

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Birkby, Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107750

Headteacher: Mr C D Jackson

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Davies  
3639

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 February 2000

Inspection number: 190726

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior & Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	George Avenue Birkby Huddersfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD2 2BJ
Telephone number:	01484 300800
Fax number:	01484 300808
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Very Reverend Father M Forde
Date of previous inspection:	4 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mr A C Davies	Registered inspector
Mrs J Garland	Lay inspector
Mr D Halford	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

### FOCUS INSPECTION SERVICES

The Court  
8 Bar Meadow  
Dobcross  
Saddleworth  
Oldham  
OL3 5QW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6-10</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11-16</b>
1 Teaching is consistently of a high quality for pupils in Years 2 to 6. Effective questioning challenges pupils to work at the very highest level that they are capable of.	
2 Pupils find learning a pleasure and their enthusiasm and interest help to deepen their knowledge and understanding in all subjects. Their behaviour is exemplary and their politeness and good manners are a credit to them, the school and their parents.	
3 Standards in writing are particularly good. Pupils write for a range of purposes and the content captures the reader's interest, contains excellent description, is grammatically correct, and presented neatly with accurate spelling..	
4 Pupils' skills in mental mathematics are most impressive and help them to improve standards in other areas of their work.	
5 The headteacher has successfully developed a strong team of staff, who are provided with clear direction and work effectively to ensure that standards are high.	
6 The pupils value their own faith and have a deep respect and understanding for the beliefs and faiths of other people. They respect their school and all the people in it..	
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>16-17</b>
1 Standards in information and communication technology are inconsistent across the school. A few teachers lack confidence in teaching this subject and this is adversely affecting pupils' progress.	
2 Pupils are not provided with individual targets to help them focus on what they need to do in order to improve their work still further.	
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17-18</b>

**PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Patrick’s RC is a bigger than average sized primary school with 400 pupils on roll. All pupils are baptised Catholics and the school serves a large area covering more than one Parish. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average although other factors indicate that the school’s population comes from a mixed socio-economic background. The percentage of pupils identified on the special educational needs register is above average with an average number having statements of special educational needs. There are 13 pupils who have English as an additional language. When they start school, the majority of children have academic and personal skills that are in line with those expected for their age.

**HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an extremely effective school, which has many outstanding features and only a few minor weaknesses. Standards in literacy and numeracy are well above average by the time pupils are 11 years of age. Teaching is good or very good in most lessons with all pupils achieving well in their academic work and personal development. The school is very well led with the headteacher working closely with his governors to provide a high standard of education for all pupils. The school gives very good value for money.

**What the school does well**

**The school attain high standards in English and mathematics because:**

- Teaching is consistently of a high quality for pupils in Years 2 to 6. Effective questioning challenges pupils to work at the very highest level that they are capable of.
- Pupils find learning a pleasure and their enthusiasm and interest help to deepen their knowledge and understanding in all subjects. Their behaviour is exemplary and their politeness and good manners are a credit to them, the school and their parents.
- Standards in writing are particularly good. Pupils write for a range of purposes and the content captures the reader’s interest, contains excellent description, is grammatically correct, and presented neatly with accurate spelling..
- Pupils’ skills in mental mathematics are most impressive and help them to improve standards in other areas of their work.
- The headteacher has successfully developed a strong team of staff, who are provided with clear direction and work effectively to ensure that standards are high..
- The pupils value their own faith and have a deep respect and understanding for the beliefs and faiths of other people. They respect their school and all the people in it.

**What could be improved**

- Standards in information and communication technology are inconsistent across the school. A few teachers lack confidence in teaching this subject and this is adversely affecting pupils’ progress.
- Pupils are not provided with individual targets to help them focus on what they need to do in order to improve their work still further.

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



## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous inspection recognised that St. Patrick's was an effective school. The good work has been maintained and built upon, with consistent improvement being made since the last inspection.

Of the five major key issues identified in the previous inspection outstanding progress has been made in two areas. The first is related to teacher planning. This is now one of the school's strengths with teachers sharing with the children what it is they are expected to learn in each lesson. The two teachers in each year group plan together and share their expertise. Secondly, co-ordinators are now very effective in their role and are able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects.

Good progress has been made in improving two other areas. The assessment procedures in the school are now more effective and all staff have been involved in further professional development, especially in basic skills. The one remaining area where progress has not been as good is related to increasing the number of classroom support staff. This is due to budgetary constraints and has been largely outside the school's control.

In addition to the main key issues there has been good improvement in standards attained by pupils. The quality of teaching is much better. There is now more teaching of a very good standard. The curriculum has benefited from the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and there is much more use made of national test results to focus attention on areas that could be improved.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	2000	
English	A	B	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	B	A	A	
science	B	D	A	A	

The national test results for 11 year olds in 1999 indicate that in each of the three core subjects the school's performance is well above average. They are also well above average when compared to similar schools. Standards have remained high in the past four years despite the 1998 cohort not achieving as high as in previous years. The present Year 6 pupils are also attaining well above average standards especially in writing and mental mathematics. Standards in information technology are more variable with a significant number of pupils not attaining at the expected level for their age but an equal number exceeding the expected standards. The school has set challenging future targets for literacy and numeracy and are on course to achieve these.

The results for 7-year-olds show that there has been greater variation in performance over the past few years. However, in 1999 standards were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics and science. The present Year 2 are attaining at the same level as the 1999 cohort. Standards in information technology are also variable with many 7-year-olds being able to exceed the expected standards for their age but a few not able to attain the expected level.

All pupils are achieving well with high attaining pupils being appropriately challenged by the tasks they are given while lower attainers showing good improvement in their work over time.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are very proud of their school. They are very enthusiastic about learning, keen to do well and show much interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. During lessons, in the dining area, on the playground or when they are moving around the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are exceptionally polite and well-mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils respond well to any responsibility they are given. They think carefully about their work and show creativity and imagination. They form very good relationships with everyone around them.
Attendance	This is well above average. Pupils are punctual allowing lessons to start on time.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Very good

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

Very good and good teaching is a strong feature of this school. It is at its best in Years 2 to 6. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good for children aged 7 to 11 and good for children aged 5 to 7.

Teachers are extremely well prepared, know their children and challenge them effectively. They are particularly confident in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and ensure that they have opportunities of using them in other subjects. Good questioning is a prominent feature of most lessons. There is particularly effective teaching in Year 6, although this is not exclusive with many examples of very good teaching occurring elsewhere throughout the school. It is only in the area of information and communication technology where teachers' competence is more variable with a few teachers lacking confidence in their subject knowledge and personal information technology skills.

Children are receptive and build on the knowledge and understanding that they have previously gained as they move through the school. They show good concentration and work very hard to produce work of quality. When marking pupils' work, teachers outline what they could do to improve their work but have not set clear targets for pupils to aim for on a longer-term basis. Teaching is very good in 38 per cent of lessons; good in 52 per cent; and satisfactory in 10 per cent.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have helped the school to focus attention on developing pupils' basic skills. Staff have been very aware of the need to ensure that other subjects are properly taught and that the pupils use literacy and numeracy skills in these subjects. There is an extensive programme of after school activities provided for older pupils and good links with the local community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils' individual needs are appropriately identified. The school makes every effort to support pupils. The teachers' plans show that they take full account of additional work that has been prepared for individual pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All the pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress along with others in their class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is excellent. Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to understand how different people live and worship. They learn to value their own way of life and feel proud of their own faith. They know how to behave appropriately and show much respect for their friends and for adults. They care about others and about the equipment they work with.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils. Careful checks are made on their personal development and academic progress. This enables them to achieve to the very best of their ability, resulting in standards being very high.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led by a headteacher who provides staff with a clear understanding of what they need to do to get the most from their pupils. All staff with additional responsibilities know what their role is and support colleagues effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have appropriate committees in place to help them oversee the work of the school. They know the school's strengths and recognise areas that need developing. They ensure that all statutory requirements are being met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very good systems in place to help the school to check on its performance. When necessary, good use is made of this information to adjust the focus of pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	The school has very little leeway when it comes to budgetary matters. This is because a considered view has been taken to retain two forms of entry rather than move to mixed aged classes. This has resulted in finances for other resources being very limited. When taking account of the school's performance and effectiveness the decision to retain the two forms of entry is a sound investment. Careful consideration is given to all spending with the school seeking to achieve maximum value from all it buys.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The commitment of staff – teachers, classroom support, clerical and caretaking.</li> <li>• Their children are made to feel part of a caring community.</li> <li>• They applaud the Christian values that the school stands for.</li> <li>• That children enjoy coming to school and a feeling that they safe and secure.</li> <li>• They recognise that their children achieve good standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many commented that limited additional opportunities are provided for their children out of lessons.</li> <li>• A significant number were unhappy with homework arrangements.</li> <li>• A few commented that pupils with special educational needs were not well supported.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings recognise all the positive points made by parents and confirm that they are significant features of the school. The opportunities provided for pupils to be involved in activities after school or lunchtime is far greater than in most other schools. However, the team recognises that these are mainly for older pupils, which is what is expected. The school has a planned approach to supporting pupils with special educational needs. Their individual plans are specific and outline the small steps pupils need to make to help them improve. Parental pressure sometimes demands an

unrealistic expectation of what the school can deliver with regard to pupils with special educational needs. The school's arrangements for homework are appropriate and in line with other schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- 1 Teaching is consistently of a high quality for pupils in Years 2 to 6. Effective questioning challenges pupils to work at the very highest level that they are capable of.**
- 2 The teaching is very good overall. It makes a positive impact on pupils' learning through the precise and careful planning that takes place; the challenge provided for all pupils, especially the higher attainers; the effective questioning which focuses on individuals and the match of the task to the prior attainment of pupils. It is at its best in Years 2 to 6, where the teachers successfully engage the whole class and have the greatest impact on pupils' achievements.
- 3 The way the teachers continue to challenge pupils is one of the most prominent features of this very good teaching. This challenge is normally evident in two ways. Firstly, through the lesson-by-lesson questioning, which is very searching and is aimed at deepening pupils' understanding. Secondly, through the way the teachers share with the pupils what they are to learn in each lesson that has the effect of directing the pupils' attention to the main topic being taught.
- 4 Pupils' achievement in English benefit most from the good questioning. During the 'Literacy Hour' there are several examples of teachers using questioning effectively to delve deeper into the text being studied. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher successfully helps the pupils draw inferences from the text when considering the different characterisation of main people involved in the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece. It is clear that the pupils are used to working at this demanding level and they are able to name a range of common, proper and abstract nouns. Further questioning helps pupils to recognise the difference between the different types of nouns and they accurately recognise 'wise' and 'evil' as two abstract nouns.
- 5 In another lesson a Year 4 teacher helps pupils make sense of a complex text written in an old-fashioned style. He helps the pupils to handle the complex text by careful questioning which takes the pupils deeper into the text. Initially he concentrates on aspects of punctuation, because of its unusual style, before moving on to help pupils draw inferences from the reading. The style of the text in this case is unfamiliar to the pupils and they have to draw upon their good comprehension skills to fully understand what the passage is about.
- 6 During a Year 3 'Literacy Hour' the teacher's questioning is used effectively to help check on the pupils' understanding. She probes to the extent that children know that she wants precise and carefully structured answers. One pupil in answer to the question, 'What is the difference between a legend and a story?', answers that 'A legend is a story passed down through generations that may or may not contain some truth.' In the same lesson the teacher uses her voice to good effect to ensure that all pupils are highly motivated and captured by the story. This makes them eager to answer questions and helps to improve their learning.
- 7 In Year 6, two very good teachers work with different groups of pupils on the same topic. In both lessons the challenging questioning is a prominent feature. The text is taken from a mystery written by Arthur Conan Doyle and teachers use questioning to probe into pupils' understanding of the mystery genre. One pupil in answer to a question about 'mystery stories' states that, 'A mystery is fiction based sometimes on events taken from non-fiction.' One of the most impressive features of both lessons is the way the teachers are able to move

seamlessly from one focus to another. The pupils are able to gain a greater understanding of the text they are reading because of the way the teacher carefully takes them through each passage and scrutinises it for deeper meaning beyond the text.

- 8 The same effective questioning is evident during the mental agility work in mathematics. Teachers use questioning to maintain a brisk pace and keep pupils alert. In a Year 3 lesson for example, the teacher is able to use incorrect answers to help pupils gain deeper knowledge of the problem posed. She gets pupils to explain how they reached their answers and then uses part of their explanations to ask other questions so that inaccurate responses are corrected. Another strong feature of the mathematics lessons is the way the teachers use the plenary at the end of the lesson to check on what the pupils know now that they didn't before the lesson began.
- 9 **Pupils find learning a pleasure and their enthusiasm and interest help to deepen their knowledge and understanding in all subjects. Their behaviour is exemplary and their politeness and good manners are a credit to them, the school and their parents.**
- 10 The positive attitudes that all pupils have for learning are a particular feature of this school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy learning. Their enthusiasm for learning is seen in several subjects. For example, two pupils in Year 4 explained and demonstrated the process of sending e-mail. During the discussion it was very evident that they were proud to talk about the school's web site and how they contributed to the information contained within it.
- 11 In literacy, the demanding work is only possible because of the way pupils show much interest and enthusiasm. During a Year 4 lesson looking at non-standard English text, the pupils are extremely interested in the phrases used by the main character Tom, who has lived in a rural setting. They explore their own use of language while studying this text and when it comes to settling to the individual tasks set for them they show great industry. Similarly, the enthusiasm for learning is evident in another literacy lesson, where pupils read with very good expression. In a Year 3 lesson the pupils' reading gives an insight into their love for literature. Pupils have developed different voices for different characters and the confidence oozes from them as they move through the text. The pupils show by their facial expressions that they are fully engrossed in the story.
- 12 The excellent attitudes that pupils have to learning are key to enabling them to deal with more complex texts. For example, in Year 2 pupils are able to deal with challenging work because they are fully aware of what is expected of them. They are confident enough to pose suggestions even when they are not entirely sure of the answer.
- 13 As soon as pupils start school they are helped to understand what is expected of them. For example, in the reception class, pupils soon learn about the routines and the part they have to play in keeping the resources tidy. They know that when they are asked to do something they are expected to respond. They are very effective in tidying up after themselves and are attentive listeners. Their personal and social development is good.
- 14 Many pupils independently come into the library during the day. They show very sensible and mature attitudes and spend time looking for books related to their topic. The environment in the library has been carefully thought out to achieve this effect. The pupils' response is very positively and this enriches their learning.

- 15 The quality of relationships at all levels is something that is a delight. Teachers are able to set challenging but realistic targets for pupils in terms of the quantity and quality of work in an environment where all pupils are striving to do their best. In Year 6, for example, the pupils are able to use their personal experiences to relate to issues being discussed knowing that their point of view will be respected and listened to. Similarly, individual pupils are able to challenge each other's thinking without fear of hurting feelings or of under-mining what has been said.
- 16 The excellent behaviour, which is a feature within each classroom, is also very apparent when pupils are outside their classroom. The dining hall provides a good example of this. The lunchtime period is a pleasant and calm time where pupils are able to sit and socialise as well as take time to finish a meal. There is no sense of rushing pupils to release tables for others. This results in noise levels being at an acceptable level without the need for an adult to raise their voice to achieve the desired atmosphere.
- 17 **Standards in writing are particularly good. Pupils write for a range of purposes and the content captures the reader's interest, contains excellent description, is grammatically correct, and presented neatly with accurate spelling.**
- 18 The high standards the school achieves in writing can be confirmed by analysing the national test results for writing in Key Stage 1 and for English in Key Stage 2. For example, test results for 7-year-olds show that standards in writing are above the national average and above the average when compared to similar schools. This standard has been maintained consistently for the past four years. At the age of 11 years, however, the results in English are even more impressive with standards being well above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. Again, this has been a consistent feature for the past few years. The school has a larger than expected percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels at both key stages.
- 19 The overall picture is one of good progress being made by pupils as they move through the school and, equally important, the good progress is evident amongst all groups with higher attainers and those with learning difficulties achieving well. One of the main reasons for this is that skills taught within the 'Literacy Hour' are put to good use in a number of lessons. Writing is an important feature in several subjects, especially science, history and religious education.
- 20 Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to write for sustained periods. Their writing is lively and holds the reader's interest. Their ideas are well organised and follow a clear sequence. Good use is made of description, as is the case with one pupil who writes, 'I put it in the cupboard that was bright red.' They also use their writing effectively to describe the difference between a 'pull' and a 'push' in their science work on 'forces'. By the time higher attainers have moved to Year 4, the description within the writing has improved prominence given to with more adjectives and adverbs. The pupils are able to 'play' with different forms of punctuation to create effect and by, for example, using capital letters to extenuate points – 'NO SAFETY EQUIPMENT'. There is also accurate use made of speech commas and words like 'collision' are spelt correctly. As higher attainers progress to Year 6 they have the ability to recall detail from the past within their story without complicating the storyline. There are excellent examples of description being used to set the scene, for example, 'I walked casually past him', or, 'striding down a dingy street.' The pupils have the ability to help the reader bring a picture to mind as they focus attention on settings for their stories. Very good use is made of punctuation with apostrophes and speech marks used correctly. The writing successfully interweaves elements of dialogue, action and description. They draft and redraft their work with each successive piece being that much more polished. There is good use of

metaphor and simile to enliven passages. These higher attainers are working at levels that is beyond that expected for their age.

- 21 Lower attainers are also making good progress. In Year 2, for example, the amount of written work completed is a concern with most not writing much beyond a sentence. However, there is evidence of improvement over time but punctuation still varies considerably although most use capital letters accurately. Handwriting is mainly printed but most can be read and there are few reversals to individual letters. By the time they are in Year 4 lower attainers have increased the amount they write. The content of their writing is generally better than the standard of spelling and punctuation. For example, one pupil writes, 'The zone craft hissed and twirled in space.' Spelling is not as secure however, with most polysyllabic words mis-spelt. Handwriting is of a good standard. The lower attainers in Year 6 are not far away from attaining in line with that expected for their age because their descriptions are very good. One pupil writes, 'When I was inside the cramped and colourless coalmine..'. However, their ability to interweave the past and present within their story and still hold the reader's interest is not as good. Work is very neat and although spelling proves to be a difficulty they do try to use more complex words in their writing.
- 22 The standards of writing are high because of the very good quality of teaching making an impact on the learning. For example, the teachers have set high standards that the pupils are expected to reach. The reading of individual pieces of work to the whole class and the work on challenging texts helps in this process. The gains made in their learning results in children achieving their full potential.
- 23 Pupils' skills in mental mathematics are most impressive and help them to improve standards in other areas of their work.**
- 24 Standards in mathematics are very high throughout the school. The national tests for 7-year-olds indicate that the school's results are well above the national average and also well above average when compared to similar schools. This is exactly the same for 11-year-olds. The school has a larger than average percentage attaining at the higher levels in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The effective work that is taking place in mental and oral mathematics is making a significant contribution to these high standards.
- 25 In line with the National Numeracy Strategy each mathematics lesson begins with a mental and oral mathematics session. During these sessions pupils of all ages are effectively challenged. One of the strong features in each class is the effective questioning that takes place. In addition, the brisk pace of the sessions adds much to keeping pupils alert and motivated.
- 26 Year 6 pupils are dealing with percentages and are able to work out mentally the cost of various sales items, which have been reduced by a certain percentage. They do this with remarkable efficiency and speed. Similarly, there is a good standard achieved by Year 5 pupils dealing with fractions of given numbers. The teachers effectively use a range of resources, many homemade, to develop these ideas. The pace is once again demanding and the questioning most effective in moving on the task for higher attainers. During the mental agility work pupils are asked to explain how they have reached their answers and others discuss whether there is a more efficient way. During these sessions pupils know that suggested methods and answers are all valued and merit consideration.

- 27 All teachers are comfortable with teaching the basic skills of numeracy. More importantly, they are effective in gauging the challenge required for different groups of pupils. For example, in Year 3 there are very challenging extension activities prepared for higher attainers when dealing with place value for numbers to 1000.
- 28 The teachers ensure that pupils do have opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subjects. Science work provides opportunities for pupils to record their results in tables and charts. Good use is also made of numeracy skills in history, geography and design and technology.

- 29 The headteacher has successfully developed a strong team of staff, who are provided with clear direction and work effectively to ensure that standards are high.**
- 30 There is a very strong sense of teamwork and partnership in the school. Every member of staff works to a common goal in ensuring the provision for pupils is as high as it can be. In addition to the strength of teamwork amongst all staff, the school has successfully set up partnerships across year groups so that each of the two teachers working in each age group is committed to planning and working together. In this way teachers are able to draw on each other's strengths and to enrich the curriculum for the pupils. A very good example is seen in Year 2 where two very effective teachers with very different styles work very closely together to ensure that each benefits from the other's approach.
- 31 The headteacher has encouraged successfully a shared commitment to improvement and provided staff with the will to succeed. He has clear priorities, which are shared with all staff. He has provided the staff with clarity of direction and has effectively supported them in focusing on the issues that are important in the present educational climate. For example, the school's effective use of the literacy and numeracy strategies is helping to raise standards. The headteacher is committed to the implementation of the strategies and has put appropriate emphasis on resourcing literacy and numeracy. The senior management team also plays an important role. It is effective in recognising issues, prioritising them and checking to see if the actions that have been taken are having an impact on standards. To this end there is very good monitoring of subjects in place. For example, the literacy and information technology co-ordinators are able to identify areas of strength and weakness in their subjects and have appropriate plans to help support or improve provision.
- 32 An important factor in helping the school to focus on areas that require attention has been the effective evaluation of test results over the past few years. The school uses up-to-date information technology systems to help it analyse results beyond just test results for 7 and 11 year olds. The information is shared with staff and appropriate action is taken to address any issues that arise.
- 33 The quality of teaching is consistently high because there is appropriate support provided for each teacher. The school's finances are stretched to the limit and therefore the school has had to look at other ways of providing support other than through employing additional classroom support. One of the positive effects has been the quality of monitoring that has been undertaken internally and externally. Each teacher is appropriately praised for their effective teaching but is also helped to improve if they have areas identified as needing development.
- 34 The governors are also fully committed to the school and although they leave much of the day-to-day running of the school in the hands of the headteacher they do none-the-less know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are appreciative of the way they are kept informed and have the opportunities to be able to question and review the school's work on a regular basis. They have had to oversee a difficult financial situation over the past few years but through astute management and careful budgeting they have been able to keep standards high.
- 35 The care that is provided for pupils extends beyond that of just looking after their academic needs. To this end the school's leadership has been equally as vigilant in ensuring that pupils are happy at school and feel part of a 'special' community. The strong teamwork within the staff sees the caretaker knowing exactly what is required in terms of the cleanliness of the school environment and the dining staff playing their part in maintaining a positive atmosphere

at lunchtimes. The imaginative way the food was served to take account of St. Valentine's Day is testament to this.

**36 The pupils value their own faith and have a deep respect and understanding for the beliefs and faiths of other people. They respect their school and all the people in it.**

37 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is one of the strongest features of this school. Pupils learn to value their own faith and there are many opportunities taken throughout the school day to pray and reflect. All the main Christian celebrations form an important part of school life. All teachers are practising Catholics and the school believes this adds to the positive feeling of everyone sharing in a common approach to worship and faith. There has been a deliberate attempt made to create an atmosphere where all the school's life and actions are dedicated to God. There is a strong sense of promoting self-discipline in pupils and this is effective in creating such positive attitudes amongst them.

38 The religious education curriculum provides much opportunity for all to understand about the way other people worship and there is much time dedicated to discussing similarities and differences in life styles. This results in there being much respect for all faiths as well as pupils having good factual knowledge about wider issues related to different faiths. The pupils have opportunities of visiting a Hindu Temple during Diwali. There are also strong links with local Baptist, Quaker, Sikh and Muslim centres of worship. Year 6 pupils studying the Sikh faith are able to relate to the main characteristics of the faith and have good knowledge about the reasons why their faith is so strong.

39 Pupils are also encouraged to raise money for a range of charities and the school has been very generous in giving time and money to local as well as worldwide charities. Pupils show very mature attitudes towards these issues and have a deep concern about issues of famine and the destruction of war.

40 Pupils work very well together. This is a feature in most of the lessons and helps teachers to be able to organise their learning using different methods. For example, there is no hesitation in getting pupils to work together in any of the subjects because the teachers know that pupils' response will be very good. Teachers and pupils show much mutual respect and in each class a warm and purposeful relationship has been established. Teachers come across as desperately wanting to get it right for the pupils and they in turn want to give of their best for the teachers.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**41 Standards in information and communication technology are inconsistent across the school. A few teachers lack confidence in teaching this subject and this is adversely affecting pupils' progress.**

42 Standards are inconsistent across the school with some pupils being very able and others having limited skills in information technology. The school has already recognised these inconsistencies in its provision for information and communication technology. The school has plans to develop a computer suite. These plans are close to fruition and the suite is expected to be in place by the beginning of the next academic year. The number of computers presently in school is below average although the amount of software is adequate. The main problem is

that many of the computers are. However, money is limited and it will be some time before the school is able to buy enough new computers to meet its needs.

- 43 This situation has put undue pressure on the school's ability to keep up to date with national expectations. However, in some areas there is very good work happening. For example, a significant number of Year 4 pupils are very skilful and can use e-mail proficiently. Two pupils in one of the Year 4 classes can explain how to use a program to generate a poster. They use all the facilities available to them, such as cut and paste, when word-processing. However, at present not all staff are maximising opportunities to enable information and communication technology to support other subjects, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- 44 Some teachers have very good subject knowledge and others lack confidence in using information technology skills. This results in the best work and consequently the highest standards being apparent in classes led by the confident teachers. As a result approximately a third of pupils in Year 4 are able to use the Internet while only a sixth of pupils in Year 6 can do so.
- 45 The school has an excellent development plan for information and communication technology in place but much will depend on the amount of funding available to enable staff to gain access to the training they need. All staff are very keen and have identified their individual needs on the information technology development plan. The school's current position has been accurately identified within the plan and there are very good proposals in place for moving the school on. These contain suitable training plans for improving teachers' subject knowledge. There is undoubtedly concern amongst the staff about this area of the curriculum. However, there are appropriate and achievable measures being taken to help the school address the issues.
- 46 Pupils are not provided with individual targets to help them focus on what they need to do in order to improve their work still further.**
- 47 Although the school has set realistic and achievable whole school targets for literacy and numeracy it has not yet moved to a position of setting individual targets for pupils. There is very good practice taking place in terms of letting pupils know what they are expected to learn on a lesson-by-lesson basis. For example, nearly every lesson starts with learning objectives being shared with the pupils. There are also good assessment procedures in place to help the school identify the needs of individual pupils. These are at their best for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers also use marking as a positive vehicle to help pupils understand what they need to do next in order to improve their work.
- 48 The foundations have therefore been laid for the school to develop individual targets for pupils so that they have a wider picture of what they need to do to improve their work. The school should build on the success of its other procedures and look towards a systematic process starting with literacy and numeracy targets. The target-setting system should help teachers give greater emphasis on the needs of individuals when they are planning future work.

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

- 49 In order to continue the good work and maintain high standards, the governors, headteacher and staff need to:

**Gain greater consistency in the provision for information and communication technology by:**

- Providing appropriate training so that all teachers are confident in teaching information technology skills;
- Raising staff awareness to the opportunities that information and communication technology offers them in all subjects;
- Being more consistent in using information technology skills to support literacy and numeracy.

**Develop individual target setting procedures so that:**

- Pupils are able to identify what they need to do next to further improve their work;
- Teachers are able to focus their planning on the individual needs identified in pupils' targets.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	38%	52%	10%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### 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)		400
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		91

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.02
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.16
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	27	33
	Girls	22	24	21
	Total	52	51	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	89 (89)	95 (87)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	30	33
	Girls	23	22	24
	Total	53	52	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	91 (84)	100 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	38	32	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	31	34
	Girls	29	30	30
	Total	60	61	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (76)	87 (69)	91 (56)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	32	32
	Girls	28	28	27
	Total	54	60	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (83)	86 (72)	84 (74)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	15
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	4
Indian	
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	9
White	367
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, 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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	24.4

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

Total number of education support staff	3.7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	74

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

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

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

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/9
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	559329.00
Total expenditure	568518.00
Expenditure per pupil	1387.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	-4078.00
Balance carried forward to next year	-13267.00

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	315
Number of questionnaires returned	141

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	30	0	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	38	13	2	6
The teaching is good.	72	28	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	42	8	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	21	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	20	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	46	6	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	70	26	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	23	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	40	11	1	15