

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWTON POPPLEFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newton Poppleford
Sidmouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113103

Headteacher: Mr Steve Kerrigan

Reporting inspector: Mrs Ann Coughlan
21124

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 February 2002

Inspection number: 196127

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Newton Poppleford Sidmouth Devon
Postcode:	EX10 0EL
Telephone number:	01395 568300
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Johnson
Date of previous inspection:	July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is smaller than most other primary schools with 157 girls and boys on roll aged between four and eleven years. The school serves the village of Newton Poppleford and the neighbouring villages of Colaton Raleigh and Harford. The pupils live in a mix of owner occupied and rented accommodation and the percentage eligible for free school meals at 4.4 per cent is below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs at 16.6 per cent, is also below the national average but the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils who leave and join the school, other than at the beginning and end of the school year, is below the average. Over the last few years pupils' attainment on entry has been slightly above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school, with many strengths, that provides good value for money. Pupils attain high standards in their academic and personal development owing to the commitment to evaluate and improve the already good quality of teaching. The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by all staff and the governing body ensure clarity of direction and purpose. There is a strong emphasis upon maintaining high standards, and bringing about further improvements.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management of the school provide a very purposeful atmosphere for learning, with priorities aimed clearly towards further improvement.
- Pupils attain high standards because of the good quality of teaching that employs a wide range of strategies and involves pupils well in their learning.
- The shared sense of values in the school and very good teamwork by staff develop excellent attitudes to learning in pupils.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development results in pupils' very good behaviour and an increasing ability to accept responsibility.
- The school provides a very secure and caring environment for its pupils; parents appreciate this and support the school well.

What could be improved

- Aspects of the school's provision for children in the reception year as identified as a priority in the school's improvement plan.

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 progress since its last inspection in 1997. It has maintained the high standards noted at that time and successfully addressed the areas for development the inspection identified; there has been good improvement in the structure of the curriculum and the assessment. The targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are now more relevant and manageable. In addition, the proportion of good and very good teaching has increased and also helps pupils to learn. The school has implemented national initiatives such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very effectively.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	B	A	A*
mathematics	A*	A*	A*	A*
science	A	B	A*	A*

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

The table shows that the school's performance in national tests is consistently well above average and the results are frequently in the highest five per cent of schools (A*). The school's trend in improvement in test scores is above the national trend and it exceeded its targets for 2001 with all pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in all three subjects and a higher than average proportion attaining at higher levels. Inspection findings reflect these test results; pupils' standards are above or well above those usually found. Achievement is good in Years 1 – 6 and sometimes very good in Years 3 to 6. The attainment level of children entering the school varies from year to year but achievement in the reception year is satisfactory and most attain the national early learning goals by the end of this year and many exceed these. Over the last three years results have been above the national average in tests for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. After careful analysis of trends in standards, the school found areas where writing could be further developed. The strategies to address this are robust and effective, and having a positive effect. The school has set challenging, yet realistic targets for the forthcoming year and is on course to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent: the pupils are attentive and concentrate well in lessons. They show a sense of enjoyment, contribute confidently to discussions and respond well to a wide range of challenges.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous and friendly. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils can reflect on what they do, and begin to understand how this may affect others. Pupils show initiative and develop independence in learning and they handle responsibility with maturity and pleasure. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Very good: pupils are keen to come to school and punctuality is good throughout the school day. Unauthorised absence is below that found in most schools.

The pupils' very good behaviour and excellent attitudes make a strong contribution to the quality of school life. They understand the importance of effort and hard work, and come ready to learn. Pupils take care and pride in their achievements. By the time they leave, many pupils have a well-developed understanding of good citizenship. The considerable strengths in this area ensure pupils use their time efficiently and effectively throughout the school day for the purposes of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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 in English and mathematics is good across the school and frequently very good, and this means that pupils make good progress. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and teachers encourage pupils to practise these skills in other subjects. In addition, they provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and this strongly promotes learning. Teachers encourage pupils to take considerable responsibility for their own learning from an early age so that they develop good independent learning skills by the time they leave the school. Teachers provide interesting resources and stimulating activities that motivate pupils to learn. They manage pupils well so that time is used productively. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen. For reception children, although some good or better lessons were seen, teaching is judged as satisfactory overall owing to remaining weaknesses in the organisation of the classroom, the planning of children's activities and the recording of their attainments. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is frequently very good. On the few occasions when teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 – 6 the pace was a little slow. The school meets the needs of all pupils well; skilled and experienced teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively. Teachers plan extended work for the higher attaining pupils who do very well in school and national tests.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall but satisfactory for reception children; the school provides a broad and interesting range of learning opportunities, relevant to the pupils. Well-chosen visits to places of interest and visitors to the school together with the good quality extra-curricular activities effectively broaden pupils' experiences and understanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the work designed especially for them and the level of support, enables these pupils to play a full part in lessons. They make good progress in meeting the targets in their individual education plans and many attain average standards in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the curriculum, in assemblies and through other school activities and visits.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall: very good child protection and welfare procedures. Teachers and other staff know and care for the pupils well so provide very good personal support. Good procedures for monitoring attendance, behaviour and personal development. Good assessment of pupils' academic progress with some strong features.

The school is implementing its planned improvements to the curriculum for the reception children in order to suitably extend the range and quality of learning it offers to them. There is already good quality provision for this age group in literacy and numeracy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership and team building by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher ensure a very positive ethos in the school. There is strong commitment to improvement and good management of subjects overall across the curriculum. Good management of provision for pupils' with special educational needs.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governors are supportive and have established good relationships with school staff. They are led and organised well, fulfilling their responsibilities conscientiously and effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school makes good use of its analysis of the results of school and national tests together with its monitoring of the curriculum and teaching to evaluate its performance and modify its practice.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school uses its resources well to support priorities in the school development plan and to raise standards and quality

The school uses the principles of best value well when allocating and managing school funds. The small size of the hall and the classroom for reception and Year 1 pupils places restrictions on the teaching of aspects of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and do their best so they make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework children are given. • The information they receive about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agree with the positive comments made by parents. There was little evidence to support the concerns expressed by a few parents through the questionnaire. These concerns were not raised at the inspectors' meeting with parents. The governing body consulted parents about homework before agreeing the school's homework policy and each child has a home-school book for communication about homework. Inspectors judged that the homework is at an appropriate level. The headteacher and teachers are always available to discuss individual progress in addition to an appropriate range of formal consultations and an Open Day. The school offers good extra-curricular activities and governors allocate finances to support visits and visitors as well as a residential visit for Year 5 to support their priority to provide children with a broad curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The very good leadership and management of the school provide a very purposeful atmosphere for learning, with priorities aimed clearly towards further improvement.

1. The leadership of the school is strong and effective. The senior managers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and they involve and value all who work in the school as members of a team. The headteacher has well-established routines for reviewing the school's effectiveness. The strategies for analysing pupils' achievements and trends in standards, and the careful reflection on practice ensures that the school's priorities for improvement are relevant, up to date and focused on further raising standards and quality. The headteacher ensures that new initiatives are introduced in a sensitive way into the school's overall work so that teachers are encouraged to build them into their own practice effectively. He inspires all who work in the school to do their best to help pupils to achieve the highest possible standards.
2. The strong skills of the deputy headteacher complement those of the headteacher so that, together, they form a highly effective management team. The deputy headteacher, through her responsibilities for pupils' personal and social education, makes an effective contribution to the positive ethos found in the school. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher also provide good role models in the very good quality of their teaching practice, in particular in English and mathematics.
3. Teachers with responsibilities for subjects have a clear understanding of their areas. Together with the governor who helps oversee the subject, they analyse the standards, trends and relative strengths and weaknesses in their subjects on an annual basis and identify the priorities for future development. These could be usefully developed into more detailed action plans. The leadership for special educational needs is also strong, and the procedures for identifying pupils and supporting their individual needs are thorough and comprehensive.
4. The governing body is ably led and strong in its own right. It supports the school very well. Governors are active in the school and have appropriate procedures for their visits, and an agreed protocol for writing their findings and reporting to other colleagues. There are very good relationships with teaching and other staff. The governing body has a clear grasp of good practice in governing schools, including the principles of holding the school accountable. It also seeks to involve parents and determine their views, for example on homework and improving road safety for pupils by lobbying for a 'pinch point' in the road opposite the school gate. The prospectus, information for parent's booklet and the governors' annual report are all well presented with an attractive format. However, there are a few items missing from these that are statutory requirements. The inspection team has discussed these, as points for improvement, with the headteacher and governing body.
5. Governors appreciate the positive approach that teachers have towards new initiatives. They join subject co-ordinators in the school's well-established practice of monitoring of lessons. Joint observations are undertaken to an agreed format and feedback given to teachers. This has clearly had a positive impact in improving the quality of teaching by spreading good practice in the school. Putting more emphasis on points for improvement could now usefully extend this monitoring of teaching.
6. The management use financial resources prudently to improve quality and standards and support the school's current priorities; this is seen in the money allocated over the last year to the development of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the good quality of materials and construction in the school's Millennium Garden. As the school has no room available to install a suite of computers it has purchased a laptop computer for each class and teachers timetable these to be brought together in each class to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching in information and communication technology. This provision also helps teachers to use computers more frequently in learning across the curriculum. An important priority for the

governing body is to maintain good breadth in the curriculum the school provides; to this end they have allocated money into providing educational visits and support for the Year 5 residential visit to Dartmoor.

7. Those with leadership and management responsibilities help to make a strong, united and professionally motivated team with the needs of the pupils at the forefront of their thinking. These qualities are having a very positive impact, as the school works coherently towards its aims with clarity, co-operation and common purpose. Parents agree; they have a high opinion of the management of the school.

Pupils attain high standards because of the good quality of teaching that employs a wide range of strategies and involves pupils well in their learning.

8. In eight out of ten lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was good or very good. All teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better. The proportion of very good teaching represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and is a major factor in pupils' good achievement and their high standards of attainment. The strong subject focus in lessons provides pupils with a range of approaches to different types of study and helps them to build subject specific vocabulary. The wide range of strategies used by all teachers contributes significantly to the strengths found in lessons.
9. The school places considerable emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening and skills; discussion between partners or in small groups is a well-established feature. This makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning across the curriculum and starts with the youngest children. The teacher in the reception/Year 1 class encouraged active listening skills by the strategies she used for lining up 'Who has a brother or sister in Year 3?' She used partners well to practise speaking and questioned the children effectively to refine their speech and correct verb tense. She encouraged children to find words to extend their vocabulary. In a lesson for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils the teacher used dynamic body language to capture pupils' attention when telling a story. Their facial expressions and responses showed how enthralled they became, developing total involvement and concentration thus meeting her high expectation for listening.
10. Pupils learn to consider and express different points of view. In a lesson for Year 2 and Year 3 pupils the teacher gave the class two problems about friendships to discuss in groups of three or four. Similarly in a Year 5 lesson pupils had the opportunity to discuss their thoughts in small groups during a discussion on the benefits or otherwise of tourism in India.
11. As a result of such activities pupils become articulate and able to express their views and opinions using carefully considered reasons. Pupils listen well to the opinions and arguments of others and prepare convincing counter-arguments. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher used a balance to illustrate his point about balanced arguments. There was good reinforcement of connectives and the use of language such as 'on the other hand', 'alternatively', 'nevertheless'. This increasing familiarity with language benefits pupils' learning in reading and writing. Pupils of all ages read in a lively and expressive manner and their progress in writing is good with many examples of high quality. Pupils show a wide vocabulary in their poetry with good use of simile and metaphor. Good examples of teaching spelling strategies were seen in Years 1, 2 and 4. There is much useful work to develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum, for example in history and geography. For example, Year 4 pupils sorted the characteristics of rich and poor boys and girls in Tudor times after watching a video and then expressed these in their own words in sentences. The provision of clear and concise individual targets for improving pupils' writing is raising standards further.
12. A strong feature of the science teaching is the time teachers give to pupils to plan their investigations. Following introductions where teachers reinforce suitable vocabulary and remind pupils of previous learning they give them time to consider and record their predictions. Reception and Year 1 pupils are introduced to this through drawing pictures and adding words on a prepared recording sheet as when they show what objects they think will be attracted by a magnet. Teachers provide useful prompt sheets to help pupils work in pairs or small groups to make

predictions, plan and carry out investigations such as how waterproof materials are, different rates of evaporation and how the mass of a spinner affects its rate of fall. Teachers intervene well and use skilled questioning to help pupils justify their predictions, to encourage accuracy in measurement and to help them explain their results. As a result pupils gain a secure understanding of scientific method as they proceed through the school and can apply this to investigations in different areas of the subject. They begin to articulate reasons for their findings and suggest possible conclusions. Teachers make the work in science relevant to pupils. For example, Year 2 and Year 3 pupils investigated the best material to soak up spillage to help the caretaker decide which was best to order next.

13. Relevance to everyday life is also seen in mathematics lessons. For example, Year 6 pupils are learning to convert Euros to pounds sterling and vice versa. They work out a running balance using the Excel program with reference to items the school needs to buy for its Twilight Club and games for wet playtimes. Teachers have implemented the numeracy strategy effectively and the good pace and challenge seen in mathematics lessons encourages pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Good subject knowledge, a clear approach, the very good use of questions and good pace and challenge for all helps all pupils to make good progress in lessons and enjoy learning.
14. Evidence from lessons and scrutiny of recent work indicates that there are two factors in particular that lead to pupils' good achievement in this subject. Firstly, teachers promote pupils' learning by the emphasis they place on helping them to articulate the strategies they have used for particular operations and thereby demonstrating that there is often more than one way of tackling an operation or problem. This was seen, for example, in a lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils on approaches to subtraction where the teacher helped pupils understand how they had used counting on or counting back. Secondly, teachers use a good mixture of reinforcement, extension and investigation to build on previous learning. Younger pupils are given plenty of opportunity to practise and consolidate their basic mathematical skills and this is built on well in the middle years so that pupils gain a secure knowledge of the number system and apply it confidently to areas such as money and measure.
15. Older pupils are given 'board work' at the beginning of mathematics lessons. This starts in Year 4 with one or two sessions per week and by Year 6 there is a daily session. It involves a wide range of mathematical examples that pupils work through for 15 minutes and then go through with their teacher. This provides reminders and reinforcement of areas of mathematics that are not being studied currently and teachers find speed and accuracy improve considerably with time. Teachers ensure that mathematical skills are also practised in other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils confidently used tallying in a science lesson and Year 6 pupils calculate averages of results in science. As some parents told inspectors "Children find mathematics fun". The wide range of mathematical experiences teachers provide for pupils results in high levels of attainment. The high proportion of pupils (55 per cent) that attained above the expected level in last year's national tests at the end of Year 6 confirms this.
16. From scrutiny of work on display and photographs of pupils' work it is clear that teachers also use a wide range of strategies in other subjects such as art and design. They teach pupils to really 'look' through observational drawing and the close study of the work of significant artists. In this way the pupils begin to appreciate line, shape and texture. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of media and build skills such as colour mixing. Teachers integrate art effectively with other subjects, enhancing learning in both, and make good use of visits and visiting artists and craftspeople to extend pupils' experiences. They draw well on work from a good variety of different cultures. These factors ensure that pupils produce high quality pieces of art and design when working individually or as a group to make large collages.
17. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the skilled support they receive. For example, where appropriate, the learning support assistants unobtrusively repeat and clarify the teachers' introductions to lessons and help pupils with relationship and communication difficulties integrate in a small group.

The shared sense of values in the school and very good teamwork by staff develop excellent attitudes to learning in pupils.

18. The very good relationships and team working shown by adults in the school present a good example to pupils. Their consistency of approach has a very positive impact. Teachers manage their pupils in a firm but pleasant manner and relationships are very good. Pupils notice how courteously and closely teachers work with each other, with the learning support assistants and parent helpers. Teachers provide many opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop teamwork; for example, they help groups to allocate tasks to individuals within the group; "Choose together who is going to be the scribe". These factors also help pupils to learn to co-operate well both in lessons and beyond the classroom. Pupils listen attentively and are eager to contribute their ideas and opinions to class discussions. The clear explanations that teachers provide engage pupils' interest and collaboration. For example, in a Year 6 science the teacher's reinforcement of the elements of fair testing helped pupils to plan their investigations more carefully. In a Year 5 science lesson the teacher skilfully guided small groups of pupils into finding an appropriate method for solving a problem on evaporation from different materials.
19. The way pupils immediately settle and turn their attention to learning when they come into the classroom, at the start of the day or following playtimes, is impressive. Teachers encourage this by the way they quickly establish a purposeful working atmosphere. Their high expectations and the brisk pace seen in most lessons help pupils to concentrate and make considerable effort; this results in a high level of productivity.
20. The way teachers value pupils' work is seen in the way they display it in the classroom and in the way they help pupils look after individual pieces of work that they collect to make books to form a record of their studies. Teachers use good quality resources and make good use of new technology to make their own resources. This encourages pupils to do their best and through scrutiny of recent and current work inspectors found high standards being sustained throughout the school in all areas of the curriculum. Recording in mathematics is clearly set out so that the method of working is apparent, and the school's requirements to follow well established routines, such as ensuring headings are displayed prominently, and the systematic attention to handwriting and presentation assist the pupils in their efforts in writing. Pupils learn a wide variety of ways to record their work in history, geography and science. They use tables, charts, graphs and maps. They take pride in producing clear diagrams and understand the importance of explanatory headings and labels. Pupils frequently take meticulous care in the way they use paint, apply materials to collages and weave fabric.
21. The positive attitudes of staff and their evident hard work encourages pupils to take part in the range of activities the school provides. Parents think that pupils are keen on learning because the teachers make lessons enjoyable.

The very good provision for pupils' personal development results in pupils' very good behaviour and an increasing ability to accept responsibility

22. The school operates as a close knit and caring community and it aims to provide experiences that encourage pupils to act responsibly and value each other's contributions. This is confirmed by comments from parents. Much of this provision takes place in lessons in different subjects; for example there are opportunities for reflection on environmental issues within geography and science. Contributions to a discussion about possible housing development on the school field by Year 2 and Year 3 pupils showed they had a well-developed sense of community. Pupils are encouraged to care for their own environment and to wonder at the natural world. For example, they all contributed a painted tile to the school's Millennium Garden that is intended to promote an atmosphere of peace and reflection. The flowerbeds around the school and in this garden are kept in good order with sympathetic planting of shrubs, plants and bulbs.
23. The school places an appropriate emphasis on religious education so pupils can reflect on the common values in major religions. In lessons dedicated to personal and social education pupils can explore difficulties that arise, for example, in friendships and strategies for dealing with these. Owing to the emphasis the school places on developing speaking and listening skills, pupils learn

to listen carefully to each other and understand that individuals have different but valid points of view. Teachers also give pupils time to be still and quiet. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect and they reinforce the school's emphasis on the importance of working together and sharing ideas. The teachers make assemblies 'special' and are careful to involve pupils. In a whole school assembly the headteacher illustrated how support from others allows an individual to be adventurous.

24. The good programme of extra-curricular activities makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The school enhances this with special curriculum days and whole school events such as a Healthy Eating Week. Year 5 pupils have good opportunities to develop their leadership and co-operative skills through a residential visit. Visits to a mosque and a synagogue help pupils to understand the practices of different faiths and they gain insight into how people lived in the past through visits such as one for a Year 4 to Montacute House. Pupils gained ideas for their artwork from African artefacts in a museum visit.
25. Pupils behave very well as they have a well-developed sense of right and wrong because the school's ethos and expectations create a good context for pupils to develop a point of reference for moral values. The school makes children aware of these values as soon as they start in reception and this is reflected in the way pupils respond and care about each other. Pupils' sense of right and wrong is further developed through planned opportunities for debating moral issues linked to current affairs. This is further illustrated in the concerns they raise in the school council that meets about once a month. The school's policy of consulting pupils about improvements and changes in provision also encourages a sense of responsibility.
26. Pupils develop a high degree of independence because they know what is expected of them. The youngest pupils undress quickly and sensibly for their physical education lessons. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils clear away very sensibly and responsibly with a minimum of supervision. The way teachers organise their classrooms and have the necessary resources to hand also provides a good model for pupils and helps them to become responsible for looking after their own things in an orderly way.
27. Year 6 pupils can volunteer to become 'buddies' to younger pupils and all Year 6 pupils have an additional responsibility that contributes towards the running of the school. Year 6 pupils showed a high degree of responsibility in one of their weekly assemblies where they are fully responsible for the content and delivery. This included a computer-generated presentation based on the story of Jonah and some pupils read chosen poems that provided a reflective content. The pupils quite naturally accepted the Catholic confessional prayer introduced by one pupil as part of the assembly.
28. Pupils increasing independence in learning is demonstrated by the good quality individual topics they produce on chosen topics in Year 6 that are well organised and well presented. In addition small groups are beginning to use new technology effectively to make attractive presentations. In both the above they incorporate information and pictures obtained from CD ROMs and downloaded from the Internet. Pupils also use computers to write well-constructed letters to firms and officials about matters that affect the school, such as those about construction of the Millennium Garden and, to the local education officer about the use of balls in the playground.
29. Parents report that the school is very involved in the community. For example, pupils designed T-shirts for the playgroup and for the quiet garden. They provide an annual art exhibition, design the front cover for the "What's on for Christmas" at the church and all take part in the school play. The school is clearly preparing pupils well for the next stage of education and to become good citizens through participation.

The school provides a very secure and caring environment for its pupils; parents appreciate this and support the school well

30. Pastoral care has a high priority in the school and its very good quality contributes positively to pupils' achievement as they feel secure. The school provides a safe environment and the staff look

after the pupils well, as they know them as individuals. There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils' general welfare. Much work is done informally; the quality of this informal care is enhanced by the very good relationships that prevail within the school. Pupils find members of staff approachable so are willing to turn to them for help and guidance. Pupils feel secure enough to express their viewpoints and even challenge the teacher appropriately on occasion. Parents find that any matters for concern are dealt with quickly.

31. Parents appreciate the quality of care and they particularly like the headteacher's presence in the playground at the beginning and end of the day and find him easy to approach. They like the targets that are set for their children and find these are useful for setting the agenda at parent-teacher consultations. Several parents feel that the school's Twilight Club is a real asset and gives children opportunity to complete their homework where they have access to resources and to teachers. Parents appreciate that the school strongly supports the values of parents and as a result, they are keen to support the work of the school through helping in the classroom, with visits and practical support and fundraising through the Parents' Association.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Aspects of the school's provision for children in the reception year as identified as a priority in the school's improvement plan.

32. The school has recognised that its provision for pupils in the reception year, although satisfactory, was not of similar quality to that found in the rest of the school. The school has two difficulties to overcome; the classroom for these young children is very small and, owing to numbers on roll, there is a mixed age group class of reception and Year 1 pupils.
33. The school's management addressed the first of these by allocating significant funds to develop an 'Outside Classroom' to provide more room for children and opportunities for physical development and activities, for example, with sand and water. To date the school has provided a covered area immediately outside the classroom and has purchased appropriate equipment and storage facilities. Children are already beginning to make good use of this but a play plan for its use showing opportunities across the areas of learning would enhance this provision.
34. The school is beginning to plan the curriculum to take better account of the differing needs of reception and Year 1 pupils and ensure that the youngest children receive a full range of appropriate activities in all the areas of learning. The teaching in children's mathematical development and aspects of communication, language and literacy is already good and the teacher makes use of baseline assessment information to group children appropriately. The teaching is particularly successful when a classroom assistant is available to focus on the work of a particular group. However, teaching is judged as satisfactory overall owing to remaining weaknesses in the planning and recording of children's work and the use of the accommodation. It would be useful for the school to review the furniture arrangement, storage of equipment and use of space in the classroom for reception and Year 1 when considering the learning opportunities to be provided for the youngest children. Currently they are expected to sit and concentrate on formal learning for too long a period in the school day.
35. There are good relationships with staff in the private playgroup that is situated close to the reception classroom and which most children attend before admission to the reception class. However, liaison over children's attainments is largely informal and there are opportunities for further development here. The school could build on the very good relationships that exist between the reception teacher and the playgroup staff to develop transfer records that could then be used to monitor progress towards the early learning goals.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

36. In order to build on the school's many strengths and further raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should continue with their planned improvements to the school's provision for children in the reception year.

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	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	9	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	35	45	20	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

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	157
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	26
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	17	17	218
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (90)	89 (100)	95 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	17	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (76)	89 (90)	89 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Figures are omitted where there are less than 11 pupils who took the tests.

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
	2001	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (71)	100 (90)	100 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (71)	100 (90)	100 (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	26.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	327,264
Total expenditure	321,116
Expenditure per pupil	1,794
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,769
Balance carried forward to next year	11,917

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	179
Number of questionnaires returned	122

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	30	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	67	29	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	30	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	42	16	2	1
The teaching is good.	77	21	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	47	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	30	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	44	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	77	22	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	29	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	36	12	2	6