

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOSEPH'S RC FIRST AND MIDDLE  
SCHOOL**

Harrow

LEA area: Harrow

Unique reference number: 102233

Headteacher: Mr P Sutton

Reporting inspector: Mr P Evans  
20737

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2003

Inspection number: 246187

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dobbin Close Belmont Circle Harrow
Postcode:	HA3 7LP
Telephone number:	(0208) 863 8531
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Coyle
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>8 - 13</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>15 - 19</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's RC First and Middle School is a Roman Catholic School in Harrow, Middlesex. The school admits pupils of primary age and at the moment the school is awaiting confirmation of its redefinition as St Joseph's RC Primary School. The school is providing education for 413 children, 211 boys and 202 girls, aged 5 to 11 years of age. The vast majority of pupils who attend the school live within the Parish of St Joseph's RC Church. The proportion of pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A higher than average number of pupils have statements of special educational need, although the proportion of pupils on the school's special educational register is below the national average. A significant proportion of these pupils have speech and language difficulties or emotional and behavioural problems. The proportion of pupils whose mother tongue is believed not to be English is higher than in most schools. However, there are no pupils who are in the early stages of learning English. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is in line with what is expected for their age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

St Joseph's RC First and Middle School is a good and improving school. Significant areas of the school's provision are very good. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher gives the school very good leadership and an excellent, clear educational direction. The school promotes very good personal development and relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers are excellent. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and contribute to the high standards they achieve at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. The school's strategies for including all pupils in all its activities are good. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school which contribute a lot to pupils' learning.

When considering its context, the standards that it achieves, the level of education that it offers to all its pupils and the money that it spends, the school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership and management of the school and the strength of teamwork throughout the school are very good.
- The development of skills in information and communication technology and the way that they are used in other subjects are very good.
- The quality of support given by learning support staff is very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils whose classrooms are in the temporary buildings suffer from reduced teaching time because of their situation.
- There are inconsistencies in the way that a small number of teachers mark pupils' work in some subjects.
- In a small number of lessons, learning support assistants are not well deployed during lesson introductions or end of lesson reviews.

*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 November 1997 when it was felt there was a need to incorporate a commitment to achievement of high standards in the Mission Statement and a systematic programme for the monitoring of the quality of education. The quality of teaching needed improving, particularly teachers' subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science. Teachers needed to make use of assessment information in planning their lessons to ensure that higher attaining pupils were challenged. There was also a requirement to improve the provision for the teaching of science at Key Stage 1 and information technology at Key Stages 2 and 3. Also the governing body needed to ensure that all fire exits were properly signed.

The Mission Statement now contains a commitment to the achievement of high standards. The quality of teaching and teachers' subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science is now very good. The school no longer has any pupils in Year 7 but standards in information and communication technology in Years 3 – 6 are now well above expectations. All fire exits are properly signed and clearly identifiable. Standards in national tests have shown a consistently steady rise over the past three years. Overall the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	B	B	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	A*
Science	A	A	A	A*

<b>Key</b>	
in the top 5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The majority of children in the Foundation Stage reach standards that are above expectations for their age in all six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

In the 2002 national tests for 7-year-olds the school's results were in the top five per cent nationally in writing and mathematics and well above average in reading. Standards in science, according to teacher assessments, were above average. The school's results in the 2000 national tests were well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Standards in 2000, when the school's results were well above average, were much improved in all three subjects. At the end of Year 2, the school has improved its results every year since 2000.

When compared to schools with a similar entitlement to free schools meals the school's results for 7-year-olds are in the top five per cent nationally in writing and mathematics and well above average in reading.

The 2002 national test results for 11-year-olds were well above average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in English, the expected level for 11 year olds, was well above the national average although the percentage achieving the higher than expected Level 5 was below the national average, which means that overall standards are average when compared to national expectations. Standards in mathematics and science have remained well above average since 2000. In 2000 and 2001 standards in English were above average.

When compared to the results of similar schools the standards achieved by the school in 2002 were in the top five per cent nationally in mathematics and science and above average in English.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in information and communication technology are now well above expectations throughout the school. Standards in design and technology, dance and games are above expectations for all pupils. Standards in all other subjects are at least in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school sets challenging targets for all pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. All pupils are keen to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of	Very good. They behave very well in and out of classrooms.

classrooms	
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers are excellent.
Attendance	Good. The level of attendance is above the national average.

Relationships in the school are of the highest level and pupils' behaviour is always very good. Attendance is above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	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.*

During a short inspection, relatively few lessons are observed. Overall judgements are based not only on the quality of teaching seen in lessons but also on evidence gained from looking at pupils' past work.

Thirteen lessons were seen during the inspection. The quality of teaching in two lessons was excellent and in six more it was very good. In four lessons the quality of teaching was good and it was sound in one. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The quality and effectiveness of teachers' planning is very good in all classes. The quality of marking is very good throughout the school and it is often used very well to guide pupils on how to improve their work. Written comments often include guidance for pupils, showing how well they are doing. This contributes very well to their good knowledge and understanding of how well they are learning. However, in some subjects such as mathematics, a small number of teachers do not reach the very high standards of marking demonstrated elsewhere. All teachers and learning support staff have very good expectations of how well pupils will achieve.

Assessments of how well pupils progress are gathered by teachers and learning support staff and this information is very well used to modify pupils' future work. This very good level of information is very well used to track each pupil's progress as they move through the school. This area of the school's provision has improved a great deal since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school.

Throughout the school, expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, including their handwriting, are high. Pupils achieve a well rounded, joined style of handwriting at an early age and they are taught very good presentational skills. This raises pupils' self-esteem, self-confidence and their pride in their work. This contributes very well to their learning and the standards that they reach. The school fully meets the needs of all its pupils, including those with special educational needs.

The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school offers a wide ranging, well-balanced curriculum which is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school ensures that all pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from teachers and learning support staff to enable them to make the same progress as their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is excellent. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and provision for their cultural development is sound. The good overall standard of provision has a very positive impact on the way that pupils learn. However, more could be done to develop pupils' understanding of the multi-ethnic

	nature of society and their place within it.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Strategies for pupils' pastoral care are excellent. The procedures for checking how well they are progressing are now very good and are a strength of the school. The school's policy for promoting racial harmony is very well implemented.

The partnership between the school and parents is very good. The school has good procedures for promoting attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides excellent, clear educational direction for the school. There is a very strong working relationship between the headteacher and deputy headteacher and teamwork throughout the school is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body makes a very good contribution in shaping the educational direction of the school. Governors are very effective in fulfilling their statutory duties and have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has addressed the key issues from the last inspection very effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of its funding and ensures that this is appropriately spent. All spending is guided by the needs of the pupils.

The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He is very highly respected by teachers, governors, parents and pupils. Together with the deputy headteacher he has developed very strong teams throughout the school. The school applies the principles of best value very well. The accommodation is very good and very well maintained by the excellent caretaker. However, there are problems with some classrooms which reduce the amount of teaching time available to the pupils in them. The school library is well stocked, the information and communication technology suite is an outstanding area for teaching and resources for teaching and learning are very good overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high expectations the school has for their children.</li> <li>The fact that they are comfortable to approach the school with any questions or concerns.</li> <li>The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>The fact that their children like attending school.</li> <li>The quality of teaching.</li> <li>The behaviour of the children in the school.</li> <li>The good progress their children make at school.</li> <li>The way the school helps their children to mature and become responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A very small minority of parents have some concern about the amount of homework that pupils are given.</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of the parents who attended the meeting and responded to the parents' questionnaire. A small minority of parents raised a concern over the amount of homework their children receive. Inspection findings show that the amount of homework given to children is good. It is regularly set and increases appropriately as pupils move through the school. In this area, inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**The leadership and management of the school and the strength of teamwork throughout the school are very good.**

1. Very good leadership and very strong management by the headteacher and key staff are significant characteristics of St Joseph's school. The future direction of the school is extremely well mapped out by the headteacher, governors and senior staff. The headteacher is held in great esteem by the pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. The management team works extremely hard to set high expectations for the work of pupils and staff alike. School improvement is a very high management priority in the school and school improvement and raising standards is very high on the management team's agenda. This is shown by the very good improvement since the last inspection.
2. The last inspection report raised areas for concern about the lack of commitment to the achievement of high standards in the school's Mission Statement. Not only has this been corrected, but the Mission Statement is evident all around the school and in almost all of its documentation. Beyond that the management team has worked very hard to ensure that all members of the school's staff are fully aware of and committed to the attainment of the highest standards possible. There was a requirement to establish a system for assessing pupils' progress and the standard of education they receive. These systems are fully in place. Each pupil is assessed regularly and a "tracking" system has been developed which shows very clearly the targets set for each pupil and how they progress as they move through the school.
3. Other areas of concern were found in the extension of pupils of higher ability, the quality of teaching in English and science and the provision for the teaching of science and information and communication technology in various areas of the school. All these issues have been dealt with well. The school prioritised its efforts towards effecting these improvements and has built steadily, ensuring that the highest priorities were attained and then building further improvement upon them. This has not only resulted in good progress in each of the areas indicated as weaknesses in the last inspection report but also in the raising of standards throughout the school. A striking improvement has been achieved in information and communication technology. The school has worked with HSBC, a major bank, and its own "Friends" association, in partnership, to provide a strikingly attractive computer room which is very well used and has a significant impact on pupils' learning. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection.
4. The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff always provide a good example for others to follow and the development of a very strong team of teachers and support staff was a very high priority leadership objective which has now been achieved. The aims of the school place great emphasis on raising standards and pupil achievement and the team now in place has very good capacity to improve the performance of the school even further.
5. Substantial emphasis is placed on the delegation of management responsibilities to staff. The headteacher audited staff strengths and devised a system for carefully matching the wishes of individuals to the areas of responsibility delegated to them. This has resulted in subject and aspect co-ordinators who are fully committed to the improvement of performance in their subjects and happy to fulfil those responsibilities. Co-ordinators are fully aware of the school's improvement plan, the prioritising of targets, and they fully support their own areas of responsibility until they become the subject of whole school focus for improvement. This has developed strong teams within the school and the quality of teamwork throughout the school is now a strength and is a key factor in the school's continuing improvement. Each member of staff is fully committed, for example, to the present endeavour to raise the quality of delivery in music, and in other parts of the creative curriculum as they become priorities. These improvements, in subjects in which inspection evidence shows that standards are at least in line with expectations, are intended to raise standards across the school and further raise the quality of education offered to pupils.
6. Governors and senior staff very regularly monitor and evaluate the school's performance. The development of teaching is monitored and evaluated very regularly. Good teachers are often used to

support others and develop the overall level of subject expertise and elements of teaching that are in need of improvement are invariably addressed well. Major emphasis is placed on performance management as a means of raising standards and most members of staff have performance targets related to their individual needs. Teachers and support staff work very well together as a team to ensure that pupils achieve their best. The priorities for development are very well matched to the needs of staff and pupils and this very significantly enhances the quality of teaching and learning within the school. The management team demonstrates an extremely keen commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to succeed. Staff development has improved since the previous inspection and, as a result, training is very well matched to the needs of all members of staff in the school.

7. The school has very well developed policies for the personal development of its pupils. The spiritual development of pupils is good and is strongly underpinned by the specific religious focus of the school. The moral and social development of pupils' are both very good and are very effective in raising their self-esteem and self-confidence. This in turn has the effect of promoting good skills as independent learners as they move through the school. The provision for pupils' cultural development is sound and all pupils have good knowledge and understanding of their own culture. They also learn about the practices, festivals and celebrations of other religions through their studies. However, there is too little emphasis placed on pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of our society and their place within it.
8. Governors are very effective in supporting the work of the school. Many of the governors make frequent visits to the school. Indeed, such is the close partnership and trust between the school staff and the governors that they often arrive at the school to monitor what is happening without this being formally arranged. Governors reflected in discussion that this gives them a true feel for the school and that the results of these impromptu "drop ins" had always been very positive.
9. Governors are very clear about what the school is doing well and what needs to be further improved and they are invariably fully involved in making important, strategic decisions which affect the future direction of the school. The governing body puts great emphasis on monitoring school improvement and the evaluation of its work and the governors' input into target setting is very beneficial to the school. The governing body complies fully with its statutory duties and legal responsibilities. It works extremely closely with the headteacher and the very good deputy-headteacher to raise pupil standards even further. Governors make good use of the opportunity of setting the headteacher's targets to raise pupil achievement in the school. The governors responded very well to the areas of concern identified in the previous inspection.
10. The requirements of the special educational needs code of practice are very clearly reflected in the quality of provision for special needs pupils. Oversight of special educational needs is the responsibility of a specific governor, who has a very good understanding of the requirements. There is a good level of liaison between the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the governor responsible and the governing body are kept fully informed about the school's provision for special educational needs pupils. The effectiveness of spending in this area is very well monitored, which has a positive effect on the learning of pupils with special educational needs and the standards that they reach.
11. The management team works very hard to use its financial resources for the benefit of all pupils. Educational priorities are supported through the school's very good financial planning. The management team ensures that financial administration systems are efficient and effective and the few minor issues raised in the most recent auditor's report were addressed very quickly and very effectively. The management team and the governing body continuously review the school finances. The school's use of new technology is very effective and the very good financial administrator has a very clear understanding of what can be achieved with the financial software available. She provides very good financial information for the management team and the governing body. The effectiveness of the way the school spends its money is monitored very well and the school's objectives and the outcome of expenditure are very well matched.
12. The principles of best value are a very high consideration in school spending. The school compares its costs with those of other schools and makes effective use of available information to make further

efficiencies. The staff are very often required to justify their use of resources. Major expenditure decisions are invariably subjected to wide consultation. The starting point for all school improvement planning, which drives the school towards greater improvement, is the need of the pupils. With this as its very first consideration, and very good evaluation of the effectiveness of all spending, the school ensures that it uses the principles of best value very well. The school spends slightly less per pupil than the average spent in schools of this type. Overall the school provides very good value for money.

13. The overall staffing levels and range of teaching skills are very well matched to the current circumstances of the school. There are more than enough teachers for the number of classes and the number of learning support assistants is very good. This is an example of the school's very good implementation of the principles of best value. The decision to employ more learning support staff was made because it was judged that this was a very good way to improve pupil progress and attainment. Once employed and in place the work of learning support staff and their effectiveness in raising standards was evaluated and judged to have matched, indeed to have exceeded, the school's projections. Inspection evidence supports this judgement. The school is able to maintain staffing levels because it uses very effective recruitment strategies. The demands of the curriculum and teachers' experience are very well matched. Very good job descriptions for teachers and co-ordinators help to support performance management and all teachers and staff understand their roles and responsibilities fully. Administrative and other staff are well deployed and any staff absence is very well managed by the school to ensure continuity for pupils.
14. Overall, the accommodation is very well matched to the current circumstances of the school and the accommodation is suitable for the whole age range. The provision for indoor games and sport is good as the hall provides a good space for gymnastic and other physical activities. However, the school does not have its own field. This aside the facilities are very good for outdoor activities. The space for large equipment for the under fives is adequate. The school provides very good quality indoor facilities for pupils and the quality of the outdoor accommodation is very good. A stimulating environment is provided for pupils and the maintenance and cleanliness of the premises is very good.
15. Overall, learning resources are very good and are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. The deployment and accessibility of resources is very good. The good quality and condition of resources reflects this and all resources for teaching and learning are carefully matched to pupils' age and needs. Resources are appropriate to meet the needs of gender and cultural diversity. The range and condition of books in the library and classrooms are good and pupils are encouraged to use the library resources. Information and communication technology resources are very good and the inclusion of the library in the same room has the effect of providing a high quality research area which impacts very well on the learning and attainment of pupils. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.

**The development of skills in information and communication technology and the way that they are used in other subjects are very good.**

16. At the time of the last inspection in 1997, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) were judged to be unsatisfactory by the time that pupils left the school because insufficient attention was given to the control and modelling strand of the National Curriculum programmes of study for Years 3 to 6 and for Years 7 to 9. Control and modelling is now very well taught throughout the school. It was also judged that staff confidence in teaching ICT was in need of further development. Since then, all teaching and support staff have undertaken training financed by the New Opportunities Fund. In addition to this, significant improvement in staff expertise has been enabled through in-house training led by the very good ICT co-ordinator. In the last inspection report standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be in line with expectations.
17. The school no longer has pupils in the secondary age range and is waiting to be officially re-designated as a primary school. In addition to the training of teachers and learning support staff in the use of ICT the school has also developed a very high quality ICT suite. This has been achieved through a very effective partnership between the school, the "Friends of St Joseph's school" and the major high street bank, HSBC.

18. Inspection evidence shows that the standards achieved by pupils in ICT at the end of the Foundation Stage and Year 2 are well above those expected nationally, and all pupils make very good progress. This is also true of pupils in Year 6 as they leave the school. Pupils of minority ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs make the same level of progress as their classmates. Expectations in the subject have increased sharply since the time of the last inspection and the standards now achieved represent a very good level of improvement.
19. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the school's work in ICT. Pupils of all ages and abilities regularly use computers in other subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history, geography, music and art and design.
20. In an excellent lesson for children in the Foundation Stage, the very good ICT suite was very well used by the class to demonstrate their skills. Once the teacher had completed the short, very well focused introduction, children went to computer stations in pairs. They typed in their user names and password and accessed the school's safeguarded intranet access page. Some stations were not "ready" but most children simply used four levels of the "start" menu to access the intranet page without support from the teacher or the very good learning support assistant. From there they typed in the www. address for the "CBeebies" web site and accessed the music that the teacher had given instructions to use. This level of independent knowledge and understanding of the use of computers is very high for children of this age.
21. The lesson content involved the singing of well known and remembered songs and the reading and listening to well known stories. Children made very good progress in their personal and social development sharing computer stations and taking turns very effectively. They also extended their knowledge and understanding of the world through their use of computers. Very good progress was also made in communication, language and literacy and creative development through the involvement of songs and stories in the lesson. The teacher and the learning support assistant also promoted pupils' literacy and ICT skills by consolidating their knowledge and understanding through the use of very good questioning skills.
22. This is one of many very good examples of the approach to learning in several subjects at once. It is seen in many areas of the school's work and contributes strongly to the very good standards that they reach in ICT and the way that computers are very well used in the teaching of other subjects throughout the school.
23. While there are planned lessons which are entitled 'ICT', this does give a false impression. ICT is not usually taught as a stand-alone subject but is very well integrated into the curriculum as a means of teaching other subjects. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils combined good learning in ICT, mathematics and geography. They modelled and controlled a system for operating traffic lights, showing very good knowledge and understanding of control skills and developing their observational skills. They noted, for example, that certain lights showed together and that the time that each light stayed on could be different. They gave clear opinions for this, developing their thinking skills and showing very good speaking and listening skills.
24. The teachers' planning showed links with the National Curriculum programmes of study. During the lesson the learning objective was well developed and all pupils succeeded in creating their own program. The teacher also took the opportunity to review pupils' knowledge and understanding of the use of the mouse to navigate through icon-driven menus and reminded pupils, where necessary, of the sequence of operations for saving their work. The classroom teacher and learning support assistant also focused very effectively on developing pupils' vocabulary in ICT.
25. This combined learning in numeracy, because the teacher and support staff insisted on pupils' use of appropriate vocabulary, with reinforcement of some ICT skills and the learning of new ones. Skills in geography were well developed as pupils showed that they understood the need for traffic lights in the safe conduct of behaviour on our roads. Because it avoids breaking pupils' learning into falsely-compartmentalised sections, this approach has a significantly positive effect and, wherever possible, is used throughout the school. This holistic approach, from the youngest age, has a very positive impact on pupils' learning throughout the school and the standards that they reach in ICT by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

26. Many other examples of this approach to learning were seen in pupils' past work and the very attractive displays of their work around the school. For example, in an attractive display of pupils' work in Year 2, pupils have combined skills in art and design with literacy skills to combine text and graphics when re-telling their favourite stories. In a Year 5 display, the work of many pupils is used to demonstrate how they have used computers to convert two-dimensional shapes into three-dimensional shapes in mathematics.
27. In a very good lesson in a Year 2 class, pupils worked in the ICT suite. They combined learning in ICT with data handling in mathematics and the properties and characteristics of plants and animals in science. Through a detailed explanation the teacher enabled pupils to use their skills to develop a branching database to accurately classify each member of the class. During the lesson pupils showed standards in ICT which were well above expectations as they used computers with confidence and clear familiarity to achieve their target. They started up computers, used passwords and used the mouse to navigate icon driven menus to load the programs that they wanted to work in. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils made high level progress in ICT, mathematics, science and geography when using computers to model and control the environment of a lighthouse. The flowcharts that they developed had decision boxes included which constantly checked the time of day, light or dark to optimise the efficient use of energy.
28. These studies, and the many other examples available, combine the use of computers to promote high-level learning in a number of subjects at once, whenever these are naturally linked by the topic matter. Thus ICT is very well integrated into holistic studies involving many subjects. This approach to learning in ICT has a very positive impact on the standards that pupils reach, not only in ICT but also in other subjects.
29. Pupils have very well-developed ICT skills by the time that they leave the school. They switch computers on and off, if necessary, and load programs, using the mouse to navigate through icon-led procedures. They give instructions to a programmable robot, use computer programs to design and control environments, and can talk about the different applications in a painting program, for example, the spray-can or the large brush. They combine text and graphics in their writing. Pupils regularly access the internet when researching their work in several subjects.
30. Pupils regularly work extremely well together when required. The computers in each classroom have the same operating systems as those in the ICT suite. Computers were seen being used in classrooms during the inspection and the school has clear plans to extend this even further.
31. The school has made very good progress with its improvement plan for ICT and has made outstanding progress since the last inspection, when ICT provision was seen to be a weakness. There is now one computer for every 12 pupils in the school. Teachers' planning for ICT is of a very high level and includes the use of computers in lessons wherever possible. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and the high standards that they reach in ICT.
32. All classes are timetabled to use the ICT suite regularly and several were seen doing so during the inspection. The overall quality of teaching is very good and it is sometimes excellent. All teachers are fully committed to using ICT to further pupils' learning. Other resources for teaching and learning in ICT include a scanner, printers and a dedicated monitor, linked to an inter-active whiteboard, which is very well used for whole class demonstrations. There is a CD/tape/radio available for each class and there are headphones which pupils use very well when computer programs have a soundtrack or when they are listening to music or instructional material. The provision of these resources and their regular use have a very positive impact on pupils' learning.
33. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and all show excellent relationships in the way that they work collaboratively when appropriate. Their behaviour is always very good in these situations and they are very well managed by their teachers and learning support staff.
34. The co-ordination of ICT is excellent, which is evident in the standards that pupils reach. Overall the leader gives outstanding guidance and support to all staff and is continuing to develop the subject provision very well from an already high level. He has developed a very high quality scheme of work

for the subject and has a very good action plan for improvement in the future. There is very good monitoring of the quality of teachers' planning and of the coverage of the curriculum and this also has a very positive effect on pupils' learning.

### **The quality of support given by learning support staff is very good.**

35. The management team and the governing body have extended the number of learning support staff because it was judged that this would improve the quality of learning of pupils and raise the standards that they reach. Since the recruitment of an increased number of learning support staff the school has promoted their best use throughout the school and has evaluated the outcome of this investment. The management team, staff and governors are satisfied that the quality added to pupils' education through this investment has matched the expectations which guided their spending. Inspection evidence shows that the very good provision and support given by learning support staff supports their judgement in this area. It is one example of the school's very good application of the principles of best value.
36. Learning support staff work in very close teamwork with teachers in all aspects of pupils' teaching and learning. They are fully included in teachers' lesson planning and are very clear about the tasks that they have to undertake. Many are very well trained and the school's plan for their professional development is very well organised. For example they were included in the school's use of New Opportunities Funding to raise the expertise of teachers in the use of ICT as a teaching medium. The level of training that they have access to has a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards that they reach.
37. One notable area of the impact of learning support staff is that of educational inclusion. In the best lessons, they are fully involved with designated pupils during lesson introductions and end of lesson reviews. During these sessions they interpret the teachers' instructions and questions so that pupils who have difficulties are fully involved. It was noticeable, during the inspection, that when this was the case the pupils involved were fully enabled to answer questions and to give their findings or opinions in the same way as their classmates. This has a significant effect on the learning of the pupils involved. This was seen in ICT lessons in the Foundation Stage and Year 3, in literacy lessons in Years 2 and 5 and in science in Year 4.
38. Learning support staff are also well trained and well used to provide high quality support, particularly, though not only, in literacy, to pupils who have particular difficulties. When pupils are withdrawn in this way, not only do they receive very well focused support which promotes their learning very well, but the school has very good strategies to ensure that they are undertaking study in the same area as their classmates. This individual or small group input has a very significant impact on the learning of the pupils involved.
39. The assessment of pupils' progress is another area which is contributed to significantly by learning support staff. They make written records of the progress or difficulties that pupils have during lessons. This is added to other assessment information and is used to modify future work, to aid the tracking of pupils through the school and also to set and review targets for pupils' attainment. For example, a group of infant pupils were assessed by a learning support assistant to check their progress in knowledge and understanding of the sounds made when letters are pronounced together. She explained the tasks very carefully, answering pupils' questions as she progressed. The tasks were set, and discussions afterwards, led by her very good questioning skills, meant that not only was clear information about pupils' levels of attainment gathered, but pupils also made progress at the end of the session. This is very good use of learning support staff as a valuable teaching and learning resource.
40. Learning support staff are all very consistent in their application of the school's very good behaviour management policy. They develop excellent relationships with pupils and contribute significantly to the very good behaviour seen throughout the school. The provision, training and deployment of learning support staff in the school have a very good effect on the teaching and learning of all the pupils that they support. The school has a good set of rooms which are designated "The learning support suite". These are mainly used for the delivery of learning support programmes for pupils

throughout the school. The programmes are mostly led by learning support staff who are very well managed by the deputy-headteacher, who is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Pupils whose classrooms are in the temporary buildings suffer from reduced teaching time because of their situation.**

41. Four classes are accommodated outside the main school building in temporary accommodation. These buildings are not connected to the main school by covered walkways, which is less than satisfactory in bad weather. The school has conducted some studies of the movement of these classes and the effect that it has on their learning opportunities. The outcome of these studies is that these classes suffer significantly reduced teaching time because of the situation of their classrooms. This constitutes a weakness with regard to educational inclusion and is less than satisfactory.

### **There are inconsistencies in the way that a small number of teachers mark pupils' work in some subjects.**

42. While marking throughout the school is strong in almost all areas, there are inconsistencies in some subjects. From looking at pupils' past work it is clear that a small number of teachers do not always maintain the highest quality of marking seen in the school in some subjects. For example, the marking of mathematics in some classes is mainly by ticks. There is rarely any written comment to guide pupils how to improve further or to tell them how well they are progressing. This is less than satisfactory.

### **In a small number of lessons, learning support staff are not well deployed during lesson introductions or end of lesson reviews.**

43. Learning support assistants are an outstanding resource when deployed as described in previous paragraphs. However, in a small number of lessons teachers do not use their skills well during lesson introductions and end of lesson reviews. This is less than satisfactory use of a highly valuable resource for promoting pupils' learning and attainment.

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

In order to raise standards even further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- i. Enter discussions and planning with the appropriate authority for the improvements required to the school's buildings, in order to rectify the teaching time lost to those pupils whose classrooms are in the temporary accommodation;

*(Paragraph 41)*

- ii. Ensure that the inconsistencies seen in teachers' marking of pupils' work are rectified by raising the quality of all marking to the highest levels found in the school; and

*(Paragraph 42)*

- iii. Monitor the deployment of learning support staff during lessons to ensure that they are actively involved with pupils throughout, as observed in the best lessons.

*(Paragraph 43)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

13

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

11

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	6	4	1	0	0	0
Percentage	15	46	31	8	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	413
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

#### Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	69

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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
	2002	35	23	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	34	35
	Girls	19	21	22
	Total	51	55	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (95)	95 (100)	98 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	32	35
	Girls	18	19	22
	Total	51	51	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (100)	88 (100)	98 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	29	30
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	55	57	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (88)	95 (88)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	30	30
	Girls	27	27	30
	Total	53	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (83)	95 (88)	100 (97)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
Parent/pupil preferred not to say

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

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
244	0	0
74	0	0
14	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
11	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
7	0	0
17	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
17	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

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

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	309.75

***FTE means full-time equivalent.***

### ***Financial information***

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
	<b>£</b>
Total income	1,036,515
Total expenditure	1,009,515
Expenditure per pupil	2,269
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,340
Balance carried forward to next year	27,000

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
<hr/>	
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	420
Number of questionnaires returned	177

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	31	4	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	32	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	46	9	2	0
The teaching is good.	67	29	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	42	7	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	21	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	38	4	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	70	28	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	34	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	36	3	1	7

Please note that not all columns total 100 due to rounding, the fact that not all parents and carers respond to every question or feel that all questions are appropriate for the age of their children.

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of the great majority of parents who expressed an opinion. A small number of parents raised a concern over the amount of homework their children receive. Inspection findings show that the amount of homework given to children is good. It is regularly set and increases appropriately as pupils move through the school. In this area, inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents.