

INSPECTION REPORT

**DALTON ST. MARY'S C.E. (AIDED) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Dalton in Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112412

Headteacher: Mr M Eady

Reporting inspector: Mr R Fry
21073

Dates of inspection: 15 -16 October 2001

Inspection number: 195694

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

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GLOSSARY

Foundation Stage – (young children up to the age of 5+ in the nursery and reception classes) The curriculum includes the ‘Areas of Learning’ - language development, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative, physical and social development.

Key Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2.

Key Stage 2 – Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Curriculum – everything the school teaches pupils in and out of class, such as English, science and health education, visits and visitors.

Schemes of work – courses of lessons in eg. English, for teachers to use when planning lessons.

ICT – information and communication technology.

Baseline assessment – tests for young children when they join the school or in their first year.

Co-ordinator – teacher in charge of organising a subject, such as English or physical education.

School development (or improvement) plan – set of plans that shows how the school will improve over the coming year or longer, what its priorities for action are and how it will spend its money.

National averages – refer to National Curriculum test results and teachers’ assessments in English, mathematics and science where there are national comparisons with all schools and similar schools.

National expectations – most pupils are expected to reach Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects at the age of seven years and Level 4 at the age of eleven.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Coronation Drive
Dalton in Furness
Cumbria

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend A Mitchell

Date of previous inspection: 16 June 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's Primary is an average sized school for boys and girls aged between three and eleven years. The school educates pupils from Dalton and the surrounding area. It has 230 pupils on roll, including 34 young children in the nursery who attend part-time. Children's attainment on entry to the school is typical of children nationally. Eighteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is average. Twenty nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. No pupils have English as an additional language. The Church of England will inspect religious education, acts of collective worship and pupils' spiritual development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Mary's is a very effective, happy and caring school. It makes very good provision for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils achieve very well. By the time they leave the school, standards of pupils' work are higher than in most schools. The teaching is very good and the work that pupils are set is demanding. All staff work very well together and seek to improve the standards of pupils' work still further. The cost of educating pupils is slightly above average. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress from the time they enter the nursery until they leave. Pupils' standards of work by the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- The teaching and learning are very good.
- The curriculum is very good. The strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively put into action. There are other strengths, such as in information and communication technology.
- The management and leadership of the school are very good. There has been much progress since the last inspection.
- Pupils' moral and social education is very good. The school takes very good care of pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good.

What could be improved

There are no major issues that the school needs to address.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then, it has made very good improvements. The teaching has improved. Teachers have greater expectations of pupils' capabilities and higher attaining pupils now achieve very well. The school has sustained well above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in all subjects since the last inspection. The school has schemes of work for all subjects and uses national subject guidance effectively. There are good assessment, recording and reporting systems. Teachers use this information effectively for planning lessons. Teachers in charge of subjects carefully check that the school's guidance for teaching the National Curriculum is used effectively. The headteacher and staff make checks on the quality of teaching. The checks have proved very effective in improving the quality of pupils' learning. Registrations are now properly recorded in accordance with regulations. The accommodation has been improved greatly and now includes a nursery and a computer suite.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	St Mary's compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	C	A	A*	very high A*
mathematics	A	A	A*	A*	well above average A
science	A	A*	A*	A*	above average B
					average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The table shows that in the National Curriculum tests in 2001, the standards of work of Year 6 pupils in mathematics and science were very high (in the top five per cent) in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools. English standards were also very high in comparison with similar schools. Pupils reached their targets and some exceeded them. Results in 2001 were better than those in 2000. The school has sustained well above average levels of performance in the last three years. The consistent teaching ensures pupils' achievement varies little from year to year.

Five year olds mostly attain standards above those of children nationally and achieve well in all the 'Areas of Learning' they study. The nursery and reception teaching has had a positive effect on young children's standards of work. Young children soon become confident and learn many important skills, such as how to work together with others and how to settle to tasks.

Results in the reading, writing and mathematics tests for Year 2 over the last four years have varied between above average and well above average in comparison with all schools nationally. At the end of Year 2 in 2001, pupils' National Curriculum test results were above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics in comparison with all and similar schools. However, the school strives for ever better standards and has identified the need for an improvement in standards of writing across the school. The trend in results has been to maintain well above average standards across the school.

During the inspection, Year 2 pupils' standards of work observed were above average in English and mathematics. Pupils made good progress and achieved well. Eleven year olds' standards of work observed were also above average in English, mathematics and science at this early stage in the year. In all three subjects, pupils made good progress and achieved well in relation to their capabilities. Pupils attained the standards expected nationally in all other subjects observed at seven and eleven years old.

Pupils achieve very well during their time at the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and the quality of teaching ensures that pupils make very good progress from the time they enter the school until they leave it. Pupils' very good achievement is present in many subjects, such as information and communication technology. Achievement in Year 6 last year was particularly good because the teaching across the school has been increasingly sharply focused on what pupils need to learn. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well and they attain the targets they have been set. Most reach nationally expected standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show a keen interest in school life and make the most of lessons, special events and clubs. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other during lessons and therefore make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well in lessons, in the computer suite and at playtimes. Movement around the school is also good. Pupils are reliable and helpful. Many pupils are mature and hard working, from the nursery to Year 6.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils progress well in lessons because they co-operate enthusiastically and feel part of the school. Older pupils work effectively and independently for long periods and children under five mature quickly.
Attendance	Well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very 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.

Teachers' close attention to young children's individual needs in the nursery and reception classes means that children make a very good start to their education. Activities are varied and well planned. All children, for example, learn to express their views and then listen to others. The atmosphere is such that children quickly gain in confidence in all that they do and consequently are able to learn new ideas immediately.

English (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy) are very effectively taught. The very good organisation of lessons and challenging work set in literacy and numeracy lessons have led to pupils' very good results in Years 2 and 6. There is a high level of consistency in the teaching across the school. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school. There is a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms and all teachers have a wide spread of knowledge and skills, which they use effectively to bring about learning. Teachers and support staff reinforce ideas effectively and repeat key points in every lesson.

Pupils learn at a good pace because they are well challenged by what they have to do when working in groups. Teachers and support staff are very clear about what it is that pupils will learn in each lesson and they check that this has happened. The quality of lesson planning, work sheets that pupils use and of information displays on classroom walls is good. During the inspection, teachers rarely used computers in lessons. However, the staff is about to undergo extensive training in the use of ICT with pupils. Teaching of ICT skills in the computer suite is very good and, for example, pupils in Year 3 have made rapid progress in a short time.

Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress. Pupils' capacity to learn is extended effectively and the needs of all pupils are met in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers and support staff meet their needs very effectively, within small withdrawn groups and in whole class lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught consistently well. High priority is given to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils are taught an interesting and broad range of topics in lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The provision is well managed. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Many attain national standards. Teachers and support staff help pupils effectively in lessons. Pupils with statements of their special educational needs are well integrated into all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in everything that the school does. There are many clubs for pupils to join, which they enjoy. The social and moral tone of acts of collective worship is strong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for improving pupils' behaviour work very well. The new school council is a valuable addition. End of year reports to parents are informative but give widely differing amounts of information about subjects. Displays of information for pupils in classrooms are very good.

The school has a good partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead in a very positive way. Since the last inspection, the school has responded very effectively to what needed to be done. Teachers with responsibilities are effective. The staff development programme is very effective. The administration of the school is very efficient.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors take an active role in helping to manage the school. They understand its strengths and what still needs to be done. The work of the committees is particularly effective. For example, a close watch is kept on the school's budget.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school development plan effectively identifies what the school needs to do in the coming years. The plan is used to check progress towards targets very well. Staff make checks on the work of the school and the quality of teaching has improved as a result.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school has made very good use of the money available to it and 'best value' is found for many major purchases and contracts. The large under-spend is kept in reserve to ensure that the school's good provision is maintained, as a small fall in pupil numbers is predicted.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Thirty four per cent of questionnaires were returned and 12 parents attended the meeting

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like going to school very much and make good progress with their work. • Behaviour is good. • The right amount of homework is set for children of different ages. • The teaching is good and parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. • The school has high expectations of children. • The school is well managed and led. • The school helps children to mature and become responsible. • There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<p>Virtually all parents are pleased with what the school offers.</p>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make good progress from the time they enter the nursery until they leave. Pupils' standards of work by the end of Year 6 are well above average.

1. There are several significant reasons why standards and achievement have improved since the last inspection. The very good management of the school and teachers' dedication are important factors. The school has carefully identified its areas of weakness over the years and has set out to improve them. Adults work closely together and there is consistency throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff make checks on the quality of teaching and this has been a significant factor in improving the quality of lessons. Another factor is that the school has spent much money on good quality resources during and after the period when it was grant-maintained. A particularly good example is in information and communication technology. (ICT) All classes have good quality computers to use at all times during the school day and there is an excellent new computer suite. Teachers display pupils' work and important information very clearly. Lessons are planned so that all pupils have work that challenges them. Teachers provide interesting and well written work sheets and other information for pupils to use. Pupils are always clear what they have to do and how long they have to do it. They receive rewards when a job is well done. Consequently, pupils have a sense of pride in their work and they work hard.
2. Pupils achieve very well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and the very good quality of teaching ensures that pupils make very good progress from the time they enter the school until they leave it. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make. The school has identified the need for a further improvement in writing standards, including spelling and handwriting. Year 2 pupils' standards were average in 2001 and pupils had made sound progress. Year 2 last year was a lower attaining group. However, the school looks to improve standards again. In Year 6, pupils' standards in English were very high in comparison with similar schools.
3. Five year olds attain standards above those of children nationally and achieve well in all the 'Areas of Learning' they study. The nursery and reception teaching has had a positive effect on young children's standards of work. Young children soon become confident and learn many important skills, such as how to work together with others and settle to tasks. By the end of the reception year, most children for example achieve well in making activities. In one lesson observed, they knew the names of food ingredients and could suggest how mixtures might be changed to improve the quality of their baking.
4. Results in English of Year 2 pupils over the last four years have varied between average and well above average in comparison with all schools nationally. Teachers plan very carefully, and include accurate targets for pupils to attain by the end of each lesson. The work that teachers provide is accurately matched to pupils' needs. These two factors have a major influence on the success of lessons. Average attaining pupils observed in Year 2 demonstrated that they could turn statements into questions verbally when the teacher asked them to do so. They completed short sentences with 'oo' words in them successfully. Higher attainers, for example, joined letters when writing and turned statements into questions without help. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs put, for example, the letters 'oo' between 'b' and 't' successfully to make 'boot.'

5. Achievement in Year 6 last year was very good. The teaching has been clearly focused on what pupils need to learn. All pupils reach their high targets because the teacher in Year 6 uses a range of very good teaching tactics. For example, lessons are very well planned so that pupils revise their previous knowledge and only then learn new ideas and knowledge. The school uses the funds for 'booster' classes very effectively. Pupils who are on the borderline between levels 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum and between levels 4 and 5 receive extra attention. The success of this process is evident in the school's results.
6. At this early stage in the year, Year 6 pupils showed that they knew how to change fractions into percentages and went on to answer many questions using this technique. Higher attainers know that 30 per cent is three tenths or 30 over 100. Pupils with special educational needs worked on the computers in the classroom during this lesson. After some effective prompting from the teacher, they were able to convert 50 per cent into 0.5 or 50 over 100. During an English lesson pupils showed that they could write a dialogue in an author's style using complex sentences. Their dialogues were correctly punctuated and pupils, with little prompting from the teacher, improved the range of verbs they used.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and they attain the targets in their individual education because of the quality of the individual education plans and the good teaching they receive. Pupils' targets are short-term and pupils' progress can be measured easily. Pupils, for example, have targets that refer to learning particular letter sounds or types of words over periods of a few weeks.

The teaching and learning are very good.

8. Over the past four years, there has been much very good teaching, which has been reflected in pupils' standards of work. Teachers share common goals and discuss ideas together constructively. Since the last inspection teachers have worked hard to improve their skills further, for example, to support their work in literacy and numeracy lessons. Many examples of very good teaching were observed during the two days of the inspection. Parents also feel the teaching is very good.
9. Teachers in the Foundation Stage skilfully ensure that each child receives much personal attention. Teachers and adults ask children how they are getting on, what they have done and about how well they have done it. Teachers reward children who have worked hard. There is a happy and constructive atmosphere in the nursery and reception classes because all adults are clear what they want children to gain. The management of the school gives clear direction about how the curriculum should be taught.
10. Young children under five years old and older pupils are taught progressively more difficult ideas in a logical order. At the Foundation Stage for the youngest children, teachers provide a series of activities that fully reflect the curriculum recommended for children of this age. A very good lesson was observed where nursery children used the computer suite. Children were asked to place circles on top of squares. They received very good support from the adults and soon children carried out their work without direct support. The activity was well matched to the needs of children. It helped them develop some of the important skills of moving the mouse when controlling a computer program. In addition, children's ideas about colour and pattern were reinforced

constructively. They were very interested and excited when their work came out of the printer.

11. The staff follows a single behaviour code which means pupils know what is expected of them in every class. Pupils are particularly effectively managed. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher matched work about 'direct' and 'indirect' speech very effectively to pupils' capabilities. She gave tireless support to all groups and prompted them with ideas. She offered some suggestions to help them and rephrased their ideas on occasions. Pupils learnt quickly how to punctuate their sentences. The lesson was very well managed, which meant that the teacher could spend a considerable amount of time helping pupils and marking sections of their work. The lesson ended with a very good consolidation of the main points, for example, how to change the order of words in sentences to improve them.
12. In Year 1, pupils learned more about how to classify shapes. Some pupils went to the computer suite where the 'white-board' was used most effectively. In Year 3, the teacher used a plastic spider on her shoulder to develop pupils' understanding of 'Charlotte's Web.' The spider encouraged very good attention and behaviour from all the class. They listened particularly well and therefore made very good progress. The spider asked pupils a range of questions about characters in the story and pupils in turn asked the spider questions. Pupils recorded their ideas later in a story template that the teacher had prepared. Pupils successfully developed their understanding of characters in the book and about how to punctuate writing with speech marks.
13. English (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy) are effectively taught. The challenging work set in literacy and numeracy lessons has led to pupils' very good progress and very high results in Year 6. Over the last few years, pupils in Year 6 have achieved well above average standards and on occasions very high standards in mathematics and science. Pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy benefit from work done in other subjects. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar in, for example, history lessons. Pupils continue to learn to write clearly in many lessons. For example, pupils use graphs in geography that they interpret using well chosen words. In design and technology, pupils use their powers of estimation and measurement to help them make things. They then evaluate their ideas clearly.
14. The teacher in Year 6 completes pupils' primary education and she sets an excellent example to all staff. She thoroughly revises all aspects of the subjects tested in a rigorous and meaningful way. Pupils have responded very well indeed to her teaching and the National Test results are proof of this. The Year 6 teacher has very high expectations of their behaviour and attitudes to work. Lessons are interesting and pupils know how important their work is.

The curriculum is very good. The strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively put into action, and there are other strengths, such as in information and communication technology.

15. The school provides a curriculum for young children in the following categories; social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. Teachers' close attention to young children's individual needs in the nursery and reception classes is very good and children make a very good start to their education. Each morning and afternoon, teachers present children with a wide range of

activities based on the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Activities are varied and well planned and children soon gain in confidence. The curriculum develops children's motivation to learn because it interests them. It begins to develop young children's respect for their own culture and of those of other people. Pupils learn to experiment with language, make up their own stories and poems and to spell. The curriculum introduces children to counting, addition, subtraction and patterns in numbers. Children use their senses to investigate the world around them and learn to move with greater control and co-ordination. They begin to discuss ideas in a group and learn to listen closely to what others say.

16. Teachers provide a good curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT) in specific computer based lessons. They use national guidance to help them plan lessons. The lesson observed in the computer suite for Year 3 pupils was very effective. The lesson included various skills, such as pupils' use of dialogue boxes to find files they needed. Pupils demonstrated that they had learned much already this term. During the inspection, computers in some classrooms were not used often to reinforce learning. Some teachers have a more limited knowledge of the use of ICT but all teachers are about to undergo a period of extended training.
17. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught consistently. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been well implemented. High priority is given to teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and number. The quality of the curriculum is a major positive influence on the standards that pupils attain. The curriculum is very well matched to pupils' needs by the skilful teaching. The yearly, termly and weekly planning of the curriculum is very good. Teachers use assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do effectively to help them plan lessons in subsequent weeks.
18. In science, pupils investigate a wide range of ideas. They learn to test ideas fairly by Year 4 and to carry out investigations independently by Year 6. Year 6 pupils have investigated the speed that water evaporates. Pupils learn about the qualities of different materials, whether they are strong or weak for example. In other lessons, they learn about plants and how seeds are dispersed. They study how forces work. The curriculum for science is successful and the school's results are proof of this. Parents feel the school teaches a good curriculum and that no subject is neglected. Parents report that their children like going to school and that the interesting curriculum is one positive reason for this view.
19. There is a good range of additional activities available to all pupils as they move through the school. There is a strong emphasis upon pupils' personal development. Pupils discuss matters in weekly 'circle time' discussions. The school offers the following clubs; football, rugby, cricket, swimming, netball, rounders, badminton, clog dancing, choir and the Christian club. Older pupils spend a week at a nearby outdoor education centre and learn through a wide range of activities to become more independent and resourceful. Some pupils play recorders, violin and cornet.
20. Teachers agree what should be taught and when. Expectations are made very clear. The curriculum therefore builds consistently on what pupils already know. Teachers make good use of the guidance for subjects provided for all schools. The many displays demonstrate the quality of work and the breadth of the curriculum. Pupils learn much from the carefully considered displays that teachers put on the walls. Apart from examples of pupils' work, teachers also display important information. A very good example of the quality of the school's displays was seen in the Year 2 classroom.

Pupils in this class see, for example, very good information about how to spell some types of words.

The management and leadership of the school are very good. There has been much progress since the last inspection.

21. Since the last inspection, the school has responded very effectively to what needed to be done. The headteacher provides very good leadership and clear direction for the school. He knows all pupils well and takes a detailed interest in their standards of work. The deputy headteacher sets a rigorous example in all matters, not least in her teaching of the Year 6 class. Standards of pupils' work were very high last year and pupils made very good progress in her class.
22. The aims of the school in the 'Statement of Intent' are clearly reflected in its work. For example, the school is a caring Christian community, pupils are happy and they are confident and hard working. Parents feel that the school is well managed and led and most parents feel the school works closely with them.
23. The governing body provides very good support for the management of the school and has ensured that it makes a significant contribution to the school development planning process. Some governors work in the school or visit it regularly. The chair of governors has a clear view of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do next. Governors make checks on what the school does and any matters that arise are discussed thoroughly. For example, a committee of governors regularly reviews the way the school spends its money and the staffing committee successfully appoints good staff.
24. Teachers with responsibilities are effective in their work. English, mathematics and science co-ordinators have developed their subjects effectively. Consequently pupils' results have been sustained and on occasions improved. In all three subjects, resources for use by pupils in lessons are good. Targets for lessons are consistently well written throughout the school. Overall, the school is successful because all teachers work together to improve what the school does. The Local Education Authority has recognised that the school is very good at developing the staff's expertise through training programmes.
25. There are more reasons why the school is successful. Pupils have individual targets to attain and they become better motivated consequently. Teachers carefully analyse test results so that any weaknesses in pupils' performances can be put right. Teaching assistants are effective. They reinforce learning and help teachers in many other ways. Teachers are thorough in what they do and share expertise regularly. They attend many courses and bring back information for all to hear and to act upon.
26. The administration of the school is very efficient. There is a good system for recording attendance. Very few pupils arrive late, or do not have a reason for their absence. The headteacher and governors ensure that the school is safe on a day to day basis. The bursar keeps a careful check on spending and ensures that the headteacher and governors receive regular reports about financial matters. The school building is well maintained and pupils have modern books and equipment to use. There is a strong sense of shared purpose evident between all groups involved in the school. Good resources have a positive effect on what the school provides.

27. One governor has made an outstanding contribution to the school. He has built many computers and installed them in the school's computer room at cost price. He gives his time and expertise for nothing. His effort alone has had a very significant positive effect on the standards pupils attain in ICT. A member of the support staff is expert in the use of the facilities. She supports teachers very effectively indeed. ICT lessons in the suite are very successful and pupils rapidly learn new skills.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively managed. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs early in their school careers. This has allowed the school to develop individual education plans that boost pupils' performances, in many cases up to the standards that are expected nationally by the time pupils are eleven years old. They make very good progress. All pupils with special educational needs are included in all the school does. Support staff help to meet their needs effectively.
29. The headteacher, governing body and staff have successfully recorded the school's priorities in the 'School Plan for Development and Improvement.' Targets are reviewed regularly and they are very useful tools that the school uses to judge progress. The current school development plan is a very good working document. It contains virtually all that the school needs to do to make further progress. Priorities are identified taking into account influences on the school, such as the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The document indicates that the school knows its strengths and areas for development very well. The budget under-spend is large. The school correctly maintains this sum of money for contingencies, such as to offset the effects of a decline in pupil numbers expected in the future. The school looks carefully at how it spends its money. It has made significant savings by changing yearly contracts for the better.
30. The school's evaluation of its performance is very good. The school checks its progress rigorously using the school development plan and associated documents. Staff have analysed the quality of pupils' work and watched their colleagues teach. This process has had a positive effect on teachers' work, because recommendations for improvement have been made in reports to teachers and they are followed up. The school has very clearly identified its strengths and areas for improvement. The school checks pupils' progress carefully in all subjects. Teachers have looked closely into the comparative achievements of boys and girls. An important document records the progress of pupils in English and mathematics from Year 3 to Year 6. Test scores are listed and the progress of all pupils' is checked. Teachers have been able to identify pupils who need extra help successfully. The school is about to embark on a comprehensive plan to improve writing standards further.
31. Reports to parents are informative in many ways and parents feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress. There is an imbalance in the detail provided for each subject. For example, some subjects have longer comments than English and mathematics. Design technology and ICT comments are very brief. No attendance percentages are included.

Pupils' moral and social education is very good. The school takes very good care of its pupils.

32. Pupils' moral and social development has had a very positive effect on the way they approach their work and in the degree of effort they make in all aspects of school life. The social and moral tone of acts of collective worship is clear. The headteacher in one assembly talked of rules, starting with the Ten Commandments. He continued by explaining how they were changed in the New Testament. The headteacher successfully involved pupils by asking them questions. He then skilfully turned the theme into what every pupil could do to help children less fortunate than themselves. Pupils responded very well indeed. Many volunteered to fill a shoe-box with gifts for children in need. Pupils further responded by singing enthusiastically and maintained very good concentration throughout. Pupils entered and left the hall very quietly and respectfully.
33. The school's emphasis on developing pupils' social skills has been successful because the school takes the time to educate pupils about doing the right things. Pupils consequently behave very well in most lessons. They progress well in lessons because they make friends easily and co-operate enthusiastically. Older pupils work independently for long periods and enjoy being treated as capable young people. There is a high and implicit expectation that pupils will behave responsibly. Movement around the school is good and pupils are reliable and helpful. Behaviour is particularly good in Year 6 where pupils are mature and hard working. Pupils respond very well to the demands made of them. Pupils are ready to take on the new challenge of secondary education.
34. Parents feel that the school makes a good job of teaching their children right from wrong. Their children know the school rules and parents are pleased that good manners are taught well as part of the daily life of the school. Young children learn to express their views and to listen to each other during the 'circle-time' discussions in the reception class. Pupils' education in this important area continues in Year 3 where organised listening games feature in the curriculum.
35. Older pupils particularly enjoy going to a nearby outward-bound centre. Last year, pupils recorded their experiences using digital photographs, soundtracks, pieces of their own writing and drawings on computer. Pupils improved their sense of independence and capacity to solve problems through activities such as orienteering, climbing, rafting, canoeing and tracking through woods.
36. The school takes very good care of pupils. There is firm evidence of the success of the school's work in the levels of attendance the school attains. Teachers and the administrative staff closely monitor attendance and the result is that it is well above average. Pupils attend school regularly and therefore learn more.
37. The school is very successful in maintaining the very good behaviour of pupils. Expectations are high and pupils simply do not want to let the school down. The staff works as a team at all times and they share the responsibility for maintaining good behaviour throughout the school. There is a 'buddy' system where the older pupils help younger ones. The school has a council where pupils bring their concerns and good ideas to the attention of teachers. Both these activities are successful in developing pupils' sense of responsibility. Pupils feel included in all the school does.

Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good.

38. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Pupils' attitudes enhance their progress and the standards they attain because they make the most of what they are offered. They show a keen interest in school life and most have a thirst for knowledge. Pupils work very well together and they behave very well in lessons. Pupils respond very well to the very good teaching. Parents feel that children's behaviour is very good. They noted that teachers are patient, positive and expect the best from their children.
39. There are many examples of pupils' and children's very good response to school. Reception children listened very well to each other in only their second 'circle time' discussion. The teacher has a very good rapport with her class and although expectations are high for young children, they respond with appropriate ideas about how they can make other people in the school happy. The teacher took the opportunity to reinforce many of the school's rules during the lesson. Later in the lesson, children shared their thoughts. Children suggested they could help someone else by providing first aid for their classmates, share a jigsaw with them or help to tidy the classroom.
40. In many lessons, pupils show very good powers of concentration. Pupils are attentive and concentrate very well on the teaching, partly because the teaching is interesting and teachers' expectations of pupils are high. In Year 1, pupils worked well in physical education both individually and together on games skills. Pupils worked successfully in pairs by making it easy for their partner to catch their throw as best as they could. Pupils played a game in fours very well for their age. They knew the rules and when it was their turn to give the ball to the other pair, they did so with good grace.
41. In Year 4, pupils behaved well throughout a mathematics lesson. Pupils were introduced to words such as 'horizontal,' 'vertical' and 'diagonal.' Pupils revised their understanding of co-ordinates and they enjoyed plotting the positions of co-ordinates to make letters shapes. Most pupils participated enthusiastically in the mental arithmetic activities. Pupils had five seconds in which to write answers to each question on their individual white-boards. The lesson proceeded at a good pace and there was good learning. Pupils had a sense of pleasure from the lesson because they had worked hard.
42. Pupils with special educational needs respond very well to the extra support they receive. At St. Mary's there is a family atmosphere where pupils care for one another. Most pupils are keenly aware of how they can get better at their work and contribute more fully to school life. Pupils play co-operatively and sensibly in the playground and play a variety of games. Pupils have opportunities to collect and deliver things to classes, which they enjoy. Pupils carry out these activities reliably.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

43. The inspection team identified no major areas for development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. The minor areas for development referred to in the report should be included in the current year's school development plan.

- Ensure that teachers make better use of ICT in class lessons (paragraph 16)
- Improve the balance of comments for each subject in school reports and include attendance information (paragraph 31)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	10	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	52	44	4	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.9	School data	0.0
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	25	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (90)	93 (97)	93 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	25	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (90)	90 (100)	93 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	15	17
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	28	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (78)	90 (88)	97 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (78)	93 (84)	97 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	183
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	475866
Total expenditure	476609
Expenditure per pupil	1953
Balance brought forward from previous year	31797
Balance carried forward to next year	31054

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	37	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	50	7	2	8
The teaching is good.	59	38	0	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	59	2	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	24	7	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	57	7	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	4	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	44	8	2	7

Other issues raised by parents

Parents strongly supported the school at the meeting for parents and no widely held issues of a negative nature were raised.