

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PHILIP'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Arundel

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126036

Headteacher: Mrs M Fraher

Reporting inspector: Eileen Chadwick
19115

Dates of inspection: 5th – 6th March 2001

Inspection number: 189009

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	London Road Arundel West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, St Philip's Catholic Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Branigan
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized Voluntary Aided school with 200 girls and boys aged between four and eleven. The school is popular and has expanded since the last inspection from six to seven classes. As a result, all pupils are now taught in single age classes. The school serves the parishes of Arundel and Storrington, as well as a number of other neighbouring towns and villages. Ten of the 28 children in Reception are still under five and those with summer birthdays are still part time. Four pupils are from ethnic minorities and three pupils are travellers. None have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at five per cent, is below average. Twenty per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which includes two pupils with statements of special educational need. These figures are similar to national averages. Last year eighteen pupils joined the school and nine left at times other than the main times of entering or leaving. This represents a high degree of mobility. In the current Year 6, over one third of all pupils entered in Key Stage 2. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is above average although wide ranging for children who enter in Reception and also later. Significant numbers of pupils enter with well above or below average attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Over the past few years, the school has substantially improved the standards reached by eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science. Good quality teaching in Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6, ensures that by the age of eleven, pupils are well prepared for their secondary education. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain high standards in numeracy and science and girls attain well above average standards in reading and good standards in writing. However, by the time they leave the infants, a high proportion of boys attain low standards in reading and writing and enter Year 3 not well prepared for their junior education through unsatisfactory literacy teaching in Year 2. The new headteacher already has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is developing a team, which has a strong sense of purpose in raising standards. The school's overall effectiveness and the value for money provided by the school are satisfactory.

What the school does well

- Good quality teaching in Key Stage 2 enables most pupils to reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and music by the age of eleven.
- Children in Reception achieve well above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and personal, social and emotional development. Standards in reading are also high in Year 1.
- A strong Catholic ethos contributes greatly to the school's very good provision for spiritual and moral development and to the school's caring atmosphere.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and good behaviour help to promote and happy and purposeful atmosphere.
- The new headteacher already shows strong but sensitive leadership and is developing a team that has a clear purpose in raising standards.

What could be improved

- Boys' underachievement in literacy. Boys attain unsatisfactory standards in reading and writing by the age of seven. More able boys underachieve in writing by eleven. The implementation of the literacy strategy and the quality of teaching in literacy are unsatisfactory in Year 2.
- Pupils' achievement in some aspects of investigative mathematics and science. Pupils do not spend enough time on solving mathematical problems or testing scientific experiments that they themselves have designed.
- The inconsistent progress of younger more able pupils, especially in literacy, mathematics and science.
- The management of the school. Systems for enabling key staff, including the deputy headteacher and subject coordinators, to perform key roles in helping the headteacher to raise standards are insufficiently developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in July 1996, its improvement has been satisfactory. There have been good improvements in the standards that eleven year olds reach in English, mathematics and science. In Key Stage 1, improvement has been satisfactory in reading, good in mathematics and science but unsatisfactory in writing. Reception children's attainment was not reported by the last inspection so comparisons cannot be made. School development planning is now satisfactory and effective schemes of work are in place except that there is no continuous programme for teaching phonics, spelling and writing. The role of the coordinators is satisfactory in literacy, numeracy, religious education and special educational needs but is not yet fully effective in other subjects. The school has developed satisfactory assessment and recording systems and, overall, their use is satisfactory. However, more able pupils' progress remains inconsistent in English, mathematics and science and the school still has work to do on addressing this key issue. Progress on improving the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is less unsatisfactory teaching, but the proportion of very good teaching is lower. The school has a good capacity to improve in the future.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	B	A	B
Mathematics	D	B	B	C
Science	A*	A	A	B

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

Pupils' attainment has improved well over the past two years in English and mathematics. It has been consistently well above average in science and, in 1998, was in the highest five per cent compared with all schools. The rate of improvement has been above the national trend. The school's targets are satisfactory for 2001 and it has set challenging targets for 2002 in English and mathematics.

The findings of this inspection agree with the 2000 test results for eleven year olds for English and mathematics. In the 2000 English tests, girls attained very high standards in both reading and writing. Boys attained very well in reading but their attainment in writing was below average. This was mainly because the proportion attaining the higher level, Level 5 was well below average and this is still the case for the current Year 6. Inspection also shows that the small proportion not on course to achieve the national expectation in English are mainly boys. In mathematics, eleven year olds have good mental skills but do not spend enough time solving problems. Standards in science are above average and not as high as the 2000 test results. Pupils attain very well in scientific knowledge but their attainment in investigative science is average. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils do not learn to plan their own investigations adequately.

The findings of this inspection agree with the 2000 national test results for seven year olds in reading and writing and show that standards are above average in reading and well below average in writing. In reading, girls attain well above average standards but boys' attainment is below average. In writing, girls achieve above average standards whilst boys reach very low standards. In mathematics, including numeracy, standards are above average and not as high as the 2000 test results. Whilst standards are above average in numeracy, and well above average in shape and space, pupils' problem solving skills are average. Pupils attain above average standards in science. Children in Reception attain well above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and personal and social development and above average standards in writing. Some good work was seen in Years 2 and 6 in design and technology and art in textiles and in Key Stage 2, in music and physical education.

As this was a short inspection, too little teaching was seen, or work examined, in other subjects to provide judgements.

By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Girls' achievement is good in reading and writing whilst boys' achievement is good in reading but unsatisfactory in writing. In Key Stage 1, boys' achievement is unsatisfactory in reading and poor in writing. Very few boys in the current Year 2 entered the school with below average attainment in language and literacy and yet, in Year 2, a half of all boys have poor spelling and handwriting. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Travellers make satisfactory progress. More able pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall although the oldest pupils make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy learning and accept responsibility well when provided with the right opportunities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils move around the school and play sensibly. Their behaviour in lessons is very good when teaching is of a good quality and pupils have a clear purpose.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Very good relationships but pupils' problem solving skills are underdeveloped.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Most are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stage 2. Ten per cent of the teaching observed during the inspection was very good, 42 per cent was good and 43 per cent was satisfactory. Five per cent was poor. Most of the good teaching occurred in Key Stage 2 and in Year 6 in particular. In Key Stage 2, the high quality teaching of English and numeracy in Year 6, and for pupils with special educational needs through Key Stage 2, enables pupils to learn well and make good progress. In Reception, the teaching of reading is good overall whilst the teaching of writing and numeracy is satisfactory. Very good literacy sessions were observed in Year 6 and Year 1 where time was used very effectively and teachers instructed, questioned and matched pupils' work very well to their attainment in reading and writing. However, in a poor literacy lesson in Year 2, the teacher's management of the literacy hour was unsatisfactory as reading and writing skills were not taught and the work provided was much too hard for lower attaining pupils, who were often younger boys. Lower attaining pupils in Year 2 do not learn the basic steps in reading and writing well enough. The teaching of numeracy and science is satisfactory in Year 2. However, in the infants, expectations for the presentation of pupils' recorded work are not always high enough, and too many work sheets are used. Teachers' plans rarely show how more able pupils will be challenged until the upper juniors.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. A broad curriculum which is satisfactory in Reception and Key Stage 2. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Long term plans for teaching writing, including phonics and spelling in the infants do not provide enough support for teachers in teaching the basic steps in reading and writing.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Reception. Unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Boys at risk from underachievement in literacy are not identified early enough and consistently provided for.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Very good provision for spiritual and moral development. Good provision for social and cultural development. Very good links with the Cathedral support pupils' spiritual development. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to work in small teams and make decisions for themselves.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for and there are good health and safety procedures. There are satisfactory assessment procedures overall, including for more able pupils. However, the monitoring of the progress of younger, more able pupils is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The new headteacher shows strong purposeful leadership and is engendering a good team spirit amongst staff. Subject coordinators' roles are satisfactory overall but only literacy, numeracy, religious education and special educational needs coordinators have monitored teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors fulfil their statutory duties and use their skills in the service of the school. They have a satisfactory overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but they have not yet developed management procedures in keeping with the increased size of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school compares its performance with similar schools. However, the school cannot measure its own success accurately because it has not always kept rigorous enough details of late entrants' previous attainment. This has been recognised by the headteacher, staff and governors.
The strategic use of resources	Unsatisfactory overall. Excellent improvements to the school building and use of available finances. However, the school had a very low contingency fund in the last academic year although this is predicted to increase this year. Spending on supply teachers is very high because of the level of absence by members of staff. The school spends a large amount on special educational needs as a result of too many pupils entering Key Stage 2 with reading and writing difficulties. The school has good financial administrative procedures and, overall, ensures that money is spent effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strong Catholic ethos and the school's caring atmosphere. • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Their children's good behaviour. • The way Reception children settle happily in school. • The progress made by older pupils. • They feel welcome in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the standards their children are achieving and what they should achieve. • The inconsistent amount and quality of homework and insufficient writing homework in the infants. • The progress some of their children make in reading and writing. • The progress made by more able pupils.

The findings of the inspection support parents' positive comments. However, they find that the reports on pupils' progress do not provide enough information about what the pupils are expected to achieve, the standards reached and the progress pupils make. Homework is inconsistent in amount and quality, especially in the infants and there is very little writing homework for younger pupils. They agree that some pupils do not make enough progress in reading and writing in the infants. More able pupils' progress improves as they get older because of support by the Local Education Authority as well as opportunities for pupils to achieve at very high levels in English and mathematics. However, there is little provision for younger, more able pupils and too many mark time through few opportunities to learn subject knowledge rigorously and to solve problems.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Good quality teaching in Key Stage 2 enables most pupils to reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and music by the age of eleven

1. In Key Stage 2, and particularly in Years 5 and 6, teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. This enables them to teach subjects in the required depth. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 6, the teacher enabled the pupils to perceive for themselves how reporters need to present a balanced view of people's differing opinions. The teacher's skilful questioning enabled the pupils to see things from other people's perspective and to learn very well from listening to each other's ideas. Her very effective instruction on how arguments may be joined together enabled the pupils to generate their own ways of presenting different viewpoints for example "some people think", "on the other hand" or "some people argue that". Examination of pupils' previous work shows that higher attaining pupils in Year 6 reach very high standards in writing for different purposes. When writing about "The night I met a ghost in my attic" pupils use an excellent range of sentence structures and vocabulary to create effects for holding the reader's interest. Pupils are equally adept when writing instructions, for example on "pond dipping". By Year 6, most pupils spell very accurately and their writing is neat and legible through systematic teaching in Key Stage 2.

2. In Year 3, teaching of pupils with special educational needs in literacy is given a strong focus. There is much successful group teaching when pupils are taught the steps in reading, spelling and writing at their own level. The special educational needs coordinator has very good subject knowledge and special educational needs assistants are well trained in how to teach literacy. Good opportunities for systematic practice in the basics enables those who have made an unsatisfactory start in Key Stage 1 to begin to catch up. Very careful assessment of pupils' attainment leads to well matched work for pupils.

3. Teachers' good planning enables them to teach in a range of teaching styles and provides enough time for pupils to learn and practise skills and to generate their own ideas. In a good Year 5 numeracy lesson, the teacher ensured that pupils consolidated their understanding of multiplication tables before they used this information when problem solving. The lesson was very well structured in the way pupils were encouraged to apply their understanding of the four rules of number when they searched for patterns in data and learned how to use scales when constructing graphs.

4. Teachers have high expectations of the standards which pupils can achieve. In a good music lesson in Year 6, the teacher's very good subject knowledge raised expectations of the level pupils could reach. When using a variety of tuned and untuned instruments, pupils played melodies from musical notation and went on to create their own lyrics. The teacher skilfully instructed the whole class and small groups and used praise well to ensure that all learned well, including the less confident, and enjoyed their music making. The school's excellent links with the Cathedral also greatly enhance musical provision. Pupils listen to the music in Cathedral, for example the choir, and also perform their own music in the Cathedral. There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn instruments, including woodwind, brass and stringed instruments and good opportunities for more able musicians to excel.

5. Teachers manage their pupils well and ensure that little time is spent maintaining discipline. In a good dance lesson in physical education in Year 4, the teacher's inspiring presentation engaged the

pupils' interest from the start. The lesson's purpose was made very clear to pupils from the start and ensured that there was no loss of impetus as the pupils moved from listening to performing. The teacher's skilled demonstration and intervention during group work ensured that all remained very keen to learn throughout. In this lesson, the pupils made good strides in seeing the need to improve their performance and gaining the will to succeed.

6. Very little teaching of science was seen during the inspection because of the timetable. Examination of pupils' work showed that pupils successfully learn the required breadth of scientific knowledge, often at higher levels, through a range of relevant practical experiences. A successful feature is the way in which pupils apply their knowledge to everyday life, for example, when they learn which materials have the best insulating properties. Science is also applied very well to pupils' imaginative story writing, for example, pupils' knowledge of food chains when they write about "The predator and the prey" in English.

Children in Reception achieve well above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and personal, social and emotional development. Standards in reading are also high in Year 1

7. Children are often articulate and speak confidently and their well-developed speaking skills enable them to make a good start in learning to read. By the time they leave Reception, their speaking and listening skills are very well developed. Sound role-play areas in Reception, for example, a pretend Church for their religious education and a pretend "office" with high quality artefacts, encourage the children to develop their speaking skills through play. In a good literacy lesson in Reception on "We are going on a bear hunt", the children were enabled to understand more complex language very well before reading the shared text. This was made possible because the theme was carefully chosen to appeal to the children's interest and the teacher's presentation included dramatic actions which showed the children the meaning of more complex words. The shared text provided good reading opportunities for children to read and to learn their sounds. The subsequent group activities were well planned to ensure that pupils' work in reading and writing was well matched to their needs, including the younger part time pupils.

8. Standards of reading are well above average in Reception and Year 1. By the time they leave Reception, all pupils attain at least average standards and a substantial proportion attain higher than this. A few are very advanced and read simple texts quite fluently and have often already made a start on learning to read by the time they begin school. In both Reception and Year 1, the teaching of reading is well organised for both school and home learning and there is good continuity from Reception to Year 1.

9. A very good literacy lesson was observed in Year 1 when the teacher taught reading and spelling in an exciting but structured way. The shared text "The Chinese New Year", provided good opportunities for reading together with interest. The sound work followed very well from the words the pupils had encountered in the text and the teacher very skilfully taught the pupils how to blend words. The links between reading phonics, spelling and writing were very good. Expectations were high and realised by the small and suitable steps that were taught in phonics and spelling. Many learned to search for patterns well and to apply a rule to reading and spelling new words for example "trap, strap".

10. Reception and Year 1 pupils are very keen to learn, confident and independent. They concentrate very well. For example, after Year 1 pupils had completed a writing activity they independently chose a reading book without being told and ensured that they did not waste time. In Reception, the teacher provides well-balanced opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class, in groups or individually. This

enables the children to learn how to adapt their learning style so they can apply themselves equally well when learning through tasks the teacher has set or when demonstrating their independence by selecting an activity. They are eager to explore new learning. They enjoy playing alongside others and exchanging comments and conversation, and many engage in cooperative play with common goals, together. Children in Reception are encouraged to feel secure and form very good relationships with each other and the adults who care for them.

A strong Catholic ethos contributes greatly to the school's very good provision for spiritual and moral development and to the school's caring atmosphere

11. Daily assemblies play a very important part in enabling the pupils to develop their spiritual beliefs and values. Assemblies provide pupils with opportunities to appreciate the significance of religious stories, festivals and traditions. Catholic values pervade the school and there is time for prayer and contemplation. Pupils are taught to value the power of prayer and to consider those less fortunate than themselves. Music is used very effectively to create the right atmosphere for spiritual development. In one assembly, the pupils listened very attentively to Jewish music to set the scene for the New Testament story about when Jesus visited Lazarus. The pupils were captivated by the Year 4 pupils' dramatic presentation, which included the introduction of Martha and Mary, and were praised for making the script "come alive". There are many opportunities for the pupils to reflect on the wonder of nature, poetry, music and the beautiful setting of their school. Pupils are also encouraged to support worship in the Cathedral.

12. Through its policies, procedures and practices, the school very strongly promotes pupils' moral development and there is good provision for social and cultural development. The strong Catholic ethos provides a very secure foundation for its moral code and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. Many parents expressed satisfaction with this part of the school's work. The staff set a very good example by their own behaviour and relationships with each other and by fostering positive attitudes. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers are very good. Pupils are taught to value the efforts and achievements of their peers. For example, when groups or individual pupils demonstrate their musical talent, other pupils are quick to praise them and show their appreciation.

13. The staff know the pupils well and show great concern for their personal as well as their academic development. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for a range of school duties. Although there is no school council, the school has plans to develop this aspect of school life. Visiting speakers and outside visits enhance social development. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by their studies of other cultures and faiths, for example, pupils' awareness of Jewish and Islamic cultures is raised. There are very strong links with the secondary schools and some secondary teachers have taught Year 6. The transition to secondary school is also eased when the Year 6 pupils visit their secondary schools and learn in the classrooms.

Pupils' very good attitudes to school and good behaviour help to promote a happy and purposeful atmosphere

14. Pupils are enthusiastic and responsive learners. They settle quickly in lessons and listen attentively to staff and other pupils. During the inspection, pupils showed their eagerness to learn and to please on many occasions. In Year 1, pupils showed remarkable concentration during a very good literacy lesson which promoted their rapid progress in phonics and spelling. In Year 3 literacy and personal and social development lessons, pupils, including those with special educational needs, settled quickly to work because of the calm and organised atmosphere created by their teacher. In a Year 5 art lesson,

pupils were fascinated by the work of artists from other cultures and took great care to present their work very well when designing and making pictures in Tunisian style.

15. Pupils are very polite to each other and adults in the school, including visitors. They respect each other's feelings and show concern for others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils play harmoniously and take good care in the playground, which is very small, not to hurt each other by behaviour which is too boisterous. The staggered play times ensure that infant pupils, including Reception, have room to enjoy their play and adapt well to school. The good behaviour, politeness of pupils and their keenness to learn help to create a happy productive atmosphere for learning. Pupils are very keen to join in the activities provided by the school, including extracurricular activities. The pupils take responsibility well when provided with the opportunity, for example, older pupils have presented a report to the local parish council and shared their views with other local communities.

The new headteacher already shows strong but sensitive leadership and is developing a team that has a clear purpose in raising standards.

16. The headteacher, in post for less than one term, has already won the respect of staff and governors. She values the traditions of the school and promotes the school positively at all times. The headteacher provides staff with a good role model through her commitment to school improvement. She has shown strong and purposeful leadership in helping the staff to prepare for the inspection and a very good understanding of how to build on the good work of the school. The headteacher has helped the staff to identify and focus on priorities and has already led the staff to improve their lesson planning so that it is more consistent through the school. In the short time she has been in post, she has shown very good inter-personal skills and has successfully encouraged greater teamwork among a staff whose morale was low.

17. The headteacher has enabled the subject coordinators to take more responsibility for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are working together on a self-evaluation training course so they can rigorously evaluate the school's performance. The headteacher, who is already an experienced headteacher, has already begun to monitor the work of teachers in order to ensure that they confidently strive for improvement. Her strong commitment, energy and clear thinking are contributing significantly to the purposeful ethos of the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Boys' underachievement in literacy. Boys attain unsatisfactory standards in reading and writing by the age of seven. More able boys underachieve in writing by eleven. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the quality of teaching in literacy are unsatisfactory in Year 2.

18. The 2000 national tests for seven year olds showed that, compared with all schools, standards were very variable. In reading, they were above average and in writing, they were well below average. Compared with similar schools, these standards were below average in reading, and well below average in writing. Standards in reading in 1998 and 1999 were well above average but in 2000 were not as high because of the low standards reached by one third of all boys who did not reach the expected level, Level 2. Standards in writing have not been high enough compared with similar schools for the past four years. In 2000, the low standards were caused by a half of all boys attaining below or well below average standards in writing.

19. The inspection confirms the 2000 results for reading and shows that standards in reading by Year 2 are above average. In Year 2, a substantial proportion read at higher levels, and have good

strategies for working out new words. However, the most able pupils do not read a wide enough range of books in school. Average pupils do not always have a firm grasp of how to work out new words and the lower attaining pupils, who are mainly boys, read very simple texts, and struggle when they encounter new words. Lower attaining pupils' reading books are sometimes too hard for them. Most of the pupils' home reading records show that parents support their children's reading very well by hearing them read regularly.

20. The findings of the inspections show that standards in writing by Year 2 are well below average and similar to the 2000 national tests. This results from about one third of all pupils, mainly boys, not having made a satisfactory start on learning to write. These pupils cannot express themselves adequately in simple phrases or sentences and their spelling is poor. Their handwriting is very large and not clearly shaped. Examination of the pupils' books shows that many pupils' writing has not improved since entering this class and there is much unfinished work. Many writing tasks in Year 2 are too difficult for pupils who are at an early stage of writing.

21. In a poor literacy lesson observed in Year 2, the four-part literacy lesson was poorly implemented. During the whole class work, the teacher spent a very long time talking about the Big Book and did not read the text with the class, or provide opportunities for them to read it. The phonics work, which came before the shared text, was poorly structured and did not enable the pupils to see sound and word patterns easily. Time for phonics was very low for each pupil as only a few could participate. The pace was very slow and, after a half an hour, the pupils had not been sufficiently involved in the lesson. The writing activity that followed "Make a flow chart of a day in school" was set at the same level for all the class, this was far too hard for many pupils. Although a work sheet was provided for the basic flow chart design, there was no instruction in how to write. Most pupils were very unclear about their purpose and resorted to drawing and colouring to show their day in school. A few more able pupils managed to record the sequence of their day in writing, they were not provided with any dictionaries. The pupils with special educational needs worked with their assistants, many were boys and their task was to draw their day. This resulted in hardly any learning in reading and writing in this lesson.

22. There is no continuous system or support for the teachers in phonics, spelling, and handwriting from Reception to Year 2. Although Reception and Year 1 teachers teach these areas systematically, they do not follow a common programme and Year 2 work does not follow a structured approach to teaching these basics. The school's admission procedures, which follow those for the Local Education Authority, mean that children with summer birthdays do not begin school full time until the summer term. Analysis of the school's results in reading and writing show that this does not appear to affect adversely summer born girls but summer born boys do not always do as well in reading and writing as their peers by the age of seven. Pupils who are at risk are not identified sufficiently early and are not, therefore, given a programme of reading and writing that is continuous and always well matched to their needs.

23. Analysis of the school's special educational needs register in Year 2 shows that one third of pupils are on the special educational needs register, all are boys and most have reading and writing difficulties. Comparisons of the standards they now reach with their attainment on entry when they entered Reception, shows that these pupils have made poor progress. Very few entered the school with below average attainment in language and literacy or personal and social development and yet the proportion is now nearly one third of the class.

24. Pupils with special educational needs in literacy make good progress in Key Stage 2. However, by the age of eleven, boys do not achieve as well as girls in English, and particularly in writing. In 2000 national tests, girls performed exceptionally well in both reading and writing but boys' very good

attainment in reading was not matched by that in writing. In writing boys' attainment was below average. This was mainly because the proportion attaining the higher level, Level 5, was well below average. The inspection shows that a slightly lower proportion of pupils are on course to achieve Level 4 in English than in 2000 tests, mainly because of weaknesses in boys' literacy. Although overall standards at Level 5 are high, and a very small proportion of girls are achieving within Level 6, few boys achieve higher levels in English because of their underachievement in writing. This is not because of boys' lack of progress in Key Stage 2 but the result of their earlier attainment on entry to the key stage. Nearly two thirds of all pupils in the current Year 6 attended the infants at St Philip's and entered Year 3 having attained well below average standards in reading and writing in their end of Year 2 national tests. Although a small proportion entered the school late, in Key Stage 2, with low standards in literacy from other schools, most of the boys who still underachieve in literacy by Year 6 entered the school in Reception.

Pupils' achievement in some aspects of investigative mathematics and science. Pupils do not spend enough time on solving mathematical problems or testing scientific experiments they themselves have designed.

25. Lesson observation and examination of pupils' work show that, whilst teachers often instruct well and are thorough, they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their questioning and problem solving skills in numeracy and science. By the age of eleven, in mathematics, standards of numeracy are above average. Many pupils use the four rules of number accurately including multiplying numbers with three or more digits by a two-digit number. Many have good understanding of place value and know how to add, subtract and multiply decimal numbers. Pupils attain well in algebra. However, pupils' attainment in using and applying mathematics is average overall. This is because this aspect of mathematics has received less emphasis through the school. Although, by the age of eleven, pupils are developing their own strategies for solving problems, there is little higher-level work where pupils work on more complex problems and identify which information they need to collect and try out their own methods.

26. In science, by the age of eleven, many attain high standards in scientific knowledge, for example, pupils know that a wide range of living things live in different habitats and that life is often interdependent. Pupils' classification skills are particularly good. They often gain their knowledge through relevant practical experiences. However, there are some weaknesses in scientific enquiry skills. Pupils' experimental skills of observation, predicting, fair testing, measuring and pattern seeking are good, but they do not ask enough questions or identify an appropriate approach for solving a problem. They do not plan and conduct experiments that they have designed. This aspect of investigative science is not systematically planned for and taught through the school.

The inconsistent progress of younger more able pupils, especially in literacy, mathematics and science

27. The last inspection identified the need to provide more demanding work for the highest achievers. Whilst some progress has been made on this key issue, it has not been completely addressed. The progress of higher attaining pupils has improved in the school overall and this has been demonstrated by pupils' overall improved performance in national tests. However, a small number of the most able pupils are very capable and their progress is unsatisfactory. The school now identifies more able pupils more carefully and older pupils with very high ability in English and mathematics are provided with opportunities to learn at very high levels and to take national tests at Level 6. However, extension and enrichment work for very able pupils does not begin early enough in the school and other provision is very inconsistent for them. For example, there are examples of pupils attending courses organised by the Local Education Authority but these are infrequent for each pupil. Additionally, teachers from

the secondary school have provided enrichment activities although this does not happen on a regular basis. Parents were critical of the provision for more able pupils and the inspection team agrees that they underachieve considerably in English, mathematics and science.

28. In the infants, including Reception, the most able pupils' reading books are not sufficiently demanding and older pupils do not read a wide enough range of books. Provision for the most able in writing is weak by Year 2. In the poor literacy lesson observed in Year 2, pupils were given the same work as the rest of the class. Examination of pupils' work in science in Year 2 also shows that, too often, more capable pupils work at the same level as the rest of the class. In writing, in Year 2, pupils' independent research skills do not develop adequately and the more able do not write for a wide enough range of purposes in English and across the curriculum. In mathematics and science throughout the school, more able pupils' questioning, problem solving and investigative skills are unsatisfactory. There are also few examples of opportunities for younger pupils to work at very high levels in numeracy or to learn knowledge at very high levels in science. More able pupils' progress is not monitored adequately and provision for them is unsatisfactory.

The management of the school. Systems for enabling key staff, including the deputy headteacher and subject coordinators, to perform key roles in helping the headteacher to raise standards are not thoroughly in place.

29. The structure of the senior management team is unsatisfactory. Systems are not in place for key staff to work with the headteacher in improving the school. The weaknesses in literacy teaching in Year 2, where work was not sufficiently well matched to the pupils' needs, that were identified at the time of the previous inspection, have not been addressed. The school has grown since the last inspection but it has not developed management procedures in line with other schools of this size. There are no key stage coordinators or procedures to enable the special educational needs coordinator to work securely with each class in the infants. This prevents the early identification of pupils with special educational needs, and the monitoring of teaching and how well work is matched to pupils' needs. The special educational needs coordinator has a very good understanding of the progress pupils are making in Key Stage 2 and good monitoring systems are in place. The special educational needs coordinator has limited time to perform her role which also includes the coordination of more able pupils. The coordination of more able pupils is a significant area in this school and the coordinator provides some enrichment by teaching them in Year 6 in mathematics. However, there is little time for developing the management aspects of her role.

30. Procedures for enabling coordinators to support teachers, to evaluate the quality of their work and to provide constructive feedback in subjects other than literacy, numeracy and religious education are not thorough. Each subject has two coordinators so that infant and junior staff work together more closely for the benefit of the pupils. This has had the desired effect but, in a school of this size, this is not now the most efficient use of staff's time.

31. Although the teaching support staff provide valuable help and their teaching to small groups of pupils with special educational needs is often of a high quality in Key Stage 2, too much is left to individual teachers in Key Stage 1 to decide how support staff might best be used. This has a particularly adverse effect on the quality of support they can provide in literacy in Year 2. In several observed lessons, in both key stages, there was some inefficient use of assistants' time when they sat listening to the teacher's whole literacy introduction when, through better planning, more efficient use could be made of their time.

32. The school keeps careful records of most pupils' attainment, including the results of optional and national tests. However, records for the late entrants' attainment on entry to the school are not

always in place. The school has recognised this and that a more manageable system is needed for analysing pupils' progress and the effectiveness of the school's provision in raising standards.

33. Several inefficiencies in the school's spending have led to the school having a very low contingency fund in the last academic year, although this is predicted to improve this year. Spending on supply cover remains very high; this results from much short and long-term staff absence from stress related illnesses. Spending on pupils with special educational needs is also high and the need for this partly results from unsatisfactory literacy provision in Key Stage 1.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

(1) * Improve boys' achievement in literacy by: (paragraphs 18-24)

- Improving the quality of teaching in Year 2 by providing training for implementing the National Literacy Strategy and ensuring that enough time is spent on teaching reading and writing and that skills are carefully taught;
- Improving the match of work for all pupils in Year 2, but especially for lower attaining and more capable pupils;
- Rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in Year 2 and taking effective action to ensure teaching and learning are of a high enough quality;
- Carefully monitoring boys' learning and progress in reading and writing through the school, including lower attaining and more able boys' progress in writing;
- Ensuring that there is early identification of those who are underachieving so they can be given additional help in reading and writing so they achieve their best;
- Providing teachers with guidelines which support them in the teaching of phonics, spelling and writing in a structured manner.

(2). * Improve pupils' attainment and progress in investigative mathematics and science by: (paragraphs 25-26)

- Enabling pupils to develop systematically their problem solving skills in mathematics, including numeracy, in every class;
- Providing systematic opportunities for pupils to raise questions and learn how to design and make their own tests in science;
- Providing training throughout the school so that teachers can successfully teach these investigative skills in mathematics and science;
- Monitoring, evaluating and, where necessary, improving the quality of teaching and learning in these areas.

(3) Improve the progress of more able pupils by: (paragraphs 27-28)

- Raising teachers' expectations of what more able pupils can achieve;
- Training teachers, and link with other agencies where appropriate, so pupils are taught in depth, their thinking skills developed and their learning enriched especially in reading, writing, mathematics, including numeracy, and science;
- Carefully monitoring the progress of more able pupils, evaluate the effect of the school's provision and, where necessary, make improvements.

(4) * Improve the management of the school by: (paragraphs 29-33)

- Putting robust policies and procedures in place which help key staff to work closely with the headteacher in improving the school, especially in the infants;
- Putting procedures in place which help coordinators and allow them to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects;

- Reviewing the time the special educational needs coordinator has for her responsibilities; improving the coordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 1 and more able pupils through the school. Ensure that learning support assistants' time is always used effectively;
- Putting in place rigorous systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work, including effective systems for analysing pupils' progress. Ensure all late entrants' attainment on entry is systematically recorded;
- Addressing the parents' concerns that writing homework should improve.

*** The school has already identified these as areas for improvement**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

21

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

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	42	43	0	5	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10
<i>FTE means full time equivalent</i>	
Special educational needs	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	42
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	8	16
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	24	20	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(100)	69(88)	100 (100)
	National	84(82)	85 (83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	16	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	24	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(96)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	14
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	23	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88(73)	85(90)	100(100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	24	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92(77)	88(93)	100(100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	356, 615
Total expenditure	365, 579
Expenditure per pupil	1, 925
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,435
Balance carried forward to next year	2, 471

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	5	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	55	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	15	4	0
The teaching is good.	56	37	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	39	16	3	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	34	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	41	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	51	34	8	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	57	37	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	36	3	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	31	17	0	6

Other issues raised by parents

- Several wrote to say they were pleased with the school.
- A few parents were concerned that their children were not receiving a broad enough curriculum. The inspectors confirm that the curriculum is broad although they could not inspect the richness of the curriculum provided in subjects other than English, mathematics and science as this was a short inspection.
- Parents had mixed views about the provision for pupils with special educational needs in some classes. The team found provision was good in Key Stage 2 but had weaknesses in Key Stage 1.

