

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Hertford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117436

Headteacher: Mr Michael Lyons

Reporting inspector: Martin Beale
19385

Date of inspection: 24th to 26th May 2000

Inspection number: 192436

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Shealgh Stacey

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school for pupils aged 3-11, with an attached nursery. There are 172 pupils in the main part of the school, making it smaller than other primary schools, with a further 26 children in part-time places in the nursery. The attainment of the majority of pupils on entry to Reception is above average. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and only three have English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs is close to the national average. The majority of pupils come from economically advantaged backgrounds with few eligible for free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is a very effective school. The strong leadership and the clear educational direction provided by the headteacher and the Governing Body have enabled sustained improvements to be made. The high quality of much of the teaching throughout the school generates an enthusiasm for learning and enables the pupils to achieve high standards in their work and their behaviour. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The high-quality teaching of English throughout the school is enabling the pupils to make good progress and achieve high standards.
- The teachers' high expectations and their well-planned lessons enable pupils to learn quickly.
- Strong leadership is focused effectively on raising standards.
- The pupils are keen to learn and to do well, and they respond well to the high standards of behaviour expected of them.
- High standards are promoted in information technology through a wide range of interesting learning opportunities.
- The nursery provision is very good and results in the development of good attitudes to work and good social skills.

What could be improved

- Improvements in standards of numeracy have not kept pace with those in literacy.
- The marking of pupils' work is not used to support improvements in the pupils' achievements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress in raising standards and tackling the key issues raised by the last inspection in 1996. Standards in National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 have improved in all three core subjects since the last inspection, particularly so in English and mathematics. Standards at Key Stage 1 are also higher in reading and writing but are slightly lower in mathematics. The quality of teaching has improved considerably with more very good teaching taking place. Standards have also improved in geography, an area of weakness at the last inspection. A curriculum framework has been developed and national or local authority schemes of work have been adopted to support the teachers' planning in all subjects. Time has been provided for senior managers and co-ordinators to monitor planning, standards and the quality of teaching, and has enabled good practice to be identified and shared. More opportunities are provided for the pupils to undertake independent learning activities.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A*	C	A*	A	well above average A
mathematics	A	B	B	C	above average B
science	A*	C	B	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Standards are high throughout the school, although there is some variation reflecting differences between each cohort of pupils. This also accounts for the fluctuations in Standard Assessment Task (SAT) results in recent years; however, results are higher at both key stages than at the time of the last inspection. The majority of pupils are achieving well and they make good progress in most classes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them.

SAT results in 1999 at Key Stage 1 for reading and writing were well above average. When compared with similar schools, results in writing were well above average and those in reading were above average. In both cases the results show an improvement since the last inspection. Results in mathematics declined in 1999 to be in line with the national average but below similar schools. These results were below those at the last inspection. Fewer pupils achieved higher levels in mathematics compared with reading and writing. SAT results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 for English were very high, the A* grade putting the school in the top 5% of schools nationally. The English results were well above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of the pupils achieving at least Level 4 exceeded considerably the government's national target for 2002. Results in mathematics and science were not as strong, largely because fewer pupils than in English achieved Level 5. The results were still above the national average in both subjects and in line with those in similar schools. The standard of the work seen at Key Stage 2 during the inspection reflects these standards in English and science; however, more pupils were seen to be working securely at Level 5 in mathematics, representing an improvement over the 1999 results.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are happy, enthusiastic learners who want to come to school. They know what is expected of them and readily comply with school and class rules.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils concentrate well, are attentive and collaborate well in group work. They are polite to visitors and to each other.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils in the upper years have positions of responsibility and carry out their duties seriously. They are good role models for the younger pupils. Pupils play happily together in the playground, and relationships with their teachers and each other are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons start on time.

The school is very effective in promoting good attitudes to work, good behaviour and the pupils' personal development. There is a calm atmosphere in the school in which the pupils can work and learn with confidence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 97% of lessons. Almost three-quarters are good or better and 45% are very good. All of the teaching observed in the Nursery was very good. There is a greater proportion of the good and very good teaching at Key Stage 2. High expectations and well-planned lessons, which have clear learning objectives and a good balance between teacher-led and pupil activities enable the pupils to learn quickly and consolidate their learning. Well-targeted, open-ended questioning challenges the pupils' thinking, focuses their attention and encourages them to respond in detail and at length. Confident, enthusiastic and brisk teaching with a good understanding of the subject material moves lessons and learning forward at a quick pace. The teachers have developed an effective working atmosphere in their classrooms. This enables the pupils to concentrate well, to participate in activities and to work productively. The teaching of literacy is very good. The Literacy Hour has been implemented well and the development of language skills, particularly those of speaking, listening and writing, are fostered across the curriculum. The daily mathematics lesson has also been introduced effectively and the school intends to evaluate its impact shortly. Teachers make very good use of computers to support learning in a wide range of subjects. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly in withdrawal groups where tasks and activities are closely matched to the targets in their individual education plans. All pupils have targets in English and mathematics but these are not reviewed sufficiently regularly to have an impact, and although marking is rigorously completed, it is not always being used to support improvements in the pupils' achievements.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. It offers a good challenge to pupils of all ages and abilities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The support for pupils with special educational needs is effective. Individual education plans are focused on the pupils' needs and are regularly reviewed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' personal development is good, enabling them to grow in self-confidence. The provision for their spiritual, moral and social development is good and that for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	St Joseph's is a caring environment which promotes respect and consideration for others through its Christian ethos.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is enriched by the provision of French at Key Stage 2 and the wide use of information technology to support learning in all years. Extra time is allocated in each class for reading and at Key Stage 2 for extended writing. The curriculum for the children in the Nursery is closely linked to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and provides a good foundation for the pupils' future study of the National Curriculum. Teachers show considerable care for the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate arrangements for child protection and for dealing

with health and safety issues are in place.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school very well. He is ably supported in this by an effective staff team who share his commitment to higher standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is very effective. It has a clear understanding of its role and is fully involved in planning school developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The analysis of data, the systematic monitoring of teaching and the evaluation of initiatives are having a beneficial effect on the drive to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is thorough and supports the aims and targets of the school improvement plan.

The school benefits considerably from the strong leadership of the headteacher. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school and a willingness by staff to examine their teaching and the curriculum that they provide to seek improvements. The drive to raise standards is central to the planned development of the school. The budget is well managed to meet the school's priorities for improvement. The school seeks value for money when purchasing services, applying the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents report that their children are happy to come to school. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the good behaviour in the school. Most parents feel that their children are making good progress. They recognise that their children are expected to work hard and to give of their best. Parents judge that the teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many parents feel that the school does not provide sufficient extra-curricular activities.

The vast majority of parents support the work of the school and all that it is trying to do for their children. The inspection team agrees with all of the positive views expressed by parents. Some extra-curricular sporting activities take place, generally run by parents. The headteacher would like to offer more, particularly at lunchtimes, and has plans to do so. Some parents who completed the questionnaire feel that the school does not work closely with them or provide sufficient information about how well their children are doing, and they are not comfortable about approaching the school. These views were not shared by those attending the parents' meeting, who find the school approachable and find communication with them to be effective and informative. The inspection team judges that the information provided by the school about both the curriculum it teaches and the pupils' progress is more than adequate, although more clarity is needed over the school's requirements for homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The high-quality teaching of English throughout the school is enabling the pupils to make good progress and achieve high standards

1. Standards of literacy have steadily improved in the last few years, and overall they are considerably above the national average and are better than those achieved by pupils in similar schools. The teaching of English is a particular strength of the school. The school attaches great importance to the teaching of reading, seeing it as the key to future learning. Pupils are introduced to language in the Nursery and Reception through stories, big books and an introduction to phonics. Books are taken home to be shared with parents, who are given an important role in assisting the development of early reading skills. The Literacy Hour is introduced at Key Stage 1 with staff taking care to incorporate all of the recommended elements and giving additional time to the teaching of reading. This work is consolidated at Key Stage 2. In addition, English is used effectively to support all other areas of the curriculum at Key Stage 2. This is reflected in the very good progress that the pupils make in all aspects of language development.
2. When evaluating the impact of the Literacy Hour, teachers became concerned that pupils had insufficient time to write at length and that opportunities were being lost for creative and extended writing, particularly at Key Stage 2. In response to this concern classes have a timetabled extended writing session and opportunities are created in subjects other than English to develop the pupils' written work. Instead of completing worksheets, the pupils are more often expected to write answers in their own words with guidelines given if necessary. This has had a considerable impact on the quality and range of their writing, which is both interesting and imaginative.
3. The teachers are particularly effective in their development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills in all lessons. They expect and require pupils to answer questions in detail and at length. They also expect them to listen carefully to each other and to participate in class discussions. The pupils speak clearly and with confidence, using a wide vocabulary. The teaching of French, with lessons carried out in the language, also helps to promote listening and develop the concentration of older pupils.
4. The teachers are skilled at capturing the pupils' interest and enthusiasm, as in a Year 1 Literacy Hour where the pace of the lesson resulted in the pupils making good progress. Opportunities were taken in this and a Year 3 lesson, following up work on *Danny* by Roald Dahl, to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding and to generate an enjoyment of literature. Clear explanations, the very good use of time and good class control enabled the teacher to assess the pupils' understanding of the text and challenge them to consider how they might continue the story. Effective support is also provided for pupils with special educational needs, to help them to overcome weaknesses in their language skills. A lesson taught well to a small group of Year 3 pupils had clear objectives to improve their knowledge of letter blends. A good variety of activities were successful in the development of the pupils' understanding and application of phonics to read and spell unfamiliar words.
5. This concentration on literacy and the high quality of the teaching has had a very beneficial effect on standards. The results of Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 for reading and writing were well above the national

average. When compared with similar schools, results in the writing test were also well above average, while those in reading were above average. Results in writing have improved steadily since the last inspection and at a faster rate than nationally, while those in reading have tended to fluctuate but are still higher than those at the time of the last inspection. Standards in writing are not as high in the current Year 2, but this has been recognised since this group entered the school. Unlike in other year groups there are few pupils writing at above the nationally expected standard in this class. Attainment in reading, however, is high with almost half of the class above nationally expected standards for their age. Attainment elsewhere in Key Stage 1 in both reading and writing is well above average.

6. SAT results for English at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were very high, putting St Joseph's in the top 5% of schools nationally. The results were also well above average when compared with similar schools. 95% of pupils achieved at least Level 4 (the standard expected for their age) and half achieved the higher Level 5. On average the pupils at St Joseph's were more than a year ahead of pupils nationally. Although the results have fluctuated in recent years as cohorts have varied, they were considerably higher than those at the time of the last inspection. Boys have done better than girls when compared to the national picture, where girls' results in English are consistently higher than boys' results. Pupils in the 1999 cohort made better progress at Key Stage 2 than in other schools. The increase in their average point score from the SATs at Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 was greater than nationally. The standard of work in English of the current Year 6 is similarly well above average. Attainment in the other Key Stage 2 classes is well above average overall, although there are variations between classes, reflecting the differing nature of each cohort of pupils and the fluctuations in the Key Stage 1 results.

The teachers' high expectations and their well-planned lessons enable pupils to learn quickly

7. The most significant factor in the good progress made by the pupils and the high standards achieved from the Nursery upwards is the high quality of much of the teaching. Lively and interesting lessons in well-organised classrooms give the pupils confidence and enable them to learn quickly. The quality of the teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Almost half the teaching observed during the inspection was very good, and a further quarter was good.
8. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Lessons are well planned, with clear objectives for the pupils' learning. There is a good balance in the vast majority of lessons between direct class teaching and pupil activities. Pupils consolidate well what they have learnt and learn new skills and ideas quickly. A brisk start carried out largely in the language was a feature of a very well taught Year 5/6 French lesson. A good review of previously learnt vocabulary and a good range of activities to practise new words associated with finding directions in a town moved learning forward at pace. The very good involvement of all the pupils and the encouragement and help given to those who were unsure of some of the language, enabled all pupils to consolidate and learn new vocabulary quickly.
9. Staff have successfully established an effective working atmosphere in each classroom. The teachers are very skilled at managing the pupils in their classrooms, which they do with a minimum of fuss. Classrooms are calm areas for learning where the pupils can concentrate on their work, participate in all activities with confidence and work productively. High expectations of behaviour were put to good effect in a Reception

physical education lesson. The good structure to the lesson and the challenge provided enabled the pupils to make good progress in their movements in response to a taped piece of music.

10. Confident, enthusiastic and brisk teaching by staff who have a good understanding of the subject material moves lessons and learning forward at a brisk pace. The teachers employ very good questioning techniques. Questions are carefully targeted at individual pupils. This focuses their attention, challenges their thinking and encourages them to respond in detail and at length. A good review of previous work on the Tudors in a Year 4/5 history lesson, with good questioning that encouraged detailed responses from the pupils, set the scene well for looking at Henry VIII. The questions challenged the pupils to think about why Henry wished to present himself in a particular way through his portrait. Very confident teaching by a teacher with a good command of the material was seen in a Year 3 science lesson on the conditions for plant growth. Good questioning encouraged the pupils to think carefully and to answer in detail. High expectations of the pupils' behaviour were also evident, which ensured that the pupils concentrated and applied considerable thought to the investigations that they were planning. Challenging questions which extended the more able were a feature of a Year 1 design and technology lesson in which the pupils were designing a drink. The teacher made the evaluation session enjoyable and interesting, successfully encouraging the pupils to use their imaginations.

Strong leadership is focused effectively on raising standards

11. A major reason for the success of the school and the very good improvement made since the last inspection is the strong leadership and effective management by the headteacher. He leads the school well and gives it a sense of purpose and clear direction. His leadership has been instrumental in raising standards and in maintaining the very positive ethos, based on Christian principles, that permeates the school. Senior management, co-ordinators and all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff team ably support him in this.
12. The careful analysis of examination and test data, the systematic observation of teaching and the careful evaluation of the implementation of initiatives such as those for literacy and numeracy are having a beneficial effect on the school's drive to raise standards. Concerns that the Literacy Hour would reduce the time to develop pupils' writing have resulted in extended writing sessions being timetabled and staff exploiting every opportunity to develop writing skills in subjects other than English. An evaluation of the daily mathematics lesson is about to take place. This is being approached from a careful consideration of the benefits that it has brought to mathematics teaching while looking at how this might be adapted to better effect for the pupils at St Joseph's.
13. The Governing Body is very effective in its work. It has a clear understanding of its role and supports the school well. The Governing Body is well organised and uses its experience and expertise to good effect in each of its working parties. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the challenges currently facing the school. They share the headteacher's vision for the school's development and have begun to try to reduce the impact of variations in the number of parents applying to send their children to the school by marketing St Joseph's more forcefully.
14. Governors have been particularly closely involved in the preparation and construction of the latest school improvement plan and its publication to parents in a clearly presented and easily understandable format. This has been much appreciated by many parents.

The improvement plan is a very clear document with targets and priorities that are right for the school in its current stage of development. Raising standards, such as increasing the proportion of pupils who achieve at the higher levels in mathematics, is central to its priorities. Financial planning is thorough and supports the aims and targets within the improvement plan. The plan has clear criteria by which the success of the school can be measured. These criteria along with regular visits by governors is enabling them to scrutinise carefully the work of the school and the standards that it achieves.

The pupils are keen to learn and to do well, and they respond well to the high standards of behaviour expected of them

15. The school has been very successful in the creation of a calm, stable and secure environment for its pupils with an ethos based firmly on Christian principles. St Joseph's is a caring environment where respect and consideration for others is promoted. Parents are very pleased with the attitudes and values that are promoted, believing them to be lived on a daily basis by the school. There are high expectations of the pupils' behaviour, which the pupils understand and fully accept. Any behaviour that is felt to be unsatisfactory is dealt with firmly and with the minimum of fuss. Pupils are keen, happy and enthusiastic learners who want to come to school. Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are attentive; they concentrate well and collaborate effectively when involved in pair or group work. They rise to challenging questions and take pleasure in their own achievement and that of others.
16. The provision made for the pupils' personal development is good. The school gives the pupils many opportunities to gain knowledge of and insight into the values and beliefs of others. Moral values are taught within a Christian framework, and the pupils are encouraged to consider the difference between right and wrong. They learn to care for each other and to consider children in different circumstances from their own. To this end, the school has adopted a school in The Gambia, and links with it are being forged by teacher visits. Assemblies and other acts of worship play a significant part in the life of the school. The theme for each week is established during the Monday assembly and reviewed on Friday. The pupils' achievements are valued and celebrated.
17. The calm and welcoming atmosphere is built on the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. Pupils are polite to visitors and show respect for the contributions of others. Those in the upper years have positions of responsibility around the school and carry out their duties seriously. They are good role models for the younger pupils. Pupils play happily together in the playground and relationships with their teachers and with each other are very good. At present there is no school council in which the pupils could discuss issues, but a group of older pupils has consulted others about possible changes to the school uniform and has presented its findings to governors and to the school.

High standards are promoted in information technology through a wide range of interesting learning opportunities

18. The school has worked with considerable success not only to teach a wide range of information technology (IT) skills, but also to provide pupils with an understanding of how the computer can be used as a tool to support their learning. By the time that the pupils reach the top class they are skilled, confident and autonomous users of IT. They know and understand the functions of the computer and how to apply the various

menus and tool bars for the wide range of software that they can use. Many have computers at home, which they use to good effect to enhance their learning. Most pupils have a good understanding of the impact of IT on their everyday lives. Pupils in Reception, for example, have produced a display showing the appliances in the home that use IT. Older pupils know how to access the Internet to obtain information for projects that they are undertaking.

19. In many lessons individuals and pairs of pupils work on the computer while the rest of the class is engaged in another activity. Plans and registers of tasks completed show that this is a regular feature of the school week in all classes. Staff have a good level of expertise, which they are seeking to extend through further training. The teachers use this expertise well to teach new skills and to plan creative opportunities for their use and application by the pupils. There is a good level of equipment and software which enables all aspects of the National Curriculum for IT to be covered.
20. The teaching of IT skills and the provision of opportunities to use these skills to support learning starts in the Nursery. Here the children were observed putting instructions into the floor roamer to control its movements and to help them to develop an understanding of forwards and backwards. Pupils in the Year 4/5 class extend this to control movement on the screen using the language 'Logo'. They have developed sophisticated programming skills for their age and are able to write procedures that draw repeating patterns of shapes. This supports very well their understanding of shape as well as of angle. Year 5/6 pupils also use sensors in their science lessons to measure temperature change and use the computer as a tool for displaying their results graphically.
21. Pupils at Key Stage 2 know how to use a spreadsheet to present data that they have obtained from a survey in graphs and tables. Older pupils would like to see a change in the school uniform and have presented their findings of a survey that they have undertaken to support their arguments. Bar graphs and pie charts have been produced and the results displayed in the school hall. Pupils also learn how to construct and interrogate a database, selecting the particular feature that they wish to consider. All pupils develop very good wordprocessing skills as they move through the school. By Year 6, many know how to import pictures and graphics into text that they have written. Poetry written by pupils in Year 3 has been used as a task to develop wordprocessing skills. These pupils have changed the font style and size, the layout and colour of their text, and imported a picture to produce a dramatic visual effect.
22. The teaching of specific IT skills, and the interesting activities that are then devised in which pupils can apply these skills, have a significant bearing on the high standards achieved. A very well-taught lesson in the Year 5/6 class enabled the pupils to develop their understanding of the potential of the 'Powerpoint' software to produce their own slide presentation. Very good use of the laptop computer attached to a projector enabled the teacher to demonstrate the use of the software to the whole class. Both the teacher and the pupils, who were interested and enthused by the lesson, demonstrated a high degree of expertise. The skills learnt were then put to use by the pupils as they prepared slides in their geography lesson about features of the River Severn. They were able to link text and pictures effectively, some taken with a digital camera, to begin to put together interesting, eye-catching presentations.

The nursery provision is very good and results in the development of good attitudes to work and good social skills

23. Children have a very good start to their school life in the Nursery, which provides them with a very good foundation for learning. Activities are carefully planned. They are closely linked to the recommended curriculum for children of this age. The teacher and the support staff are very aware of the children's needs. They ensure that the activities planned provide opportunities which move the children's learning forward whilst providing a safe, secure environment which encourages the development of both their social and academic skills.
24. The teaching has very many strengths, with the teacher and the nursery assistant working well as a team. Lesson planning describes clearly each individual's learning needs, with steps identified to meet them. A variety of strategies are used to retain the children's attention. Very enthusiastic, energetic teaching adds interest and excitement and fosters a love for learning in the children. Sessions maintain a brisk pace. The children listen carefully, work well in groups and persevere with tasks even without direct adult supervision. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere, which prepares the children well for their future study of the National Curriculum.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Improvements in standards of numeracy have not kept pace with those in literacy

25. SAT results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 improved steadily after the last inspection and at a faster rate than nationally, but fell back in 1999 to be in line with the national average but below results in similar schools. Results were lower than in reading and writing in 1999, because higher-attaining pupils did not achieve the same high standards in mathematics. Standards in the current Year 2 are similar, but with a larger proportion of the pupils not reaching the nationally expected Level 2. SAT results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were above the national average and in line with those in similar schools. As at Key Stage 1 the main difference between mathematics and English was that fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in mathematics. Attainment in the current Year 6 is much higher and the SAT results for 2000 are likely to show a considerable improvement, but this is largely because of the nature of the group. A larger proportion of the class is working securely at Level 5, with some pupils showing an understanding of material at Level 6.
26. Results at Key Stage 2 are higher than at the time of the last inspection but have not risen as rapidly as in English. Part of the reason for the difference in results between English and mathematics is the greater emphasis that the school has placed on literacy teaching and the support for language development. One of the targets in the current school improvement plan is rightly to raise the number of pupils achieving at higher levels in mathematics.
27. The daily mathematics lesson has been introduced with some success as the school's training has advised; however, there are aspects that the school might well need to consider in its evaluation of its impact. The teaching of numeracy is not as effective as for literacy, and pupils are not making the same rapid progress in mathematics as in English. Some teachers are fragmenting the activities within their lessons. All use a mental session at the beginning, but few relate this consistently to the main teaching objective of the lesson. This slows the pace of learning; however, this practice was adopted after advice from an external source. Whole-class sessions do not always

take account of the wide ability range of the pupils within each class. These sessions can be beyond the weaker pupils, who find it difficult to participate and can lose confidence, or they provide insufficient challenge to higher-attaining pupils. Some questioning is very good, with questions skilfully targeted at individual pupils, but this practice is not consistently seen in all classes. More able pupils would also benefit from more opportunities to undertake extended pieces of investigational or problem-solving tasks.

The marking of pupils' work is not used to support improvements in pupils' achievements

28. The pupils' work is marked thoroughly and carried out regularly but does not provide them with a clear picture of how well they are doing, how they might improve their work and how they might meet personal targets. Marking, with a few exceptions, consists of ticks and crosses and some congratulatory remarks, but no clearly evaluative comments that demonstrate the quality of the work, guidance on what steps need to be taken or corrections to make it better. Planning is usually annotated with an evaluation of the success of each lesson, and this is used to help to identify the next stages of learning; however, marking is not playing as significant a part as it could in this. A recent development has been the introduction of individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics. These are seen as valuable by staff, parents and the pupils themselves. At present, however, these targets are not reviewed with sufficient regularity for them to be a significant focus for the pupils' learning. There are occasions when a pupil has achieved the target but some time elapses before they are assessed or the target changed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. In order to build on the very good progress that the school has made in recent years, it should now:

- ensure that all pupils are challenged in mathematics so that they can achieve the same high standards as in English;
- establish and implement a policy for the marking of pupils' work that incorporates the requirement for teachers to give guidance to pupils on how their work can be improved and enables individual targets to be reviewed and changed regularly.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	45	28	24	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	172
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	7	20	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	96 (93)	96 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	11	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	11
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	21	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	95 (72)	86 (68)	100 (76)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	9	7	7
	Total	17	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	77 (72)	73 (72)	73 (80)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	5
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	130
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	322184
Total expenditure	321979
Expenditure per pupil	1721
Balance brought forward from previous year	2145
Balance carried forward to next year	2350

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	161
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	35	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	49	46	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	36	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	50	12	1	6
The teaching is good.	51	44	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	52	22	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	25	13	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	30	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	43	22	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	28	54	12	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	37	6	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	21	34	21	16