

These pupils benefit greatly from the variety of tasks that teachers produce to ensure that they have secure understanding of the concepts before they move on to other work.

The leadership and management are very good and this has produced a high-performing staff.

13. The school is doing very well and the headteacher and governors have a clear idea of how to improve. They are not at all complacent and constantly strive for excellence. However, even although the outcomes, in terms of pupils' achievements, are of vital importance to them, they are not obsessed with the end result. The broad nature of the education provided, including the ethos of the school and the partnership with parents and the community, is equally important to the senior management. This wide view of education has produced a school that is moving forward, but looking outwards.
14. The leadership of the headteacher is of very high quality. All members of the school community paid tribute to his commitment and to his success in building a high-performing team. He has played an essential part in the setting of high standards. He has facilitated a 'whole-school' approach to everything that is done, which has ensured consistency and conformity to set procedures. He ensures clear communication and demonstrates clarity of vision and sensitivity to the concerns of staff, parents and pupils. He has established the supportive culture and the special style of the school. His management is very good. In most aspects of the school he has instigated secure systems and structures that ensure consistent work practices. He heads a disciplined, organised school where communication is very good.
15. The headteacher is supported by an effective deputy headteacher and senior management team. The deputy headteacher has been instrumental in bringing into the school many initiatives that have helped raise standards. The management of the subject co-ordinators is also very good. The school makes good use of year-group leaders, but more could be made of their skills if there was a better overview of the teaching timetable, which is not as efficient as it could be. The lack of a curriculum co-ordinator means that small deficiencies of the overall curriculum planning have not been spotted. The management of aspects such as special educational needs and pastoral issues is good, but the management of the provision for pupils using English as an additional language, although satisfactory, needs further thought to be as effective as it could be.
16. There are procedures in place and policies to direct the work of almost all aspects of the school. The school runs very well on a day-to-day basis and this helps staff to concentrate on essentials. The governors are very keen on outside accreditation to monitor whether the school is doing as well as it could. The school has had very favourable reports from outside assessors, such as that for Investors in People, and has achieved a School Achievement Award, and Artsmark and Activemark awards in the last two years. All this helps to keep staff and pupils striving to improve, and has had a positive effect on teaching and standards.
17. The internal monitoring of teaching is quite good, but could be better. Records of lesson observations are detailed, but there is more emphasis on teachers' input rather than on pupils' learning, and this is a weakness. The senior management team undertakes book searches but the emphasis is on presentation rather than on levelling the work scrutinised in terms of attainment. The performance management of staff is very good, with very good procedures for induction of new staff and for training. An aspect that could be improved would be further management training, which would improve evaluation skills. Opportunities are sometimes missed to instigate 'best practice', as few staff have seen this in other schools.
18. The governors are very well involved and provide excellent leadership for the school's work. Led by a knowledgeable chair, governors not only give support but also are truly involved in evaluation of the school's performance. They know what is going on and insist on top quality in everything. They have faced the difficulties over the recruitment of good teachers with determination and imagination. They are fully aware of the possible drawbacks in the turnover of staff and are making appropriate contingency plans. The financial planning and control is very good, and although the school faces the shortage of funds and the uncertainty about future funding, with realism, the long-term strategic planning should be better. Money has been well spent and very

good improvements to the accommodation were very well planned. The high quality of the environment and the resources improve the working conditions and help teachers to do their best. Governors and staff work very well together for the benefit of pupils.

The teaching is very good.

19. The teaching over time has been very good. Half of the teaching observed during the inspection was very good and no lesson observed was graded as unsatisfactory. There was evidence of very good teaching from all the school's full-time permanent teachers. Very good teaching was observed in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in information and communication technology. Lessons in most other subjects were not observed.
20. There are many strengths in the teaching and these ensure that pupils learn well. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and staff teach basic skills very well. There is a very good emphasis on the proper use of technical language, such as in English and mathematics. The planning of lessons is good, but would be even more effective if teachers structured their lessons in greater detail, especially in terms of the time taken for each part of the session and the differentiated work to be given to pupils of different abilities.
21. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils in terms of work and behaviour, and this is key to the success of their lessons. Pupils rise to this and make very good intellectual and creative efforts in their learning. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 4, for instance, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were exemplary, due to the challenging work and the ethos set by the teacher. Pupils are very well behaved and have excellent attitudes to learning, and this is partly due to the sensitive management by staff. Due to the very good relationships within the classrooms pupils respond very well to the work and show a great deal of interest. The atmosphere of study, generated by staff, enables pupils to concentrate very well and this is of great benefit to their learning.
22. Teachers mark pupils' work very well and pupils are left in no doubt about what they must do to improve. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers make supportive comments and are constructive in suggesting further work. Staff use a very wide range of strategies to help pupils learn and make excellent use of a wide range of resources, especially information and communication technology. Homework is also used well to consolidate pupils' learning. Skilled support staff are used well in lessons, and they make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils who have special educational needs.
23. Aspects of teaching that could be further improved are the balance of teaching strategies employed and the use of time. Although most lessons go with a swing, the pace of a significant number is rather leisurely. This is partly due to the organisation of the timetable when some lessons are planned for a significantly longer time than is usual. Also, several instances were noted when the pace of the lesson dropped, due to over-long explanations, and when pupils' writing flow was halted because the teacher kept on stopping pupils to check on understanding. The opening part of a significant number of lessons, where teachers explain the purpose of the session and give pupils essential information, sometimes goes on for too long. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and are keen to impart this knowledge, and also their love of the subject; this is fine, but restricts the time that pupils have for independent learning. It also impinges on the time that pupils have available for writing on their own at length. As speed and output are essential when doing writing tests, this is something that the school might consider, in order to give pupils even more practice in this aspect. The lessons are sometimes planned for long periods of time, such as 75 or 80 minutes; this extra time, which is at the expense of other subjects, is not well enough planned to ensure that pupils' learning is most effective. The work planned expands to fill the time available.

Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and their behaviour is very good.

24. Inspectors had several discussions with groups of pupils as well as observing them in lessons. All the inspectors were very impressed by pupils' attitudes to school and their approach to learning.

Pupils show great enthusiasm for all school activities. They enjoy learning and speak highly of staff for whom they have great affection and respect. They settle down well to work, for instance when a Year 6 group wrote a poem. Pupils know what they want from the school, and are happy that they are given it. The only real criticism that older pupils had about the school was about the swimming pool; they would like it deeper and warmer, with a smart cover!

25. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good and it is usually good around the school and playground areas. Their comments to inspectors reflect the strong moral code set by the senior management. Pupils told inspectors that there was no unkindness or bullying, but that they were absolutely confident that the staff would sort things out if there were. Pupils tolerate other people's idiosyncrasies with amusement, and most show a mature approach to different points of view. There is a refreshing lack of any issues about gender or race among pupils in the school.
26. Attendance is very good, as is punctuality, and pupils consider that such standards are essential in growing into responsible individuals. Older pupils show initiative and personal responsibility, but these attributes are not developed as much by the school as they could be. For example, there is no School Council, which many schools find valuable, and the teachers choose the prefects.

The curriculum is very broad and includes a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

27. The curriculum provided is very good. It is very broad and highly relevant to pupils' preparation for secondary education and life in general. It is balanced, but not as well as it could be. It covers all statutory requirements and has ensured very good teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The school strives to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. There are many extras provided, including peripatetic music lessons for several instruments, a wide range of visitors and well planned curricular visits. The residential trips were praised by parents and pupils alike and these do much to enhance pupils' personal and social development. The community and outside areas are used well to promote learning and links with partner schools are good. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and the governors have moved with the times to ensure that this is relevant to the modern world. Parents are appreciative of the hard work of staff to put on productions in drama and music. An area for further development is the inclusion of the opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual, moral, social and especially multi-cultural awareness within lesson planning.
28. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good in terms of the range and take-up by pupils. This is especially commendable given the high staff turnover. More able pupils are catered for well in the inclusion of an optional Latin course, and there are several sports available, including separate football for girls who want to play on their own, without boys. A large number of pupils take part in the choir and the orchestras.
29. The school has coped well with the problems of how to include the compulsory swimming element in the physical education curriculum. This is an issue that concerns a few parents. The pool on site is used successfully, but the governors are aware that it is not ideal. However, they have sensibly taken the view that it is less of an issue to use the pool they possess than to use valuable time and scarce funds in transporting pupils to a local swimming pool.
30. Pupils of all abilities are well catered for in the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs have good quality extra help, and more able pupils have extension work given to them. This has been particularly successful in mathematics. The possible difficulties of boys are taken into account and boys in this school have a good crack at the whip with regard to their teaching.

There are very good procedures for assessment and the information acquired is used very well to set targets for pupils' future learning.

31. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good. A whole raft of strategies is used, including many standardised tests. Pupils are monitored consistently from the time they start at the school until they leave, targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics are set and revised regularly. An especially good feature is the consistency of the recording from all teachers,

which is not always demonstrated even in good schools. A new 'on-line' assessment system has been tried out and has been found to be very useful. Valuable files of moderated work are kept on selected pupils, to guide newer teachers. Support staff are involved with on going monitoring of pupils and play a part in the assessment process. Pupils are appropriately involved in their own assessment and target setting.

32. Teachers make very good use of all the information they collect on their pupils' attainment. Optional national tests in mathematics are used to place pupils in sets, and the grades attained by pupils in the tests taken at the end of Year 6 are predicted with some accuracy, although some pupils have surprised staff with how well they have done. Pupils with special educational needs have sound individual education plans, but teachers do not always use these when they plan lessons. This is an area for improvement.
33. An extension of this high quality work is being considered. There are no targets for groups or individuals for science which the co-ordinator thinks might be useful. The school has active plans for the identification and monitoring of any pupil who might be gifted and talented, but this has not yet been acted upon. A further improvement would be to refine the assessment process for pupils' communication skills which, at present, is rather basic.

The support and the care given to pupils are very good.

34. This is a very caring school. All parents and pupils interviewed testified to this. The ethos is one of support but challenge. It has the feel of a small rural school with its ethos of community and open approach. There is great emphasis on good relationships, and this benefits staff as well as pupils. The 'family' atmosphere means that all staff keep a close eye on pupils' welfare as well as their personal and social development. Appropriate systems and structures are in place to ensure pupils' safety and welfare, such as an anti-bullying policy and a new policy for child protection. Systems to ensure good attendance are very good. There are in-built hazards at the entrance to the school, due to the site and the volume of traffic, and the governors are working with the local education authority to reduce the effect of these.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The formal procedures for identification and assessment of pupils who use English as an additional language.

35. Last year there were 24 pupils using English as an additional language and currently there are seven pupils. As well as English, five or six different languages are spoken at home by current pupils, and the school considers that their spoken English is fluent. However, there are no special arrangements to monitor these pupils apart from the school's usual arrangements of tracking pupils by ability, gender and ethnic origin. Although pupils using English as an additional language make as good progress as their classmates, the school cannot guarantee that this is always the case. A senior member of staff has been appointed as co-ordinator for English as an additional language, but there is no policy to guide the practice, and no special assessment of their spoken and written fluency in English, which takes into account home language factors. In relation to target setting for these pupils, the teachers need to be able to plan work appropriately, and so a clear view of the attainment and potential for pupils' learning is an essential requirement. At present there are no plans for development of this assessment in the school development plan.

The long-term planning for further improvement.

36. The school has done very well over a long period of time and this is due to the detailed planning for improvement and the overt striving for excellence. Operational management is good, although some priorities do not have specific enough success criteria so that governors can measure what they have achieved. However, the formal planning for the school's improvement mostly covers only one year, and there are few strategic plans that would guide the development over the longer term. An example is the lack of firm planning for the identification and support of any pupil who might be gifted and talented, even though this has been identified as something that the school

wishes to improve. One reason for this is the governors' uncertainty about the funding arrangements from the local education authority until the start of a financial year. Another is the uncertainty about the level of direct funding from the government, through the Standards Fund. The headteacher states that the school, like all primary schools in the local education authority, is heavily dependent on this government cash, and this is a factor inhibiting planning. The known problems of the recruitment of teachers is also hampering long-term planning. All these factors constrain definite plans for future development. However, in an area where it is difficult to attract good teachers, it is even more important to plan for the future in order to match resources to the changing environment. The headteacher and governors are thinking creatively about how to attract the best teachers. They are appropriately considering the salary levels as well as other factors that are beneficial to teachers who are developing their careers. This is good application of the 'principles of best value'.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. Whilst there are no major weaknesses for the school to address, there are two issues that the governors should act upon in order to improve what is already a very effective school.
- Improve the formal procedures for identification and checking on the progress of pupils using English as an additional language by:
 - devising a policy;
 - tracking pupils using home language as a criterion of difference;
 - providing training for the co-ordinator in assessment of the levels of pupils' fluency.
(Paragraph 35)

 - Improve the long-term strategic planning for the school's improvement by:
 - extending the formal planning to cover a longer timescale;
 - liaison with the local education authority about acquiring information about funding for subsequent years;*
 - exploring ways of recruiting suitably qualified and experienced teachers.*
(Paragraph 36)

*The governing body is already considering these issues, which are a problem for many schools.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	8	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	50	33	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	444
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	39

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	46	50	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	42	44	46
	Girls	48	42	48
	Total	90	86	94
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (91)	90 (85)	98 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	43	44
	Girls	45	41	47
	Total	83	84	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (81)	88 (84)	95 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to 2000.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
358	0	0
0	0	0
14	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.2
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	774,715
Total expenditure	772,225
Expenditure per pupil	1,809
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,585
Balance carried forward to next year	21,075

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
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	444
Number of questionnaires returned	239
Percentage of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	43	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	53	3	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	52	7	1	8
The teaching is good.	49	44	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	49	13	3	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	41	5	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	38	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	50	8	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	46	44	3	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	48	1	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	49	10	0	9