

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Littleborough

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105816

Headteacher: Mrs M Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mrs P K Parrish  
22380

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 June 2000

Inspection number: 189737

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whitelees Road  
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Lancashire

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs P Spiteri

Date of previous inspection: 10 June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's RC (Voluntary Aided) Primary School dates from 1976 and is a smaller than average primary school, situated in Littleborough within Rochdale Local Education Authority. There are 189 pupils on roll, with the number of girls and boys balanced in all year groups except Year 4, where 17 of 23 pupils are boys. There are a small number of surplus places. The admission policy established by the local education authority allows entrance to Roman Catholic pupils only. All pupils are of white British heritage background. The school has seven classes, one for each year group, and classes range in size from 20 to 32 pupils. At the time of the inspection, six children in the reception class were under five. The school is currently without a nursery class but has arrangements in hand to open a nursery class in September 2001. A below average number of pupils (eight per cent) are entitled to free school meals. A higher than average number of pupils is on the school's register of special educational needs (29.6 per cent). Of the 56 pupils on the register, one has a Statement of Special Educational Need (0.5 per cent) and ten others are at the national Code of Practice Stage 3, with weekly teaching support provided by the local education authority. Most pupils on the register have moderate learning difficulties. No exclusions have occurred in the past year or earlier years. Pupil mobility is limited, with no pupils joining the school and 11 pupils leaving, other than at the usual time, in the past year. The local education authority's music service provides lessons for flute, keyboard and guitar for 15 pupils.

On entry to the school, most children have experienced pre-school education in local playgroups or nursery classes in other schools. A wide range of attainment on entry is represented and different year groups vary more widely than average. However, assessment procedures indicate that attainment on entry is generally above average nationally and for the local education authority.

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

The school is successful and standards for 11 year olds are high. Teaching is good, overall, in both key stages and very good for the children under five. Leadership and management of the school are efficient and effective in maintaining standards and promoting national strategies. The cost per pupil is a little above average but, nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards are higher than average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The progress made by pupils is tracked well through the school.
- The personal development of the pupils is good, supported by very good relationships within the school. The great majority of pupils have a mature approach to their work.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, enabling pupils to achieve their best.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good, motivating staff and pupils to achieve their best.
- The curriculum has successfully maintained its breadth at a time when many schools nationally have found it necessary to focus more exclusively on literacy and numeracy.

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

- Assessment systems track pupils' overall progress well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and provide a good review system for monitoring standards through the school. The school itself has identified the need to extend this system to

include specific targets for pupils which can be used as a basis for planning teaching according to the specific needs of differing groups.

- Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are not fully interested in their reading. The range of books made available to this age group is too narrow, overall, to meet national requirements.

*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 June 1996, the following improvements have taken place:

- Standards in the core subjects have risen in step with the national trend at the end of Key Stage 1 and have exceeded the national trend at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching remains good overall and no lessons observed during this inspection were of unsatisfactory quality. (15 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory in the last inspection.)
- The school's support for pupils identified as having special educational needs has considerably improved and includes the appointment by the governing body of a teacher whose sole responsibility is the co-ordination of provision for such pupils.

Improvement in those areas identified for development in the last inspection report:

- Assessment and recording procedures have evolved to a much higher level of effectiveness in promoting the progress of individual pupils and is a crucial resource for monitoring the standards of the school.
- Significant improvement has been made to the provision for information and communications technology, which has resulted in much higher standards throughout the school. Attainment now meets national requirements at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The schemes of work for each subject advocated by the last inspection are now all in place, with the exception of music. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been extended and is now more efficient in monitoring standards of teaching and learning.
- Pupils' punctuality is good and the school day gets off to a brisk start.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and its capacity for further improvement is good, due to the commitment and expertise of the headteacher, key co-ordinators and staff. The school is on course to at least meet targets set for English and mathematics by 2002.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	C	A	A	well above average    A above average        B average                 C below average         D
Mathematics	A	B	A*	A	

Science	A	A	A*	A	well below average	E
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Results are on an upward trend overall. The school is justly proud of its results for 11 year olds in 1999, with the school's performance being well above average in all core subjects both nationally and compared to similar schools. In mathematics and science, the school was in the highest five per cent nationally. The 1999 year group was particularly able, attaining similarly high standards when they were seven year olds, as detailed in the last inspection report. For seven year olds in 1999, results were well above the national average in writing, above average in mathematics and average in reading. When compared to seven year olds in similar schools, results were above average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics. Provisional results for 2000 indicate a similar picture for seven year olds, supported by inspection evidence. Results are not yet available for Key Stage 2 but inspection evidence indicates broadly average attainment in English and mathematics and above average results in science. This exceeds targets set for the year group and staff believe that this has been achieved through the 'booster' groups and ability sets arranged for teaching the older pupils. Attainment for the children under five is well above that set nationally for literacy and numeracy and attainment in all other areas of learning at least meets the targets set nationally for five year olds. The pupils are generally well challenged and achieve well throughout the school, although reading skills lack 'sparkle' and the full interest of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have a good attitude to school and generally to their work. They develop the confidence to express their own thoughts from the earliest age and co-operate well when working with others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good, overall, and often very good, in class and around the school. However, some unsettled behaviour was noted in the Year 3 and 4 classes.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils learn to accept responsibilities as monitors in their class and older pupils have further opportunities for personal development through their roles as prefects. The very good relationships between all adults and pupils in school promote an effective atmosphere for learning.
Attendance	Very good.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	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.*

- Of the lessons observed throughout the school, all were of at least satisfactory quality and 61 per cent were at least good. Of these lessons, the teaching in 21 per cent was very good. All teaching observed for children under five was very good. In Key Stage 1,

78 per cent of lessons were at least good, with 11 per cent very good. In Key Stage 2, teaching varies between the younger and older classes. It was consistently satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, but never less than good in Years 5 and 6, with almost 40 per cent being very good.

- Literacy and numeracy are taught well, overall. In English, teaching is good in reception and Year 1; satisfactory in Years 2, 3 and 4; and very good in Years 5 and 6. In mathematics, teaching is very good in reception and Year 1; satisfactory in Years 2, 3 and 4; and good in Years 5 and 6, where it is aided by the setting of the two classes into three groups.
- Early identification of pupils with special educational needs and extra, effective support for those at Stage 2 and above of the national Code of Practice ensures good progress. Class teachers satisfactorily provide for support for those at Stage 1.
- Higher-attaining pupils are generally well provided for and a pupil identified as gifted is challenged to a suitable level.
- Thorough teaching with good reinforcement means that pupils learn the basic skills well. By Year 6, pupils reach a high level in speaking, listening and reading. Basic writing skills are learned thoroughly although most pupils tend not to develop a sufficiently rich written vocabulary for descriptive work. In mathematics, computation skills are well developed by Year 6 and pupils learn and remember their tables well, and show a good understanding of graphs and other visual representation of quantities. Information and communication technology skills are confident and reach a suitable level at each stage in the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, well-planned curriculum of good quality throughout the school, with appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs through early identification and good support systems. The national Code of Practice is well implemented.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for personal development with many opportunities for reflection and spirituality, according to the school's mission statement, based firmly on the values of the Roman Catholic faith. There are clear expectations of right and wrong behaviour, good opportunities to develop social skills and satisfactory provision for learning about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good standard of care and protection for its pupils. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and carry them out diligently. Assessment procedures are flourishing and providing a systematic record of standards and progress. This is the school's current focus for development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very effective leader, demonstrating a clear vision for the school and a full awareness of the national requirements for primary schools. Senior co-ordinators provide skilful and diligent support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is committed to a school of high quality and fulfils its responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is a strong element in the successful management of the school. The headteacher and staff have evolved a very useful system for checking the progress of each pupil in English, mathematics and science.
The strategic use of resources	All financial resources available to the school are managed well, with careful consideration for the impact on standards. The principles of best value are applied.

Although the quantity and quality of resources made available to the pupils for learning is generally satisfactory, there are two areas of shortage: a wider range and quantity of books are necessary to extend the reading skills of pupils in Year 2; and, as the school is aware, outdoor equipment for the further physical development of children under five is a necessary target for the future.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is helping the children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and the staff of the school are caring and approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The regularity and suitability of homework, particularly in Years 3 and 4.</li> <li>• The range of activities which are provided outside lessons, including educational visits.</li> <li>• A closer working partnership with parents.</li> <li>• A resolution to the discipline problems that exist in the class that is currently in Year 4.</li> </ul>

The inspection team finds that the parents are justified in their positive views of the school. They find little justification for their concerns. As a rule, homework is regularly set and marked throughout the school, and it suitably supports class work, overall. However, the homework programmes in Years 3 and 4 are less consistent and less closely matched to class work. The range of activities provided outside lessons is similar to that in most primary schools of this size. The partnership with parents appears to be sound and further opportunities for co-operation are to be introduced in the autumn term. There was no evidence of discipline problems in Year 4 during the inspection but inspectors found pupils in both Years 3 and 4 to be a little unsettled on some occasions.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Standards are higher than average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The progress made by pupils is tracked well through the school.**

1. Children admitted to the reception class represent a wide range of attainment but, overall, the school's baseline assessment indicates that skills on entry are generally above average compared with other schools within the Rochdale Local Education Authority. The very good teaching in the reception class enables the children to make a very good start to school and develop great interest in their work. By the age of five, the skills of the majority exceed the nationally set learning outcomes for the age group.
2. The 1999 test results for seven year olds at the end of Key Stage 1 indicated that:
  - compared to all schools nationally, results were well above average in writing, above average in mathematics and science, and average in reading;
  - compared to schools with pupils from a similar background, standards were above average in writing, average in science, but below average in reading and mathematics.

The evidence of the inspection finds a similar picture for this school year, except in mathematics, where standards are a little higher overall.

3. The 1999 test results for 11 year olds at the end of Key Stage 2 indicated that:
  - compared to all schools nationally, results were in the top five per cent nationally in mathematics and science and well above average in English;
  - compared to schools with pupils from a similar background, standards were well above average in all three subjects.

This was a particularly able year group, who had reached high levels at the end of Key Stage 1 at seven, as detailed in the last inspection report. Nevertheless, the results achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 were outstanding. The group of pupils in the present Year 6 includes a high proportion identified as having special educational needs and, overall, has been working at a lower level, as is indicated by the targets set for the year group. Inspection evidence indicates that standards remain well above average in science and above average, overall, in mathematics and English. The higher standards in science have been achieved through the well-established scheme of work in the subject, used with confidence by staff throughout the school.

4. In 1999, the school exceeded its targets for 11 year olds, in both English and mathematics and again, is set to exceed the targets set for this school year. However, the targets set for this year in mathematics do not fully acknowledge the slightly higher than average results achieved by the year group when they were seven years old. The staff attribute improvements at the end of Key Stage 2 to the success of 'booster' classes in English and the setting of all pupils in Years 5 and 6 into three teaching groups based on assessment information.
5. In English, by the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' writing skills are above average and

stronger, overall, than reading skills, which is the reverse of the national situation. Pupils get off to a remarkably good start with writing in the reception class, with effective teaching achieving a good balance between providing support and setting challenging expectations. As a result, most pupils move into Year 1 with a good understanding of spelling and writing skills for their age. The pupils maintain these skills with great enthusiasm in Year 1 and build to a high level of independence in sentence composition, spelling and punctuation by the end of Year 2. Reading skills also develop early but some of the enthusiasm evident at the end of Year 1 has evaporated by the end of Year 2. The pupils' interest in books when reading with their teacher and to inspectors was muted compared to most pupils of this age. The reading books in use lack variety and do not represent a sufficiently wide range of children's literature. However, within other subjects, such as history, factual books are used well as a source of information. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 generally show a greater interest in texts and reading, and demonstrate very good skills in discussing different styles of literature. For example, in reviewing different styles of poetry, Year 6 pupils showed a good understanding of the technical attributes of verse. On the other hand, the writing skills in Year 6 are not developed to such a high level by so many pupils. At this much later stage in the school, although the written work continues to demonstrate good spelling and punctuation skills, the pupils' descriptive vocabulary generally lacks variety and originality and thus limits the interest and detail available to the reader. The underdevelopment of this skill is reducing the achievement of higher-attaining pupils in particular. However, the writing skills of a gifted pupil in Year 5 reach an exceptionally high level for her age, showing a particular facility for the discerning use of a wide vocabulary. Throughout the school, the pupils' presentation of their work varies and although a significant minority consistently produces neat and thoughtfully laid out work, the majority take much less care.

6. Speaking and listening skills develop to a high standard by the end of Year 6. From the earliest stages in the school, the pupils' confidence is encouraged as they learn to voice their thoughts and express their opinions. The very successful relationships existing in the school and the good, clear models of speech provided by most teachers, using perceptive questioning skills, are effective in promoting meaningful discussion that requires pupils to refine and clarify their ideas. By the end of Year 6, pupils express their thoughts fluently and clearly, demonstrating the ability to listen with a keen awareness for detail and respond in a way which takes discussion to a higher level.
  
7. In mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 1, last year's results were broadly in line with the national average but a little below the average for similar schools, as slightly fewer pupils than average achieved the higher level for the age group (Level 3). This year, this proportion of pupils has improved. Learning is at least sound for the great majority of pupils. In the reception class, pupils are well challenged by their work and again get off to a good start in the subject. The enthusiasm for the subject continues through Year 1 to the end of Year 2, where pupils' skills are generally confident and secure. Progress is never less than sound through early Key Stage 2 but accelerates within the set groups in Years 5 and 6, where pupils' are stretched to a suitably challenging level and achievement is good. The individual performances of pupils are closely tracked through National Curriculum levels, checked by optional national tests, to try to ensure each achieves their full potential by the end of Key Stage 2. Although results fluctuate between different year groups, standards have been above the national average for the past four years.

8. Few lessons were observed in science but a review of pupils' work at the end of both key stages indicates that scientific skills develop early in Key Stage 1 through suitably practical learning investigations. Throughout the school, skills are built upon sequentially and thoroughly across the full range of the subject. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 has been consistently well above the national average for the past three years and in the top five per cent nationally last year.
9. Standards in information technology are much improved since the last inspection, where they were found to be low at the end of Key Stage 2. The National Curriculum scheme of work is now fully in place and systematically taught throughout the school. Skills are building well and resources are up to date and carefully staged through the school. Computer skills are utilised adequately and increasingly well within most subjects. There is a clear scheme of work established and staff are gaining confidence in teaching the subject.
10. For pupils with special educational needs, progress is good, overall, in relation to previous attainment and targets set within individual education plans. Higher-attaining pupils are generally suitably challenged and achieve at a suitable level. There is no significant variation in attainment between gender groups.
11. In comparison to the last inspection, standards have improved in line with the national trend in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, and exceeded it in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards show improvement beyond the national trend in English, mathematics and science.

**The personal development of the pupils is good, supported by very good relationships within the school. The great majority of pupils have a mature approach to their work.**

12. The behaviour of the pupils is good, overall, and often very good in the classrooms, around the school. Outside on the playground, the pupils are happy and co-operative. The pupils are friendly, co-operative and generally mature in their consideration for others. Staff and pupils are confident that there are generally no problems with bullying and that should instances arise, they will be promptly and successfully resolved. At the parents' meeting, those present were unanimous in their praise for the caring approach of the staff to their pupils' welfare and generally confident that their children enjoyed school.
13. A small number of parents voiced concern about recurring problems with discipline in Year 4, where a very high proportion of the pupils in the class are boys. During the inspection, no instances of indiscipline were observed in this class or any other. However, the quality of teaching in both the Year 3 and the Year 4 classes, although consistently satisfactory, is not always successful in fully motivating all pupils to do their best for the duration of the whole lesson. In such lessons, the learning atmosphere is less successful than in other classes in the school and pupils do not always achieve at as high a level. Some work at too slow a pace and this reduces their learning opportunities.
14. The school's discipline policy is well understood by pupils and provides a clear basis for acceptable behaviour in lessons and give pupils a sense of responsibility for their own actions. The positive reward system is well established and the team points, good work wall and entries to the 'golden book' presented in school assembly each Friday are much appreciated by pupils. The development of the pupils' sense of

personal worth is included in the mission statement of the school and successfully put in place on a daily basis. The older pupils demonstrate a self-confidence and respect for the views of others, such as during class discussions where pupils present their own views of a poem.

15. Relationships within the school are generally very good, encouraged by the clear moral and social provision, such as when Key Stage 1 pupils were invited, during assembly, to give examples of personal kindness. Activities in class regularly involve the pupils in working in partnerships or groups and thereby extend social skills. The pupils' successful speaking and listening skills support the development of constructive relationships. Pupils at all stages in the school have opportunities to take responsibility for routine class tasks and, for the oldest pupils, the role of school prefect involves them in responsibilities such as supporting younger pupils, completing library duties and preparing the hall for school assembly. These are carried out with maturity and diligence. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities supports further personal development, and opportunities for research, such as in history lessons, encourage the development of independent study skills.
16. Staff provide good role models, both for behaviour and an interested and conscientious approach to learning. They demonstrate the courtesy and concern that the pupils are expected to show to others. The good behaviour and social skills of the pupils enables a successful learning environment, where in almost every class, pupils can apply themselves without distraction to the school's programme of work.

**The quality of teaching is good, overall, enabling pupils to achieve their best.**

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. This results in a good level of achievement for pupils. In the lessons observed throughout the school, teaching was never less than satisfactory. The teaching in 61 per cent of lessons was of at least good quality. Of these, 21 per cent of lessons were very good.
18. For the children under five, teaching is consistently very good. During this short inspection, teaching was seen to be strong in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and the science and information technology elements of knowledge and understanding of the world. The class teacher is skilfully supported by the work of the nursery nurse, providing an optimum learning situation for these young children in their first year at school. The subject knowledge of both the teacher and the nursery nurse are of a high standard and is combined with a very good understanding of the needs of the age group. There is a good balance achieved between active learning through play and direct teaching through enjoyable activities. The small size of the class of 20, in the care of two skilled staff, provides many opportunities for the children to listen to and take part in constructive learning dialogue with adults.
19. In both key stages, the teaching was good, overall, in the lessons observed in English, mathematics, science, information technology and history; and was satisfactory in the lessons observed in music. However, the teaching varies in quality through the school. It is most successful in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). This means that pupils get off to a very good start in establishing learning skills in reception. This is extended through very enthusiastic teaching and learning in Year 1 and consolidated well in Year 2. The teaching of writing is particularly successful and pupils achieve well. Pupils, however, lose some of their enthusiasm for reading towards the end of the key stage, where the range of books

made available is too narrow. The pupils' learning of mathematics and information technology skills is confident and secure due to a thorough and demanding teaching programme. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to use the school computers. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is consistently sound, and pupils' learning is generally consolidated and sufficiently extended in all subjects observed. Later in the key stage, in Years 5 and 6, the teaching improves in quality to very good. This is due to the good subject knowledge and obvious enthusiasm of the teachers; very good class management techniques; and consistently high expectations of the pupils' learning. These skills are combined with effective questioning techniques, making frequent reference to previous learning. This very good teaching raises standards to high levels as the pupils complete their primary school education, aided by such innovations as 'booster' classes in English, graded set groups in mathematics and the consistent use of a constructive homework programme.

20. Throughout the school, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are effectively implemented, and contribute further to the success of teaching in English and mathematics. The teaching of science is well established and high standards of learning are secure throughout the school. The teaching of information technology has improved significantly due to the expansion of resources and the input to staff training and confidence of the headteacher as subject co-ordinator. A carefully chosen range of up-to-date computer programs ensures experience for pupils of high quality and continuous good progress through the school. This improvement in provision is having a strong impact on raising standards in information technology throughout the school.
21. The setting of targets throughout the school within the core subjects of English, mathematics and science provides a clear overview of pupils' progress, which contributes well to the identification of pupils with special educational needs. Any pupil whose progress is causing concern is placed on the school's register of special educational needs and their progress closely monitored. The appointment of a part-time teacher with specific responsibility for managing the school's provision for such pupils adds to the effective tracking of learning and review of successful support systems. The work of the special educational needs co-ordinator is effectively supplemented by the input of support from a teacher employed by the local education authority. Very few pupils reach the higher stages within the national Code of Practice due largely to successful intervention as soon as problems become apparent. This is a significant factor in the good results achieved by the school.

**The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good, motivating staff and pupils to achieve their best.**

22. The headteacher demonstrates very good leadership skills and works conscientiously and perceptively to take the school forward. She maintains an up-to-date awareness of requirements for successful primary education and inspires key staff to join her in developing improved strategies within the school. She is fully aware of the need to continuously monitor and review the school's performance. At present an effective initiative is in hand to establish improved monitoring systems to provide an accurate audit of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is being put into practice through the development of a rigorous system for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Plans are in hand to extend the system further in the new school year, for example by involving parents and pupils more closely in the setting of specific targets for learning.



23. Staff feel secure in the knowledge that their headteacher is providing high quality guidance in the development of the school. This encourages a commitment to increased effectiveness in the classroom. Staff training opportunities provide appropriate support for school development initiatives. The staff work successfully as a team, committed to achieving continuous improvement in the school's provision for its pupils. Consequently, the curriculum and learning outcomes are kept under regular and constructive review.
24. The headteacher co-ordinates an audit in advance of the establishment of a very useful three year school development plan, appropriately compiled in co-operation with staff and governors, and establishing a clear way forward for the school. As part of the school's current focus on self-review procedures, the means of judging the success of action taken is to be linked more closely to pupils' achievements within the new plan to be agreed after the inspection.
25. The governing body provides good support for the work of the school, taking a keen interest in the outcome of initiatives put in place. The role of governors in reviewing the success of the school is improving, enabled by the clear target setting and tracking system established by the headteacher and the assessment co-ordinator. This is, together with information received from government departments on national attainment levels, provides valuable guidance to the governing body and a basis for judging the school's performance and deciding on any necessary action. All statutory requirements are in place and appropriate use is made of financial resources made available to the school. A fall in numbers at a time of long-term absence of staff led to an overspend of the budget but this has now been successfully resolved, with a prudent underspend once again in hand. The recent appointment of temporary staff to cover the long-term absence of permanent staff has been efficient and successful, adding to the quality of education available to pupils.
26. The headteacher has established, in co-operation with senior staff, a system for monitoring teaching, which includes a regular review of lessons in the key subjects throughout the school. This is suitably linked to targets set within the school development plan and provides useful feedback to both teachers and staff with subject management responsibilities, and is a key factor in the continuing success of the school.

**The curriculum has successfully maintained its breadth at a time when many schools nationally have found it necessary to focus more exclusively on literacy and numeracy.**

27. The school had established high standards in literacy and numeracy at the time of the introduction of the national strategies. Staff have worked hard to establish the new styles of lessons which take advantage of the systems made available, but not found the need to compromise significantly in other subjects of the curriculum. As is required, all statutorily required subjects are taught but to a greater depth than is currently found in many schools nationally. Very clear long-term plans are established for each year group and these generally combine well to provide continuous progress within each subject.
28. Although the review of the full curriculum was limited by the short inspection, it is clear from examples of work available in the school that pupils experience a broad range of learning opportunities. For example, the National Curriculum is made fully

available in history through topics such as ancient Greece, the Romans, the Tudors and Britain since 1930. Lessons include important opportunities for pupils to use literacy skills through research for information, such as was seen during the Year 2 lesson within the theme of 'The Time Machine', when pupils found out a range of information about family holidays, past and present. The skills of information technology are included as far as possible in every subject, and always at a suitable and challenging level for the pupils.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

**Assessment systems track pupils' overall progress well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and provide a good review system for monitoring standards through the school. The school itself has identified the need to extend this system to include specific targets for pupils which can be used as a basis for planning teaching according to the specific needs of differing groups.**

29. Over the past three years, the school has worked towards establishing annual targets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science throughout the school. This is providing a very useful overview of the success of the school and a careful check on the performance of individual pupils in these subjects. Assessments are backed up by standardised tests, such as the nationally available optional tests.
30. Although this system is now well established and working increasingly well as a means of monitoring standards, it does not at present provide a clear indication of which skills are to be developed next. This significantly limits its usefulness as a basis for teaching plans. However, the school has set plans for next term whereby pupils in each class will be arranged into groups and the next steps for learning made clear, not only for teachers, but also for pupils and their parents. These plans offer increased efficiency in the school's response to assessment information and in helping pupils move forward more quickly. The proposed system also offers an efficient system for the frequent reviews of pupils' progress with key skills.

**Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are not fully interested in their reading. The range of books made available to this age group is too narrow, overall, to meet national requirements.**

31. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the basic reading skills of the majority of pupils in Year 2 are adequately developed but the achievement of individual pupils is not fully realised with regard to their interest in reading and their knowledge of authors of books suitable for the age range. The pupils' discussion of texts is limited and lacks enthusiasm. A review of books used over the year indicates too close a reliance on the school's chosen published reading scheme without sufficient breadth built into the pupils' reading programme. This is reducing opportunities for learning and improving achievement.
32. By the end of Key Stage 2, this situation is resolved and pupils experience a suitably wide range of texts within class Literacy Hours and within group and individual reading opportunities.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. The following issues for development should be considered by the headteacher, governing body and staff to extend further the high standards existing in the school:
  - (1) Continue with the school's programme for the development of its system for the assessment of pupils' progress, through setting specific learning targets for individuals and groups of pupils and ensuring that these are clearly linked to plans for teaching and learning.

- (2) Supplement the school's stock of reading books available for pupils in Year 2, to ensure that the school's chosen published reading scheme is suitably supplemented to provide fully the wide range of children's literature advocated by the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	40	39	0	0	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	189
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	56

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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
	1999	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	91 (83)	91 (92)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	14	11	14
	Total	30	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (83)	85 (96)	97 (96)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	16	18	19
	Total	27	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (66)	97 (73)	100 (90)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	16	18	18
	Total	27	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (80)	97 (70)	97 (97)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

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

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

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43.8

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	317,453
Total expenditure	320,590
Expenditure per pupil	1,696
Balance brought forward from previous year	-11,901
Balance carried forward to next year	-15,038

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

189

Number of questionnaires returned

42

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	41	2	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	43	2	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	38	14	5	0
The teaching is good.	52	38	7	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	36	10	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	19	10	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	36	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	33	14	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	57	36	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	40	5	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	57	12	7	10