

INSPECTION REPORT

MALDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Maldon

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114806

Headteacher: Mr. Robin Taverner

Reporting inspector: Alison M. Cartlidge
OIN23609

Dates of inspection: 27th –28th January 2003

Inspection number: 247494

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wantz Chase Maldon Essex
Postcode:	CM95DQ
Telephone number:	01621 853409
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Joyce Woodham
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the town of Maldon in Essex. It has 404 pupils between the ages of four and eleven on roll. There are fourteen classes, each with one age group and pupils from Years 2 to 6 are taught in sets organised according to their abilities in English and mathematics. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average at twenty-one per cent. Pupils come to the school from a mix of privately owned and rented housing with a high number of pupils coming from families with low incomes. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average with the attainment of boys being particularly weak. The number of girls and boys in some year groups is very unbalanced causing significant variations in test results. The total number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is greater than at the time of the last inspection although at twenty per cent this remains broadly in line with the national average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need and this figure is also broadly average. A few pupils in each class have been identified as having specific behavioural difficulties. Four per cent of pupils have English as an additional language and this is a greater number than in most schools.

The school has had a number of changes in teaching staff in the past two years with almost half being new and it is situated in an area where it is difficult to recruit experienced members of staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Maldon Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. Good quality teaching enables pupils to learn quickly and to achieve well. The relaxed and friendly atmosphere evident in the school is greatly enhanced by the calm management style of the headteacher and his high profile in and around the building. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, with National Curriculum test results being high at the end of Year 6 in 2002.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, enabling members of staff and governors to work effectively.
- Pupils attain good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The provision for children in the reception year is very good.
- Very effective support is given to pupils with special educational needs.
- There are very high levels of support, care and guidance for pupils and their parents.

What could be improved

- The challenge for more able pupils in science.
- The balance of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

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 very good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Pupils' achievement has improved in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school continues to develop despite many changes in teaching staff. The quality of teaching is now good overall and there is a well thought out programme for professional development to support members of staff as they join the school. The organisation of pupils into ability sets for English and mathematics is now effective. Governors and subject co-ordinators have developed their roles and increased their responsibilities making leadership and management effective.

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	D	C	B	A
Mathematics	C	B	A	A*
Science	B	B	A	A

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

Test results vary from year to year at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 depending on attainment on entry and the number of pupils identified as having behavioural difficulties or special educational needs. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress overall and this can be seen when comparing test data as pupils move through the school. In 2002, Year 6 was an exceptionally good year group and the school was in the top five per cent in mathematics in National Curriculum tests when compared with similar schools. The current Year 6 is not as strong and is on target to be in line with national averages in English and mathematics. Whilst Year 6 pupils achieved well in science tests in 2002, inspection findings show that higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress in developing skills in devising their own investigations and recording their findings.

In 2002, pupils at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The present Year 2 is on target to achieve the national averages in English and mathematics and all are making good progress. Children in the reception classes make good progress and are on target to attain the nationally recognised early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Particular strengths in attainment throughout the school are reading, mental mathematics and ICT. There are some examples of good quality artwork displayed around the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well enabling them to make good progress. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils are included in school life whatever their need or background. The school sets challenging targets for pupils at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. These targets were exceeded in 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Most pupils are happy at school, work hard and are keen to take part in extra-curricular activities. However, some pupils do not take sufficient care in the presentation of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils are polite and friendly and most behave well. Those who have been identified as having specific behavioural difficulties are usually managed well. However, on occasions they are inattentive and can disrupt the pace of learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils co-operate well when working in pairs or small groups and most play together harmoniously. Older pupils act as playground 'buddies' to support other pupils when needed.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Rates of attendance have recently improved due to the diligence of the school in monitoring absences and lateness.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 throughout the school. Teachers share the purpose of each lesson with the pupils and encourage them to help set targets for improvement, enabling them to become involved in their own learning. Members of staff are skilled at managing the pupils' behaviour, including those who have been identified as being particularly challenging. This means that in most lessons, pupils learn quickly. A wide range of good quality resources is used to make learning interesting. A good mix of activities helps to maintain the pupils' interest and the pace of learning. ICT is used effectively to support learning across the curriculum.

A particular strength in the reception year is the way the teachers and nursery nurses use questioning to encourage children to think about and discuss what they are learning. In English and mathematics throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and the use of ability sets means that pupils are challenged well. In English, teachers mark pupils' work well and include comments that will help pupils to develop. However, these comments are not always followed up to ensure that the improvements indicated have been made. Marking in mathematics and science is of limited value in supporting learning.

The quality of teachers' lesson planning varies and this means that in some lessons there is insufficient indication of how higher attaining pupils are going to extend their knowledge and learning further than other pupils. In addition, pupils' written work is sometimes the same irrespective of ability. This is particularly noticeable in science where higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged.

Overall, pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and good provision is made for those with English as an additional language. A high number of competent teaching assistants provide valuable support in lessons and when working with small groups on specific tasks.

In one in six lessons, where teaching was very good, the differing needs of pupils were met particularly effectively and pupils learnt very quickly. In the one unsatisfactory lesson and the few occasions when teaching was not as effective, activities were less well organised and pupils were not managed to the usual high standard, slowing the pace of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. There is a very well planned, balanced and relevant curriculum for children in the reception year. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective. There is an extensive range of clubs for older pupils, including opportunities for personal study. However, the balance of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 means that time for subjects other than English and mathematics is limited and the timing of some additional support means that in some classes a few pupils miss the start of the same lessons each week.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils receive a generous amount of valuable additional support and provision is managed very effectively. Pupils with specific social difficulties are guided very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are given helpful additional support from external agencies and from teachers and teaching assistants in lessons.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is developed well. Assemblies are used effectively to help pupils develop worthwhile values and teachers support pupils well by respecting their points of view and listening to their ideas and suggestions during lessons and at class and school council meetings.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for pupils' protection and welfare are managed very well. Clear rules and the good knowledge teachers have of the pupils' personal needs, enables them to monitor behaviour effectively. Very good procedures for monitoring attendance and pupils' personal development have a good impact on raising attainment.

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 a clear direction for the work of the school and is very effective in enabling all members of staff to develop their responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive of the school and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school analyses test data to help identify what needs to be developed next and monitors teaching and learning effectively. However, written evaluations do not always show sufficiently clearly what impact developments have had on raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Spending is carefully focused on areas of greatest need and specific grants are used effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well by comparing its performance and spending with other schools. A large carry forward in the budget has been used effectively to provide additional teaching support and monitoring.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like school, are expected to work hard and make good progress • Teaching is good and members of staff are approachable • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on pupils' progress • The range of activities outside lessons • How closely the school works with them

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school provides good information on pupils' progress by sharing individual targets in English and mathematics with parents in addition to providing annual reports and parents' consultation evenings. There is a good range of activities for older pupils including breakfast and homework clubs and the school works hard at involving parents with all aspects of school life.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, with National Curriculum test results being high at the end of Year 6 in 2002.

1. Since 1998, there has been a very good improvement in National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6. In 2002, the school achieved its best ever results with pupils' attainment being well above average in mathematics and above average in English. In English, results were better in reading than in writing. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was very high in mathematics and well above average in English. Results in mathematics placed the school amongst the top 5% of similar schools.
2. Test results confirm that progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 was very good in mathematics and good in English for pupils taking the tests in 2002. This is supported by inspection findings, which show that pupils continue to make at least good progress overall in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics. Pupils are benefiting from the generally good quality teaching and the effective organisation of year groups into ability sets. This means that differing needs are being met effectively in English and mathematics.
3. The current Year 6 is not on target to achieve the same high test results that were evident in Year 6 in 2002. This year group has a greater number of boys than girls as well as a higher than usual number of less able pupils. There are also some pupils who have been identified as having specific behavioural problems. Although teachers manage their challenging behaviour effectively in lessons, because of their particular needs, these pupils are less attentive and learn less quickly than other pupils. Nevertheless, inspection findings confirm that pupils are making good progress overall, with attainment being broadly average in English and mathematics.
4. In the current Year 6, pupils are attaining particularly well in reading and in mental arithmetic. Pupils read with good levels of confidence and are skilful at working out mental calculations and explaining the strategy that they have used in mathematics. These good quality skills in reading and mental mathematics are evident in other year groups and represent an important improvement since the last inspection, when pupils lacked confidence in solving mathematical problems and explaining their calculations.
5. When compared with national averages, National Curriculum test scores are lower at the end of Year 2. Nevertheless, a comparison of these results with pupils' attainment at the start of the reception year shows that progress over that time has been at least good overall. Data supplied by the local authority show that progress from starting school to the end of Year 2 was very good in reading and mathematics and good in writing. Inspection findings confirm that progress is especially good in the reception year and Year 2, where teaching is most effective. Pupils' progress has improved in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory overall in mathematics and good in only some aspects of English.

The headteacher provides very good leadership, enabling members of staff and governors to work effectively.

6. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and works closely with other members of staff and the governing body to bring about improvements. The school is successful in its aims to help pupils discover a love for learning and a thirst for knowledge, at the same time as ensuring that standards are rising. The relaxed and friendly atmosphere evident in the school is greatly enhanced by the calm management style of the headteacher and his high profile in and around the school. His honest and open approach towards dealing with difficulties has enabled

pupils, parents, governors and members of staff to develop trust in him and each other. Leadership and management have improved considerably since the last inspection when they required some improvement. At that time the present headteacher had been in post for two weeks.

7. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators carry out a thorough evaluation of the school's current position in all subjects and aspects of school life. However, the positive impact that changes have had on attainment and progress are not reflected clearly in written reports to help the school build on successful strategies when planning future developments. Members of staff and the governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Test data are regularly analysed to identify where developments are needed most. Most parents agree that the school is led and managed well.
8. An enthusiastic senior management team works together effectively and meets regularly to discuss academic and pastoral developments. There is a strong emphasis on making the school a happy place for pupils and members of staff and in valuing everyone's contributions. Clearly defined roles ensure that the school runs smoothly.
9. The monitoring of teaching and learning is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision and to take action when necessary. For example, the deputy headteacher, who does not have responsibility for a class, works alongside other members of staff and enables subject co-ordinators to be released from teaching to fulfil their responsibilities. In addition this arrangement has provided the flexibility for teachers to share their good practice with each other. Arrangements for professional development have greatly improved since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. Training is now closely related to the needs of the school or individual members of staff and the system of performance management includes all members of staff, not just the teachers. The high turnover of teachers in the last two years has been managed successfully, despite the school's being in an area where the recruitment of experienced staff is a difficulty. Effective induction procedures ensure that members of staff are supported well and feel valued.
10. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been greatly extended since the time of the last inspection when there was a lack of subject monitoring. Each co-ordinator takes the initiative in drawing up an action plan for the subject, is responsible for managing his/her own budget and ensures that developments take place according to plan. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the strengths and weaknesses within the subjects they manage.
11. The governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection with an increase in its knowledge of the school through frequent visits and a more rigorous monitoring of aspects of the school's work such as finances and test data. The school plans to involve governors in the next major review of the school improvement plan. They already make appropriate arrangements for discussing developments at each meeting.
12. Neither the governing body nor members of staff are complacent. There is a very strong commitment to improve the work of the school and pupils' achievement further. The school development plan has been improved since the last inspection and focuses clearly on raising standards. Whilst there is a clear understanding amongst governors and members of staff of the main priorities for the coming year this is not made clear in the written plan.
13. A large carry forward within the budget has been used successfully to support the monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning. Information and communication technology is used effectively by all members of staff to monitor the school's work.

Pupils attain good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

14. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was identified as being satisfactory. Since that time, there have been very good improvements in the way that pupils are taught skills. As a result, pupils' attainment is now above average.
15. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a well-resourced ICT suite. This is used effectively to support learning. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special

educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum by carefully planning the use of the ICT suite and other resources. They give pupils good opportunities to use their ICT skills in lessons at times other than when they are working in the ICT suite. This means that skills are quickly consolidated, ensuring that the pace of learning is good. During the inspection, there were many examples of teachers using the computers in the classrooms to practise skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 practised identifying tens and units using a numeracy programme. In Year 6, a teaching assistant worked with a group of lower attaining pupils, helping them to order fractions. This ICT activity was well linked to other activities going on in the class at the same time.

16. The quality of teaching is now good in ICT and pupils' progress is supported well throughout the school. Lessons in the ICT suite are well organised. Nationally funded training has ensured that teachers have a secure subject knowledge and they prepare well for lessons. Members of staff work hard to make learning relevant by planning practical and purposeful activities for ICT. As a result, pupils are very motivated and show very good levels of concentration. They are encouraged to work co-operatively and to support each other when necessary, especially when one of them has a problem.
17. The quality of curriculum planning for ICT has improved significantly and it shows how skills are to be developed as pupils get older. This clear progression is evident in the work seen around school. In the reception class, pupils show good skills. They use various art programmes to draw different sorts of pictures such as winter scenes. Pupils know how to log on and off a programme and carefully shut down the computer at the end of a lesson. Pupils in Year 2 use the keyboard and mouse confidently to draw different shapes and to produce symmetrical patterns. They word process confidently, for example when writing 'winter' poems and are beginning to use clip art to incorporate pictures into their written work.
18. By Year 4, these skills have been extended significantly. In this year group, pupils produce interesting pieces of writing, using clip art and different styles of text to make their work attractive to the reader. For example, they produce good quality and well presented reports on events in Ancient Egypt, with titles such as 'Terrible things happened in Egypt'.
19. By Years 5 and 6, pupils use a good range of skills. They use a wide range of word-processing techniques, varying text size, font style and colour according to the intended audience. For example, they used word processing confidently by producing good quality evaluations of their work in design and technology, combining text with photographs that they have taken using a digital camera.
20. Pupils have a good understanding of how computers can be used to present information in different ways. In Year 6, pupils make power-point presentations showing how seeds are dispersed. Pupils are making very good progress in presenting data clearly and making calculations quickly by selecting appropriate data-handling programmes and spreadsheets. For example, they produce spreadsheets showing the cost of various items and then add formulae to find total and average costs.

The provision for children in the reception year is very good.

21. The two teachers responsible for the reception year work together very effectively to plan a varied and exciting curriculum. Long-term plans ensure that all areas of learning are covered equally well during the year and enable children to make good progress. Topics are chosen to interest young children such as a project on teddy bears, and learning is made fun and relevant. There is a very good mix of child initiated and teacher led activities. Where possible activities are practical so that children learn through the use of meaningful play. For example, children developed their knowledge of how pushing and pulling causes objects to move by working outside with various wheeled vehicles, by manipulating play dough and by making pop-up toys.
22. Very good use is made of a fenced outdoor area to extend children's learning and children have access to this area most of the day. This means that children can be relaxed and concentrate well

when working with an adult because they have very good opportunities to work freely and 'let off steam' at other times. Learning outside includes all aspects of the curriculum. For example, one teacher played a shape recognition game with children by chalking a grid on the ground and on another occasion children improved their physical control by manoeuvring vehicles around an obstacle course.

23. Effective use is made of the playhouse to develop the children's imaginations and creativity. For example, a play hospital provided good opportunities for children to 'write' about their illnesses to show the doctor and to make get well cards. Members of staff were successful in encouraging an equal number of girls and boys to take part in lively and quiet activities. The children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills effectively. For example, they make up lines for a fun song about animals such as 'a crocodile is very snappy' and describe their teddy bear to other children in the class 'it has a cute nose and a purple scarf'. Children improve their creative skills further by painting pictures of their teddies and by tie-dyeing fabric to make bed covers for the 'Three Bears'.
24. The nursery nurse and teaching assistants are skilful and used effectively to support individuals or groups of children. For example, a nursery nurse worked with a small group playing a game to extend the children's sight vocabulary and the teaching assistant played 'lotto' with a group of children who were learning the numbers to six.
25. The quality of teaching is consistently good and a particular strength is the way members of staff ask questions encouraging children to think about what they are doing and to discuss their work. For example, when one teacher was helping children to find the tallest teddy she asked 'how did you find out?' so that the child needed to discuss the measuring process. The very good relationships that exist between members of staff and the children mean that the children develop social skills very quickly and become calm and confident when exploring tasks or speaking to the rest of their class. The children's attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are consistently good. Instructions are given very clearly and this means that children understand tasks and routines well. All members of staff remember to promote key vocabulary to help build the children's knowledge. Activities are well thought out to add interest such as adding mystery to learning the order of numbers by hiding some numbers and comparing lengths of paper by finding children holding the same length.
26. Information and communication technology is given a high profile in the curriculum and children are confident when manipulating the mouse to use the computer and when operating remote controlled cars. Resources in the classrooms are accessible to the children and labelled clearly enabling them to take part in putting resources away at the ends of sessions.
27. Very good assessment procedures enable members of staff to monitor the children's personal and academic progress and to plan effectively for their future needs. Members of staff are constantly noting what children have learnt and asking questions to check they have understood. The very good curriculum and good teaching means that children achieve well in all areas of learning.

Very effective support is given to pupils with special educational needs.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection when it was found to be good. Parents are very positive about the school's special educational needs provision and inspection findings support these views.
29. The school places a very strong emphasis on supporting pupils who have special educational needs, allocating a higher than usually found amount of its budget to provision. For example, there is a full time special educational needs co-ordinator, as well as a high number of teaching assistants who work specifically with lower attaining pupils. These are key factors in the very high quality of provision that is provided by the school.
30. The school is fortunate to have a full time, rather than part-time, special educational needs co-

ordinator because it means that support can be immediate and she is always available to give advice. The co-ordinator makes very effective use of her time, dividing it between working with individuals and groups of pupils and observing and assessing individual pupils. The special educational needs programme is very well managed and this ensures that needs are met well. The co-ordinator has been very pro-active in improving provision, being innovative in her implementation of new ideas and thorough in her planning of support.

31. The school uses an imaginative range of strategies to support pupils with special educational needs. There are weekly social skill lessons for small groups of pupils who have been identified as having particular problems in behaving well at lunch times or playtimes. In these sessions, pupils are learning how to play new playground games such as hopscotch and are taught different strategies for coping with difficult situations. For example, the teacher talked to them about what they should do if someone interrupts a game that they are playing. Similarly, pupils who have poor handwriting skills are given additional support through 'finger gym' sessions when they play a range of games designed to improve their hand-eye co-ordination and their ability to manipulate small objects. Both the social skills and finger gym sessions have a good impact on learning, helping to boost self-esteem and improving basic skills.
32. Teaching assistants give good quality support both in lessons and when pupils are withdrawn to work individually or in small groups. Work is closely linked to targets identified in the excellent individual education plans, which identify very clearly what pupils are expected to achieve in the short-term. Teaching assistants are well trained in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Particularly noteworthy is the recent training of a teaching assistant to provide speech and language support to individual pupils. This programme of training means that the school is able to provide additional support that is not normally readily available in most schools.
33. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from the grouping of pupils by ability for lessons in English and mathematics. This is particularly successful in Year 6, where there is a third 'set' for the lowest attaining pupils. In these lessons, work is very closely matched to pupils' needs, enabling them to make at least good progress.
34. The school works very well with the support services provided by the local authority and parents are provided with detailed information about the needs of their children. There is a very good attendance rate at reviews of progress. Both pupils and parents are encouraged to contribute fully to reviewing how well targets have been achieved and what needs to be the next area of focus. The school has made a conscious decision to allow all members of staff who are working with a pupil to attend these review sessions. This is good practice, which means that reviews can be made on the basis of all available information.
35. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. Individual records are very thorough and give very good levels of information. Ongoing assessments are made of pupils, and the special needs co-ordinator spends a considerable amount of time monitoring and assessing progress by working alongside pupils in their classrooms. She has implemented systematic procedures for tracking pupils' progress over time and for identifying where more support is needed. There is a very effective method for monitoring pupils' progress towards achieving targets identified on individual education plans. These records show very clearly how well pupils' have achieved and whether there is any pupil who is consistently underachieving. When this happens, the co-ordinator uses this information to review provision and, where necessary, alter the levels of support that are provided.
36. There is a strong emphasis placed on identifying needs as early as possible and the co-ordinator encourages members of staff to raise concerns as soon as they arise. This means that difficulties can be addressed quickly before they necessarily become a major problem.

There are very high levels of support, care and guidance for pupils and their parents.

37. The school is very successful in helping pupils feel happy and secure at school, ensuring that they

- develop good levels of self-esteem. Very close links are established between home and school.
38. The headteacher and members of staff value parents' support. They work hard to break down the barriers between home and school and they do all they can to encourage parents to become fully involved in the education of their children. They are largely successful in achieving this aim. Parents are very happy with the work of the school and they support it well. This was demonstrated by the generally positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaires.
 39. Parents report that they feel welcome in school and they find the headteacher and other members of staff to be very friendly and approachable. Parents are very appreciative of the headteacher's openness and the school has very good systems for monitoring and dealing with concerns when parents raise them.
 40. Homework is used effectively to help parents to support their children at home. Provision is carefully planned and includes some useful additional features such as the 'maths bags', which give practical support to both pupils and parents. Homework 'logs' are sent home each day and give an immediate method of communication between home and school. This is helpful for parents who do not bring their children to school. Well-organised breakfast and homework clubs provide valuable support for busy parents.
 41. The school makes great efforts to actively support parents to improve their own skills. There have been training courses for parents on how to handle behavioural problems at home as well as curriculum evenings and support groups on subjects such as numeracy and literacy. A recently established parents' 'chat club', meets in the school every half-term. These meetings give parents an opportunity to get together and talk about issues that concern them. There is a good programme of visiting speakers for the 'chat club' who talk to parents on various subjects. Parents who attend the 'chat club' report that they find it very worthwhile and feel that it has helped to develop home-school links significantly.
 42. The school communicates efficiently with parents. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about the day to day life of the school and publications such as the prospectus and annual governors' report are attractive and user-friendly. There is a well-designed web-site, which gives a wide range of information to parents and prospective parents.
 43. A very active parents' and teachers' group and all members of the school community work together effectively to raise funds and organise social events. Activities are well attended and enjoyed by parents and raise considerable funds for various projects.
 44. Members of staff show very high levels of care for pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of pupils' social and emotional needs, passing on detailed records at the end of each academic year. This helps to ensure that the transition to a new class is generally smooth and trouble free.
 45. Procedures for child protection are excellent. The deputy headteacher, who has responsibility for managing child protection issues, is very well trained and carries out her role diligently. Children who are at risk are monitored carefully, with good liaison between the school and other agencies. These good links are also evident in the way in which the school monitors attendance. Regular visits from the educational welfare officer, as well as new procedures for chasing up absent pupils have resulted in a recent rise in attendance figures.
 46. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, with a strong emphasis placed on rewarding good behaviour. Where pupils do show challenging behaviour, as is evident in some year groups, it is generally managed well by teachers in order to minimise its impact on the learning of others. Throughout the school, the friendly and supportive way members of staff work together, influences the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils making them polite and generally co-operative. They gain confidence in themselves with the encouragement given by all members of staff and feel comfortable chatting with visitors about their work and interests. The very good role models provided by the adults teach pupils to use good manners and show each other consideration and respect. The school has identified that some pupils find lunch times difficult and is seeking ways of improving facilities.

47. All members of staff are very caring and provide strong emotional support for the pupils. They use praise effectively and show genuine pleasure in the pupils' successes. This is a significant factor in the overall success of the school as it enables pupils to become confident in their work and encourages them to try hard.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The challenge for higher attaining pupils in science.

48. Whilst pupils achieve well in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their own investigations and ways of recording their findings. This means that for higher attaining pupils in particular, insufficient progress is made in practical science work. Too much time is taken up by copying text from the board rather than providing pupils with opportunities to carry out their own research or to consider in their own words what they have found out from an investigation. Inspection findings are that on many occasions all pupils produce the same written work. This means that less able and more able pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop at their own rates.
49. The science co-ordinator is aware that investigative work is heavily teacher led and has plans to develop this aspect of the science curriculum. Resources have been ordered to support teachers in their lesson planning and new assessment procedures are to be tested for suitability.

The balance of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

50. The timetables for pupils in Years 1 and 2 include more time for the teaching of English than is usually found in schools and some time is wasted each day preparing pupils for lunch. These factors mean that time allowed for subjects other than English and mathematics is shorter than the national recommendations. Up to 45 minutes a day is taken up with additional reading and writing activities. Whilst these activities are beneficial, pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop similar literacy skills when reading and writing to support learning in other subjects. The need to queue to use the toilets at the end of each morning wastes up to ten minutes of valuable lesson time when the lunch break is already long enough. The headteacher has already identified the need to review these timetables and to include greater opportunities for pupils to develop creative skills further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in science.
2. Review and improve the balance of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	19	5	1	0	0
Percentage	0	17	63	17	3	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 two 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)	NA	404
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	81

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5

National comparative data	5.9
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	31	24	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	29
	Girls	22	22	24
	Total	46	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (79)	89 (87)	96 (83)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	27
	Girls	22	23	22
	Total	48	51	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (73)	93 (68)	89 (70)
	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	23	37	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	21	23
	Girls	31	32	36
	Total	51	53	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (67)	88 (79)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	22
	Girls	30	29	32
	Total	48	49	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (67)	82 (77)	92 (87)
	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	385	4	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	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	12	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	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	17.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	283

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	NA
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	NA
Total number of education support staff	NA
Total aggregate hours worked per week	NA

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	903,162
Total expenditure	869,397
Expenditure per pupil	2,179
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,781
Balance carried forward to next year	79,546

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

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	404
Number of questionnaires returned	71

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	24	3	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	3	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	48	9	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	46	13	4	3
The teaching is good.	57	39	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	40	21	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	7	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	27	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	46	18	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	49	41	4	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	37	4	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	32	15	8	21