

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. EDWARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103447

Headteacher: Sr. Therese O'Neill

Reporting inspector: Cheryl Thompson  
22822

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 192000

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Junior and infant

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Greenland Road  
Selly Park  
Birmingham

Postcode: B29 7PN

Telephone number: 0121 472 1730

Fax number: 0121 415 5058

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev. P. Gilsenan

Date of previous inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22822	Mrs. C. Thompson	Registered inspector	Design and technology	<p>The characteristics and effectiveness of the school</p> <p>The school's results and achievements</p> <p>How well pupils are taught</p> <p>How well the school is led and managed</p> <p>What the school should do to improve further</p>
11229	Dr. M.J. Freeman	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well the school cares for its pupils</p> <p>How well the school works in partnership with its parents</p>
3687	Mr G. Bancroft	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Physical education</p>	
18709	Mrs. A.T. Bee	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Equality of opportunity</p> <p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p> <p>Provision for pupils with English as an additional language</p>	
27292	Mr. J.W. Calvert	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p>	
21750	Ms. S. Hall	Team Inspector	<p>Geography</p> <p>History</p>	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
8073	Mrs. L. Simmons	Team Inspector	<p>Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>Music</p>	

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

‘Grasshoppers’  
1 Anglesey Close  
Chasetown  
Burntwood  
Staffordshire  
WS7 8XA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Edward's is a popular, over-subscribed school serving an area of mixed housing in the parish of St. Edward's in Selly Park. There are 385 boys and girls on roll aged four to eleven, which is bigger than most primary schools. The school has two sites, about half a mile apart - one for infants and one for juniors. Approximately two thirds of the pupils are white with their origins in the United Kingdom and Ireland, with other pupils coming from many ethnic minorities, the main being of Asian heritage. A high number of pupils have English as an additional language, with seven at the early stages of learning English. Fifteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average of 20 per cent. Seventy-eight pupils (20 per cent), including six with statements, are on the school's register of special educational needs; this is just below the national average of 23 per cent but significantly more than at the time of the last inspection. The main special educational needs for these pupils are identified as moderate learning difficulties and autism. Attainment on entry is around the level expected for four year olds.

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

St. Edward's is a very effective school. It serves its pupils, their families and the parish community very well. The school provides a very good education for all its pupils, which enables them to develop self-confidence, very positive attitudes to learning and achieve their best. Consistent and very good teaching helps pupils to make good progress in their learning. At age seven and eleven, pupils achieve well and most attain standards above those expected for their age. Given the pupils' starting point and their achievements when they leave St. Edward's, the school provides good value for money. The school's mission statement shines through all its work. The strong Catholic ethos, together with the very good leadership and management ensure that the school is very successful in achieving its aim *'To ensure a Catholic ethos is brought to all our teaching and learning as we provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which meets the needs of all our children'*.

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

- Leadership and management of the school are very good.
- Very good teaching promotes good learning.
- Pupils achieve well and, at age seven and eleven, attain standards that are above or well above the national average and the average for schools with a similar intake.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and behave very well.
- Relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent.
- Partnership with parents is very good.

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

- The procedures for checking on the work of the school are good, however there needs to be an explicit focus for monitoring teaching and pupils' work.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good; there is a need now to refine these further to focus on identifying learning targets for individual pupils.
- The school provides good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, it does not have a policy for these pupils and there is a recognised need to develop teachers' awareness of the stages of language acquisition.

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



## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997 when it was found to be ‘... a good school which has a number of important strengths and no overall weaknesses’. Improvement since then has been good. The strengths of the school have been maintained. Standards that are either above or well above the national averages have generally been maintained in English, mathematics and science at both key stages. Standards have improved in design and technology, geography and physical education. The overall quality of teaching has improved. The key issues raised by the last inspection have been resolved well in the main, especially in relation to the quality of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. The school has also given considerable thought and time to improving its assessment procedures and they are now good, overall. There has been some monitoring of teaching within the school, particularly for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The school recognises the need to apply more structure to monitoring teaching. The capacity for further improvement is good. There is a strong commitment to maintaining and/or improving standards.

## 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	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	A	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A*	B	A	
science	A	A	A	A	

Results show that the school nearly always achieves standards that are above average. In 1999, when there was an exceptional group of pupils, standards in mathematics were similar to those achieved in the highest five per cent of schools in the country. In 2000, although a higher than average number of pupils achieved the expected Level 4, fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Consequently, when different points are awarded for each level and averaged, the average point score indicates that standards this year in English are lower than usual. Overall, standards are improving in line with the national trend. In National Curriculum tests, seven year olds also attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above both national average and the average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. Based on good systems of assessment, the school sets demanding targets for its pupils to achieve, which ensures the school is always questioning how it can do better. Inspection evidence confirms that in very nearly all subjects, seven and eleven year olds attain standards that are above national expectations. The exceptions are in reading and music, where standards are well above expectations for eleven year olds. Standards achieved in writing by eleven year olds are in line with expectations and an area noted for improvement. Baseline assessment in the Reception classes shows children’s starting point to be in line with that expected for their age. Given this starting point compared with the generally well above

average standards achieved by the time pupils leave St. Edward's indicates that pupils achieve well in all areas.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like coming to school and are keen to learn. They work diligently and take pride in all that they do. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour have a significant impact on the standards they achieve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are helpful, polite and courteous. They look after the school and respond positively to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show initiative and undertake responsible tasks with enthusiasm. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect each other's values, feelings and beliefs.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils arrive punctually.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The high proportion of consistent, good or very good teaching indicates that overall, teaching at St Edward's is very good. All teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Seventy-nine per cent of teaching was good or better, of which thirty two per cent was very good or excellent. Underpinning the very good teaching are the Headteacher's strong leadership, the impressive team spirit and teachers' commitment to fulfilling the aims of the school's mission statement. Pupils learn well as they progress through the school, not only in acquiring knowledge and skills but in their personal development. Teaching is equally good in both the infant and junior departments, with very good and excellent teaching seen in both. Relationships are very good. Key features of all teaching are the use of praise and teachers' affirmation to pupils that their work and efforts are valued; this encourages and nurtures self-confidence and a climate where pupils have an 'I can' attitude. Teachers set high expectations for their pupils to learn at a good pace and achieve their best. Very good teaching for children in the Reception classes provides strong foundations for future learning; high expectations are set for children to behave appropriately, persevere with their tasks and do their best. All teachers have good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the appropriate methods for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, pupils learn enthusiastically and make good progress. Very good teaching in music benefits the whole school; throughout, pupils enjoy music and achieve well. In the main, the school is most successful in meeting the needs of all its pupils. Challenging targets are set for pupils to achieve in National Curriculum tests and assessments; this system is very beneficial for higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs because all are expected and supported to achieve their best. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support in the infant department and make good progress. However, the school acknowledges the need to develop all teachers' awareness of the stages of language acquisition.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is good and relevant to pupils' needs and interests. The school's curriculum is very conscientiously and carefully planned and successful in supporting high standards in most subject areas.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have good individual education plans and knowledgeable support; as a consequence, they make good progress and have good self-esteem.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is no policy for pupils with English as an additional language. However, all pupils with English as an additional language have equal access to the curriculum, are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall and excellent for pupils' spiritual development. The strong Catholic ethos supports pupils' spiritual and moral development very well. Pupils' social development is promoted by high expectations for courtesy, good manners and respect for others. The school values the cultural diversity of its community and seeks to celebrate the cultural traditions of all its pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures in place for ensuring the health, safety and security of pupils. Pupils feel confident and happy in school. The school has good procedures in place to track pupils' progress and personal development.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Partnership with parents is very good and valued by both school and parents. Parents hold their school in high regard; they are very supportive and many are involved in the life of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are very good. The Headteacher provides inspirational leadership and, together with, senior management team is committed to sustaining the standards achieved in the school. <b>Staffing levels are good.</b> There is a consensus and clarity of vision, which is shared by all staff; they work extremely well together as a team to fulfil the school's mission statement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors' expertise is used very well within the school. They are proud of their school and committed to maintaining the high standards achieved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for checking on the standards pupils achieve. The outcomes of careful analyses of test results are used to set targets for further improvement. In the main, teaching is monitored informally. This is a recognised area for development.
The strategic use of resources	In the main, resources for learning are satisfactory although there is no large outdoor apparatus for the Reception class pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but the space available for indoor physical education at the infant site is unsatisfactory. The library at the junior site is not big enough. The school makes appropriate use of all the funding it receives. Financial management is very good. The substantial under-spend has been planned to finance the development of the computer suite and an extension to the junior library. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily, overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The very good behaviour and attitudes to learning.</li> <li>• The very good care and welfare provided by the school.</li> <li>• The very good range of information provided and the open nature of the school.</li> <li>• The helpfulness and accessibility of the teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wider range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. Staff give generously of their time to provide a good range of extra-curricular activities at the junior site. There are also opportunities to learn to play musical instruments. At the infant school site, outdoor space is limited and the time taken for pupils to move to the junior site would make extra-curricular sports activities impracticable. The school could consider some non-sports activities for the pupils at the infant site.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The school has maintained the standards it was seen to be achieving in National Curriculum tests at the time of the last inspection but has improved standards in design and technology, geography and physical education. Standards attained by eleven year olds in National Curriculum tests since that time are generally well above the national average in mathematics and science and range from well above average to average in English. Fluctuations in standards from year to year reflect the different groups of pupils taking the tests. For example in 2000, several pupils in the year group had special educational needs and two pupils were absent for the English test, which has an impact on test results. The school has also identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to undertake extended pieces of writing in order to raise standards further in writing.
2. Standards attained by seven year olds in National Curriculum tests are generally well above the national average but again there are year-on-year fluctuations attributed to the different groups of pupils taking the tests.
3. Compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, standards attained by eleven year olds are well above average in mathematics and science but in line with the average for English. Standards attained by seven year olds are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. National performance data for the years 1996 to 2000, which uses pupils average point scores, shows that standards have improved at the same rate as the national trend. Further analysis of this data shows little difference in the performance of boys and girls in the school. However, compared to the national figures, boys in this school achieve significantly better than in most schools in the country, especially in mathematics.
5. The school is using careful analyses of national tests and other tests conducted in the school to set realistic but challenging targets for achievement in National Curriculum tests.
6. Results of the school's initial (baseline) assessment of pupils as they start in the Reception classes show that attainment is in line with that expected for four year olds. At the end of the Foundation Stage, inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are achieving the standards expected in the nationally determined areas of learning with a few exceeding these.
7. Inspection evidence shows that pupils of all prior attainment are achieving well in all subjects of the National Curriculum with notable exceptions in reading and music, where pupils achieve very well.
8. In all subjects of the National Curriculum, inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils are attaining standards that are above the national expectations. The only exception is in writing at Key Stage 2, where standards are in line with national expectations. The school is already taking steps to ensure improvement by providing more time for pupils to write extended pieces of work.

9. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support from the two co-ordinators and work is well matched to their individual needs, because of this, they make good progress.

10. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. However, although they are initially assessed, the school does not accurately measure the progress they make in their acquisition of language skills. The school has identified the need to improve teachers' knowledge in this area.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. The previous inspection report of 1997 noted that attitudes to learning and behaviour were good; this inspection confirms that improvement in these areas is continuing. Pupils show very good and positive attitudes to learning and are eager to come to school. They listen attentively to teachers, concentrate hard and show persistence in their work. They take a real pride in their schoolwork and work collaboratively, diligently and hard.

12. The behaviour of pupils is very good, both in school and in the playgrounds. This is helped by a clear and positive behaviour policy and a simple yet effective array of rewards and sanctions. Pupils display an awareness of each other's beliefs, values and feelings. They actively support several local and overseas aid charities and the local hospice. Pupils move around the school in a safe and orderly manner and show a constant pride and care for the school buildings, grounds and equipment. They are invariably polite and helpful to adults and bullying and racism are absent throughout the school. Relationships with each other and with adults are very good. There have been no exclusions for many years and the well designed system of awards and certificates for good behaviour, helpfulness, good attendance and good work all contribute significantly to the maintenance of the very high standards of pupil behaviour, discipline and learning.

13. The personal development of pupils is well supported by staff; pupils are encouraged to undertake responsible tasks throughout the school, such as house captain and register monitor and they undertake these duties eagerly and perform them well. Pupils in Year 6 take on responsible roles as 'mentors' to incoming Year 3 pupils and this helps them to form good relationships and instils a care for others. The well structured programme of personal, social and health education is also helpful in supporting pupils' personal development and awareness of the world they live in.

14. Attendance is satisfactory. Registers are completed briskly and comply with statutory requirements. Punctuality of pupils is good and the hundred per cent Attendance Certificate scheme works well. Classes start and finish on time.

15. The very good behaviour combined with very good personal development and attitudes to learning clearly contribute to good teaching and learning and are a tangible and notable strength of the school.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. Underpinning the very good teaching at St. Edward's are the Headteacher's strong leadership, the impressive team spirit and teachers' commitment to fulfilling the aims of the

school's mission statement. Pupils learn well as they progress through the school, not only in acquiring knowledge and skills but in their personal development. The good teaching noted in the last inspection has been consolidated and is now very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. During the inspection, in three quarters of the lessons, teaching was good or better. In one third of the lessons observed, teaching was very good or excellent. In just over a fifth of the lessons, teaching was satisfactory.

17. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. It is equally good in both infant and junior departments, with very good and excellent teaching seen in both. The orderly and productive atmosphere established in classes enables pupils to concentrate on their work. Teachers' clear expectations and explanations mean that pupils know what is expected of them and what they have to do to achieve the tasks set for them. Relationships are very good. Key features in the teaching in this school are teachers' use of praise and affirmation to pupils that their work and efforts are valued. This encourages and nurtures self-confidence and a climate where pupils have an 'I can' attitude and are keen to 'have a go' at all the tasks set them.

18. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage in the Reception classes is good overall, with very good teaching observed in music and mathematical development. Teachers have detailed knowledge of the needs of young children and the requirements of the nationally determined areas of learning. They provide interesting and relevant experiences for children within which are interwoven specific learning activities. For example, in the role-play 'grocery', children develop their counting and recording skills when 'stocktaking'. Teachers know the families of their children well and work in partnership with them to the benefit of all. Parents' involvement in reading with and to their children is valued by teachers and plays an important part in the good progress children make in developing reading skills.

19. Literacy and numeracy are given high priority in all age groups and are taught well with very good teaching seen in both key stages. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach early literacy and numeracy skills through interesting, fun and relevant activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 are very confident in attempting to spell unknown words by using letter sounds they know and have high expectations that their story writing will appeal to an audience. Year 2 pupils have developed a good knowledge of adding up the cost of several items and giving change from a given amount. More refined literacy skills, such as skimming text to find information, are developed very effectively in Years 5 and 6 by the use of non-fiction texts. Similarly, problem-solving skills are developed well in mathematics lessons and pupils learn and use, confidently, estimation as a means of testing out their answers.

20. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils are well supported. In addition to the pupils identified as having special educational needs, a significant number of other pupils who are having difficulty acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills are monitored by the co-ordinators and receive extra support. Very good relationships are developed between the adults working with the pupils and this results in all pupils having positive attitudes to lessons and so impacts on learning.

21. The teaching for the pupils who have English as an additional language is good. Pupils in the infant department receive extra support from a classroom assistant but, although this support is not available in the junior department, the headteacher is appointing a



classroom assistant to work in this area. An area noted for improvement by the school is to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of specific needs of these pupils and the stages of language acquisition.

22. Throughout, teachers set high expectations for behaviour and manage their pupils effectively, which results in classrooms where pupils know exactly what is expected of them and a busy working atmosphere, where they can concentrate on their work and achieve well. In lessons where pupils are expected to work in groups or pairs, the high expectations set for behaviour and pupils' well-developed social skills ensure that they take turns fairly, share thoughtfully and listen to each other's opinions. The majority of lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, promoting high interest levels and a good work rate. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, pupils listened to the story from the large text book, put forward their own ideas and then set about writing their own stories. The highly interesting activity coupled with well prepared and exciting opportunities to use many coloured felt pens, ensured pupils applied themselves in a very businesslike manner and completed their work at an impressive pace.

23. Planning is good. Teachers plan together in year group teams to ensure that pupils in the same year group, but in different classes, learn the same things. For most lessons, teachers plan work to match pupils' different levels of attainment. At the moment there are no consistent methods used for evaluating the success of lessons and using this information to plan the next lesson. Teachers mark their pupils' work appropriately and in line with the school's marking policy; in the best examples, pupils are told explicitly what they have to do to improve.

24. Resources are used efficiently and always well prepared and organised. Teachers' increasing competence and confidence in the use of information communication technology (ICT) within their lessons is ensuring that pupils develop and consolidate their ICT skills through many subjects. During inspection, the non-classed based teacher was deployed very effectively to work with small groups of pupils to help them develop and apply ICT skills. In these groups, careful planning ensured pupils made good gains in learning and applying their ICT skills in meaningful situations. The teacher employed part-time to provide a better pupil-teacher ratio for ability group setting in mathematics is also deployed most effectively and contributes significantly to pupils' good progress.

25. Homework is used effectively in both key stages and has a suitable impact on the standards achieved and prepares pupils for the homework routines of secondary education.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. The school's curriculum is very conscientiously and carefully planned and successful in supporting high standards in most subject areas. Planning meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum with religious education taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus. There are appropriate time allocations for the teaching of English, mathematics, science and other subjects. The quality of curriculum planning has improved since the previous inspection.

27. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all of its pupils. The broad range of activities meet the needs, interests and aptitudes of groups of pupils, including those

with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers make good links between subjects, including history and geography, so that when pupils study historical aspects of Egyptian lives they also find out about the geography of Egypt. Similarly there are carefully considered opportunities to link curriculum planning for the development of skills in ICT with other subject areas. This is exemplified when Year 3 pupils learn about life in Roman times and have to plot a route for a programmable floor robot to reach different parts of a Roman city.

28. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage of learning is well planned within the required areas of learning. Staff have adapted the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies well to teach children the basic skills in these areas. There is good planning to support children's social, emotional and creative development. However, curriculum planning for the development of physical skills is hindered by the limitations of the accommodation at the infant department.

29. The strategy for the teaching of literacy is satisfactory with effective emphasis upon the development of early reading skills but with sometimes variable effect in developing writing skills. Whilst this planning is satisfactory it is not fully effective in consistently developing literacy links to other subjects and limits the development of the oldest pupils' skills in writing. Occasionally planning lacks a clear focus on how to improve specific aspects of the writing process through providing more opportunities for pupils to write imaginatively, in depth and for a real purpose across different subjects.

30. The strategy for the teaching of numeracy is good and is effective in enhancing the levels of attainment across the school. The greater emphasis the school places on numeracy skills including mental arithmetic skills supports good standards in this area of learning and raises pupils' confidence in using numeracy in every day situations.

31. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and, on the occasions they are withdrawn from lessons to receive extra help, the work they do is closely related to their individual needs. All pupils identified have individual education plans and most contain clear targets which are worked towards in class and when they are withdrawn for extra support. These plans are reviewed regularly and parents are involved in the process. The school has maintained this high standard since the previous inspection

32. There is no policy for pupils with English as an additional language. However all pupils with English as an additional language have equal access to the curriculum.

33. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities, which maintains the provision, noted in the previous inspection. These include several sporting and musical activities. Older pupils are given the opportunity to attend a residential centre in the spring term. The school makes particularly good use of educational visits and invites a wide range of visitors into school to help to widen pupils learning experiences. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have recently enjoyed meeting a Roman Centurion on their visit to a local museum and others have enjoyed the performances of a theatre group who re-enacted aspects of life in other historical periods.

34. The school takes social and educational inclusion as a central part of its provision for pupils. Curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Many classroom activities are planned at three different levels, with additional support provided by teachers and support staff where necessary. Some additional language support is also provided for those pupils with English as an additional language. The school is keen to ensure equal access to the curriculum and is at an early stage of monitoring the effect of withdrawing pupils from some lessons, including parts of the Literacy Hour for instrumental tuition. Staff work hard to try to ensure pupils do not miss very important parts of lessons. However, whilst the school is keen to safeguard this additional learning opportunity, staff are rightly

considering the possibility of rotating such activities on a weekly basis in order to protect pupils' access to the curriculum.

35. Personal, social and health education is given an appropriate focus in the school. Provision is good and appropriate to the ages and needs of the pupils. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of health issues. Sex education, together with awareness of the misuse of drugs, is taught appropriately. The school is successful in preparing the pupils for their responsibilities in later life through the development of a particularly caring ethos and through responding to the individual needs of pupils.

36. The school makes good use of the local community to support curriculum planning. Teachers are adept at tapping the resources available within the local and wider area. This is noted in Key Stage 1, where pupils have heard about the lifestyles of people in Africa. They have learnt how to say good morning in the Shona language, tried on some African costumes and played musical instruments. On another occasion a mother visited school to talk about her experiences growing up in Africa and taught the younger pupils how to carry a baby in a shawl, how to crush maize and carry items on their heads. These valuable experiences extend the pupils' geographical knowledge and their cultural understanding well.

37. The school has good links with partner institutions especially the large number of Catholic schools in the area. Staff attend local group meetings and training activities and work closely with the local secondary schools that the pupils will move to when leaving St Edwards.

38. In the last inspection the curriculum was nearly always balanced but monitoring of the curriculum needed further development. Whilst curriculum co-ordinators had time to evaluate the success of initiatives, procedures needed to be more rigorously applied. The balance of curriculum planning is now good. Curriculum co-ordinators work very conscientiously to provide medium term planning for colleagues in order to ensure that planning builds in a continuous and progressive manner on what the pupils know, understand and can do. However, whilst co-ordinators monitor some samples of pupils' work and provide feedback to colleagues, this is largely descriptive and not rigorously evaluative as to the quality and depth of the work undertaken. This has allowed some inconsistencies in standards to occur, including differences in the approach to the development of writing skills across the curriculum, especially in Key Stage 2.

39. Overall the school cultivates pupils' personal development very well, with particular strength in spiritual development. The school places great importance on promoting self-esteem and on helping pupils build a positive self-image of themselves and raises pupils' expectations and awareness of their potential. Aspects of personal, moral and social education are discussed during a range of lessons including religious education lessons and assemblies.

40. The provision for pupil's spiritual development is excellent. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of their own beliefs and values and those of others. In a Key Stage 2 act of Collective Worship and in a Mass that pupils in Year 2 took an active part in, a very high level of spiritual awareness was created. Teachers help pupils to understand values and beliefs by firstly showing that they have values themselves and that they respect the thoughts and opinions of pupils. The high quality of display throughout the school makes the environment visually interesting and pupils are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of nature. The school is a very busy and purposeful place but there are many opportunities for reflection and contemplation. There is use of music to generate spiritual response, with the school orchestra contributing very effectively to some assemblies.

41. The provision for moral development is very good. It is closely linked with the positive behaviour management policy, which is effective and consistent. All adults in the school provide good role models. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. They are conscious of the “personal power” within themselves and that they can use it to make good or bad choices. Pupils are developing a clear sense of right and wrong.

42. The provision for pupils’ social development is very good. Good work, behaviour and effort are all rewarded. The school promotes positive attitudes and makes clear the consequences of anti-social behaviour. Pupils are involved in the drawing up of class rules and have a very good understanding of what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Most older pupils show high levels of self-discipline. Pupils have a very strong sense of involvement with, and responsibility towards, their community. The school has organised many fund-raising activities for local, national and international charities.

43. The provision for cultural development is very good. There is a very good range of school visits, which include the local art galleries, museums and churches and involvement in parish activities. The range of visitors is wide and includes musicians, theatre groups, artists and those with experiences of living in other cultures. There are several planned opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wealth and diversity of other cultures.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The previous inspection report of 1997 noted the good standards of pastoral care, guidance and welfare provided for pupils. The school has built and improved upon this foundation and the welfare, security, personal guidance and development of pupils are well provided for and are real strengths of the school, providing, as one parent remarked, ‘A caring and sharing school’.

45. There are good and effective systems in place to encourage and reinforce good behaviour and attendance, such as reward assemblies and the ‘100% Attendance Certificate’. There are very good systems for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour such as bullying. Pastoral care is centred around the individual class teacher who monitors and supports pupils on a day-to-day basis very effectively and keeps good records. Parents are most appreciative and satisfied with the help, support and guidance given to their children, whom they feel are well looked after within a caring and supportive school environment. This care and concern for the pupils by school staff manifests itself throughout the school and is particularly noticeable in the happy and safe environment of the infant department.

46. The school continues to be a safe and welcoming place for pupils with good, well structured health and safety procedures and provision. First aid and fire precautions are satisfactory and good attention is paid to the security of pupils whilst in school. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and the school makes good, effective use of external agencies (such as the Behaviour Support Service) where appropriate. The Deputy Headteacher is the nominated person for child protection in the school and nearly all the staff have received basic child protection training. The personal, social and health education programme of the school supports pupils well and contributes to their general personal development and understanding of the world. Pupils with special educational needs have good support within their classes and in withdrawal groups. The school nurse visits regularly

and contributes usefully to the personal, social and health education programme. Whilst the premises and grounds are safe overall, a total risk assessment of the school (as noted in

the previous inspection report) has yet to be carried out and this would provide a helpful, expert overview for the school management.

47. The school has made good progress in response to the key issues at the last inspection, regarding how assessment can be used to guide future planning for pupils' learning. The marked improvement reflects the consistent effort of all concerned. Based upon good systems of assessment, the school sets realistic targets for its pupils to achieve, which ensures the school is always questioning how it can do better. In Key Stage 1, assessment has become an integral part of the teacher's planning. Also in Key Stage 2 it is informative, in order to identify how pupils can be more appropriately placed within a group or a set for mathematics and how then can subsequently be best provided for.

48. The procedures used to assess and record pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. There is extensive documentation, which includes a school policy on assessment and recording, that provides for all subjects within the National Curriculum. There is regular assessment and recording of the academic progress made by pupils, which the school keeps in individual pupil files. The school is developing a system that extends beyond English, mathematics and science in order to assess and record progress in all other subjects. The system involves half-termly reviews and enables teachers to use the results of the assessments to plan future teaching and learning in respective teaching groups. There are insufficient records kept for the pupils with English as an additional language in relation to their acquisition of basic language skills.

49. The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of each key stage and uses the appropriate range within the year groups. The results of the tests, which all pupils undergo each year, are analysed. These are recorded on a pupil by pupil basis and attainment, progress and under-achievement can be identified for each pupil together with National Curriculum levels forecast. Records of tracking the progress of pupils throughout the school in English and mathematics are kept. Therefore statutory predictions for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test are based on an on-going picture of prior attainment in national tests of individual pupils. Teachers review these targets in the light of school assessments, which take place on a half termly basis. However the system to identify which level a pupil is presently at and what he or she has to learn next has yet to be developed. This type of system would enable pupils to become further involved in reviewing their own progress and to become more aware of what they need to do to improve.

50. Teachers evaluate lessons on a day to day basis and keep notes of what certain individuals can and cannot do and how they can be moved on to their next stage of learning, but there is no consistent system of such evaluation throughout the school.

51. The school has identified within its action plan to further develop its assessment policy, especially regarding the use of assessment to guide future planning. This includes the task to develop further a more clarified approach to assessment. The co-ordinators for assessment acknowledge the benefits of rationalising the assessment systems further, to ensure manageability.



## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. The previous Inspection Report of 1997 praised the good and close partnership with parents and the centrality of the school within the parish community. This partnership with parents is still a real and notable strength and there are very good, effective systems in place to keep parents informed about school activities and the progress of their children. Parents think highly of the school's openness and friendliness and praise the accessibility and helpfulness of the staff. Parents are well satisfied with the frequency and clarity of the helpful information disseminated to them by the school via newsletters, annual report of the Governing Body, prospectus and parents' letters. The annual reports to parents on their child's progress are helpful, clear and individualised for each child. There is, however, some inconsistency regarding the inclusion of target setting in each report. Parent-teacher meetings are well attended and informative and the annual meeting of the Governing Body with parents attracts reasonable audiences. Communication with parents is good and, together with good parental involvement, is a strength of the school. Due regard is taken by the school in respect of parents who may not have English as their first language and no communication difficulties have arisen in this respect. There is an active and supportive Friends of St Edward's Association which provides valuable and extensive support by running social events and raising funds for the school.

53. Parents are very supportive and encouraged to help in school. Between 15 and 20 parents provide valued and welcome help in classrooms and on visits on a regular basis. Parents are also encouraged to help their children with their homework. Pupils' reading diaries provide useful and relevant information for parents. The support parents give with homework contributes significantly to the standards achieved in the school. The school deals courteously and effectively with any complaints and suggestions arising from parents.

54. Partnership with the local community is well founded and supportive. As might be expected, the school is particularly well integrated into the life of the Roman Catholic Parish community. Pupils' educational and social development are enriched by the good, effective use by the school of the wide range of local external resources, such as Symphony Hall, Alton Castle and the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery. Transfer arrangements into secondary education are well planned and fruitful and there are good working links with local playgroups and nurseries.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

55. Leadership and management of the school are very good. At the heart of the success of the school is the Headteacher's excellent leadership. The high quality of leadership noted in the last inspection remains a strength. The Headteacher leads by example and, as a result, pupils and adults are inspired to give of their best. Teachers and pupils feel valued. In spite of the potential difficulties posed by the split site, a very strong team spirit exists and unites the school as a whole.

56. In response to the 'Parents' Questionnaire' distributed before the inspection, very nearly all parents agreed that the school is well led and managed. In meetings with inspectors, before and during the inspection, parents enthused about the ethos and good management of the school and felt that it prepares their children well for their future, personally, socially and academically.



57. The Headteacher has a clear, explicit vision and sense of purpose for the school, which encapsulate the Catholic ethos. There is a clear commitment to equal opportunities and the expectation that each child should reach his or her potential both personally and academically. The aims of the school's Mission Statement are implicit in all its work and met extremely well. In an excellent assembly attended by several inspectors, the success of the aims was impressive. All teachers and pupils were involved in the assembly and many members of the parish and parents attended. The aim 'Affirm all the children in our care, seeking what is positive and sustaining it through praise and encouraging the children to affirm one another' was clearly evident. The aim to 'Help each child to be actively involved in prayer, assembly and liturgy and ensure that collective worship is appropriate to their level of understanding' also underpinned the assembly. The standards in music, singing and presentation were outstanding. Pupils' self-understanding and understanding of the diverse needs of other people were also impressive. As one observer noted about the assembly '.... How privileged to be part of this and, what a wonderful way to start the day'.

58. The Headteacher spends time at each site daily and has a very good understanding of what goes on in classrooms. Very regular meetings with the deputy headteacher and key stage co-ordinators ensure that strengths and weaknesses or areas for concern are noted and action taken. There are co-ordinators for each subject from each site who work together very effectively as a team to provide knowledgeable and supportive leadership for their colleagues. Delegation is very good; the Headteacher and governors acknowledge and value the hard work and commitment by staff. The deputy headteacher has clearly defined responsibilities and co-ordinators are encouraged and empowered to take responsibility for their subject areas. Belonging to the Catholic partnership of Roman Catholic schools in the area enhances teachers' professional development. Teachers have opportunities to visit other schools and subject co-ordinators share expertise.

59. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. A key issue raised by the last inspection was '.... To further develop: individual education plans so as to define more detailed short term targets with which to evaluate pupils' progress'. This key issue has been resolved very well and is evidence of the whole school's approach to improvement and the clear direction given by both special educational needs co-ordinators. Very good use is made of educational software to prepare and monitor the effectiveness of individual educational plans. All statutory requirements are met in relation to pupils with a statement of special educational need. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used well, in particular, to give additional support to help them develop basic skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Currently, there is no co-ordinator responsible for pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, the special educational needs co-ordinators provide good support for these pupils in small group situations.

60. The school receives extra funding for pupils with English as an additional language and the Headteacher is aware of the need to develop teachers' awareness of their needs in relation to developing language skills. Staff lack expertise in this area.

61. Even though standards achieved in national tests are generally above or well above average, there is no complacency. The school development plan is comprehensive with a strong focus on continued improvement. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for overseeing the development plan and improvements for their subjects. Financial planning is good. Educational initiatives are carefully costed and governors keep a 'critical eye' to make sure

that spending represents good value for money. Currently, the school has a large

under-spend which is earmarked appropriately for developing the computer suite and extending the cramped junior library.

62. The school has good procedures for checking on the standards achieved in the school. Results of baseline assessment, National Curriculum tests and other standardised tests are carefully analysed and used to set targets, making good use of the local education authority software package. Teaching in literacy and mathematics has been monitored but there is not a programme for monitoring teaching and learning in all subject areas and this is an acknowledged area for further development. The quality of teaching in the school is very good overall, but there are areas in a few classes, such as the effectiveness of planning for pupils of different prior attainment and the evaluation of lessons, where further improvement could be made. Samples of pupils' work are checked by co-ordinators but, at the moment, this monitoring, though useful, lacks rigour and clearly defined criteria.

63. The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively; they are proud of their school and the standards achieved by its pupils and are committed to maintaining these. Good use is made of governors' expertise; for example, the finance committee includes an accountant and a retired headteacher makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English. Governors are well aware of strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are kept well informed by the Headteacher and four governors work in the school on a weekly basis. Subject co-ordinators and the special educational needs co-ordinators report on their subjects and areas of responsibility to the curriculum committee. Governors analyse National Curriculum test results and compare them against national and similar school's averages. For some years, governors have set the Headteacher standards related targets.

64. The school is an active and effective provider of initial teacher training. The deputy headteacher is the mentor for trainees and ensures that they have all the correct opportunities and experiences required for their course work. Trainees benefit from the support of the whole school and in the 'free' time made available when trainees teach the whole class, teachers concentrate on their subject management role.

65. The level of staffing is good. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the National Curriculum. Teachers are supported effectively by proficient support staff who are very well deployed and make a strong impact on pupils' progress, attainment and self-esteem. The school office is a welcoming place and gives a very good first impression of the school. The secretaries make a very good and efficient contribution to the work of this split site school. Parents speak warmly of the help provided by them.

66. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The older building at the infant site presents many challenges in terms of the restricted space, awkward levels and limited play area. The provision for indoor physical education at the infant site is unsatisfactory. In spite of these difficulties, teachers ensure that classrooms are attractive and carefully organised to make the best use of all available space. At both sites, standards of cleanliness are high. Colourful and attractive displays of pupils' work, artefacts and pictures throughout both sites create an interesting and stimulating learning environment. At the junior site, the library, though used very effectively, is too small for the needs of the school.

67. Resources for learning are satisfactory for teaching the National Curriculum, although there is a lack appropriate outdoor apparatus on the infant site.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. To improve standards even further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) Make the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work even more effective by:
  - Implementing a programme of monitoring teaching, against agreed criteria
  - Implementing more focused criteria for monitoring pupils' work.(Paragraphs: 38, 62)
  
- (2) Review the assessment procedures that are in place to see how they can be used to pinpoint what level a pupil is at and what he/she needs to learn next. Where appropriate, share these targets with pupils.  
(Paragraphs: 23, 29, 48 – 50)
  
- (3) Implement a policy for pupils for whom English is an additional language and raise teachers' awareness of the stages of language acquisition by providing training in this area.  
(Paragraphs: 10, 21, 32, 48, 60)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- Extend the junior library. (Paragraph: 66)
- Consider how some large outdoor play apparatus can be provided for the Reception children. (Paragraphs: 66, 67)
- Consider including targets for improvement in all annual reports to parents.  
(Paragraph: 52)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	29	47	21	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	385
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	54

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	78

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	59

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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



### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	28	28	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	27
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	52	54	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	96 (93)	96 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	27
	Girls	26	25	27
	Total	52	52	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	93 (93)	96 (93)
	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	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	27	29
	Girls	24	22	25
	Total	51	49	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (88)	83 (92)	92 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	27	29
	Girls	24	24	25
	Total	50	51	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (88)	86 (92)	92 (92)
	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	10
Black – African heritage	14
Black – other	3
Indian	24
Pakistani	21
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	309
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	27.5

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	738 838
Total expenditure	707 652
Expenditure per pupil	1 787
Balance brought forward from previous year	76 829
Balance carried forward to next year	40 860

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	385
Number of questionnaires returned	132

### **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	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	40	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	35	8	2	2
The teaching is good.	70	27	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	40	12	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	33	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	23	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	39	7	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	28	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	25	5	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	32	13	5	8

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

69. The high standard of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection. Children enter one of the two Reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. Good induction procedures enable parents, children and staff to get to know each other before admission and before transfer to Year 1 classes. This allows the children to settle happily and move classes with confidence.

70. There is a range of attainment within the average band on entry to the school with a few children below the average expectation and some above. All children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress and by the time they start Year 1 most achieve the early learning goals and a few exceed them in nearly all aspects of their learning. Many children in the Reception classes make a sound start on the early stages of the National Curriculum for English and mathematics by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. This good progress is due to good teaching in all the areas of learning and a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Good assessment procedures are implemented thoroughly so that staff know what children are achieving and can plan their next steps in learning. Parents appreciate the caring ethos maintained by the hardworking, dedicated team of Foundation Stage practitioners and are kept informed about their children's progress. All the staff work very well together and are good role models. They have a very detailed knowledge of the Foundation Stage and know the families of their children well, working in partnership with them to good effect.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

71. Children enter the Reception classes with a range of personal social and emotional skills. They settle quickly into the well-established routines and by the time they move classes they are mostly achieving or exceeding the early learning goals in this area. They gain in confidence and are learning to make positive relationships with others. They show increasing independence, take turns and share fairly, developing an appropriate understanding of what is right and what is wrong behaviour. They learn to treat property with commendable care. They are expected to clear things away carefully ready for the next children to use them. All adults are deeply caring and show to each other and children high expectations of consistent respect and courtesy. This promotes emotional and personal well-being and good social development in classes, at playtimes and lunchtimes.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

72. The good quality of teaching in communication, language and literacy enables most children to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. Staff work hard to promote speaking and listening by encouraging language development through discussion, questioning and role-play. Each class has an attractive role-play area where suitable equipment and dressing-up clothes extend and develop imaginative play. The grocery store and the theatre are very appealing to children and encourage language development through group play. Staff join in sometimes, introducing new words to expand children's vocabulary. Early reading skills are carefully taught so that by the end of the Reception year many

children are reading simple books happily and are working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Letters and their associated sounds are carefully taught so that the children learn to identify a range of letters on classroom equipment and painted on the playground surface. These early literacy experiences encourage children to read familiar "big books" aloud in a group with enjoyment. Space in the classrooms is very restricted but each contains a small reading area, which is made as attractive and comfortable as conditions permit for children to share books or look at alone. Parents are supportive and encouraging, reading to and with their children at home and this contributes to their good progress. Opportunities are provided for children to write for themselves, making marks on paper which develop into letter-like shapes and then letters and words. Reception children make creditable attempts to trace and copy their teachers' writing legibly and write and draw about their experiences. Carefully planned activities help to develop children's writing appropriately.

### **Mathematical development**

73. In the area of mathematical development, good or very good teaching is enabling children to recognise numbers and count correctly to ten. They match shapes and colours, play number games with dice and succeed in identifying and creating number patterns. A group "stocktaking" in the grocery store were competently recording the shop's contents with pictures and numbers. There is a satisfactory range of mathematical toys and games to help children to reach an understanding of sorting, matching, classifying and counting. There are sufficient resources for other mathematical developments in shape, measurement, weight, capacity, time and money. Children, through planned experiences, develop appropriate mathematical language to describe comparisons in size and weight and to re-create patterns by size and colour. Most are on course to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the year.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. Knowledge and understanding of the world is successfully promoted through a range of play opportunities and planned experiences to help children learn about the world and the different aspects and roles within it. Children develop early geography skills when they explore the school buildings, the grounds and the immediate locality. Regular visits to the adjoining church are thoroughly enjoyed, as are those to the convent gardens nearby. Attractive paintings and collages made from materials found in the convent garden and rubbings created from different surfaces form a record of children's explorations. Children re-create their experiences of their environment in the classroom through drawing, painting, writing or playing with miniature world materials. They play with road maps and rail layouts and small wheeled vehicles indoors. However, they lack the provision of large trikes or scooters which could be steered over painted lines outdoors to develop further mapping and tracking skills. Steps are being taken to provide for this development. Children develop a sense of early history by learning about themselves and others as babies or toddlers and begin to recognise changes over time. They refer to photographs of visiting babies and siblings with keen interest, explaining their family relationships confidently. Technological skills are well taught through good construction toys and equipment. Computer skills are particularly successful, with four computers and programs appropriate to the age group. Children work with confidence and a commendable degree of independence, forming a good basis for the development of information communication technology skills. Early science experiences

include growing plants and observing animals such as a hamster and a rabbit or farm animals on a visit. A range of visitors to the Reception classes, such as the parish priests or a fireman, give children an introduction to the various roles in society. This wide range of experiences enables most children to achieve or exceed the expected early learning goals in this area.

## **Physical development**

75. The provision for physical development is satisfactory, apart from the lack of a safety surface in the playground which inhibits the use of a portable or fixed climbing frame. Children's fine motor skills are improved by daily planned activities using a variety of tools and implements. They draw, paint, cut out and apply glue to surfaces, making good progress in stirring, mixing, spreading and cutting, as their control of crayons, scissors and brushes improves. The large motor skills of running, low balancing and jumping are developed to some extent by physical activities in the adjoining parish hall or the playground but the important skills of climbing, jumping, swinging and balancing are under-developed because of limited access to climbing equipment outside. The school is aware of this unsatisfactory provision which was raised in the previous inspection report but has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. However, the provision made overall is sufficient for most children to achieve the early learning goals in physical development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## **Creative development**

76. Children make good progress in their creative development which reflects the good teaching in this area. Their drawings and paintings show developing skill with more discernible form and appropriate use of colour. Children's artwork reaches a high standard and is carefully displayed to create a warm, attractive learning environment which reflects the wide curriculum followed. Aboriginal and African paintings and materials add a multi-cultural element to the display which children enjoy. They have a variety of musical percussion instruments to shake, rub or bang and are developing an appropriate repertoire of songs. Reception children accompany the infant children to hymn singing in St. Edward's church and thoroughly enjoy the visual and audible treat, joining in with gusto and singing tunefully. This regular experience builds up confidence in performing which develops throughout their school life. In the classrooms children play happily in the role-play areas which allow a range of creative and imaginative play as seen in "The Happy Endings Theatre" as a focus for dramatic activities. Puppets are readily available to encourage shyer children to speak out loud and good quality dressing-up clothes enhance play. The quality and range of activities ensures that most children achieve the early learning goals in this area.

## **ENGLISH**

77. Standards in English are above national expectation and similar to those reported in the last inspection for seven and eleven year olds. Standards in reading are well above those expected. All pupils make good progress.

78. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their targets on their individual education plans. When they receive good quality support from the co-ordinators, they gain confidence with reading and writing and this has an impact on the quality of the work they produce. In a Year 1 class, a good example was seen when pupils confidently identified and read three letter rhyming words to the special educational needs co-ordinator who was working with them. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in reading and developing basic literacy skills.

79. Results in the 2000 national test results dipped slightly at the end of Key Stage 2 but previously were consistently above or well above the national average. The decline in

standards last year was due to a number of reasons. Pupils did not do so well in writing and the school has identified this as an area for improvement. Although the number of pupils who reached Level 4 and above was higher than the national average, the proportion of pupils who reached the higher level (Level 5) was lower than the national average. A higher than usual number of pupils in the cohort had special educational needs and three out of four pupils who joined the school during the year obtained low results. Two pupils were absent on the day of the tests. The tests show that at age eleven, standards were average when compared to those in similar schools and all schools nationally.

80. At age seven, pupils' results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests show standards to be well above the national average in reading and writing. Pupils who reached the higher level were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools standards were high.

81. Inspection findings reflect the 2000 test results at Key Stage 1 but show an improvement at Key Stage 2. They indicate that attainment is overall above the national expectations at the end of both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the level expected, in reading it is high and in writing it is around the level expected. Evidence shows that the majority of pupils make good progress as they move through the school. At the end of Key Stage 1 the levels of attainment for speaking and listening, reading and writing are above those expected. In the best lessons, planning meets the needs of all pupils and there are regular, planned opportunities for the pupils to be involved in discussion. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the planning stated that pupils would 'discuss the reading strategies they use' to read unknown words. These all contribute to the high standards overall.

82. Pupils talk confidently, and most listen appropriately to instructions and communicate well with each other and with the adults who work with them. However the learning of a few pupils in Key Stage 1 is hindered when they do not listen properly at all times and occasionally the teacher does not address this effectively. Learning is good and sometimes very good during lessons when teachers engage all pupils in answering questions in class discussions. As they get older they develop their ideas thoughtfully. A good example was seen in a Year 5 lesson as pupils discussed how they could write a myth. Good questioning from the teacher, added to the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their confidence in speaking, enabled the pupils to articulate their thinking well.

83. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils listen with good concentration, respond accurately to questions and begin to use their skills to justify their viewpoint. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactorily promoted in all curriculum areas. However there are too few opportunities for pupils to question other's ideas and opinions across the curriculum. Most teachers consistently have high standards regarding the importance of listening correctly and this results in most pupils in both key stages developing good listening skills.

84. Standards in reading are above the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, pupils read avidly from wide range of different texts and discuss the stories they read and hear with enthusiasm. Most read with confidence and demonstrate good understanding and pupils of all abilities identify the title and author of the books they read. Above average readers name the illustrator and the publisher. Below average readers read with some expression and with sound attention to punctuation. They begin to use their



knowledge of sounds to help them sound out words such as ‘strangers’. Pupils with specific special educational needs develop reading skills well in relation to their prior attainment. Learning is good when adults encourage pupils to use the different strategies they are taught to guess new words. Average and above average pupils in Year 2 confidently and correctly read words with a number of syllables in them. A few read words such as ‘lush’ and ‘jasmine’ but are unsure of what they mean. However all are very aware of how to use a dictionary to find out the meaning of unknown words. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 have access to a well organised library, which is soundly resourced.

85. In Key Stage 2, pupils are given many opportunities to study a variety of texts. In lessons they read stories, poems, play scripts and many extracts from different texts. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are well above those expected. Most pupils read confidently with good expression and have a good idea of predicting what might come next in the texts they read. Above average readers identify crucial features in texts and select phrases and sentences when justifying their own views. Average readers are sometimes not sure of some words they read such as ‘callous’ but understand the importance of using a dictionary to find out their meaning. Below average readers use reading strategies they have been taught to sound out unknown words such as ‘caramel’. Library skills are well developed and although the Key Stage 2 library is small, pupils know how to find books easily and quickly. All classrooms have their own supply of books and records show that books have been recently audited. Teacher’s records show individual pupils’ progress in developing reading skills as they move through the school.

86. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in writing are above national expectations. By the age of seven, pupils write in sentences and most have a good idea of when to use capital letters and full stops. They spell many familiar words independently and develop good dictionary skills to help them spell more difficult words. Most pupils develop a neat and well-formed cursive script when writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write imaginatively and descriptively for a wide range of purposes and audiences. They have opportunities to write in the form of stories, letters, play scripts, and biographies. However learning, with regard to the development of independent writing skills, is hindered because there are too few opportunities to develop these skills in English and in the other subjects. However the co-ordinator is aware of this and more planned sessions are due to be introduced along with the Year 6 booster sessions. Information communication technology skills are used well to support the curriculum and all pupils develop word processing skills on the computer.

87. The quality of teaching in the ‘literacy hour’ and in other English lessons varies slightly between key stages. At Key Stage 1, half of the teaching was judged to be good with the other half being very good or excellent. At Key Stage 2 approximately one third is satisfactory, one third is good and one third is very good. Very good teaching was seen in most year groups, where the teachers skilfully question the pupils to reinforce and develop pupils’ vocabulary and their understanding of the text they read. Instructions are always clear and lessons are well planned and resourced with assessment opportunities identified within the planning. These all have impact on the pupils’ learning, which is good or very good in most lessons. Classroom displays reinforce the activities taught and activities are, in most cases, accurately matched to the needs of all pupils. In all lessons teachers show good subject knowledge and support staff are used effectively. Teachers have worked hard to implement guidance and materials of the National Literacy Strategy into their teaching. Where there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop independent writing skills, in particular at

Key Stage 2, writing is not as good as it should be. Teachers manage their classes effectively and have high expectations regarding behaviour. Marking is generally supportive and the best examples inform the pupils on what they need to do to improve. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive in both key stages. They generally listen and behave well because all teachers expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils

enjoy their lessons, are well motivated and respond well to tasks they are given. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

88. Management in English is good. The two-literacy co-ordinators have monitored the teaching of English and have begun to track pupils' progress through the school. Some pupils have targets for English but this is not consistent throughout the school and there is little evidence of referral to them during lessons. Assessment procedures for English are good. Pupils are regularly tested in reading and writing and this information is used when planning future lessons. Some teachers identify assessment opportunities when planning lessons but there is no whole-school system to ensure that lessons are consistently evaluated and the information used to plan the next step of learning for individuals and groups of pupils. Resources are of sound quality and are used well. The subject is enhanced with trips to the local theatre and visitors, such as a well known author are invited in to speak to the pupils. Information communication technology is beginning to be used well to support the curriculum in particular, to develop word processing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

89. The proportion of seven year old pupils reaching Level 2 or above in National Curriculum tests in 2000 was above the national average. The number of pupils attaining higher Level 3 was well above the national average and has a marked effect on raising the average score. In comparison with all schools and similar schools, standards were well above average. Over the last three years results have remained noticeably above national levels. Although there was a decline in 1999, standards rose sharply again in 2000. There has been no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

90. The proportion of eleven year old pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in National Curriculum tests in 2000 was above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Over the last three years the overall trend in results is one of improvement and standards remain above the national average. Results rose sharply in 1999 but returned to the 1998 level in 2000. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in 2000.

91. The school has set a challenging target of 86 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected Level 4 or above by 2001. Where strengths and weaknesses in pupil performance are identified at Key Stage 2, grouping them according to prior attainment provides support. Subject co-ordinators are considering similar measures in Key Stage 1 but, at present, pupils remain in classes of mixed ability where they benefit from the support of classroom assistants.

92. Inspection evidence confirms the above average standards achieved in national tests. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils perform written computations accurately, using two digit numbers and recognise the ascending number patten of coin values to enable them to calculate confidently the purchase of two items. The most able pupils can add three single digit numbers and have a clear understanding of numbers up to 100, which they write and match successfully. When calculating the cost of two café menu items they demonstrate a good understanding and are able to identify, show and explain which coins to use. They are similarly confident in working out change from a fifty pence coin. They make correct calculations in their heads. Pupils have a fast improving grasp of mental arithmetic. The

majority of pupils knows and understands equivalence; for example, that one year equals twelve months, that seven days equal one week and that one hour is equal to sixty minutes. They can relate written and spoken time to analogue and digital time with varying confidence. Information communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning in Key Stage 1, for example by the end of the key stage, pupils' traffic survey activity has involved spreadsheets and charts. The presentation of pupils' work is of a consistently high standard. Overall pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress in Key Stage 1.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very good knowledge of the four basic rules of number, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They also have a range of methods to solve problems and are usually clear about the good sense of an answer. Lower attaining pupils work carefully, demonstrating mental strategies for solving addition and subtraction questions involving three digit numbers. They can multiply and divide whole and decimal numbers by 100 and 1000 with some confidence. Above average pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between decimals and fractions and use prior knowledge and skills to solve twenty four-hour time problems and issues of probability. Average pupils in Year 5 partition numbers effectively, for example by adding thirteen then the ten and the three and subsequently apply this strategy to a range of situations. They are quick to see relationships between tables, for example the nine and six times table and the fifteen times table. Higher attaining pupils know why brackets are used and in which order their working out should be done. Pupils know to estimate as a means of checking an answer. The majority of pupils in Year 6 recognise different types of angles and their properties. All pupils throughout the key stage, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, strive to set out work systematically and present their work to a very high standard.

94. Since the last inspection in 1997 there is evidence that good progress overall has been maintained. The school is now well placed to develop standards further. There is a noticeable consistency, along with collective, positive attitudes and a commitment amongst staff to raise standards further with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The co-ordinators acknowledge the school has moved forward since 1997 and there is evidence of extensive staff training. Standards remain above the national average. There is a marked improvement in the quality of teaching in the subject. Teaching is good overall in each key stage, whereas at the last inspection it was satisfactory. At the last inspection teachers were credited for their high expectations and their matching of work well to all abilities. Generally, this is still the case, although occasionally there was an inconsistent challenge for the more able pupils.

95. Overall the quality of teaching is good. In good, very good and excellent lessons there is always a brisk pace and the teacher uses a variety of questions to challenge pupils thinking and extend their knowledge and understanding. For example in a Year 1 lesson about ordering numbers, the teacher uses a number of open questions to provide pupils with a direction for their thinking, as they place the written word in the correct order on a 0 -9 number line. Pupils confidently explain their reasons and actions. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled at sharing the learning objectives with pupils and use the final part of the lesson to recap the areas of learning and relate them to the original objectives. On the whole, teachers' subject knowledge during the inspection was good. Planning is also a strength, where appropriate work is identified to enable the teacher to provide good challenge for all

pupils and match to respective needs and ability. Where the tasks are suitably chosen to match pupils abilities and well explained, the teaching has a positive impact upon pupils' learning. For example in certain lessons in Key Stage 2 there was evidence that previous learning was identified and taken into account when planning the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers introduce the oral, mental starter in a very positive, focused and often-lively way. Pupils are actively involved in these activities and teachers continue to make effective use of resources. Although teachers evaluate their planning to effect the next stage of teaching and learning, there is no consistent system throughout the school of evaluation for each lesson within the weekly planning format. An introduction of such a system would enable the specific strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils to be identified and action prescribed to reinforce understanding and in turn move the pupil to the next stage of learning. There is evidence that Year group teachers plan together and all teachers meet with colleagues at the end of each half term to discuss the work and review progress. Although the arrangements that group together pupils of similar prior attainment at Key Stage 2 are beneficial to the learning of all pupils, these are currently restricted to three days each week. Marking is generally positive with comments that are both encouraging and informative.

96. Pupils solve real life problems and are encouraged to devise their own problem solving tasks. They find investigations more challenging than other aspects of mathematics as it involves using and applying previously acquired knowledge and skills. They know their lesson objective which is always shared and that there is the opportunity for them to explain their ideas and methods. Pupils are developing an ability to apply their mathematical skills to subjects such as science, art and design, geography and information communication technology. They are also developing a good mathematical vocabulary and use their reading skills well when working out problems and investigations. Pupils' levels of attainment are subject to regular on-going assessment in mathematics. Each class has an assessment file which includes a record sheet indicating areas of learning and learning objectives assessed at the end of each half term. A record of assessments and progress is kept in the individual pupil's folder.

97. There is no provision for day-to-day evaluation within the format for planning. The co-ordinators promote positive leadership and work well together, offering clear direction for the subject. Monitoring includes classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils' books and review of planning sheets within the outlined programme. There have been meetings in the past at which staff have discussed together pieces of work and made judgements about the level of attainment they represent. Such meetings have enabled staff to develop a school portfolio of pupils' work. While the school uses the National Numeracy Strategy framework effectively to raise standards, there is currently no school scheme of work for mathematics. Homework now features as an integral part of the mathematics curriculum. Pupils and staff enjoy a good level of resource, which is used very well, for example the extensive range of suitable computer software to support teaching and learning. However, these are yet to be centralised for easier accessibility for all. Although accommodation is satisfactory, during the inspection, groups were taught in the school hall and a Year 3 cloaks area. Appropriate focus to raise standards in school further is; to devise a manageable system to provide individual pupils with their own numeracy targets.

## **SCIENCE**

98. By the time pupils are seven and eleven their attainment in science exceeds that found nationally. The most recent end of Key Stage tests and the test results of previous years confirm attainment is well above average. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. These high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection of the school.

99. Throughout the school the quality teaching and learning in the subject is good. Younger pupils show good scientific knowledge and understanding. They identify those common materials that are manmade and others that are natural correctly. They allocate living things, such as animals, insects and plants into species groups appropriately. They also know which materials are susceptible to change, following actions such as twisting, stretching and bending and which ones are not. Many pupils offer sound explanations about the effect heating and cooling have on everyday materials. Their understanding develops well as a result of precise questioning by teachers and the provision of activities that challenge and extend their knowledge.

100. Pupils' skills of scientific enquiry are well developed. Teachers encourage a range of research methods and different ways of recording and explaining outcomes successfully. Younger pupils use graphs, charts and recording sheets well and more able pupils write detailed accounts of their findings clearly. Older pupils also record their findings in imaginative ways and show good speaking and listening skills when responding to the opportunities, provided by their teachers, to explain their findings to other members of their class.

101. Pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour is very good. This is a result of their teachers good planning, good classroom management, and high expectations. However, younger pupils sometimes do not sustain the usually high quality of their scientific discussion when they are not supervised directly by adults.

102. The work of younger pupils shows their early knowledge and understanding of forces, gravity and electricity is good.

103. Teachers enhance pupils' learning considerably by using ICT well. In one Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils used a CD-ROM to find out how the heart works. They also checked their own heart rates on pulse monitors and recorded their findings on electronic notebooks correctly. When undertaking these activities many pupils recognise when unusual results occur, question the validity of the results, and introduce other tests to check if they are correct. Their knowledge and understanding of how various parts of the body and electrical circuits work is well developed. This is illustrated by the ability of pupils in Year 4 to analyse faults by a process of elimination and to repair circuits when they do not work.

104. Occasionally teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to predict the expected outcomes of their experiments and scientific research or, towards the end of lessons, to explain fully what they have learned.

105. Provision in the subject benefits greatly from the good work of the subject leaders who share responsibility. The guidance provided by the subject leaders for their colleagues ensures that pupils knowledge and understanding are extended effectively as pupil make progress through the school. They do much to ensure a useful range of resources is readily

available for their colleagues. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of provision in the subject and for recording and assessing the attainment and progress of pupils are good.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are above those expected and have been maintained since the previous inspection in spite of less time being available for the subject. The attractive displays of artwork throughout both buildings are a strength of the school. Key Stage 1 pupils create a vibrant learning environment through their work, experimenting with colour, crayoning with wax crayons and pastels, making collages, printing and drawing with pencils or felt pens. The younger pupils create effective designs by stone rubbings of different textures and older ones record a range of developing skills in observational drawing, pattern making, using straight or wavy lines, and drawing from memory. They achieve high standards in creating pictures on a computer and add captions in their own words. Self-portraits are created successfully and embellished with sparkling material and some are displayed effectively with outlines in black paper. Art and design supports other areas of the curriculum. Reading of the "Funnybones" book in literacy lessons is illustrated by amusing and lively skeleton collages. Visits made in connection with history studies are recorded through pictures of Victorian times and digital photographs taken at a mill. Two-dimensional artwork is expanded into three-dimensions with recognisable models made from scrap materials.

107. In Key Stage 2, pupils extend and develop their skills in a range of techniques and media. Their work is done in sizes ranging from miniature to large-scale murals such as the rainforest re-created successfully in one classroom. Painting on white fabric creates attractive wall hangings on religious themes. Older pupils work collaboratively in creating designs in quarters then assembling them into whole pictures. Art and design is studied as a separate subject but also contributes to other subjects or aspects such as spiritual and cultural development. The oldest pupils draw Muslim jewellery, Hindu gods, Sikh services and Jewish festivals and make Diva lamps for Diwali. Some make viewfinders to isolate a section of a landscape to be recorded through drawing or painting. Creative and imaginative art and design is encouraged as well as observational art and design in two and three dimensions. Pupils study the work of famous artists as an inspiration to their own developing efforts.

108. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Planning clearly identifies what pupils are intended to learn, based on what they have already been taught. Teachers have appropriate expectations for achievement and high expectations of behaviour, which enable pupils to work with concentration and enjoyment. Staff skill in managing classes ensures that work generally proceeds at a good pace. Good use is made of classroom assistants in Key Stage 1 and voluntary helpers make effective contributions to pupils' learning at both key stages. Pupils are encouraged to improve their work by evaluating what they have done and amending their designs if required. The successes they achieve and the care teachers take in displaying their work increases pupils self-esteem and builds confidence. The two co-ordinators support their subject well and have provided helpful schemes of work and a satisfactory system of assessing pupils' progress. A portfolio of different artwork samples encourages consistency in teachers' assessments and there are plans to develop this to include the new National Curriculum levels of attainment. Resources are satisfactory for the teaching of art and design and they are organised efficiently. The accommodation is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 but there are deficiencies in Key Stage 1, where space is limited in

most classrooms and water is not easily available. Both these constraints were reported in the previous inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. At the age of seven and eleven, the standards pupils attain are above those expected for their ages and represents good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of abilities achieve well. A key feature in the standards pupils achieve is the outstanding leadership in the subject. The co-ordinators work as a team, keeping themselves up-to-date in terms of resources and ideas for teaching the subject by using the Internet to find lesson information and using the Design and Technology Association's news sheets. They have also attended courses to extend their own knowledge. The infectious enthusiasm they show for their subject area and their own knowledge benefit and support all staff well in teaching design and technology. Co-ordinators have non-contact time in which, over the course of a year, they see all teachers teaching the subject. The monitoring of teaching is informal and more in the role of acting as an assistant in the lesson. However, there are systems in place for year group teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their planning and feed back their findings to the co-ordinators. These 'feedbacks' are very useful in adjusting planning and deciding on the best resources for particular tasks.

110. The co-ordinators' enthusiasm for the subject is shared by pupils of all ages. In a very good lesson observed in Year 2, pupils applied themselves wholeheartedly to the task of designing a repeating pattern for Joseph's coat and were very reluctant to stop at the end of the lesson. All pupils could identify repeating patterns in the wide range of fabrics provided for them and nearly all succeeded in including one in their own designs. The most able pupils were able to place a central design over the opening and realised that it had to be symmetrical. Good links were made with pupils' work on materials in their science lessons, when their teacher posed the question of which materials would be suitable for Joseph's coat. Pupils in Year 6 were provided with a good range of slippers to evaluate for safety, appearance, function and cost. Good questioning helped pupils to focus their attention on details, such as 'Would this slipper be for a baby who could crawl?' 'Why do you think so?' Pupils responded very thoughtfully, indicating that they have a good understanding of how to evaluate for suitability of purpose etc. Pupils complete very good detailed and labelled drawings to support their evaluations. In this lesson pupils behaved very well, applied themselves to the task set and worked very sensibly and productively together to evaluate a selection of slippers.

111. Discussions with Year 3 pupils about the designing and making of their finger puppets show, again, pupils who are very enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They explain clearly the sequence of designing their puppet and evaluating the finished product. Nearly all offer suggestions as to how they would improve their design next time.

112. Teaching is never less than good and often very good. Teachers' good subject knowledge and good planning, based on the comprehensive scheme of work, ensure that pupils build up their knowledge systematically and cumulatively as they progress through the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**



113. Pupils make good progress in both key stages and their attainment is mostly above national expectations. These findings indicate that standards have improved in Key Stage 1 and been maintained in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. Since this time the co-ordinators have worked hard to further develop an effective scheme of work which supports the teaching and has had a positive impact on standards in both key stages. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs generally make good progress

114. In Key Stage 1, pupils' learning is enhanced by opportunities for them to develop their geographical skills and knowledge through studying aspects of their local environment, including the school and the immediate locality. They can describe their journey to school and the manner of their journey. Groups of pupils identify several local places and buildings and have looked at the different types of housing that they live in.

115. Pupils in Year 2 draw a map of the school and identify the different areas within the school environment. They find out where they can locate some items and services, including electricity, within their own home. Pupils also contrast their local area with that on a Scottish Island. Several are able to identify the different countries in the British Isles. They recognise some of the conveniences of living in a large city and compare the types of transport they will encounter with those seen on a Scottish Island.

116. Photographic evidence also shows that pupils have found out about life in Africa and other parts of the world, including through the visit of parents who have talked to the pupils and shown them a wide variety of artefacts that illustrate aspects of other cultures. The pupils have enjoyed these visits, which have made a valuable contribution to extending their cultural understanding.

117. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 have very recently begun a study of rivers. Most are able to use a good range of different types of atlases to locate and identify a range of rivers in the British Isles. Most make good progress in using resources and in finding the information to indicate the length of rivers, although some lower attaining pupils are confused about whether rivers start or end in the mountains. Suitable opportunities to extend their local studies further a field include a residential visit for older pupils to Staffordshire where good use is made of a contrasting locality to that where the pupils live. Pupils in Year 5 have found out about aspects of Egyptian life, plot the route of a journey to Egypt on a map and identify the countries they would fly over, as part of their work linked to a history topic.

118. Pupils in Year 4 find out about life in the rainforest and identify the different layers, including the emergent trees, the canopy and the under-storey. Most pupils are able to name several creatures that inhabit the rainforest but are often unable to identify a range of samples of fruits found in similar environments. The presentation of the work is variable and some pupils' work lacks attention to detail. Studies of life and daily activities in contrasting communities are again planned to give pupils good opportunities to contrast their own life style and that of children in other communities. Pupils in Year 3 have undertaken a detailed study of life in Middleton as a study of a contrasting locality. They have used maps and can use grid references to locate specific buildings within the village and have made posters identifying the benefits of visiting Middleton.

119. Overall the quality of teaching and learning in geography is generally good. Lessons are well planned with work often identified for three different levels of attainment. Pupils in Year 6 are given suitable opportunities to further their knowledge and understanding through research tasks. In these instances careful planning, clear identification of learning objectives and the availability of suitable atlases enable pupils to get on with their work promptly and efficiently. Good use is made of visits to places of interest and in inviting adults in the local community to share their experiences in other areas.

120. The attitudes of most pupils to their geographical learning is good. In most lessons pupils' display a good attitude to their work and show the ability to work with good concentration. The majority of pupils listen well and produce neat and carefully presented work. However, the attitudes of some pupils in Year 4 are less positive when tasks, such as copying from a worksheet the names of items that are found in their homes, offer little challenge other than copying a list of words. Here the interest of pupils in the task is limited and insufficient attention is given to ensuring that the work is suitably matched to pupils' ability and prior attainment. Subsequently the behaviour of some pupils is unsatisfactory and they produce very little work.

121. The geography scheme of work now operates on a two year cycle of topics, and good attention is given to the step by step development of geographical skills. The subject co-ordinators have worked very hard to improve the quality of overall curriculum planning throughout the school. However, the opportunities to extend pupils writing skills across the curriculum are not consistently developed. The sample of pupils' work indicates that opportunities to develop writing skills are often better in Year 3 than in some other year groups. Standards of writing, as indicated in end of Key Stage 2 English assessments, are not as high as standards in other subjects and teachers do not make consistent use of the opportunities to develop writing skills in geography lessons. Recently acquired information technology software is incorporated into the geography syllabus and this is generally used effectively.

122. The two subject co-ordinators have a good level of subject knowledge and have worked very hard to produce detailed medium term planning for colleagues. The previous inspection report noted that a good start had been made on the development of regular evaluations and on developing a portfolio of work to assist assessment. The co-ordinators have worked with colleagues to extend assessment procedures that are useful in identifying what pupils know and what modifications are needed to subsequent activities. However, in some respects, the evaluation of work has not developed quite as effectively as it might. Whilst there is some scrutiny of samples of pupils work, this is often not across a whole year group and lacks rigour in identifying whether skills are developed in a continuous and progressive manner. Feedback to teachers from current evaluations is often descriptive rather than evaluative and has not identified whether geographical and writing skills are developed as fully as they could be.

## **HISTORY**

123. Pupils in both key stages make good progress overall and attain above average standards for their age. This indicates that standards in history have been maintained since the previous inspection. Whilst standards in both key stages are generally above average, standards are slightly better in Key Stage 1 than 2, with higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 often making very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language generally make good progress.

124. In an analysis of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 there is evidence of an appropriate range of topics which includes finding out about the lives of famous people and events. Pupils know who Guy Fawkes was, some of the main parts of the story of his life and why he is famous. They know what Remembrance Day commemorates and what the poppy symbolises. Pupils recognise which of a range of Christmas items relate to Christmas now or in the past. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in their understanding of the main features of the life and work of Florence Nightingale. Many are able to identify several differences between the working conditions of a nurse today and those in Florence's time. They place a series of pictures, illustrating events in Florence's life in order and write unaided sentences about them.

125. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the difference between sources of evidence. They use information to collate lists of similarities and differences that these sources indicate and recognise which information is factual and which is opinion. They make good use of information about life in Victorian times to find out about the lives of

children working in factories, by constructing a table that indicates the age, gender and hours worked. They also collate information about the conditions for chimney sweeps and children in the mines. Pupils use census data from the Northfield area to find out about the changes that have occurred. Most make good progress in their use of information to answer questions and construct graphs but less progress in using it to develop pieces of extended writing that reflect upon the feelings and experiences of such children. This limits the further development of writing skills which test results show are lower than other standards in the school.

126. Other pupils in Key Stage 2 also make good progress. Pupils in Year 5 study the life of the Egyptians and recognise some of the important features of life in ancient Egypt and are able to write their own name in hieroglyphics. They know about the mummification process and are able to sequence and describe details of what occurred. Many pupils in Year 3 make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the differences in the lives of invaders and settlers. They study the lives of Roman Centurions and Celtic Warriors and are able to recognise many similarities and differences between the two.

127. The attitudes of pupils to their work are good and sometimes very good, promoting good learning. Throughout the school, teachers make very good use of displays, both to raise pupils' self-esteem in the quality of their work and to interest and motivate them to make use of artefacts and pictorial information. Pupils' interest in the subject is also enhanced by the use of information technology to support learning in history. This is through the use of computer programmes for research purposes and most particularly in the use of programmable floor robots. These are imaginatively used in Year 3 to learn about programming a machine to travel around the parts of a Roman city marked on the floor of the school corridor. Pupils approach the topics with interest and enthusiasm. They share artefacts and materials well and co-operate happily in discussing their findings and ideas.

128. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make very good use of artefacts and materials and particularly of visits and visitors to enliven the pupils' interest in history and make learning interesting and stimulating. All year groups have recently visited places of historical interest or worked with visiting performers, recreating life from different historical eras. All of these strategies are very effective in motivating the pupils and promoting good learning. Teachers subject knowledge is good and some teachers, as in Year 3, provide a high level of information for the pupils. Lively presentation and enthusiasm for the subject is infectious with particularly effective use of question and answer activities not only to check pupils understanding but also to move pupils on in their learning. Pupils are actively encouraged to contribute their own ideas and extend their knowledge through research.

129. The enthusiastic and well-informed co-ordinators have worked very hard to produce good quality medium term planning for colleagues and they support teachers in developing their skills in teaching history. Staff have also worked hard to implement assessment procedures. The previous inspection identified the need for a properly structured monitoring programme to evaluate the effectiveness of subject developments but this is not yet fully effective. As yet monitoring and evaluation are largely descriptive and such activities lack rigour in clarifying whether progress is continuous as pupils move through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was judged to be above that expected nationally at the end of both key stages. In the four years since the previous inspection there has been a number of noticeable developments, which impact upon the standards of information communication technology within the school. For example, staff have undertaken courses in preparation for New Opportunities Fund training. Progress has been made with assessing pupils' work in information communication technology on a formal basis. The process of upgrading computers has continued – each class now has two computers, one of which is connected to the school network and most significantly, a computer suite has been built, which will be furnished with sixteen new computers and fully operational in April 2001. This will provide further opportunities on a regular basis to extend pupils' skills in information communication technology.

131. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment remains above the standards expected nationally overall. Attainment is consistent across all the National Curriculum areas: using, exploring and examining equipment, communicating and handling information and controlling and modelling. Pupils log on to the computer, identify and use different tools within specific programs and, in Year 1, use the mouse confidently and competently to locate information. They write and change text, using appropriate keys and draw pictures, selecting from a range of suitable programs available. Pupils in Year 2 develop independent word processing skills to write poetry and design a front cover for a prayer service. Samples of pupils' work indicate an ability to use information communication technology across the curriculum, for example in a mathematics traffic survey where they demonstrate different ways of recording information in a pie chart, spreadsheet and bar chart.

132. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment remains above national expectations. Word processing skills are particularly well developed and are used extensively across the curriculum. Pupils are very confident and samples of good work include, in Year 3, a range of writing where pupils format text to suit the purpose of their task, for example changing the typed font. In Year 4, within groups, pupils write the next scene of their play script 'Jumble for the Queen', in Year 5, religious research and Books of the Month activity and in Year 6, biographies and personification poems. Pupils throughout the key stage use spreadsheets and branching data, as in Year 6, where pupils produced keys within their 'Living Things' science topic. The older pupils also use the CD-ROM very competently to research information on body parts.. Similarly, electronic notebooks that produce spreadsheets of data regarding heart rates are used with good understanding in science. They were also used to make graphs from spreadsheets on a visit to the Botanical Gardens, as pupils studied plants. Pulse metres are used effectively to check previous findings. By the end of Year 6, all pupils can save and retrieve information, print, edit, and modify work to make improvements and cut and paste text. They know how to use Logo to develop their knowledge and understanding of control as they build upon their previous experiences of using Roamer and can access the wide range software on the Network.

133. The quality of all pupils' learning is good overall. The pupils and staff both eagerly look forward to further improvements as the focus on skill development continues with the acquisition of the new information communication technology suite in April. Previously taught skills are being consolidated. In the one lesson observed, opportunities were provided to practise each step, ensuring confidence, enjoyment and progress. Easy access in the near

future to the newly installed Internet will enable pupils to undertake research for their work in other subjects such as science and history. There was evidence of research in subjects such as geography, history, science and music, as pupils used computer software to find information about animals' habitats, Egyptians in topic work and to look up composers and musicians.

134. Older pupils use mathematics software in groups to develop speed and confidence with mental calculations and locate relevant information. They learn to use a computer and as a useful tool to help develop mathematics skills and accelerate learning. Overall, pupils show independence, co-operation and enthusiasm towards their learning.

135. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. On the evidence of the one lesson observed, pupils working with computers in other lessons, analysis of work, subject documentation and interviews with co-ordinators and pupils, teaching is judged to be good overall. Planning for information communication technology is thorough and structured and information communication technology opportunities are identified clearly in most lessons. However, in Key Stage 2 particularly, there was an inconsistent use of computers in some classrooms. Systems are established for pupils to use the hardware in turn but on a number of occasions this was not observed during the inspection period. The co-ordinator acknowledges the benefit of continued staff training although teachers are generally much more confident and competent now.

136. The school uses a detailed and well-structured scheme, which meets National Curriculum requirements and matches the needs of all groups of pupils throughout the school. The co-ordinators have identified 'control and monitoring' in Year 6 as an aspect to be developed further upon completion of the computer suite and purchase of more appropriate software. The subject is well resourced, with much suitable software available to support all curriculum areas and in particular, literacy and numeracy. Resources are well organised and extensively used.

137. Leadership is strong and looks forward positively to an expanding and influential role as the school continues to build upon its achievements. A Parish web site is to be set up and a direct link established between both Infant and Junior schools' sites. Monitoring is currently informal, although work samples are sometimes collected and annotated. This is to be built into a systematic form and a school portfolio will be created and contain a collection of pupils' work to demonstrate the different levels of attainment within the National Curriculum. Currently assessment focuses upon basic skills and pupils have a record of their experiences and progress throughout each key stage. The school intends to introduce a programme of assessment of pupils' skills in information communication technology that will provide information for future planning. The school is well placed to build upon recent achievements and raise standards further.

## **MUSIC**

138. The provision in music is a strength of the school. Attainment by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is above, and at the end of Key Stage 2, well above the standards expected for their ages and this is an improvement from the previous inspection in spite of less time being available for the subject. Music has a secure place in the curriculum. Very good use is made of the expertise on the staff and highly effective visiting music teachers. Improvements have been made in teaching. These measures have raised standards.

139. In Key Stage 1 pupils explore sound, acquire a good sense of rhythm and learn to sing with confidence and enjoyment. Good standards are reached during infant hymn practice held weekly in the beautiful setting of St. Edward's church, which adjoins the school. Pupils sing rhythmically and tunefully with sweet, melodic voices and clear articulation. They can vary tempo and volume according to instructions from the guitar accompanist and are able to offer suggestions about how to improve their performance, one pupil suggesting "We must sound happier". Apart from their church visits, infant pupils sing a range of songs and use percussion regularly, following a graphic score and written prompts from the teacher. They compose and record their work simply. In Key Stage 2 the junior pupils sing exceptionally

accurately and sweetly in unison or in two parts. During an assembly, visiting parents heard beautiful singing both accompanied and unaccompanied, which helped to create a joyous and tranquil start to the day. All pupils play a wide variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments according to their skills and interest. Extra-curricular activities include recorder and tin whistle playing and both these instruments contribute well to the school orchestra. Pupils are able to undertake specialist tuition in violin, viola, cello, flute or clarinet and these instruments enhance all pupils' musical education. In music theory, pupils move from graphic scores to standard notation, reading simple or more complex scores according to their level of ability. Composition work is recorded both manually and on computer and pupils write about their responses to listening to music. Some older pupils undertake personal research into the lives and works of famous composers and write extended project books. Pupils show strength in public performance, singing and playing with enjoyment and confidence before parents and the community.

140. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and very good when teachers have musical expertise. This is a significant improvement upon the previous inspection report when teaching varied from good to unsatisfactory. The school has made a determined effort to raise standards by increasing teachers' knowledge of the subject and thus increasing their confidence in teaching it. Colleagues with expertise in playing or singing exchange classes with others with different strengths to both classes' advantage. Resources have been improved and very good co-ordination by a trio of co-ordinators gives teachers effective support through comprehensive schemes of work, in-service training and well organised published resources.

141. The improvements in teaching have been mirrored by improvements in learning. During the previous inspection some unsatisfactory teaching had created difficulties in controlling pupils' behaviour. This issue has now been addressed. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during the current inspection were very good due to good teaching, an appropriate curriculum and a very good ethos. All musical contributions are valued and pupils are encouraged to do well. There is a satisfactory system of recording assessment of pupils' attainment. Music resources are sufficient in quantity although there are too few multi-cultural instruments. Resources are very good in quality, easily kept tidy and readily accessible. The care taken of them by pupils extends their life. Pupils listen to compositions played by various performers on compact discs and this experience is enhanced by visits from professional artists, such as those from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Junior year groups pay visits to Symphony Hall and the school orchestra performed at the launch of the city's anti-smoking campaign in Centenary Square. The choir performs annually at the National Indoor Arena in the Hallelujah Chorus concert and locally at the St. Mary's Hospice and a residential home for senior citizens. These performances and others add a valuable community dimension to the music curriculum, giving audible and visible expression to the high standards achieved.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. By the time pupils are seven years old and by the time they are ready to leave the school, their attainment in physical education exceeds the national expectation and pupils with special educational needs achieve well.



143. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning in physical education is good. High standards are evident in dance. Teachers have suitably high expectations of their pupils in this aspect of the subject and pupils respond well to this. The youngest sustain their effort well and remember difficult and complicated sequences of movements. They also make helpful suggestions about how they might extend and improve their work. However, some pupils do not move with sufficient control and this detracts from the overall

quality of their work. In some lessons, pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own and that of others.

144. Older pupils also produce very good work in country dance. They work extremely hard and cooperate well in partnerships and groups, showing a mature approach. This results in extended sequences which pupils improve by introducing their own ways of performing swings, promenades and two handed turns. Their success is closely linked to the good subject knowledge of their teacher. In team games, such as football and netball, pupils of the same age show sound basic skills when receiving or passing a ball. Once again they co-operate and support each other well in these activities. However, some pupils find it hard to apply their skills successfully in small sided games. Sometimes this is because the area they are playing in is too small or there are too many players in the allocated space.

145. Teaching is good. Teachers provide pupils with excellent role models. They are enthusiastic and lead activities with energy and vigour, particular warm up exercises. Pupils perform these exercises correctly and respond well to the good examples provided by their teachers.

146. The subject benefits greatly from effective leadership. A helpful scheme of work is in place. However, this is not yet adapted sufficiently to reflect the full range of learning opportunities, such as the selection and application of skills and the evaluation and improvement of performance, identified in the recently revised National Curriculum Programme of Study for the subject.

147. Pupils at Key Stage 2 benefit from a good programme of extra curricular activities. These include netball and association football. The school is successful consistently in local athletics, football and swimming competitions.

148. Opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their physical abilities are restricted by the lack of a suitable indoor space and appropriate outdoor apparatus on the infant site.