

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HOLY NAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108034

Headteacher: Mr Mark Brennan

Reporting inspector: Mr A J Dobell  
10373

Dates of inspection: 30 September - 1 October 2002

Inspection number: 246757

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev B Cummins
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</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>10</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This voluntary aided school is situated on the northern outskirts of Leeds. It has 210 pupils on roll with slightly more girls than boys. Most pupils in the school are of white Western European origin but some six per cent of pupils originate in other cultures. Two of these pupils are in the early stages of learning English, and the school is very effective in including these pupils in all its activities and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Overall, pupils' social backgrounds are above the national average, and their learning skills are above average when they enter the Reception class. Twenty seven children are in the Reception class and all pupils are in single year classes.

The proportion of the school's pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (8.6 per cent) is less than is found in most schools. There are 27 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and, at 12.8 per cent, this is below the national average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, and, at 0.9 per cent, this, too, is below the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties.

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

This is a very effective school with many strengths and no significant weaknesses. Standards of attainment in the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 have consistently been well above national averages and well above the averages attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. A major reason for this is the school's outstanding success in including all its pupils in all its activities.

The school has a clear sense of its identity and purpose. This is firmly rooted in its Roman Catholic base and its strong emphasis on partnership with the parish and the parent body. The headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and all his colleagues, provides clear-sighted and imaginative leadership. The quality of teaching is very good overall. As a result, the school is a lively and supportive community and pupils enjoy their time there. Given its pupils' very high standards of attainment, the very good level of improvement since its first inspection, and the very good quality and range of learning opportunities that it provides, the school gives very good value for money.

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

- Very good teaching results in very high standards of attainment and learning of very good quality.
- A rich curriculum promotes excellent attitudes to learning and excellent relationships throughout the school.
- A very high quality of care and support for pupils results in excellent personal development.
- The school is held in very high regard by parents, the parish and the local community.
- Very effective leadership and management underpin the school's high levels of achievement and ensure that it reviews its performance with a view to further improvement.

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

- The school has no significant weaknesses.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made very good improvements to many areas since it was first inspected in February 1998. Standards of attainment are now higher at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All the key issues for action from that report have been taken seriously and addressed successfully. In particular, information and communication technology has improved significantly. In addition, there have been impressive improvements in the richness of pupils' educational experiences and the quality of the learning

environment. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now excellent overall and both pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are excellent. The quality of teaching has improved well and leadership and management are now very good. The school has a healthy ethos of self-evaluation which ensures that it continues to seek further improvement. The school has the capacity to maintain its high levels of performance.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. (National figures for comparison for 2002 are not yet available.)

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	A*	A*
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Attainment, as measured in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, has improved markedly since the school was first inspected. Levels of attainment have consistently been well above the national averages and the averages attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In 2001, attainment at the age of seven was in the top five per cent of schools in the country in reading and mathematics, and well above the national average in writing. In 2002, these impressive standards have been maintained overall. At the age of eleven in 2001, attainment in English was in the top five per cent of schools and it was well above average in mathematics and science. The average for the three subjects was in the top five per cent of similar schools. In 2002, attainment at the age of eleven improved significantly on the previous year. Because of these levels of attainment, the school received School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2001.

Children in the Reception class make good progress in their learning, and achieve above the expected national standards. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make very good progress overall, and their attainment in science is very high by the age of seven. Attainment in information and communication technology has improved significantly since the school was first inspected and is now very good at the ages of both seven and eleven. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils who are particularly gifted or talented are identified and are given opportunities to develop their abilities through the Excellence in Cities programme. As a result, they, too, make very good progress. Pupils achieve very well in all subjects of the curriculum and levels of attainment are impressive. In both 2001 and 2002, the school exceeded its agreed targets for the proportion of pupils attaining at least level 4 in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have excellent attitudes to school. They settle quickly to work and enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is excellent throughout the school and is a major factor in pupils' successful learning.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are excellent. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average.

Pupils give each other a high level of support both in and out of class. There have been no exclusions of pupils in recent years because of the excellent conduct which results from the school's ethos and high expectations. This is reflected in the excellent relationships which are evident throughout the school. These mean that pupils enjoy school and want to attend.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching found when the school was inspected previously has been eliminated. In this inspection, all lessons had teaching which was at least satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory in only one of the lessons observed; it was good in one third of lessons and very good in the rest. The particular strengths of very good teaching include teachers' impressive level of subject knowledge and understanding; their careful planning which results in stimulating learning experiences which engage pupils' interest; their high expectations for behaviour and effort, and the excellent relationships which mean that adults and pupils unite in the pleasure of learning. Support staff contribute well to learning, but there are occasions when they could be used more creatively.

The school has excellent strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and teachers are particularly successful in giving pupils opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully included in learning and so make very good progress. Pupils throughout the school benefit from learning of high quality.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All pupils in the school benefit from a rich curriculum supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make very good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress because of the very good provision made for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is excellent provision for pupils' personal development which helps them to develop into mature and confident individuals.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils receive very good educational and personal support. Teachers know their pupils very well and there are excellent systems to promote their welfare.

The school's curriculum meets all legal requirements. It is broad, balanced and relevant and skilfully uses subjects across the curriculum to support learning in other subjects so that pupils enjoy rich coherent learning. Parents appreciate the high standards of care that the school offers and the school has very good links with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and all his colleagues, provides very good leadership and management. The school's very good improvement since its first inspection is the result of his clear-sighted leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. Governors have a clear understanding of their role and share the school's aims and values.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very good systems for analysing and evaluating its performance. It then uses this information very effectively to guide its priorities for its future development.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its human and physical resources very well. It has good systems in place to obtain best value from its expenditure.

Leadership and management are strengths of the school. The headteacher has a very clear grasp of the school's strengths and potential for further development. Together with his colleagues, he leads a caring school which offers its pupils a rounded education of high quality. A significant strength is the school's central role in the life of the parish which means that it is highly valued in its local community. Learning is managed well, but there is scope for subject leaders to play a greater role in monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. The school is very well staffed to teach the National Curriculum. Its accommodation is used very effectively and resources for 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>▪ Teaching is good and children make good progress.</li> <li>▪ Behaviour is good and children become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>▪ Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with concerns.</li> <li>▪ Most parents appreciate the school's efforts to involve them as partners in their children's education.</li> <li>▪ The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>▪ Children like school.</li> </ul>	<p>Of the parents who responded to the questionnaires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 21 per cent have concerns about homework.</li> <li>▪ 10 per cent disagree that they are well informed about progress.</li> <li>▪ 10 per cent question if the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The school distributed 210 questionnaires and 144 were returned (68.6 per cent). The meeting held before the inspection was attended by 30 parents. Overall, the meeting was very supportive of the school.

Inspectors support the positive views held by parents. The inspection team believes that the school uses homework well to support learning and that the quality of information provided to parents about pupils' progress is very good. The school has an excellent range of activities outside class.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **Very good teaching results in very high levels of attainment and learning of very good quality.**

1. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the school's first inspection. Then, while virtually all teaching was at least satisfactory, only just over one lesson in ten was very good or better. During this inspection, all teaching was at least satisfactory with a third being good and almost two thirds being very good.
2. Very good teaching originates in thorough planning. Teachers use effective long and medium term curricular plans to create practical lesson plans which identify what is to be learned and how this is to be achieved. They plan different work is planned for those at different stages of learning so that all pupils have appropriate levels of challenge. As a result, pupils make very good progress and future learning is planned in the light of the progress being made. However, there is scope for greater precision in this process. Assessment data could be used more effectively to analyse areas of weakness and to set precise targets for improvement. For example, the optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 could be analysed with greater focus to identify any areas of relative weakness.
3. Teachers have a knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they are teaching which is well above average. This is reflected in the high quality of the discussions which take place in class as part of learning. These discussions require pupils to think ideas through thoroughly and then to express themselves precisely when answering questions and joining in discussions. This degree of analytical thinking results in very secure learning and understanding. For example, in a very good English lesson in Year 6 on report writing, very demanding questioning meant that pupils had to think their reasoning through carefully and to bear in mind the needs of the reader when wording their reports. Similarly, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 1, the learning objective was clear and referred to frequently during the lesson. As a result, pupils understood clearly what they were learning and explained their reasoning precisely. This enabled them to spot errors and to correct them.
4. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 and excellently in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to practise literacy skills in subjects such as geography, history and religious education, and numeracy skills in such subjects as science and design and technology. In 2002, this highly successful learning of basic skills resulted in outstanding results for the school in the National Curriculum tests. At the end of Year 2, all pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 2 in reading with over two thirds attaining the higher than expected level 3. In writing, over four fifths of the school's pupils attained at least level 2 and almost one third attained level 3. The proportion of pupils attaining level 3 in writing nationally is normally less than one in

ten. In mathematics, over nine out of ten of the school's pupils attained level 2 at least, with over two thirds attaining level 3.

5. At the end of Year 6 in 2002, in the National Curriculum tests, results were even more impressive. All pupils who took the tests in English, mathematics and science attained at least the national expectation of level 4 with over 80 per cent attaining the higher than expected level 5 in each subject. These remarkable levels of attainment are even higher than those achieved in 2000 and 2001 when the school has received two School Achievement Awards. They exemplify the very secure levels of learning which are achieved throughout the school. Pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is well above average and, overall, they make very good progress in their learning.
6. A major factor in this progress is that teachers have very high expectations for pupils' efforts and behaviour throughout the school and especially in Years 3 to 6. These result in high levels of sustained concentration and pupils put an impressive amount of effort into their work. They complete a good amount of high quality work. Teachers take great care to ensure that all individuals and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully included in learning and in all the lesson's activities. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils supported each other in mental arithmetic questions which were being answered against the clock. As a result, the class beat its previous best time. In this, they receive very effective support from classroom assistants who are well briefed and have a good understanding of their role. However, there are occasions, particularly during whole-class teaching, when they could be more effective, for example, in assessing the degree to which individual pupils contribute to discussion and answer questions.
7. The school identifies pupils who are particularly gifted or talented. As well as having work planned in class which will give them appropriate levels of challenge, they are given further opportunities to develop their gifts in a programme of activities which the school has access to through its participation in the 'Excellence in Cities' project. These have included activities in the areas of mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art, architecture, geography, history, music and physical education.
8. One area in which teaching and learning have improved significantly since the school's first inspection is information and communication technology. In each age group, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is now above the levels normally found. Teaching and learning are of good quality and there are examples of very good teaching and learning. Pupils are given good opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. For example, very effective use was made of the inter-active whiteboard and a laptop computer in a Year 3 handwriting lesson. Similarly, in a Year 6 English lesson, a group of pupils went independently into the computer suite and used word processing for their report writing.
9. Very effective teaching and learning throughout the school mean that pupils become articulate and confident. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read fluently and with good expression. They discuss their reading with clear interest and are able to analyse characters and explain the plot. Pupils write with impressive competence. In mathematics, they have a very secure understanding of number and of how different elements of mathematics are related. For example, by Year 6, they understand that decimals, fractions, and percentages are three different ways of expressing the same

concept. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils have an impressive depth of knowledge and understanding. It is the very good quality of teaching and the interesting and challenging learning activities, together with the very good relationships, which enable pupils to attain this quality of understanding and to reach these highly impressive standards of attainment.

**A rich curriculum promotes excellent attitudes to learning and excellent relationships throughout the school.**

10. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum very well. The quality of the school's provision for religious education will be reported separately by the diocese. An appropriate amount of time is devoted to different subjects to enable them to be taught effectively. Pupils in the school benefit from a rich curriculum. Teachers put considerable time and effort into planning lessons which provide interesting and stimulating learning experiences. Their use of attractive displays not only celebrates pupils' previous work, but also creates an attractive and encouraging learning environment.
11. A notable feature of the school's curricular provision is the good use of time. Lessons start promptly so that a minimum of time is wasted in lessons or between lessons. For example, pupils can come into classrooms from about 8.45 a.m., and pupils in Year 6 immediately settle down to early morning work without being told to do so. In many lessons, the pace of learning is brisk so that pupils concentrate well and put considerable effort into their learning. For example, in a very good Year 3 mathematics lesson, interesting learning activities coupled with a very brisk pace and challenging questioning ensured a very good level of sustained interest and concentration. The teacher's very effective use of praise and humour maintained a high level of interest. Pupils expressed themselves with care and made rapid progress in their learning. Progress was enhanced by the use of information and communication technology and by the teacher's very effective strategies for ensuring that all pupils were fully included in all the lesson's activities.
12. Another effective element in curricular provision is the skill with which teachers plan their teaching in one subject to support learning in another subject. For example, during the week of the inspection, learning in English in Year 4 was planned so that it supported learning in history at the beginning of the week and learning in art and design at the end of the week. Information and communication technology is used to support learning in many subjects and older pupils use the computer suite independently. Many pupils have impressive information and communication technology skills and at least one pupil has his own web-site.
13. The learning experiences of pupils are further enhanced by an excellent and wide ranging provision of activities outside lessons. Out of school activities have included Lenten activities, music and drama activities and a visit from a 'hedgehog lady'. An appreciation of other cultures has been encouraged by speakers representing the Jewish faith and Islam, while an Indian workshop concentrated on Indian music and drama and the Hindu faith. Pupils' understanding of history has been promoted by a visitor from the Armley Mills Victorian Schoolroom. Sporting activities include netball, soccer, rugby, athletics and skipping. Pupils have participated in a range of activities to raise funds for various charities and the parent-teacher association arranges a wide range of social opportunities. Music and drama productions broaden pupils' learning experiences.

14. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of visits which help pupils to appreciate how other communities live and work. These have included visits to theatres, to London (including the Houses of Parliament), museums and nature visits, visits to local professional sports venues including Headingley and Elland Road, a Greco-Roman workshop, music visits, and science and mathematics days. Visitors to the school include the local Member of Parliament and a local author, the police and fire services, the school nurse, a local library representative and business links via the Young Enterprise Scheme. During the week of the inspection, eight Zulu visitors led workshops for each year group on Zulu music and dance.
15. There are wide-ranging opportunities in music and sport. In music, pupils have the opportunity to learn violin, recorder, guitar, flute, clarinet and trumpet. They also sing to a good level in the school choir. A large number of pupils take advantage of these opportunities. Musical experiences are also enhanced by visiting musicians including the local music support service. Pupils learning instruments have the opportunity to take graded examinations. In sporting activities, the school has achieved success in recent years in soccer, rugby and athletics, and pupils also have opportunities to play hockey and badminton and to skate.
16. These varied and wide ranging experiences mean that pupils have excellent attitudes to school and to learning. Pupils' enjoyment of school is illustrated by the fact that their attendance is well above the national average. Pupils enjoy school because they are fully engaged in both lessons and activities and because they know that their contributions are appreciated and valued. Because of this, behaviour is excellent and exclusions are unknown. Pupils are co-operative, courteous and responsible both in and out of class. They quickly volunteer to help and anticipate each other's needs. Excellent relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults mean that pupils have impressively caring attitudes to each other, to their local community and to the wider world in which they live.

**A very high quality of care and support for pupils results in excellent personal development.**

17. The school has excellent procedures for promoting pupils' personal development and very good procedures for promoting their academic development. Pupils are well known to all adults in the school and this underpins the care that they receive. The assessment of pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is very secure and future learning is planned in the light of these assessments. There are portfolios of pupils' work in these subjects graded in terms of National Curriculum levels to ensure that assessments are as accurate as possible. Assessment of pupils' progress in other subjects of the curriculum is less rigorous, in the sense that National Curriculum levels are not used consistently, but is still effective.
18. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 are analysed carefully so that any areas of relative weakness can be identified. The planning of learning during the next school year then takes account of these areas and teachers plan how to address them. The optional National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 are not analysed to the same extent so that opportunities to identify emerging weaknesses for these year groups are missed. However, the school's levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 do not suggest that this is a significant weakness.

19. For some pupils, further academic support is provided by the learning mentor whose appointment is made possible by the 'Excellence in Cities' project. She takes pupils nominated to her and works with them, with the support of their parents, to improve their motivation. There is good evidence that the individual programmes that she creates for each pupil are effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and ability to apply themselves. Parents and pupils express their appreciation of her work and support.
20. A key element in the academic support provided for pupils is the excellent relationships which exist throughout the school. Pupils are very well known to teachers and other adults so that they can quickly identify any developing difficulties. The excellent relationships mean that these difficulties can be discussed openly and sensitively so that they are tackled early and do not develop into major issues. Parents acknowledge that the school is very supportive and that teachers spend a good deal of time and effort with pupils who have difficulties.
21. The personal development of pupils is promoted in a range of ways. Personal, health, social and citizenship education has been developed in line with a programme initiated by the Leeds Mini Education Action Zone. This ensures that programmes for sex education and drugs awareness are sensitive and appropriate. The school has trialled whole-class discussion of sensitive issues to develop pupils' skills in considering difficult personal and social matters in Year 3. This has proved successful and the school plans to develop this programme in other year groups.
22. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is excellent. Pupils' spiritual development will be considered fully in the diocesan report, but pupils develop a very high level of personal awareness and an impressive understanding of the views and feelings of others. They have a very mature understanding of what is right and what is wrong. They bring impressive moral values to their considerations of issues in the school and in the wider world. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop social skills and awareness. They are instinctively polite and courteous, (and) anticipate what needs doing and set about doing it without being told. The residential week in the Lake District for Year 6 pupils plays an important part in developing their social competence and self-esteem, while their participation in the Young Enterprise Scheme is another element in developing their social awareness. Year 6 are also given opportunities to help to plan the wide ranging learning activities which follow the National Curriculum tests in May. These, too, extend their social and cultural awareness.
23. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. It is developing a good reputation for the education of visiting primary aged pupils from Japan and has been able to use these pupils in projects to extend cultural awareness. Subjects such as art and design, music and English contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of Western European culture. The organisation of music and drama productions to involve different year groups - Reception and Years 1 and 2 at Christmas, Years 3 and 4 at Easter and Years 5 and 6 in the summer – is a further means of developing pupils' cultural awareness. Multicultural awareness has improved well since the school's first inspection as a result of an improved range of resources, regular visitors into the school and visits out, for example, to a Sikh temple and Jewish synagogue.
24. The school council plays a key role in pupils' personal development. Members are elected annually by a formal ballot and each year group is represented by a boy and a girl. The council has a budget of £50.00 per term and decides how to use it for the benefit of pupils throughout the school. Projects have included the provision of water

bottles in classrooms, playground activities, the construction of a 'willow tunnel' and the decoration of the infant toilets. The council conducts its business in an impressively mature manner and expresses its views on a range of issues confidently and lucidly. The council, supported by the headteacher and the learning mentor, makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development, to their social skills and to their understanding of the need to consider the views of others when representing them.

25. Excellent relationships and pupils' mature attitudes have a positive effect on the standards of attainment and the quality of education that the school achieves. A further effect is that pupils throughout the school have an excellent appreciation of the impact of their behaviour on others and a clear respect for the values and beliefs of others.

**The school is held in very high regard by parents, the parish and the local community.**

26. The school's valued position in the parish and the local community gives it a confidence and security which underpin its work. The parish priest is chair of the governing body, and he and the headteacher are effective partners in establishing the school's ethos and direction. The school has a clear sense of its identity which is rooted in its Christian principles and these are evident throughout its work. This gives its pupils a sense of their own value and provides them with the security to develop very effectively as individuals who are aware of their personal worth.
27. Parents are aware of this and appreciate that their children develop extremely good attitudes and values because the school and its staff care for them. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour and attendance. Parents are grateful for the school's high expectations which result in outstanding attainment and their children making very good progress. They feel that their children become more mature and responsible not least because they enjoy school so much.
28. Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with questions or concerns because the school makes very good efforts to value parents as partners in their children's education. They find the fortnightly newsletters which give information about activities most useful. Two years ago, the school distributed questionnaires to gather parental views. This helped parents to feel that their views were valued, and these views were taken into account in the creation of the school improvement plan. The school encourages parents to express their views in a range of ways. Informal conversations with staff including the headteacher are possible at the start and end of the school day. Some parents express their views through the parent governor. Others promote ideas through the parent-teacher association.
29. This association is very effective in working for the school. It organises a range of fund raising activities to improve the school's facilities and to provide extra opportunities for pupils. For example, the association has raised funds for software for the library and financed coaches for the Year 6 retreat at Ampleforth Abbey. However, the association is not simply a fund raising organisation, it also provides a pantomime for the school and parents and arranges a summer ball for parents and staff. Parents have supported the improvement of playground facilities so that children have a greater choice of activities.
30. A number of parents and parishioners help in school in various ways and also accompany children on visits. This improves the involvement of the local community in the work of the school. As a result, pupils feel that their parents are interested in their education and this has a positive effect on attainment and progress. This

enhances the school's image as a community which extends beyond teachers and pupils. Parents feel that they are valued partners in their children's education and contribute well to learning both at school and at home.

**Very effective leadership and management underpin the school's high levels of achievement and ensure that it reviews its performance in order to improve further.**

31. The excellent leadership of the headteacher is central to the school's success. The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and needs and is adept at analysing how best to meet these needs in order to move the school forward. His vision for the school is firmly rooted in its Catholic base, and incorporates high standards of attainment in a well-structured and loving atmosphere which will enable all pupils to develop their particular gifts in the knowledge that they will be valued. These aspirations are reflected in all that the school does.
32. The headteacher and his deputy work very effectively together. They are supported by a unified and effective staff team with an excellent commitment to improvement and a clear capacity to bring this about. The headteacher recognises that the school will be most successful if staff are effective and enabled to give of their best. The school has excellent procedures for staff development and performance management. The school's commitment in this area is recognised in its success in gaining Investors in People status.
33. An important element in the headteacher's success is his ability to delegate. Subject leaders receive budgets to empower them in managing their subject. They are able to have a real impact on standards. For example, standards of attainment in information and communication technology and its use to support learning have improved markedly since the school's first inspection largely because of the efforts of the subject leader. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the careful way in which their learning is managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, subject leaders do not have the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. This is done largely by the headteacher and his deputy. The school has plans to develop the roles of subject leaders further.
34. The school's very good improvement since its first inspection results from its success in identifying priorities for development, creating plans to move the school forward and then monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the improvements. On his appointment, the headteacher spent his first term assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses and then evolved a long-term strategy for improvement. This has been put into effect systematically. Current priorities include geography and physical education since the headteacher feels that there is scope for improvement in elements of these subjects. A further priority is the outdoor play area for the Reception class for which plans are in place for September 2003.
35. Plans for improvement are linked to the school's finances and funds are allocated appropriately to put these plans into effect. These plans are given coherence in the Whole School Improvement Plan which is under constant review. For example, the current plan which runs from March 2002 to July 2004 is in its fourth version. The plan results from wide-ranging discussions between the headteacher, his deputy, teachers and other staff, governors and local authority representatives, and takes into account the views of parents and pupils. The action plans which make up the school improvement plan include actions to be undertaken, the time scale involved, who is

responsible, what resources, including finance, will be needed, and how success will be evaluated. Timings are built in for action plans to be revised and updated. This on-going analysis is a significant factor in raising attainment. The progress of the plan is analysed and discussed. For example, in February 2002, the headteacher provided governors with a summary of the improvements which had taken place over the previous two years. His commentary included the note that he had been told that 'he was never satisfied'. He regarded this as a compliment since it illustrated that the school was seeking continuing improvement and that it abhors complacency.

36. Governors have a mature understanding of their role and give the headteacher very effective support. They are effectively involved in the school's work via a range of committees and their subject link responsibilities. Open lines of communication mean that governors are very aware of what is happening in the school. Governors have an appropriate role in setting the school's budget and the finance committee exercises effective supervision of expenditure throughout the year. The school has the benefit of support from governors who have particular areas of expertise, for example in information and communication technology. The chair of governors is frequently in the school and is very aware of the views of adults and pupils. The governing body fulfils its legal requirements and is very effective in supporting the school in its role as 'critical friend'. The principles of best value are used well to ensure that the school uses its resources effectively.
36. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Its routines are straightforward and readily understood and the school's efficient running is aided by the administrative assistant who has a clear understanding of the wide range of support services that she provides. Carefully constructed routines mean that the school is very effective in its use of time. Pupils are busy and occupied in lessons and have a wide range of opportunities for activities of different kinds outside lessons. As a result, their interest is engaged in all aspects of school life and this commitment to school and to learning underpins the very good progress that they make.
37. The headteacher's sensitive but rigorous leadership is at the centre of the school's success. There is an impressive unity of purpose among all adults in the school. All work very hard for the benefit of their pupils and are keen to develop the school further. As a result, pupils are given an education of high quality in a secure and stimulating learning environment. This unity of purpose is a key element in the school's success in achieving outstanding levels of attainment and in enabling pupils to make very good progress in their learning.

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

38. This is a very good school with no significant weaknesses. There is an impressive culture of improvement as the school seeks to move forward and improve its provision for all its pupils. In continuing the process of self-review, governors, the headteacher and staff will seek to maintain the school's current highly impressive standards.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	16	10	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	59	37	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 more than three 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)	n/a	210
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	27

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	93.9
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	15	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(96)	100(96)	100(96)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	14
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(96)	100(96)	96(96)
	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	21	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	24	22	24
	Total	43	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96(86)	93(89)	98(100)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	24	22	24
	Total	44	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (69)	95 (72)	100 (72)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

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

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

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
182	0	0
0	0	0
10	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
12	0	0
2	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)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.6
Average class size	30

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
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### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	472,350
Total expenditure	465,900
Expenditure per pupil	2,218.57
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,870
Balance carried forward to next year	9,320

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5
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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	210
Number of questionnaires returned	144

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	32	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	42	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	48	13	8	6
The teaching is good.	49	46	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	49	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	27	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	38	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	50	8	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	49	46	0	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	33	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	45	16	2	6