

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CHAD'S CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pattingham, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124269

Headteacher: Mrs J Nicklin

Reporting inspector: Ian Nelson
2220

Dates of inspection: 12th - 13th March 2001

Inspection number:191142

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Chad's CE (VC) Primary School Westbeech Road Pattingham Wolverhampton
Postcode:	WV6 7AQ
Telephone number:	01902 700372
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Tritton
Date of previous inspection:	13 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number on roll	144 (Below average size)
Pupils eligible for free school meals	3.6% (Below average)
Pupils speaking English as an additional language	0
Pupils with special educational needs	5.6% (Well below average).

St Chad's is a first school with pupils from the ages of 4 to 9. It is located in a village which includes local authority accommodation as well as privately owned houses. There are around the same number of boys as girls in the school and there are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational need. Attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school which has maintained high standards of attainment in the annual national tests for seven-year-olds. These high standards have been sustained because the school is very well led and managed, teaching is consistently good throughout the school and pupils make good progress. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and senior management team are very good
- Pupils attain high standards, particularly in English and mathematics
- Teaching is consistently good across the school
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well

What could be improved

- There are no significant areas for improvement

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Since then it has:

- Maintained high standards of attainment;
- Introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
- Made substantial improvements to the building;
- Implemented the new Foundation Stage requirements for children in the reception class;
- Improved the quality of teaching and learning;
- Addressed all the key issues from the previous report.

This represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A*	A*	A
Writing	A	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key	
Very high, top 5% of all schools	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The table shows that for the past three years standards have been high. In reading results have been in the top 5% of schools nationally for the last two years and well above the national average before that. Writing and mathematics are well above average and writing results were in the top 5% of schools nationally in 1999. In reading and mathematics all pupils attained at least the expected level 2 while in writing 97% attained this level. The numbers attaining the higher levels are above average in writing and well above average in reading and mathematics. Compared with the results of schools with similar pupils standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The work pupils were doing during the inspection confirmed these high standards. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those identified as more able, achieve well in their lessons and make good progress so that by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4 some higher attaining pupils are achieving the standards expected of 11-year-olds. Reading is a particular strength and there are no weak areas in terms of standards attained. The school has maintained high standards over recent years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested in their work and try hard in lessons. They are enthusiastic and keen to complete tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very polite and well behaved in lessons and around the school. There is no evidence of any bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults in school with whom they work.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance levels match the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Teaching is good throughout the school. Of the lessons seen during the inspection none was unsatisfactory. Most lessons, 82%, were good with a further 14% being very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school is good. Teachers plan work well, based clearly upon what the pupils have learned in previous lessons. They plan work to meet the needs of all the pupils in the class and ensure that they are all suitably challenged by their tasks. Consequently pupils rise to the challenges, work hard and achieve good results. Teachers make very effective use of computers to help pupils to learn. They use programs related closely to the work of the lesson and this helps to reinforce the pupils' learning. Computers are very effectively used to reinforce basic skills in numeracy and literacy as well as in subjects like history and science. Pupils have targets to reach and progress towards them is carefully and regularly monitored to make sure that they are learning effectively. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are good and high standards of behaviour in lessons are expected to which pupils respond positively. Teaching makes effective use of resources to ensure that practical and investigative work is an integral part of pupils' learning. There are no significant weaknesses in teaching and learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All subjects are well planned for and the school makes effective use of residential visits and extra-curricular activities for the older pupils which are well attended.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school's systems for assessing pupils helps to identify those with special educational needs and good levels of support are provided to help them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are clear expectations of behaviour and plenty of opportunities to take responsibility in lessons and around the school. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection and prayer in assemblies and at the end of the day. They are introduced to a wide range of artists from around the world and to good children's literature.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has good child protection procedures in place and takes care of the pupils in school well. The school has very good assessment procedures so that teachers know clearly what pupils have achieved and what work they need next.

The school has maintained a good balance between all subjects while introducing initiatives like literacy and numeracy. It makes effective use of computers in most other subjects and uses other subjects to enhance learning in literacy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and management making very effective use of subject co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors know their school well and have a clear idea of how to maintain the current high standards. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has very good systems in place to evaluate its own performance and uses these to ensure continuous improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors, head and senior management team set clear priorities for future developments and manage the budget well. They understand the need to make the most effective use of the school's funds rather than opting for the cheapest option in purchasing decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress in school. • Behaviour is good. • Children get the right amount of homework. • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no significant areas where parents would like to see improvements.

The inspection team endorses fully the parents' views of what they like about the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and senior management team are very good

1 The headteacher, governors and senior management team provide very effective leadership and management. They have a very clear view of the direction in which the school is going and how to ensure that it maintains and builds upon the current high standards.

2 The previous inspection report expressed some criticism of the role of the governors and these concerns have been fully addressed. The governors play a very active part in the leadership and management of the school. They are fully involved in devising and monitoring the school development plan and in setting the priorities for the school. They have a clear committee structure with terms of reference and appropriately delegated powers.

3 Governors take a full role in monitoring standards attained by pupils. They are fully aware of how well the school is doing compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. They are actively involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within school. Governors are fully involved in setting and monitoring the budget to ensure that the priorities outlined in the school development plan are met. They have a clear understanding of the need to secure the best deal for the school rather taking the cheapest when considering spending decisions and they judge the effectiveness of their spending decisions through their impact on raising or maintaining very high standards.

4 The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and management. They know what the school's strengths are and what could be developed further. They have in place very well-developed systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the school. All subject co-ordinators are fully involved in monitoring their own subjects through observing lessons and looking at pupils' work. They all contribute to the school development plan. The school development plan was criticised in the previous report and has been improved since then. It identifies appropriate priorities and how these will be achieved. The ways that success is judged relate to having completed tasks rather than to how the completion of tasks will help to raise or to maintain high standards but this is something the headteacher has already begun to address. Performance management systems are fully in place, building upon the previous school appraisal systems and all teachers have targets for the first cycle. All teachers keep a personal and professional profile showing details of courses attended and qualifications gained, illustrating how they have identified and met their professional development needs.

5 As well as having very effective systems in place to evaluate and improve continuously the quality of teaching and learning the school also has excellent systems for monitoring the progress pupils make in all subjects and for recording that progress. The results of the annual tests for 7-year-olds are fully analysed to see what particular strengths and weaknesses are evident and to plan how to address them. This information is used to inform the school development plan, for example in identifying that standards of writing, though high, did not match those of reading. The school responded by having a focus on improving writing to bring it to the same standard as reading. This illustrates the fundamental basis for the school's success which is founded upon its comprehensive and consistent self-evaluation practices and commitment to continuous improvement.

Pupils attain high standards, particularly in English and mathematics

6 Pupils attain high standards, particularly in English and mathematics. In the latest national tests for 7-year-olds the pupils attained very high standards in reading, among the top 5% of schools in the country. In writing and mathematics standards were well above the national average. In comparison with schools with similar pupils, standards were well above average. Standards have been consistently high over the last four years. The tests have shown reading standards to be in the top 5% of all schools for three of the last four years and well above average in the fourth year. Standards of writing have fluctuated between being in the top 5% of all schools for two of the last four years and well above national averages for the other two. Standards in mathematics have been consistently well above the national average for the last four years. In reading and mathematics in the 2000 tests all the pupils attained at least the expected level 2 and in writing 97% did so. Nearly twice the national average gained the higher than expected level 3 in reading. In writing 13% gained the higher level compared with a national average of 9% and in mathematics 40% gained the higher level 3 or above compared with 25% nationally and one pupil gained level 4, the standard expected of the average 11-year-old.

7 The inspection findings confirm these high standards. Pupils demonstrate very good speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school they listen well to what teachers tell them and follow instructions carefully. This ensures that they know what they are meant to be doing and that they get on with their work with a minimum of fuss. For example in the reception class pupils quickly understood the rules of a number game that the teacher introduced and through listening to each other were able to work out the secret rule which allowed their given number to be accepted. Pupils' speaking skills are also very good. By the time they reach Year 4 they are highly articulate and confident speakers. They demonstrated very good levels of confidence and skill when talking with inspectors during the inspection as well as in the normal course of lessons. For example in a Year 4 literacy lesson pupils explained their ideas in a clear and coherent manner. They justified what they thought about the text they were studying including a very good use of appropriate vocabulary. They explained that the story was in the fantasy genre because of the setting and characterisation. In discussing their work with an inspector they spoke in full sentences using correct terminology. For example in explaining what they had done in design and technology they explained how they had researched the best materials to use and how they had a prototype for the planned product. They spoke about working in the style of Lowry in two-dimensional form and also about using pipe cleaners to give a three-dimensional element to work in his style by creating figures in different postures.

8 In reading standards are very high. By the time they reach Year 4 the higher attaining pupils are at the levels expected of the average 11-year-old. They read fluently and expressively, enjoying what they read. They refer to the text to justify their views and ideas and confidently make evaluative comments on what they are reading. They talk fluently and articulately about a wide range of authors and different genres of literature. Pupils in Year 3 use text books to seek information to help them to find out about their history topic on the Vikings. They find information to help them to make their writing about the Viking invasion more realistic when writing it from the perspective of the invading warriors themselves. Year 1 pupils read with increasing confidence. The higher attaining pupils have a range of strategies for tackling unknown words including sounding them out. They regularly self-correct as they read and realise that what they have read does not make sense. This demonstrates that they understand what they are reading rather than just recognising individual words on a page. They are beginning to talk confidently about the characters in their books and their particular personalities. In the reception class children are introduced to letter sounds and blends and make "sh" with playdough. They also identify objects beginning with "sh" and practice the sound "s/" with support.

9 Pupils' writing is good. Although in last year's national tests it was not as good as their reading, standards are still well above average and the school has a writing action plan in place to raise standards even further. By Year 2 pupils write in full sentences correctly punctuated. They spell most of the words they use correctly and where they make mistakes the spelling is still a plausible attempt, showing a good knowledge of spelling rules and phonics. They are beginning to use speech marks to create dialogue in their writing and they consider the best adjectives to make their writing more interesting. For example in a literacy lesson pupils had to think of adjectives to describe characters in a story they were reading. They quickly got beyond the obvious ones like 'nice' and 'kind' and moved on to use terms like 'attractive' and 'respectable'. Year 3 pupils consider the impact of perspective on the content and style of writing when they consider why the Anglo-Saxon account of the Viking invasion might have referred to fiery dragons. They then attempt to write their own version from the opposite perspective as one of the invaders, as a contrast. Year 4 pupils produce some sophisticated story writing with individual styles emerging. They use good vocabulary describing a character as 'anxious' for example or 'replying impatiently'. They spell these more complex words correctly without support or recourse to a dictionary.

10 In mathematics standards are well above average. By Year 4 pupils are confident with numbers and shapes and have a good grasp of number facts. They understand the equivalence of fractions and confidently recognise that two quarters make a half, or that three quarters is the same as six eighths. They read scales and thermometers understanding negative numbers in the context of temperature. Year 3 pupils understand fractions as part of a whole and identify given fractions correctly, providing a good base for the fractions work they will encounter in Year 4. They know that subtraction is the opposite of addition and a good way to check if calculations are correct. They understand the idea of rounding a number up and work happily with three-digit numbers in addition and subtraction. They also have a good grasp of multiplication and division. Year 2 pupils know the multiples of ten, identify simple lines of symmetry, and work out what calculations are needed in simple problems before tackling them correctly. Year 1 pupils know number facts to ten and the higher attaining pupils know them well beyond that. They add single-digit numbers correctly and are learning to double numbers in their heads. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning because the school has such good tracking systems in place based on comprehensive assessment procedures. These enable teachers to set meaningful targets for individual pupils to achieve.

Teaching is consistently good across the school

11 Teaching is good. During the inspection 96% of teaching was at least good with 14% being very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are well planned. Teachers say clearly what pupils will learn and mostly explain this to their pupils. They also say in their planning how they will know the learning has taken place. Lessons are well structured. The literacy and numeracy lessons follow the national guidance and move along at a good pace which keeps pupils interested and busy. The teachers all expect the best from their pupils and consequently pupils rise to the challenges they are set. There is an expectation, for example, in English that pupils will write in sentences that are correctly punctuated and they do. In discussions teachers expect pupils to answer in full sentences instead of single words and to justify their answers. This enhances their ability in speaking and listening.

12 Work is well matched to the needs of pupils. Targets are set for pupils to attain and progress towards them is reviewed regularly. Pupils are in no doubt about the high standard of behaviour and good manners expected by their teachers and so lessons are calm and orderly affairs. On occasions when pupils' enthusiasm gets the better of them and they call out before raising their hand, the teacher is quick, and polite, in reminding them that calling out is not acceptable. They are expected, from an early age, to work hard and do their best.

In Year 1 for example pupils worked very quietly on identifying what materials a variety of common objects were made from and what alternatives might have been possible.

13 Computers are used in the majority of lessons to support the learning. For example when Year 1 pupils worked on number facts to ten they took turns to practise some of these on the computer. In a Year 3 history lesson pupils identified things that were in the wrong period in pictures on the computer. In literacy lessons some pupils work directly on the computer, word-processing their ideas while others write in their books. Basic computer skills are well taught. For example Year 2 pupils learned how to seek information from the Internet and from Encarta, an encyclopaedia on the computer. They were taught how to manipulate the cursor around the screen using the mouse and which icons to click on. They learned terms like 'search engine', and how to use one.

14 Teachers use resources well to support learning. For example in a Year 2 lesson on electricity there was plenty of equipment for all pupils to work in a practical investigative way which meant that they learned not only how to make a simple circuit but also what would happen if they added extra bulbs to it and how to resolve the problem of them getting dimmer as more were added. In teaching fractions in Year 4 the teacher used large 'fraction walls' to demonstrate equivalence and gave some pupils sweets to use in their investigations. These investigative lessons are an indication that the school has successfully addressed the criticisms from the last report about a lack of this type of work. Teachers work effectively with classroom support assistants who are well briefed and are an integral part of the staff team.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good

15 Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school. In all lessons pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They settle quickly in their places when they enter the classroom and are enthusiastic about their lessons. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, for example pupils were spellbound by the story being used as a focus for the lesson and responded very well to the teacher's questions and instructions. Although many were keen to contribute to the discussion they took turns and listened politely to other pupils. When they are given tasks to do independently they settle quickly to them and concentrate on their work. This was demonstrated very well in a Year 3 lesson on fractions when pupils had listened attentively to the opening teaching session and then settled in silence to their own tasks with hardly a murmur to be heard. In a Year 2 science lesson pupils investigated circuits using bulbs, wires and batteries. They tackled the task with great enthusiasm, working well in pairs and bursting to show each new discovery to their teacher. Year 1 pupils working on number facts in their numeracy lesson settled very quickly and quietly to their tasks and sustained concentration throughout the lesson. Reception children at the end of the morning took part in number games and rhymes and listened well as the teacher explained the rules of a number game and then took part, asking if their number fitted the secret rule.

16 Behaviour is very good throughout the school and pupils respond well when given responsibility. In lessons they get on with their work without disturbing others and are polite and well mannered. When working in pairs they share materials and equipment, taking turns when needed. This was demonstrated in the lesson in Year 2 on electricity where each pair worked together to create the circuits. Pupils move around the school quietly and sensibly and there is a very pleasant family atmosphere in the dining hall at lunchtimes. Pupils queue up sensibly, make their choices, choose where to sit and enjoy their lunch. Afterwards they clear away sensibly and quietly before going out to play. In the playground they play well together and there is no untoward behaviour or bullying. On the contrary, when occasional bumps do happen the supervisors quickly intervene and ensure that both parties make up and apologise for not being more careful. When boarding the bus to go swimming pupils line

up sensibly and take turns without any pushing and shoving even though they are keen to get to their lesson. In assembly pupils take on helpful roles including taking charge of the overhead projector and the music to which everyone enters and leaves. They carry out these tasks very efficiently which helps the assemblies to run smoothly. The parents spoke positively about the children's good behaviour in and around school and their comments were fully verified during the inspection.

17 Pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults around the school. They work quietly alongside each other on independent tasks and collaborate effectively when they need to. For example in a Year 3 history lesson pupils were expected to use a range of books to help them with their work on Vikings. They happily shared books and ideas without disturbing others in their work. They are always polite and well mannered to their teachers and other adults around the school. They play happily together in the playground with an awareness of the needs of others so that no one game or group dominates. Overall this is a very friendly school with a strong family ethos to which all the pupils respond very well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

18 The inspection team could find no significant areas for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	14	82	4			

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	Y R – Y 4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		133
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y R – Y 4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		6

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	30	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	97 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	110
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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: Y R – Y 4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	22.6

Education support staff: Y R – Y 4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	260727
Total expenditure	254697
Expenditure per pupil	1782
Balance brought forward from previous year	7380
Balance carried forward to next year	13410

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	133
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	28	6		
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39			
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	33			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	54	2		
The teaching is good.	67	30			4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	33	7		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	2		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24			2
The school works closely with parents.	50	33	9		7
The school is well led and managed.	63	26			11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30			4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	26	6		4