

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

Camberwell

LEA area: Southwark

Unique Reference Number : 100853

Headteacher : Mr A.G. Mahoney

Reporting inspector : Melvyn Bradshaw - 6169

Dates of inspection : 11th - 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706551

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Junior
Type of control :	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils :	7 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Pitman Street Camberwell London SE5 0TS
Telephone number :	0171 703 3455
Fax number :	0171 277 1353
Appropriate authority :	Southwark
Name of Chair of Governors :	Rev. Fr. G Greatorex
Date of previous inspection :	3rd - 6th June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Melvyn Bradshaw Registered Inspector	English; Geography.	Attainment and progress; Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Teaching; Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Joy Buncher Lay Inspector		Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Catherine Gordon-Smith Core Inspector	Equal Opportunities; Mathematics; Science; History; Music.	The curriculum and assessment.
Graham Johnson Team Inspector	Special Educational Needs; Design and Technology; Information Technology; Art; Physical Education.	Leadership and management; The efficiency of the school.

The inspection contractor was:

Salter Baker & Associates (Education) Limited
Drayton House
Oving
Chichester
West Sussex PO20 6EW
Tel: 01243 780805

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

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- . The Headteacher provides very good leadership.
- . Pupils make good progress and attain high standards, especially in mathematics, science and information technology.
- . Teaching is good overall, and very good in over a fifth of lessons.
- . Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are well supported and make good progress.
- . Pupils behave very well.
- . Relationships within the school are very good and the racial harmony is a notable feature.
- . Pupils' personal development is very well promoted.
- . Pupils' support, guidance and welfare are very effectively organised.
- . The school provides a broad and rich curriculum.
- . Financial control and school administration are excellent, and the school provides very good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- . Assessment in the foundation subjects, such as geography, is not well developed and, as a result, pupils are not always challenged enough.
- . The written reports to parents about their children's progress contain insufficient detail about their attainment levels.

This is a good school and its strengths significantly outweigh its weaknesses; these will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The most important improvement is the raised standards of attainment, especially in English, mathematics and information technology. Pupils' creative and imaginative writing has improved, owing to a well planned programme which recognises pupils' relatively narrow vocabulary when they enter the school. Often imaginative writing arises from factual work which provides pupils with a firm base. Many opportunities are now provided for older pupils to take on roles of responsibility around the school, including keeping records of the books borrowed from the library using the computer system. Although some progress has been made, further opportunities could be provided to encourage more independence for pupils in organising aspects of their own learning, problem solving and research activities. The school has made strenuous efforts to involve parents in its life more, but relatively few are currently involved. The school is well placed to maintain the good standards of attainment and to improve further.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	A
Mathematics	B	A*
Science	B	A

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

The results show that attainment in English was similar to the national average, and well above the results of similar schools. In mathematics, the results were above the national average and very high when compared with the results of similar schools. In science, the results were above the national average and well above those of similar schools. In all three subjects attainment improved in 1999, especially in mathematics. Attainment in English is close to or a little above average; and above average in mathematics and science. In these subjects pupils make good progress. In information technology progress is very good and pupils attain standards which are well above the level expected. In other subjects pupils make at least satisfactory progress. In music and physical education progress is satisfactory; in all other subjects it is good. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, also make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	7 – 11 years
English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Satisfactory
Information technology	Good
Religious education	
Other subjects	Good

The quality of teaching is good overall. Over half the teaching is at least good and almost a quarter very good. Strengths in teaching are especially evident in the upper school. Teaching is rarely less than satisfactory. A particularly effective feature of teaching in the school is the way in which teachers use all areas of the curriculum to support pupils' learning in English and mathematics.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their learning. The high standards of behaviour occur both in class and when children move around the school.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to encourage pupils to attend and get to school on time.
Ethos*	The school has a very good ethos. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good and improve as they move through the school. Relationships are very good and there is a commitment to achieving good standards.
Leadership and management	The Headteacher provides the school with very good leadership and management. He has a clear vision of the school's future. Co-ordinators monitor and manage their areas effectively.
Curriculum	The curriculum is good and well planned. It is broad and balanced, and meets the needs of the pupils well. There are particular strengths in English and information technology. Assessment is satisfactory overall.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well catered for throughout the school and they make good progress. This positive picture is also reflected in the provision made for, and the progress by, pupils for whom English is an additional language.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and cultural development and good provision for spiritual and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school has a good number of qualified and experienced staff, good accommodation and very good learning resources to meet the needs of the curriculum.
Value for money	Although the costs of the school are high, it provides very good value for money. This is reflected in the standards of attainment of pupils and their responsible attitudes when they leave the school. School administration and financial control are excellent.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life.● The school is approachable and handles complaints well.● Parents are given a clear picture of what is taught and kept well informed about their children's progress.● The school enables children to achieve good standards in their work.● Parents are generally satisfied with the homework set and think that the school encourages children to be involved in more than just daily lessons.● The school has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and values, and achieves good standards of behaviour.● The children enjoy going to school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Few parents expressed any concerns about the school.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the school's life, but relatively few are able to become involved. Information about the school, including what is to be taught, is very good. However, written reports about children's progress do not provide sufficient detail. Behaviour is very good and children enjoy school. Children make good progress and, by the time they leave the school, attain high standards, especially in mathematics, science and information technology.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To improve the standard of education further, the governors, Headteacher and staff should:

Improve the quality and use of assessments across the curriculum by:

- Building on the good systems already in place in English, mathematics and science and using them as a model for other subjects;
- Raising teachers' expectations of pupils, especially those who are higher attaining;
- Improving the content of written reports to parents about their children's progress, to include more detail of what they can do in each subject and what their weaknesses are.
(Paragraphs 6, 14, 23, 33).

In addition to the key issue above the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- The need to continue to develop the role of the Governing Body in monitoring the curriculum, especially in relation to pupils' standards in subjects where National Curriculum test data are not available.
(Paragraph 39).
- The continued development of opportunities for pupils to extend their independent learning.
(Paragraphs 11, 14, 20, 27).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. St. Joseph's RC Junior School is situated in Camberwell, south east London. Pupils mainly come from the local area. All pupils are from Roman Catholic families. Pupils mostly come from local authority, rented accommodation, many from tower blocks close to the school and most transfer from the adjoining infant school. An increasing number of pupils are refugees. The social and economic backgrounds of pupils are generally well below average. The school is just below the average size for a junior school. Currently, there are 233 full-time pupils from Years 3 to 6. A little over 57 per cent of pupils are boys. A minority of pupils (36 per cent) is of white ethnic origin. The main other groups represented in the school are black African or black Caribbean. These figures hide an even more diverse mix, as pupils' families originate from 33 different countries. Most pupils (almost 90 per cent) are ones for whom English is an additional language, a very high figure. However, the majority enter the school speaking competent English and few pupils are supported by additional funding. Almost 43 per cent of full-time pupils are eligible for, and claim, free school meals, a figure which is above the national average.
2. The school is organised into eight classes, two each for Years 3 to 6. Five pupils have local education authority Statements of Special Educational Needs and a total of 61 pupils (26.2 per cent) has been identified as having learning difficulties at Stages 1 to 5 of the Code of Practice. This figure is above the national average, and will be increased further when current Year 3 pupils are reassessed. Attainment on entry into the school, reflected in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments, is about average. Although this is true in English, many pupils display a narrow vocabulary.
3. The school has clear aims, which include to provide each child with an education in a Christian setting; thus the curriculum to be followed is designed to enable each child to acquire skills, attitudes and values which foster an increasing love and understanding of the Catholic faith. The previous inspection took place in June, 1996. The key issues of the previous report have been addressed well in most respects. The school development plan identifies wide-ranging targets relating to literacy, numeracy, information technology, meeting the new curriculum guidance and target setting. In addition, reference is made to strengthening school leadership further, rewarding good performance and continuing to improve the school environment.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	30(29)	23(28)	53(57)

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	22(13)	25(12)	27(18)
	Girls	19(22)	19(13)	19(24)
	Total	41(35)	44(25)	46(42)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	77(64)	83(45)	87(76)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	17(13)	20(13)	20(15)
	Girls	18(17)	18(16)	19(24)
	Total	35(30)	38(29)	39(39)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66(55)	72(53)	74(71)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)
missed through absence for the
latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age)
during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	22.4
Satisfactory or better	98.3
Less than satisfactory	1.7

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. In 1998, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was similar to the national average in English, well below average in mathematics and above average in science. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 was well above the average in science, but below the average in English and mathematics. Overall, the results were below the national average in English and mathematics, and above in science. In comparison with similar schools, results in English and mathematics were above the average, and in science they were well above the average. Results in 1999 were better. In English, pupils' attainment was similar to the national average while in mathematics and science they were above the average. Compared to similar schools, results were well above average and in mathematics they were very high. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its good results in science, and improved them in English and mathematics. The disappointing mathematics results in 1998 were, in part, associated with a poor performance in mental arithmetic. As a consequence of action taken by the school, results in mathematics improved dramatically in 1999, with 83 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 or above. Results in English and science also improved.
2. Levels of attainment, when pupils join Year 3, are broadly average in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology. The weaker area is English because of pupils' limited vocabulary. Pupils' attainment when they leave the school at the age of eleven is above average overall. In English, it is similar to, and often somewhat above, the average. Pupils write at length in a range of styles and for different purposes. Their creative writing has improved since the last inspection, although some of the content is limited owing to a restricted vocabulary. The technical aspects of writing, such as grammar, spelling and punctuation are often above average. Pupils' handwriting is very good and consistently neat and well formed. They read well, know how to use libraries or find out where information is in non-fiction books. By Year 6, pupils' listening skills are particularly good, whether listening to the class teacher or other children. Their speaking skills are satisfactory. Most pupils speak clearly, with good expression, but often rather quietly, so that they cannot be heard clearly. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average and their knowledge is good, especially in number. They handle data well, but have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge to new problems or investigations. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are above average, owing to interesting, well organised, teacher-led activities. Pupils' scientific skills are not as well developed as their knowledge, as there is too little emphasis on the development and independent use of specific skills within lessons. In information technology, pupils' attainment is well above average. They are confident when using computers, producing high quality news publications for the school. They regularly obtain information from the Internet and have a good understanding of using information technology to monitor or control events.
3. The progress of pupils is good overall, but is usually better in the upper key stage than in the earlier years. This difference is associated with the greater challenge and pace demonstrated by teachers, especially in Years 5 and 6. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils' progress is good, and for information technology it is very good. Teachers build effectively on the attainment pupils bring from the infant school. All pupils make at least good progress in each area of English, and there are examples of very good progress. This amount of progress is promoted by the time devoted to English and to the well thought out use of literacy skills across the whole curriculum. In mathematics and science, although progress is good overall, there are occasions when higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently, especially in applying their skills to new problems or investigations. In information technology, pupils progress well. Their skills are very well promoted as teachers follow a particularly effective scheme. Good opportunities are provided for their use across the curriculum. Progress in other subjects is generally good, and aided by the carefully integrated curriculum. In art progress is good, illustrated by pupils' knowledge of the work of other artists, such as Kandinsky, and the miniature portraits they have

produced. Good progress in design and technology occurs in the areas of designing, making and evaluating. Pupils make good progress in their development of geography and history skills and knowledge. Progress is satisfactory in music and physical education.

4. Pupils' literacy skills are good and they are used effectively across the whole curriculum. Particularly good examples are evident in geography, history and science. Pupils' numeracy skills are good and they are used particularly well in geography and science. Their very good information technology skills are used well for data handling, desktop publishing and research activities.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets identified in their individual education plans, which are amended as necessary. Progress is reviewed twice a year and individual education plans are modified where necessary. Similarly, the good support provided to pupils for whom English is an additional language helps them make good progress across the curriculum. Virtually all pupils make good progress throughout the school, although there are occasions, especially in science and the foundation subjects, when higher attaining pupils could be given more difficult work. Boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, make similar progress. The school is setting appropriate targets in relation to attainment by Year 6 at Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. In 1999, it was successful in exceeding the targets set.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

6. Pupils in the school have good attitudes to their learning. Their response is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in about 70 per cent of lessons. It is very good in almost a quarter of lessons, especially in the upper key stage. Almost all pupils show great interest in their work and concentrate well in group tasks. Pupils are involved in their learning and enjoy what they do, responding positively to the teachers' enthusiasm. Pupils usually listen very well during lessons, although this is not always evident in Year 3 when the length of time for discussions led by the teacher, such as at the beginning of the literacy hour, becomes excessive. When given the opportunity to carry out independent activities, pupils complete them carefully. Behaviour is very good in classrooms, when pupils move around the school, especially on the difficult staircase and when lunch is eaten in the hall. The high quality attitudes and behaviour seen in most lessons make a very positive contribution to the rate of pupils' progress. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils are courteous to visitors and all adults in the school. They greet them cheerfully and are polite in conversation.
7. Relationships at the school are very good. All pupils mix well and happily work and play together whatever their backgrounds. The racial harmony within the school is a very notable feature. Adults at the school know the pupils very well and the Headteacher and staff work hard to promote a pleasant, yet challenging, learning environment. Particularly good relationships in some classes are associated with relaxed and confident teachers. This is less evident early in the school where relationships are not so positive. This is linked to the fact that younger pupils do not yet appreciate fully the expectations of the school.
8. Pupils' personal development is good. A positive feature is their awareness of right and wrong. This is illustrated in their writing in historical topics or when discussing 'Caring for our Earth' or issues associated with the destruction of rain forests. The weakness identified in the previous report relating to developing pupils' independence has been satisfactorily addressed. They have more opportunities to act as monitors around the school, but there are not yet sufficient occasions when independence of learning is developed. Pupils support each other very well at all times of the school day. Older ones regularly help young children through the 'buddy' system, often without being asked. They take considerable pride in the presentation of their work. The respect shown by most pupils is a notable feature of their personal development. Pupils are confident enough to answer questions and suggest ideas without worrying about being wrong, since they appreciate that teachers will value their response. Older pupils show their initiative when working in groups and take responsibility as monitors on the staircases, in the library and at lunchtimes. Pupils collect for organised charities at home and overseas. They have a good

understanding of a range of cultures from the past, the characteristics of western culture, including the arts and music, and those associated with the wide ethnic mix within the school.

Attendance

9. During the recent reporting year attendance was satisfactory, and broadly in line with the national average and that at the time of the previous inspection. On occasions, pupils are late. Parents say their children like going to school. Registers are maintained correctly and satisfy statutory regulations.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

10. The quality of teaching is good overall. The school has maintained the good standards noted in the previous inspection. Virtually all teaching is at least satisfactory. Over 50 per cent good or better and over 20 per cent very good. The quality of teaching in upper Key Stage 2 is especially good, and often very good in Year 6. During the inspection, teaching was good overall in English, mathematics, information technology, art, geography and history.
11. The strengths of teaching are most evident in the upper key stage. Occasional weaknesses are most frequent in the lower key stage. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good, and they are supported by clear and consistent guidance through the school's schemes of work. Literacy is taught well and pupils' literacy skills are consistently developed in other subjects. A feature of many lessons is the good use of questions by teachers, which helps to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively. Particular literacy skills are promoted through appropriate reference in other subjects, such as the encouragement to use suitable adjectives when describing events in science. Teachers also ensure that pupils use their writing skills in a wide range of contexts, including encouraging the development of imaginative writing from a firm knowledge base. This was illustrated when pupils were asked to write from the perspective of a Norman knight. In a similar way, numeracy skills are promoted through many subjects, from simple mental calculations in physical education to careful measurement and the display of data collected in geography and science. Expectations of pupils are often high and, on these occasions, pupils are challenged. Less challenge is evident in relation to the use of skills learnt to investigate new problems. This relative weakness usually limits opportunities for higher attaining pupils and the development of increased independence in aspects of their learning. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall and is often good for older pupils. The best planning identifies clearly what pupils are to learn. In planning for other lessons, the statements tend to be general and lack precision.
12. In almost all lessons, a wide range of methods is used well. Pupils are grouped effectively and lower attaining pupils given good support. In science, the work is often too prescribed and teachers do not always allow pupils to conduct investigations with sufficient independence. Expectations of good behaviour are made clear to pupils and the quality of pupil management and discipline is good. These features are less evident in Year 3 classes, especially in literacy hour activities. In this case, pupils are kept in whole class, teacher-led, activities for too long. As a result they become restless and inattentive. The problems affect relatively few pupils but, because the teacher has to try to deal with the problems, all the pupils suffer. During these periods, in particular, the teacher speaks too loudly. This contributes to the noise level in the class increasing. As soon as these Year 3 pupils are engaged in an individual or group activity, the problems largely disappear. The generally high expectations extend to the amount of work and its presentation. Hence, handwriting standards, which are high, are maintained through comments such as 'That's not St. Joseph's writing'. Virtually all lessons feature good pace and effective use of resources. Many teachers, in the best lessons, give very specific time targets to ensure a good volume of work is completed during the lesson. Occasionally, in the early part of the key stage the pace is too slow during whole class introductory sessions. This can lead to pupils losing attention.

13. In subjects such as art and physical education, teachers do not focus sufficiently on the teaching or application of skills. In science, the teaching of skills is given sufficient attention but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use them independently. Effective day-to-day assessment procedures are used by all teachers. Work is marked regularly and the information used to assist planning. Comments made are supportive and suggest areas for attention. They focus on subject content as well as English. Teachers also assess pupils' work effectively during many lessons. A satisfactory range of homework supports pupils' learning, especially in English, mathematics and science.
14. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language is good. When pupils are withdrawn for support in small groups, the teaching is very well organised and a good pace is maintained. Class teachers also support these pupils well during group work and take great care to ensure that they have full access to the curriculum by effective briefing sessions following their return to the class.

The curriculum and assessment

15. The school provides a good curriculum that is broad and well balanced. It is well planned to provide very good development of pupils' knowledge. There are particular strengths in English and information technology. The National Literacy Strategy has been very well implemented and an effective start has been made to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The curriculum as a whole is carefully managed to make sure that the balance between the subjects is good and that it meets the needs of the pupils well. All are given equal access to the curriculum offered. Any pupils who miss parts of the work are given help to catch up so they all have equal opportunity to make progress.
16. The school has clear guidelines and very good schemes of work for all the core subjects of the National Curriculum. The long-term plans for music are satisfactory, and good for all the other foundation subjects. They are regularly reviewed and updated and provide a good framework against which specific subject plans can be drawn up and monitored. The high quality of curricular planning reported by the previous inspection has been maintained. Links between the various subjects are well thought out as in Year 6, when the work of Charles Dickens is studied in literacy lessons when Victorian England is the history topic. This kind of complementary work is a strong feature of the provision as a whole and contributes well to the overall success of the curriculum.
17. There are still not enough opportunities for independent learning, although there have been some improvements since the last inspection. Pupils do have opportunities for some individual research in the library which older pupils help to run. However, there is not enough provision within lessons for pupils to extend their own work, to test theories or set up their own experiments. This is particularly true in mathematics and science where investigations and experiments are too often prescribed or text book-based.
18. All the statutory requirements are met. Appropriate provision for personal and social education is made within the programmes of study for religious education. Health and drugs education are part of the science syllabus. A wide range of educational visits and school journeys, including a residential visit for the older pupils, enriches the curriculum. The school also provides good extra curricular activities including opportunities to take part in drama productions and competitive sports.
19. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. A well-structured policy is in place. Individual education plans are satisfactory, reviewed regularly and help to promote good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate material in the classroom which enables them to take a full part in class lessons. The school provides similar, well organised, support for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
20. Procedures for assessing attainment are satisfactory overall. National Curriculum tests are properly

administered and the results are carefully analysed. In addition, other standard tests are used in Years 4 and 5. Reading standards are tested regularly. In the core subjects of mathematics and science, assessment arrangements are good. Assessment procedures in English are extensive and detailed. In information technology, teachers keep records of pupils' work and there are plans to extend the practice to include greater detail. In the foundation subjects, assessment is less structured, although co-ordinators are beginning to introduce more formal and standardised practice. The teachers know the capabilities of their pupils. They keep samples of work in most subjects but, as yet, they do not record systematically the levels of attainment reached in relation to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers make satisfactory use of the information they have in overall planning for each class but on occasions the work is not matched specifically to the previous standards of all pupils, especially the higher attainers.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

21. Overall, the school provides very well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. This very good provision reflects the skills of individual teachers and the ethos within which the school operates. The Headteacher and his staff demonstrate professional and caring relationships, providing good role models for the pupils. They know their pupils very well and support them in a sensitive way.
22. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. In addition to spiritual aspects being explored in religious education and assemblies, many day-to-day activities involve reflection and consideration of meaning. In history pupils describe how they might have felt as a character from the past, such as a Norman knight. During English sessions, when studying poems or the works of Charles Dickens, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of a poem or how Oliver might have felt before he asked for more. Prayers at the end of the day are used effectively by encouraging pupils to think back over the day. In many subjects, questions raised by teachers during marking help pupils reflect on the work they have done. There are too few opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out experiments independently in science, and experience the excitement of personal discovery.
23. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development, often in ways which are implicit in its every day life. High standards of behaviour are expected in and around the classroom, together with respect for others. School and class rules are displayed and applied consistently by staff. In some classes these are written in terms of 'our responsibilities'. Older pupils understand that it is an expectation of the school that they should care and support younger pupils. Responsibility to others is emphasised, especially collecting for charity. Pupils are encouraged to consider right and wrong. Moral questions are raised during discussions about, for instance, caring for the Earth or the destruction of the rain forests. Internet facilities are also used effectively to promote pupils' awareness of help needed for people in different countries around the world.
24. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. Pupils receive encouragement to relate positively to each other. They are encouraged to be polite, friendly and welcoming. The values of the school are promoted positively. Staff usually ensure that pupils develop good social skills by working in different groups, which reflect a mix of gender and attainment. At times, however, teachers do not actively ensure that pupils work in mixed gender groups, for instance in physical education. Group work does not often encourage co-operation, especially in the younger classes. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop roles of responsibility around the school. They are responsible for returning registers, monitoring the movement of pupils on the staircase, running the computerised library recording system and helping during lunch. Pupils have a few opportunities to organise aspects of their own learning, but these are not extensive and do not, therefore, promote pupils' independence in organising aspects of their own learning sufficiently. Fund-raising activities are encouraged and these include regular collections for charities.
25. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The wide range of cultures within the school is celebrated and valued. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced through literature, the study of the work of famous artists and music played in assembly. Pupils also visit museums and art galleries, and a theatre group visits the school each year. In history, life in Victorian times is compared effectively with our own.

The religious education programme introduces pupils to a number of faiths, in addition to Christianity. Pupils study aspects of African art and that from Roman times. They then produce material in a similar style. During Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to visit France and, through this, learn something about French culture.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

26. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare are very well organised. It is a strength of the school and makes a very strong contribution to pupils' good progress and attitudes to learning. Pupils are secure and happy. Extra-curricular activities are available before and after school and at lunchtimes. These include netball, recorder, choir, cricket, football and sports days at a local school. Year 6 pupils take part in canoeing and trampolining at a local sports centre and also have the opportunity to spend five days camping at a centre in Normandy. Through these activities pupils are well supported and encouraged to broaden their experiences.
27. Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development are good, and those for promoting good behaviour excellent. There are clear written guidelines for the recording of serious misbehaviour and the supervision of playgrounds, together with a conduct and discipline policy. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and have agreed their own class rules. The school provides effective support for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language. One member of staff carries the full time role of special educational needs co-ordinator and is supported by two learning assistants. They provide a good level of support both in the classroom and in group work specially focussed to pupils' needs.
28. Following the last inspection more opportunities to act as monitors have been provided for pupils to use their initiative by helping in the dining hall, library and with discipline. Year 6 pupils help those in Year 3 with their reading. There is still room for pupils to be more involved in decision taking and in opportunities to develop independence in their learning.
29. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. An effective system is in place for recording attendance and latecomers and for contacting parents when necessary. There is good liaison with the education welfare officer. Procedures for child protection and promoting health and safety are excellent. They are clear, well organised and followed by all staff. The Headteacher is the nominated person responsible.

Partnership with parents and the community

30. Partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory. Parents say the information provided by the school is generally good. Reports are comprehensive, clear and helpful, although some subjects are not reported in sufficient depth and are not always specific to the pupil. Termly information sheets about what is to be taught are very useful. Information on entry is good. Parents are invited into assemblies and a few parents give active support to out-of-school sporting fixtures, while a similar group attend weekly class Masses. Termly open evenings, musical and major religious events are well supported. The school has asked parents to become more involved in the life of the school as this would be encouraging and supportive to the school, but there has been no significant response. The termly meetings with parents are well supported, as are meetings for specific purposes.
31. A home-school agreement has been approved by the governors and, so far, approximately 75 per cent of parents have signed. The school is hoping that the remaining parents will sign shortly. There is positive

support for the school's homework scheme.

32. Pupils have participated in supporting several worldwide charitable events ranging from collecting food for victims in Honduras to collecting for the "Good Shepherd Appeal" and helping Kosovan refugees in Albania. Links with the community are satisfactory and include the Church, police and other agencies. Staff have good links with colleagues in neighbouring primary schools. There are few links with business. Arrangements for secondary transfer are well organised.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

33. Since the last inspection the school has maintained a very good overall standard of leadership and management. The Headteacher, senior management team and governors provide clear educational direction for the school. The management of the change from grant maintained status to the new voluntary aided status has been achieved smoothly.
34. The school's mission statement, overall aim and specific aims are implemented effectively through the strong Christian ethos of the school which fosters care for others and a strong moral and spiritual development. These aspects and qualities are applied consistently by all staff.
35. The Governing Body meets its statutory responsibilities and supports the strong leadership of the Headteacher through its committee structure. Governors' committees are in place for finance, personnel, curriculum and premises. Detailed minutes of meetings are produced. The committees support the school fully and maintain an oversight of the curriculum through reports from subject co-ordinators. Attendance at meetings is satisfactory. Governors are also 'paired' with a member of staff whose subject responsibility mirrors the governors' own interests. This pairing assists in the efficient communication of information between teaching staff and the Governing Body.
36. The governors recognise their duties in overseeing the curriculum but have not yet developed an active and long term view of their role in acting as a critical friend of the school. In particular, there is no systematic process for monitoring subjects where there is no national testing.
37. Development planning is very good. A clear and very full school development plan, which identifies priorities, targets, timescales and costings through to 2002, is in place. The plan is supplemented by reports from co-ordinators who identify progress and issues for future development in their subjects. Staff guidelines, a clear mission statement, complaints procedure, finance and pay policies support the Headteacher and senior management team in their firm management of the school.
38. Teaching and curricular developments are monitored by the Headteacher and subject co-ordinators. In the core areas of mathematics, science, English and information technology the co-ordinators provide good levels of subject expertise and support in monitoring both planning and teaching. In the foundation subjects, co-ordinators provide a generally satisfactory level of leadership and management with some strengths in history, art and design and technology.
39. The management of special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is employed full time as a teacher for this area and fulfils the statutory requirements. Two support assistants work effectively with pupils who have statements of special educational needs. The co-ordinator also organises special classes for pupils for whom English is an additional language. These classes are very effective in building pupils' confidence and language skills. Appropriate individual education plans are in place for all pupils at stages three to five of the Code of Practice and these are reviewed at least twice a year. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the school has maintained the good standards achieved at the last full inspection.

40. The ethos of the school is very good. A positive climate, linked to supportive attitudes, fosters children's learning. The strong sense of community and shared endeavour are reflected in the excellent relationships and commitment shown by all adults and pupils within the school. The school provides an impressive environment for learning and fulfils its statutory requirements.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

41. The school is well staffed which supports the delivery of the curriculum. Staff have a wide range of experience. Some teachers are still settling into their new roles. Staff are hardworking and have a strong sense of commitment to the pupils. Sufficient experienced and qualified support staff are available to meet the demands of the curriculum. In particular, they effectively support pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Staff are appropriately employed and work hard for the pupils' best interests.
42. Staff have attended in-school training courses on a wide variety of subjects linked to the school development plan. Staff can also apply to the Headteacher to attend other courses which they consider necessary for their own development. Appraisal guidelines are in place. The in-service training provided, such as that associated with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, has been effective in helping to raise standards.
43. Recent capital works have made considerable improvements to the school's accommodation which is now good. A new security system has been installed. The accommodation is well maintained and used effectively. Some classrooms are small, but well organised. Spacious communal areas, including the library, music room and information technology area, more than compensate for this. The high standard of display enriches the learning environment.
44. Resources, including books, materials and equipment are very good. The library is well stocked and well used. Information technology resources are very good. Overall, the range of resources has a positive impact on the quality of the pupils' learning.
45. Playgrounds are small. However, the school has improved them and made them attractive. They provide a stimulating and interesting environment. The school has no playing field, but makes good use of another local school's facilities. Staffing and accommodation for special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator works full time with groups of pupils who have learning difficulties or English as an additional language. She is ably supported by two learning support assistants.

The efficiency of the school

46. The efficiency of the school is very good overall. Financial planning is very good. The school has an appropriately costed school development plan projecting expenditure to the year 2002. The plan identifies budget headings, resources required and responsibilities very clearly and provides a firm basis for future developments.
47. The school makes very good use of its teaching and support staff. Good use is made of the accommodation. Learning resources, including those for information technology, are used effectively. The library is a strong feature of the school and is well used by all pupils. Funding made available for pupils with special educational needs is used efficiently, as are the funds for staff development.
48. The efficiency of financial control and school administration are excellent. The school is audited annually, and the latest auditor's report contained no recommendations for improvements. The computerised financial management system is used most effectively. The school administrator keeps a very careful oversight of all income and expenditure and discharges her role extremely competently.

49. The unit costs of the school are high. However, funds are very well spent to provide pupils with very good resources. As a result, pupils make good progress and attain above average standards in the core subjects. Their attitudes when they leave the school are particularly good, showing responsibility to others. Taking account of pupils' attainment on entry, their progress and background, the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

50. In 1998, when pupils left the school at the end of Year 6, attainment in English was below the national average but above that of similar schools. In the National Curriculum tests in 1998, 64 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above. This was similar to the national average. Seven per cent of pupils achieved Level 5, which was below the average. These results show an improvement over those reported at the time of the last inspection. A further improvement occurred in 1999, when 77 per cent achieved Level 4 or above, and 13 per cent Level 5. The results were similar to the national average, and well above the results of similar schools. Over the period since 1996, girls performed a little better than boys but the difference was less than the national figure. An area for improvement identified in the previous inspection report related to creative and imaginative writing. This has improved sufficiently, despite some weaknesses in pupils' vocabulary, especially early in the school.
51. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. This reflects a good understanding of the main elements of reading and writing, but a narrowness in pupils' vocabulary. The rate of progress is good overall, and accelerates in the upper key stage. This helps to ensure the good standards attained by the end of Year 6. A significant number of pupils has special educational needs, and almost 90 per cent are from homes where English is not the first language. These pupils make good progress through effective support whether withdrawn or in class and as a result most pupils achieve at least Level 3 in English.
52. Listening skills are above the expected level by the time pupils are in Year 6. Progress is good. Pupils who enter the school in Year 3 find difficulty in sitting and listening to the teacher or other pupils during a class introduction or discussion. Pupils' speaking is clear but tends to be rather quiet when they speak to the whole class and, as a result, they cannot always be heard. Activities across the curriculum are used successfully to develop the pupils' speaking skills and extend their vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about a range of subjects and discuss some of the issues raised about Victorian times when studying extracts of David Copperfield and Oliver Twist. They perform competently the scene when Oliver asked for more and other pupils evaluate this well. Speaking and listening skills make an appropriate contribution to pupils' progress across the curriculum, especially when responding to the teacher's questions, which, in turn, aids the development of language skills.
53. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 is above the national average. Pupils read regularly in school and many at home; they make mostly good progress. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils read independently and accurately from a range of texts. They are confident to tackle fiction, poetry and non-fiction. All pupils recall a story in detail and talk about the events, characters and plot of books they have read. They make their preferences clear about their favourite books and authors. With good teacher guidance, they explore the meaning of extracts of stories they have read, for instance from the work of Charles Dickens, and apply the information to the study of the Victorians. Pupils in Year 5 identify words they do not understand when reading John Masefield's 'Sea Fever' and then identify examples of simile and metaphor in the poem. By the end of Year 6 they know how to use the classification system used in most libraries and understand the purpose of contents, glossary and, to a lesser extent, index.
54. Pupils' attainment in writing is generally in line with the national average, and some is above, at the end of Year 6. Progress is good, and improves as pupils move through the school. They write independently, convey meaning and have a good understanding of sentence structure, including the use of capital letters, full stops, commas, question marks and apostrophes. Pupils enhance their writing by including a range of different adjectives and adverbs. The vast majority of words are spelt correctly but, although it improves steadily from Year 3 to Year 6, pupils' vocabulary is often relatively narrow. The pupils plan, draft and redraft their writing. There is a good range of writing appropriate to different subjects, including stories, reports, poems, letters and narrative. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the different styles of

writing used, for instance that David Copperfield is written in the first person while Oliver Twist is a narrative. They then write well in the first person to describe how Oliver felt. Pupils' handwriting is very neat in all subjects.

55. Pupils' attitudes to learning in English are good, although less consistent in Year 3 than in other years. They are generally attentive and responsive listeners, interested in the content of lessons and eager to contribute their ideas. They settle quickly to group or individual work and maintain their concentration while writing on their set tasks. In Year 3, however, they have not yet become accustomed to lengthy introductions and discussions at the beginning of literacy lessons and tend to become fidgety and do not listen well. These problems largely disappear as soon as individual or group tasks are set. Pupils take pride in their work and present it well. Most pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about books and stories or poems they have read.
56. The teaching of English is good, and sometimes very good, especially in the upper key stage. All staff have worked hard to implement the literacy hour. The order is sometimes appropriately modified to meet the needs of pupils. What pupils are to learn is clearly identified in the best lessons. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory these statements sometimes lack clarity. Whole class sessions are usually well led. Good questioning helps pupils explore the meaning of poems or text they have read effectively. In the less successful lessons, especially in Year 3, there is a lack of pace and the introductory sessions, which feature whole-class, teacher-led activities, are too long. This means pupils become inattentive and restless. In some cases, the noise becomes excessive and this is not helped by the teacher's raised voice. Work is matched carefully to pupils' needs and independent tasks are well managed. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of aspects of English being taught. The best lessons often feature dynamic and dramatic teacher performances, which enthuse and interest pupils. Teachers manage pupils well, and use praise and encouragement to good effect. In the best lessons, expectations are high; the tasks motivate and interest pupils and the views of pupils are valued. The marking of work is good, being both encouraging and challenging. The results of marking and other assessments are used well when teachers plan the next work. A satisfactory range of homework supports learning in English. All teachers effectively develop language skills across all subjects of the curriculum and use English well to support pupils' progress in other subjects. This is well illustrated in the study of the Victorians in history at the same time as using excerpts from stories written by Charles Dickens for literacy work.
57. The subject meets statutory requirements and the curriculum provided is very broad and balanced. It effectively promotes the development of pupils' literacy skills. A particular strength is the way in which the work in English is very effectively linked to other subjects of the curriculum. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' creative and imaginative writing was identified as needing improvement. This has been effectively addressed while recognising the limitations due to pupils' limited vocabulary. Pupils are encouraged to write imaginative text, for instance by imagining they were Norman knights and by building from factual knowledge gained about related events. A very good policy and scheme of work are in place, which, together with the large amount of time devoted to English, help all pupils make good progress. Very good assessment procedures are in place and used consistently throughout the year. The data obtained from assessment are used well to set specific targets. English makes a particular contribution to pupils' spiritual development, for instance when they are asked to write about how Norman knights or Oliver Twist felt.
58. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well, and has worked hard to develop literacy throughout the school. All staff have a clear understanding about the development of literacy and have received good training from the co-ordinator. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored regularly. Teaching is monitored through direct observation in the classroom. The school has a large quantity of books, including sufficient quantities of group reading books. The selection of both non-fiction and fiction books is good. The library is well organised and the use of a computer system to record books pupils have read assists staff to offer guidance to help pupils extend their reading experiences.

Mathematics

59. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in the summer of 1999 were good. Eighty three per cent of pupils reached Level 4 or above and 34 per cent of pupils reached Level 5. This is well above the national average. These results show considerable improvement on the previous year, when attainment was below the national average. The results for 1999 are above the national average and are very high when compared with those of similar schools. Overall attainment has improved since the last inspection, although higher attaining pupils have too few opportunities to start to think mathematically and to apply mathematical processes to solve every day problems. Standards seen in lessons were at least satisfactory and in some cases were good or very good. Scrutiny of work confirmed the findings in lessons that standards become higher and progress faster towards the end of the key stage.
60. All the programmes of study of the National Curriculum are covered. By the end of the key stage most pupils calculate competently up to four figures and two decimal places. They use calculators confidently because they understand place value and the four rules of computation. They measure and draw angles to the nearest degree and have a basic understanding of area and volume. They interpret simple data, using a computer to display their findings. Pupils work well together and respect each other's efforts. They explain their work well. Pupils carry out little original practical work. Most of the exercises are textbook based. There is too few opportunities for pupils to organise their own learning, which would be particularly beneficial to the higher attainers.
61. The quality of teaching is good overall. It was at least satisfactory and, in half the lessons seen, it was good or very good. The best lessons are the result of good planning which is built on clear assessment information both for the term as a whole and for individual lessons. Teachers use correct mathematical vocabulary as a matter of course and ask well directed questions. These help to promote progress. Lessons are less successful when lesson plans are not precise enough and learning intentions are not clear. Therefore, work is not matched well enough to the abilities of the pupils. However, pupils with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to take full part in class lessons.
62. The curriculum is well balanced. Good cross-curricular links are made with design and technology, art and geography. The mathematical skills of choosing the best strategies to carry out a calculation or solve a problem are carefully taught, though not put into practice in real situations often enough. Assessment procedures are good and detailed. National Curriculum tests are carried out at the end of the key stage, according to statutory requirements. In Years 4 and 5, non-statutory standardised tests are used. The information gathered from assessment is carefully analysed and used effectively to develop the curriculum. This has assisted in improving pupils' mental mathematics, which was found to be a weak area in the 1998 National Curriculum tests. The arrangements for teaching mathematics are good. All teachers successfully teach their own mixed ability classes.
63. The policy and scheme of work are very good. They are regularly reviewed and revised. Most of the weaknesses identified recently have been addressed, as when the school realised that performance in mental mathematics was poor. The action taken as a result has contributed to the much improved assessment results in 1999. It also meant that very little change in practice was needed to implement the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. There are sufficient good quality resources and the timetable is well organised to make best use of them.

Science

64. Standards of attainment in science have improved since the last inspection. However, teachers still need to provide more opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they learn. Overall, standards are above average. For the last three years, the results have been above the national average. In the National Curriculum tests in 1999, 87 per cent of pupils reached Level 4 or above and 42 per cent reached Level 5. These results continue to be above the national average, and well above the results of similar schools. Both boys and girls exceeded national expectations.

65. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand that living things are interdependent and they know some of the ways in which animals and plants are adapted to the environment in which they live. Pupils have had experience of a wide range of materials and know some of their properties. They have learned about basic forces including magnetism and electricity and how they affect materials. Progress is at least satisfactory and is good or very good in Years 5 and 6. Good progress is clear from scrutiny of work in both the class workbooks and the attractive displays of work around the school. Assessment information confirms that progress is good and that it accelerates towards the end of the key stage.
66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In almost half the lessons seen it was good and, occasionally, very good. Teachers concentrate on using subject specific vocabulary consistently. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Planning for each term or half term is very good, although lesson plans are not always precise enough. The best teaching occurs when learning objectives are clear, precise and central to each part of the lesson. Teaching is also effective when previous work is revised to provide a secure foundation for new concepts. Where lessons are less successful, it is because the teacher loses sight of the learning objectives or introduces too many new ideas in one session. Too few opportunities are developed by teachers to allow pupils to plan and carry out independent investigations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to take a full part in class lessons. If they do have to miss part of a lesson, they are given help to catch up.
67. There are good links with other subjects as when temperature and rainfall statistics are analysed in geography in Year 5. Science work is also referred to in history, where lifestyles are contrasted. Pupils then realise the impact which scientific discovery has had on modern life.
68. The science curriculum is broad and covers all the programmes of study required by the National Curriculum. The scheme of work is very good. All parts of the National Curriculum are taught twice, first in Years 3 and 4 and repeated at a more difficult level in Years 5 and 6. The gradual development of knowledge and understanding is very good. The curriculum provides a secure foundation for future work. Pupils are taught scientific method and what constitutes a fair test. However, the skills are taught rather than practised. Most experiments are carried out according to instructions and the pupils observe and try to interpret the results. They are not sufficiently encouraged to show initiative or to become scientific thinkers.
69. Assessment procedures are good and improvements are due to be added later this year. At present, National Curriculum tests are carried out at the end of the key stage according to statutory requirements. In addition, intermediate key stage tests are used in Years 4 and 5. The results are carefully analysed and the information gained is used to develop the subject further.
70. Accommodation for science lessons is satisfactory. Although some of the classrooms are quite cramped, additional space is available in adjacent areas. The resources are good and well organised. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop work in using and applying scientific knowledge and has provided new materials and assessment support for this purpose.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information Technology

71. By the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment of pupils is very good and well above the national average. Pupils access commercial publishing programs and produce a wide range of reports, art work and information sheets. In addition, control and modelling programs are studied. The standard of work produced by the pupils is very good and they demonstrate a clear understanding of the processes and programs being used. The school has clearly maintained, and improved further, the good standard of work observed during the last inspection.

72. Progress through Years 3 to 6 is very good and is supported by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work which has been adopted by the school. Pupils complete a carefully structured series of tasks ranging from basic word processing skills in Year 3 to accessing the Internet in Year 4. In Year 5 pupils use 'e' mail and in Year 6 work on more challenging tasks, such as information sheets for younger pupils. The pupils develop in confidence, skill and understanding as they work through this programme of work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
73. Pupils in all year groups enjoy their information technology lessons and respond positively to the tasks set. Behaviour is good in most lessons although some classes can be noisy. The pupils are generally attentive and keen to complete their work. They handle the computer equipment with care and work in pairs co-operatively helping each other use the keyboard.
74. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. The successful teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, a calm and careful pace in presenting tasks, good relationships and clearly set expectations. Higher attaining pupils are encouraged to extend their skills and try more complex routines and menus. The less successful lessons are taught by members of staff with limited subject knowledge who are, therefore, unable to help pupils sufficiently.
75. The subject is co-ordinated by the Headteacher who manages the development and maintenance of information technology efficiently. The resources available to the pupils include a computer suite with fifteen modern machines which are regularly updated. The suite is used for whole class lessons which enable pupils to make steady and regular progress. There are a further five computers in the lower hall and four in the upper school hall. These are used by small groups and are supervised by class teachers and learning support assistants. All the computers in the school are networked and linked to the Internet. All children have a personal 'e' mail address.
76. The information technology medium term plan allows for a wide range of cross curricular links which make good use of pupils' skills and enrich the wider curriculum. During the week of the inspection, cross curricular links with geography, mathematics, history, religious education and art were noted.
77. The assessment of information technology is in the process of development and there are plans to use a check list of basic skills for each child throughout the year. There are also plans to save all pupils' work on hard drive to assist class teachers in assessing work at the end of each year. A clear information technology development plan is in place with planned progress and responsibilities projected through to 2002.
78. The resources provided for this subject are outstanding and, as a consequence of this and some good teaching, high levels of attainment are maintained throughout the school. Information technology enjoys a high priority within the curriculum and represents a strength of the school.

Art

79. Pupils make good progress in art throughout the school and receive a well balanced curriculum based on the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 2. The carefully structured and clearly focussed medium term plan ensures that pupils experience a broad and balanced range of artistic experiences. Pupils study basic drawing skills and the body in motion in Year 3, and progress through studies of light and colour in Year 5 to work on shape and symmetry related to William Morris designs in Year 6.
80. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve a good standard in art. They demonstrate good levels of attainment in work on line and form, scale and perspective, drawing from close observation and work inspired by other artists and curriculum subjects. Work produced is well presented and carried out with care.
81. Knowledge and understanding is good and pupils are introduced to the work of a variety of artists. Displays around the school demonstrate a high standard of work and involve studies of historical miniatures, Kandinsky, Bridget Riley, African patterns and strong links with information technology. The quality of

the pupils' work is high. Visits are made to Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum to broaden the pupils' perspective of art.

82. Pupils work enthusiastically in art lessons. They behave well and use equipment responsibly. Pupils co-operate with each other and are also capable of independent work.
83. Teaching in art is good in most lessons. These lessons are conducted with enthusiasm for the subject which is transferred to the children. Secure subject knowledge leading to clear expectations and appropriate challenge are other features of good lessons that enable pupils to engage fully with the task set. Less successful lessons lack tightly focussed objectives and learning outcomes which result in pupils becoming confused and insufficiently challenged.

Design and Technology

84. Owing to timetable restrictions, no lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. On the basis of the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff, pupils' progress is good. The curriculum for design and technology is broad and balanced and allows pupils to study a wide range of topics that require the skills of designing and making. They design and construct 'moving monsters', bake cakes, construct torches, build moving toys and construct simple electrical circuits designed for specific purposes. The pupils' planning shows developing sophistication and accuracy of judgement as they progress through the school. Construction skills develop satisfactorily, as does the quality of the original designs. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate their understanding of materials and their properties and construct electrical circuits with motors to drive model cars in a variety of ways. Pupils complete a design record for all work attempted. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicated a good standard of attainment with careful planning and analysis of faults and problems of design and construction.
85. The co-ordinator is newly appointed to the role and supports the subject efficiently. She organises resources well and monitors teachers' planning. She has a clear view of the future development of the subject. The school has made good use of a visiting advisory teacher in developing the curriculum and pupils' skills in constructing model cars. The planning sheet in use is highly suitable for the younger pupils. It is not as effective in challenging the older and higher attaining pupils. In particular, they are not encouraged to consider alternative designs and construction methods or materials, nor to evaluate the testing of effectiveness and health and safety issues.

Geography

86. Geography was only taught to Year 5 during the period of inspection. Further evidence was gained through the scrutiny of pupils' work, including some from last year's Year 6, and discussions with teachers and pupils. Little evidence was available for early in the key stage. Pupils make good progress, particularly in extending their knowledge of climate, weather and maps. Good progress is also evident as pupils compare their local area with one in rural Kent, and also with one overseas. Pupils in Year 5 write about the different types of clouds and what they can tell us. They know why it is important to know about the weather, particularly for certain occupations, such as builders or pilots. Higher attaining pupils distinguish between weather and climate. Older pupils make good progress in mapping skills. They know the main symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps and, by the time they leave the school, use six figure grid references correctly. Pupils describe accurately the main features of the water cycle and use terms such as "tributary", "meander" and "source" correctly when describing the characteristics of a river. Pupils make good use of their literacy, numeracy and information technology skills when writing about places of interest and comparing their characteristics. When investigating temperature and rainfall during the year, they use appropriate line graphs and bar charts.
87. Pupils show interest in their geography work and are fascinated when finding out about areas around the

world, such as Antarctica, and their different climates. They are enthusiastic when using atlases. Pupils answer questions well during discussion, and their behaviour is good. The presentation of pupils' work, including the handwriting, is of a very high quality.

88. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers' questioning skills are usually good. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory, although there are occasions when the work introduced is limited to the text included in the books or atlases being used. Instructions are clear and pupils are managed effectively. A range of useful resources is used effectively to promote pupils' interest. Teachers do not make the most of opportunities for pupils, especially higher attaining ones, to undertake research associated with the topics, even though relevant books are displayed in the classroom. Activities planned by teachers make especially good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
89. A good scheme of work helps to support teachers' planning effectively and also ensures that pupils are taught a well balanced curriculum. A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed. She has already identified the need to produce guidance on the specific use of assessment in geography, and intends to develop this following the modifications to the curriculum due to be introduced next year. The wide ranging curriculum promotes pupils' moral and cultural development effectively by, for instance, discussing issues associated with the destruction of the rain forests.

History

90. It was only possible to observe lessons in two of the year groups during inspection week. Progress is good overall. Pupils discuss their work sensibly and offer opinions about good and less good aspects of life in earlier times, as in Year 6 when pupils compared the lives of rich and poor Victorian children. Scrutiny of written work and the good displays of work in each class show that progress is good both in knowledge and in understanding of the implications of historical events. Pupils are given planned opportunities to consider life in other times and places, and to reflect on their own situation. They enjoy history.
91. The teaching is generally good with a brisk pace and a variety of activities, all focussed on clear learning targets. Teachers make good use of text books, as in a Year 4 lesson about the Domesday book and life in Norman England. In Year 6, pupils were also taught how to use photographic and documentary evidence about Victorian schools. Planning is based on the good framework provided by the school's comprehensive scheme of work. History is taught in alternate half terms but the curriculum is well covered. There are many examples of good, well-planned links with other subjects which enhance the pupils' understanding. The geography of the Nile region is part of the work in Year 3 when Ancient Egypt is the topic. Year 6 pupils read books by Charles Dickens when they are learning about life in Victorian England.
92. At present, assessment is informal, although there are plans to introduce a whole school scheme by the end of the present term. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. Pupils are taught research skills. They write original accounts. Sometimes they put themselves in the place of historical characters. This strategy helps them to enhance their understanding. By the end of the key stage, most pupils will be well prepared to move on to the next stage of learning.
93. The timetable is arranged well to make good use of staff expertise. Resources for teaching history are good. There are few artefacts available but the school is aware of the importance of first hand experience and arranges at least two outside visits for each pupil during the key stage.

Music

1. There have been several changes since the last inspection and provision for music, although still satisfactory, has not improved. At present, the Headteacher co-ordinates music as there is no post holder for the subject. He monitors the provision and makes sure that there is satisfactory coverage. A trained musician, who is not yet a qualified teacher, takes some of the classes along with the class teachers in Years 3 and

4. Otherwise, teachers take music lessons for their own classes. Progress is satisfactory. Assessment is carried out informally in class and progress is reported annually to parents.
2. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond to the music well. The curriculum is appropriate. The school has chosen the curriculum content wisely. Recorded lessons from the BBC Music Workshop support the teachers well and provide for the gradual development of both listening and performing skills and the opportunity to experience a range of music of differing styles. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.
3. All classes have a weekly music lesson. There is also opportunity for pupils to join the choir or the recorder club and to learn to play an orchestral instrument with visiting teachers. Pupils sing together regularly in acts of worship. Every year, a professional team holds a dance and drama workshop for each class and the pupils of Year 5 have a series of lessons leading to performance in a musical production.
4. The accommodation for teaching music is good. There is a well appointed music room with a good range of both tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In addition, there are a number of brass instruments on display, as well as drums and pipes from Africa and South America.

Physical Education

5. Since the last inspection, the physical education co-ordinator has developed a very clear curriculum map and very good medium and long term plans that are broad and balanced and support class teachers well. Swimming is included in the scheme and Year 5 pupils attend lessons at a local pool. Based on observations made during the inspection week, the majority of older pupils are likely to be able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
6. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In games, younger pupils throw and catch large balls and co-operate in pairs and small groups. Older pupils apply these skills to small competitive games, and in the majority of cases they retain their levels of skill. These aspects of the curriculum and teaching have been successfully addressed since the last report. In dance, pupils in Year 6 move rhythmically to music, interpret the story and construct short dance sequences. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 5 construct a sequence based on different ways of travelling linked with more formal gymnastics skills such as forward rolls, cartwheels and handstands. The pupils make satisfactory progress in these lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress.
7. Pupils' responses to physical education lessons are good. They change quickly and quietly, work with enthusiasm, listen carefully and try hard to improve their performance. The majority of pupils co-operate well and are helpful in supporting each other.
8. Teaching is at least satisfactory across all year groups, with some good practice in Years 4 and 6. The most successful lessons are characterised by effective teaching of skills in games and careful, positive evaluation of pupils' work in dance. Good lessons also demonstrate careful planning with clear learning outcomes and appropriate expectations that allow pupils to concentrate their efforts. Good levels of subject knowledge are also evident as a crucial feature of good teaching. This enthuses the pupils and encourages good levels of effort and response. There are examples of activities being set without sufficient prior practice of skills or clear teaching of them and, as a result, progress is limited.
9. Since the last inspection, the playground has been completely re-surfaced with a high quality safety surface that is permanently marked for netball and basketball. This provides an excellent resource for small games and practice of skills. As a further response to the last inspection, the school has expanded its extra-curricular programme. The school is now involved in football competitions including a league, a netball league, cricket for girls and mixed groups and inter-school sports. The school makes good use of a visiting dance group and cricket teachers. The school has a good record of success in these activities and recently represented Southwark in athletics and achieved 7th place out of 33 London boroughs. The co-

ordinator discharges his duties conscientiously and is making a good attempt to develop the subject and extra curricular activities. There is a need for some staff training in gymnastics and games. Although the subject is adequately resourced, the small apparatus stock would benefit from replacement.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

10. The inspection of St. Joseph's RC Junior School was undertaken by four inspectors who spent a total of 14 inspector days in the school. The evidence in the report is based upon a total of 42.2 hours observation from 56 lessons or part lessons distributed across the eight classes, together with 11.4 hours of other direct observation activities.

The evidence also includes:

- inspection of a range of other school activities, including assemblies and registration;
- listening to the reading of pupils from each year group, selected by teachers to represent the full range of ability and attainment;
- inspection of books and other work of three pupils in each age group, selected by teachers to represent the full range of attainment;
- inspection of books and other work of pupils who left in July at the end of Year 6;
- inspection of samples of written reports to parents;
- discussions with children in each age group;
- discussions with governors, parents, members of teaching, learning support and non-teaching staff;
- discussions held at a meeting, prior to the inspection, attended by 34 parents;
- scrutiny of policy documents, attendance registers, records kept of pupils, teachers' planning documents, the previous inspection report and action plan;
- analysis of the school development plan and budget figures;
- analysis of 90 parents' questionnaires.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 - Y6	233	5	61	108

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y3 - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:3 : 1

Education support staff (Y3 - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	55

Average class size:

29.1

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	757773
Total Expenditure	787327
Expenditure per pupil	3365
Balance brought forward from previous year	50285
Balance carried forward to next year	20731

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

233

Number of questionnaires returned:

90

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	36.7	54.4	5.6	2.2	1.1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	50.0	44.4	2.2	2.2	1.1
The school handles complaints from parents well	35.6	51.1	7.8	3.3	2.2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	48.9	45.6	4.4	0	1.1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	52.2	43.3	3.3	1.1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	51.1	42.2	5.6	1.1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	41.1	52.2	4.4	2.2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42.2	46.7	7.8	2.2	1.1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	50.0	46.7	1.1	2.2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	48.9	44.4	5.6	1.1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	68.9	30.0	1.1	0	0