activities, both in and out of class.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and this strongly supports their learning. Their very good behaviour in the whole range of school situations is a significant strength of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' relationships are very positive with each other and with adults. They are kind and considerate, and will help others without any need of prompting.
Attendance	Very good. In most years attendance is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very 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. During the inspection, examples of good teaching were seen in every class, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In Years 3 to 6, about half the lessons seen were very good, and one lesson was excellent.

A particular strength of teaching is the management of pupils, based on positive relationships and clear expectations. Discipline is secure and relaxed, because pupils know what is expected of them, and they want to please their teachers. Teachers have good subject knowledge, so their explanations are clear and pupils learn efficiently. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, particularly in the oldest classes. In most lessons, great care is taken to match work to pupils' particular needs, so they make consistently good progress. In the best lessons, this is done exceptionally well. Homework is well planned, regular and helps support pupils' independence. The quality of marking is good, and in the best examples gives pupils a clear understanding of how they are doing, and how they could improve.

Lessons which, despite some strengths, were only satisfactory, tended to have too slow a pace, to have work which was too difficult for some pupils, or not to involve all pupils sufficiently.

Pupils' learning is good, and they try hard, concentrate well and take a pride in what they achieve. For the older pupils, in Years 5 and 6, a particular strength is pupils' good knowledge of their own progress, because of the high quality of teachers' marking.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The national curriculum and religious education are covered appropriately. A strength is the wide range of visits out and visitors to school, which strongly supports pupils' learning. Particularly good and effective are the unusually extensive opportunities for residential trips.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A wide range of help is provided to pupils, and the skilled support staff contribute effectively to this. Individual education plans are generally good, but vary in quality between classes. In some cases they are not sufficiently specific or detailed about what pupils need to do to make progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a significant strength of the school. Provision for social, moral and spiritual development is very good. Many aspects of cultural development are good, but there are too few opportunities to teach pupils about the diversity of cultures that constitute modern British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are looked after well on a day-to-day basis, although one or two minor health and safety issues need attention. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good, but there is a need to improve the accuracy of assessments for younger pupils, and to make better use of data to improve their progress.

The school works well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher provides a clear lead to colleagues, and has maintained an effective team in the absence of the headteacher. Work has continued to focus successfully on standards, and on the school's positive ethos. Curriculum co-ordinators lead their subjects well, and there are sound management systems to support their work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Statutory duties are carried out effectively, and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school celebrates its strengths, but also successfully identifies its weaknesses and works hard to address them.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are used well to ensure that the school makes full use of staff and resources to benefit pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • They are comfortable in approaching the school with concerns. • The school expects children to work hard and do their best. • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents do not feel well informed about how their children are getting on. • Some parents are unhappy with the homework given. • Some parents feel there is not an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A small number of parents feel the school does not work closely with them.

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. Homework is of good quality, and is well organised. The range of activities outside lessons is wide, and the provision of residential visits is exceptionally good. Information for parents is generally good, although the very short time slots for some parents' meetings are a legitimate concern. The school tries hard to work closely with parents, and is generally successful.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils attain good standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the school

1. Pupils achieve well in these basic subjects, and by the time they are eleven have attained standards that are ahead of those normally seen, because of good teaching across the whole school. Their high scores in national curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 confirm this.
2. In **English**, they are doing very well in all elements of the subject.
3. Their **speaking and listening** skills are above average and they are confident in expressing opinions and they explain their thinking clearly. They listen carefully to each other and to their teacher and contribute thoughtfully to discussions. For example, pupils in Year 6 were keen to contribute their ideas to the development of a story, showing an enthusiastic desire to use a varied and interesting vocabulary with words suggested including “hazardous”, “enchanted” and “gargantuan”. Their good listening skills help them throughout the curriculum, as they quickly understand their teachers’ explanations and follow instructions carefully, so no time is wasted.
4. In **reading**, they achieve very well, and this supports their good achievement in other subjects. They are able to deal well with written instructions and cope with quite complex texts confidently and competently. They are able to read new and complex vocabulary accurately, making good use of dictionaries to check meaning. Their good understanding is clear from the very good analytical work they do in studying a range of texts, writing about them knowledgeably, with accurate use of technical language.
5. Their **writing** skills are very good. These develop very well from a shaky start when they first go into Year 3. By Year 6 the work in their books is of a high standard. The work over the year shows that they came into Year 6 with good standards, and this basis has been securely built upon to come to their current very good levels. All pupils write in a legible joined script, showing an imaginative range of ideas expressed clearly, suiting the style to the purpose of the work. The vast majority of these do so fluently, and are able to get their ideas down on paper quickly and accurately. Their writing in subjects such as science or design and technology shows that they handle a variety of styles and genres well.
6. In **mathematics**, almost all pupils are gaining the expected standard, with a large proportion likely to exceed this. A small group of pupils is unlikely to reach the expected standard by the end of the year, because they struggle to work quickly enough to succeed in the timed test situation. However, they are given good support in class and they generally come to a sound understanding of the topics they study. This is because of the skilled extra help they receive, and from the provision of easier work, which helps them make good progress in line with their abilities. A significant group of pupils is working at a level higher than that expected for 11 year olds. For example, by the end of a very good lesson seen during the inspection, a large proportion showed a secure understanding of the internal angle sum of a triangle. A large percentage of pupils are confident and competent in multiplying and dividing whole numbers and decimals by 10,100 or 1000. Most have a secure understanding of negative numbers and can add and subtract them in a relevant context, such as temperature.
7. In **science**, pupils attain good standards, and do particularly well in their investigative and practical skills because of the high priority given to this throughout the school. They are confident in carrying out practical work, and write about it effectively, showing a good understanding of what they have done and its implications. They have a good understanding of a fair test, because this is taught well from an early stage. Pupils in Year 2 can already discuss the fairness of a test with help from an adult, and this is thoroughly consolidated and built upon as they progress through the

school. In a lesson observed with 11 year olds, they drew on their previous scientific knowledge to make predictions, and to suggest reasons for what they had observed. They showed a very secure understanding of how to plan an investigation, with the fairness of the test featuring prominently in their thinking. Their scientific knowledge about air was good, with pupils able to say that air was an invisible gas and that it contained oxygen, which is important for life, and they could explain the concept of air resistance.

Teaching and learning are good

8. A particular strength of teaching is the consistently positive working atmosphere that is maintained in classes throughout the school. This is strongly supported by the clear expectations which teachers have of pupils' behaviour and standards. Pupils take these aims on board well, and come to have similarly high expectations of their own behaviour and that of their classmates, and to want to do well in their work. The very positive relationships that exist with their teachers support this strength. Teachers praise good work and behaviour, while calmly but firmly dealing with any behaviour that falls short of the school's high standards.
9. Teachers respond positively to pupils' ideas and suggestions, and often incorporate them into the lesson. Because they know their ideas are valued, pupils are willing to be imaginative and to try to answer difficult questions. They contribute thoughtfully and enthusiastically in lessons and try hard to explain their ideas and how they have worked things out. This improves their thinking skills, their speaking skills, and teachers' positive response to their hard work boosts their self-esteem.
10. The high quality of marking also supports pupils' desire to do well. This is a particular strength for the older pupils. Teachers, by both their written marking, and their discussions with pupils about their work, make it clear how they are doing. Pupils are told what makes their good work successful, and are challenged to make it better by clear pointers about where it is still lacking. Pupils, particularly the older ones, have a good understanding of how well they are doing, and respond to this very positively, because they know their success is valued. They like and respect their teachers, so they are keen to gain their approval and try hard to attain high standards.
11. A feature of most lessons is the accuracy with which teachers match the work to pupils' differing needs. Work is planned to build carefully on what pupils have previously learned. For those who struggle with their work, easier tasks are provided, or extra support from adults is used to help them succeed. For higher-flying pupils, expectations are correspondingly higher, and more challenging or difficult work is provided. In the best lessons, this is done exceptionally well. This was exemplified by an excellent lesson in Year 5, when pupils made tremendous progress in their understanding of narrative poetry. All pupils were fully included, and the teacher ensured that all were given work that was challenging for their individual abilities.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, form very good relationships, and behave very well

12. Pupils enjoy school and take a pride in their achievements. They know that their work is valued and they try hard to reach high standards. In class, they concentrate well and get on with their work with minimal supervision when appropriate. This is partly because of the clear expectations of their teachers, but also because they are genuinely interested in their work. For example, in a very good literacy lesson, Year 3 pupils were totally involved in a writing task, because their imagination had been captured by the teachers' enthusiasm for expressive use of language. The high quality of some of the phrases they included to describe a mystical garden, ("overcrowded with crystal flowers" "a perfect, enchanted, bronze swing") reflected their hard work and the immense thought they had put into it.
13. Behaviour is at least good from the start of the school, and improves further as pupils get older. In reception, they come happily into class, settle quickly and join in lessons with confidence and

enthusiasm. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently very good. Pupils are polite and respectful to their teachers and to other adults, and treat each other with kindness and consideration. They collaborate effectively when required, such as when pupils in Years 1 and 2 worked in pairs to plan a science investigation, or shared computers in a lesson about researching information. In the latter, they took turns amicably, and gave each other help and advice where needed. This meant that they made good progress in their understanding of how to find information, as well as sharpening their skills in using the computer. Pupils come into assemblies quietly, and behave well throughout. They pay careful attention to what is going on, join in enthusiastically in singing, and show due reverence when asked to reflect on issues, or to join in with a prayer.

14. All this, and the good progress they make, is strongly supported by the very good relationships that they have with each other and with adults in the school. This pervades all lessons. The positive working atmosphere and the friendly and orderly way things are done not only contribute to pupils' learning, but make the classroom a happy environment where pupils develop socially as well as intellectually. Pupils in Year 2, for example, told inspectors that all the children in school were friendly, and that their teachers made their learning fun. They showed enthusiasm for a whole range of aspects of school life. Pupils in Year 6 showed similar enthusiasm for their work, as well as a very good understanding of the subject, when they discussed what they had learned in history.

Provision for pupils' personal development is very good

15. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on and think about a range of issues, both in assemblies and in class. The hushed atmosphere at the start of assemblies helps pupils to gain a sense of occasion, to which they respond with due reverence.
16. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The routine work done in classes to promote good behaviour and to ensure good relationships is very successful. Pupils are given minor responsibilities from an early age, and these increase as they get older, both formally and informally. On an informal level, older pupils all understand that they have a responsibility to care for each other and for younger pupils. Positive re-enforcement from all staff helps to maintain this positive ethos. More formally, older pupils take their role in the recently introduced School Council very seriously and work hard to fulfil this. They are very successful, and younger pupils are all very clear about who their representatives are, and report that they are consulted properly and their views taken seriously. The adults respond very positively to issues raised, discussing them with the Council members, and changing procedures where this is appropriate. At the moment, for example, all those concerned are consulting about possible changes in how the playgrounds are used. A good range of extra curricular activities gives pupils good opportunities to take part in the community of the school in different social contexts. Pupils' social development is also greatly enhanced by the wide range of trips out, of visitors to school and, in particular, by the many opportunities to take part in residential visits. Pupils respond enthusiastically to these opportunities, and in conversation can recall many elements of their trips with affection, and often recall in detail what they have learned.
17. Pupils' moral development is enhanced particularly by the consistent approach of the staff to such issues. A variety of moral topics is tackled in assemblies and in lessons, and a clear moral code is taught. Pupils are successfully encouraged to think through the reasons for what they do, and to consider carefully the thinking behind the rules for appropriate behaviour. They come to a good understanding of right and wrong as they progress through the school. Whenever there are minor disputes, teachers take the opportunity to re-inforce pupils' moral understanding, by getting them to think through their actions and discuss what should happen.

The school is well led and managed

18. The staff work together very effectively as a team, under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher, with able support from her acting deputy. Staff and governors share a clear educational purpose, which is jointly focussed on standards of attainment and on pupils' personal development. In the absence of the headteacher, this focus has been maintained well, with all concerned working together to maintain the high pastoral standards of the school, and to improve the academic standards. The school has been successful in both. Leadership and management since the last inspection have been good overall, resulting in good improvement since then.
19. The establishment of systematic procedures for monitoring teaching and standards, and the role of the subject co-ordinators in this, have been instrumental in many of the improvements in the school. Co-ordinators now have a good grip on what is happening in their subjects in different classes, and are clear about what needs doing to build on strengths and to make improvements. Monitoring of teaching is now routine, so that improvements have been made based on helpful analysis from colleagues. The systems established have enabled the relevant co-ordinators to lead colleagues in improving standards in DT and ICT, for example, both much improved since the last inspection. The procedures are now well established, and teachers who were new to their roles, after recent changes in the allocation of responsibilities, were quickly able to function effectively, and ensure that support to colleagues continued to be good.
20. Governors have sound systems to help them in their role and they carry out their duties conscientiously and effectively. A particular strength is the involvement of many of them in school on a day-to-day basis so that their systems are backed up by a secure knowledge of what is involved. It was noticeable that the attendance of the governors at the pre-inspection meeting was good, and that one governor who was not there was away helping with a Year 5 residential visit that night.
21. The principles of best value are well established and used well to ensure that the school is successful. Good use is made of assessment data to compare achievement with that in other schools, and effective action taken to address any weaknesses, such as the quality of writing at age seven. The views of all the school community are taken into account. Governors and staff are fully consulted in any major decisions. Parents are also consulted, though less formally; for example a straw poll was taken before deciding to make available, at a fee, professional football coaching to pupils. Pupils are now able to voice their views effectively through the School Council. Care is taken to ensure that quality and price are considered when significant purchases are made, or contracts awarded. The care taken in the allocation of a contract for maintenance of computers was a good example of this. The school has a very clear rationale for decisions it makes about what it does. For example, governors and staff are all clear that the wide programme of educational visits is undertaken for social as well as academic reasons.
22. The key to success has been the school's willingness to analyse its practice and its results, and to take action where problems are seen. For example, the two main issues identified for development by the inspection, assessment and writing, had already been identified by the school, and work started to try to make improvements.

Systems to track how well pupils are doing are very good

23. The school is continually seeking to improve its systems for recording and analysing information about pupils' needs related to their academic performance. Good use is made of information and communications technology to support this process. Consequently, the school has devised a very efficient tracking system which is used very effectively to set challenging targets for pupils' achievement and monitor their progress towards them. Monitoring typically includes lesson observations, and the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils' individual targets to be attained each term are based on their achievement in work undertaken at the end of the previous term, and on a variety of test

results. Termly targets, based on assessment, are set for children's development during the early years, for mathematics and English during the infant years and English, mathematics and science for pupils in the juniors. The school responds quickly to pupils who progress less well than expected, by providing very good support within classes and a wide range of extra lessons for literacy and numeracy. Data analysis to identify how to improve the curriculum and raise standards in the three main subjects is a key tool for senior managers. Suitable modifications to the curriculum are made to address any problems identified, such as recent changes to the approach to writing for six and seven-year-olds. The school recognises that pupils who do not attain well are pupils who have had a special educational need for much of their school life. The school has used this information well to extend provision for them, so that many reach national expectations by the end of the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing for seven-year-olds could be better

24. Standards in writing are below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Results of national tests show that for a few years this aspect of pupils' achievement has been consistently weaker than their achievement in mathematics, or in reading. A significant factor is that pupils are relatively slow to develop the use of joined writing. As a result, many younger pupils struggle to get their thoughts down onto paper as fluently and quickly as they need. This weakness remains to some extent in Years 3 and 4, where many pupils still do not routinely join their writing, and so still lack fluency.
25. Most younger pupils correctly observe the conventions in using capital letters and full stops, but do not routinely take opportunities to include more complex punctuation, such as question marks, in their 'free' writing. More able pupils incorporate descriptive phrases in well structured stories but often the same words are repeated instead of selecting alternative words to create variety and interest. A further issue that affects progress is that the assessments made of younger pupils' attainment are not as accurate as they should be. This means that, despite the good tracking systems, because targets are sometimes based on inaccurate data, they are not always appropriate. Some improvements have been made to the provision for writing in Years 1 and 2, and this has resulted in some benefit to standards, despite the fact that a third of the pupils in the current Year 2 have special educational needs. The various weaknesses above mean that pupils' progress in writing during their time in the infants is only satisfactory, from their low base on entry, despite the good teaching that the school generally provides.

Assessments of how well younger pupils are doing could be more accurate, and better used to help them make progress

26. The school is aware that they often assess younger pupils too cautiously to offer enough challenge in teaching and learning to higher attaining pupils. For several years previous to this inspection the assessment of pupils' ability on entry to the school was less reliable than at the present time. Work to improve this has been successfully undertaken over the last year, and improvements made. Differences between teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2, and the results of national tests have been greater than average. Inspectors also identified inaccuracies in some aspects of how current pupils in Years 1 and 2 are being assessed. Professional development has now been arranged to improve accuracy in identifying pupils' attainment, particularly at the end of Year 2.
27. Insufficient time is currently allocated to parents to fully inform them of their child's individual termly targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy, and to discuss how they could assist their child at home towards these. Although teachers use good practice to identify group targets to inform their teaching these are not sufficiently shared with pupils to involve them more in their own learning.

More could be done to teach pupils about cultural diversity in modern British society

28. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn about various aspects of local culture, and to learn about a variety of facets of western European culture, such as the artists studied in art and design, or the composers whose work is covered in music. In addition, there is some useful work done to teach pupils about some aspects of cultures in distant countries, such as the interesting link with a school in Kenya. However, there is relatively little attention paid to the current diverse range of cultures in the United Kingdom. Not a great deal is done in terms of studying traditions or different places of worship in this country, for example, or of how life is lived in other, relatively nearby parts of England. At the moment, the variety of visits out and visitors to the school that help pupils' so effectively with their learning in a range of topics, makes little contribution to this aspect of their understanding. There are no links, for example, with other local schools that are less mono-cultural than Ditton. The school is aware of this relative shortcoming, and is considering how provision can be improved.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build upon the present good provision the school should:-

1. Improve the standard of pupils' writing at age seven, in line with the school's current priorities by:-
 - a. Making an earlier start in getting pupils to join their writing.
 - b. More consistently stressing to pupils the importance of using joined writing.
 - c. Making more accurate use of assessments to set challenging work for pupils in their writing.
 - d. Sharing targets for improvement more effectively with parents and with pupils.

2. Make better use of the very good assessment systems, as is already planned, by:-
 - a. Improving the accuracy of the assessment of children's attainment when they first enter school.
 - b. Improving the accuracy of assessments made of pupils' attainment as they progress through the infants.
 - c. Making use of the expertise of the Local Education Authority to help moderate assessments.
 - d. Ensuring that the results of assessments, and consequent targets for pupils to improve, are shared more fully and frequently with pupils and their parents.

3. Improve pupils' understanding of the range of cultures in modern British society by:-
 - a. Including provision for this in different aspects of the curriculum.
 - b. Taking advantage of any visits or visitors that are available that could contribute to pupils' understanding.
 - c. Investigating whether links could be set up with schools whose pupils come from a different range of cultures than those in Ditton.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	8	5	0	0	0
Percentage	6	22	44	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

195

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

1

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

40

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

9

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

0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	22	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (79)	76 (79)	93 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (79)	79 (94)	79 (97)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	22	21	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	20	22
	Girls	18	16	21
	Total	37	36	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (95)	84 (85)	100 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	22
	Girls	19	17	21
	Total	39	37	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (93)	86 (88)	100 (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	170	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	23	0	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.98
Average class size	27.57

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	79

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	2002-3
	£
Total income	456051
Total expenditure	480263
Expenditure per pupil	2172
Balance brought forward from previous year	42747
Balance carried forward to next year	18535

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	195
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	40	1	4	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	39	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	49	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	58	37	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	50	17	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	27	2	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	38	41	11	1	9
The school is well led and managed.	50	37	4	4	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	37	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	36	17	5	0