

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116397

Headteacher: Miss A Dale

Reporting inspector: Mr MS Burghart  
20865

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> –19<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 193809

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mansel Road West  
Southampton

Postcode: SO16 9LP

Telephone number: 02380 773264

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Philpott

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20865	Mr MS Burghart Registered inspector	Information and communication technology; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9487	Dr F Hurd Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22167	Ms H Carruthers Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; Art and design.	
20671	Mr J Palethorpe Team inspector	Mathematics; Music; Physical education.	Results and achievements.
20977	Mr R Thelwell Team inspector	English; Geography; History.	
25554	Mrs J Watson Team inspector	Special educational needs; Science; Design and technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is situated on the western edge of Southampton. The school is housed in 1960s buildings, recently extended to provide accommodation for fourteen classes. This year a new initiative to train teachers in a school based environment (SCITT) was begun at Holy Family. It is the first Catholic primary to have such a base.

The school is larger than average, with 437 pupils on roll aged from four to eleven. All classes contain pupils from single year groups. There is an average of 30 pupils per class. Pupils are drawn from a wide area, but many come from the local council housing estate. Children's attainment on entry to the school, aged four, varies, but overall is below average.

The head has been in post for five years and is supported by fourteen full time teachers. Two members of staff are in their first year of teaching and, at the time of the inspection, another was only in her second week at the school.

There are 199 pupils on the special educational needs register. This accounts for almost 46 per cent of the total school roll, and is much above the national average of 23.2 per cent. Four pupils have formal statements under the terms of the DfEE Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>, which is broadly in line with the national picture. One hundred and seven children are known to be eligible for free school meals, which at 24.5 per cent is above the national average of nearly 20 per cent. Six pupils are in the first stages of learning English, having English as an additional language. Ten traveller children attend the school periodically, which is above average.

Religious education and the quality of collective acts of worship will be inspected in the term following this inspection by a representative appointed by the diocesan trustees.

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

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is very much improved since the last inspection. It now provides a sound standard of education and pupils, many of whom have special educational needs (some physical), achieve well to reach national expectations before they leave. Teaching is good and the school takes good care of its pupils. Assessment procedures are very good and are driving up standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science; and are beginning to improve standards in other subjects. Staff and pupils get on well together and the school is successful in pursuing its stated Catholic aims to encourage pupils' personal, as well as academic, development. The school is well led and gives good value for money, which represents a significant improvement since this was judged unsatisfactory in the last report.

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

- Makes good provision for reception children.
- Supports pupils with special educational needs well.
- Successfully encourages very good attitudes, relationships and moral development.
- Teaching is good.
- The school is led well and manages change effectively.
- Assessment and monitoring of pupils' performance is very good.
- The school maintains very effective links with parents.

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<sup>1</sup> The DfEE Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

## What could be improved

- Standards of information and communication technology and design and technology at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>.
- The quality of physical education teaching.
- Arrangements for lunchtimes.
- Punctuality.
- Outdoor facilities for the Foundation Stage<sup>3</sup>.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last full report identified serious weaknesses in the school in a wide variety of aspects. It highlighted six significant key issues. The school has made very good progress in addressing these and is very much improved. Standards have been raised in all subjects at both key stages and are now satisfactory in all but information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology by the end of Key Stage 2. Assessment, and its use, is judged very good. Planning and teaching are now good having been unsatisfactory last time. Good strategic management has improved resources to at least sufficient, with further developments in hand. In addition literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced and good quality new buildings have enhanced accommodation. The school is now well placed for future development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores<sup>4</sup> in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	D	C	A	well above average    A above average        B average                 C below average         D well below average    E
Mathematics	E	D	C	B	
Science	E	E	C	C	

The table shows the school to be doing well in the light of 45 per cent of its pupils being identified as having special educational needs. Standards are much improved in all subjects and are now in line with national averages and expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. This is with the exception of ICT and design and technology at Key Stage 2, where a lack of emphasis over time has meant that current Year 6 pupils have not covered all required programmes of study in sufficient depth to reach expected levels. Overall, pupils are achieving well from below average standards when they first begin reception, to satisfactory standards by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language do well, and often make good progress. Traveller

<sup>2</sup> Key Stage 2 refers to pupils in Years 3 to 6 aged seven to eleven and Key Stage 1 to pupils in Years 1 and 2 aged five to seven.

<sup>3</sup> From September 2000, the term Foundation Stage refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of the reception year.

<sup>4</sup> Average point scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

children make less progress as a result of prolonged absence, but when they do attend, their achievement is satisfactory.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good: most pupils like school. Ninety-six per cent of parents say their children enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, especially in classrooms, notwithstanding those pupils with individual education plans for behaviour, who could, and sometimes do, present problems. Poor lunchtime arrangements and too little to do outside, have negative effects on behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils and staff get on well together. There is mutual trust and respect and pupils know right from wrong. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall, but below the national average, partly as a result of the prolonged absence of some traveller children. Punctuality, reported as unsatisfactory last time, is still a problem. The school continues to work hard to overcome this.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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

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

The quality of teaching has been improved significantly from the last inspection where 25 per cent was unsatisfactory. Now, across the school 62 per cent of lessons were judged good or better, with 10 per cent very good and one lesson excellent. Only four per cent of teaching observed was less than satisfactory. All staff had at least one lesson at the good level and six at better than this. Very good monitoring and development of teaching have been responsible for this improvement. Strengths in teaching are in early years, literacy and, particularly at Key Stage 2, numeracy. Good relationships, planning, questioning and management of pupils have very positive effects on pupils' learning. Special educational needs, English as an additional language, traveller children and those with physical special needs are all well taught. Aspects of teaching in need of further development are in teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT and physical education, and in the pace and management of time in some lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good as a result of big improvements in planning, and very good assessment and evaluation. ICT and design and technology have been underemphasised, but current planning should redress this. Homework is used effectively. A lack of extracurricular activities means opportunities are missed to enhance the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: the high proportion of such pupils are well supported for physical, personal and academic needs. Such pupils are included well into school life. Learning support assistants make a good contribution.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good involvement of outside agencies. Such pupils are integrated well into the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall: spiritual and cultural opportunities are satisfactory. Moral provision is very good and social development is well planned for.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A good level of care, in keeping with the school's aims and principles. More to do to confirm formal child protection procedures. Assessment and record keeping very good and used well in planning. Some minor issues of health and safety drawn to governors' attention.

The school makes satisfactory provision for the small group of traveller children. It makes sound use of a small amount of support funded by a government grant. The clear majority of parents have very positive views about the school. There are very effective links between home and school which benefit children's learning, notwithstanding punctuality problems.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall: with very good features in the management of change; especially in developing teaching and assessment. The headteacher leads well and has created a good team. The school has clear educational direction and a very good ethos. The lack of a deputy head, permanent special educational needs co-ordinator and English subject manager temporarily have restricting effects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound: improved participation and support since the last report. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of issues affecting the school. Statutory responsibilities met with the exception of ICT, but current planning will improve this.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and very good use of assessment have driven standards up. The monitoring role of subject managers is good for standards and planning: still more to do to monitor the quality of teaching in some subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good links between educational priorities and finance. Staffing, accommodation and resources satisfactorily used. Time generally used well but the pace of some lessons is too slow and some aspects of the management of time need addressing. Resources much improved. A secure outdoor area for those under five identified as needed.

The school applies the principles of best value and finances are efficiently run.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led.</li> <li>• Expectations are high.</li> <li>• Pupils make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>

The overwhelming majority of parental responses about the school were very positive. Inspectors support these views and recognise the value of improvements made since the last inspection. Although potential difficulties arising from the relatively wide catchment area are noted, the lack of extracurricular activities run by staff does mean that opportunities are missed to enhance the curriculum, particularly for older pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In 2000, the percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reaching Level 2 or above in reading and mathematics was above the national average, and in writing it was well above. Results for seven year olds are very high when compared with schools with similar circumstances, and have shown a marked improvement over the last four years, coming from well below average. The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 reaching the expected Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science was in line with national averages. When compared with similar schools, results for eleven year olds were very high in English, above average in mathematics, and in line with the national average in science. These results show an improvement over the last four years, and are the best results the school has achieved. Realistic but challenging targets are set each year. They were exceeded in English by four per cent but missed in mathematics by seven per cent in year 2000.

2. The attainment on entry for the majority of children starting the school is below average. From this position, most children in the Foundation Stage at present under five and those now aged five in the two reception classes, make good progress in their learning. By age five, most children attain the Early Learning Goals<sup>5</sup>. The school works closely with the on-site playgroup to make good improvements to the poorly developed speaking and listening skills, which many children have on entry. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, working and playing together happily. Those children in the Foundation Stage capable of higher attainment are well challenged in their learning and attain standards above those expected by age five.

3. The percentage of pupils on the register for special educational needs is high. In the two important years at the end of each key stage, the proportion with special needs is 54 per cent in Year 2 and 45 per cent in Year 6. With three exceptions, the school is achieving standards, in all subjects, in line with national expectations. The exceptions are reading in Key Stage 1 where standards are above expectations, and design and technology, and ICT in Key Stage 2 where standards are below expectations. Bearing in mind the low standard on entry to the school and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, pupils are achieving well.

4. There are several factors which have led to the improvement in pupils' achievement, most of which stem from the action plan following the previous inspection. In particular:-

- Careful analysis looked at the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, through lesson observations;
- Needs were satisfied with a good deal of in-service training for teachers;
- The role of the senior management team was strengthened with the help of an external trainer;
- The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy were successfully implemented;
- Effective assessment and tracking systems in English, mathematics and science helped teachers set targets to plan pupils' needs.

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<sup>5</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals', comprised of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they enter Year 1. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

5. The last inspection judged overall standards to be below average at the end of both key stages in English. Since then, a number of strategies have led to improvements bringing about a year on year rise in attainment.

6. Standards in mathematics have improved a good deal to bring them in line with national averages at the end of both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and the quality of teaching and learning has improved. Effective assessment and tracking procedures have led to work being well matched to pupils' needs.

7. Standards in science are broadly average throughout the school. These results show significant improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below average for seven year olds and just in line for eleven year olds.

8. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in information and communication technology have been significantly improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations. Standards in Key Stage 2 have been improved too, but pupils have not yet covered enough of the National Curriculum requirements to enable them to reach satisfactory standards.

9. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 2 but below average at the end of Year 6. This judgement is broadly similar to the previous inspection although there have been significant improvements in several areas. However, there was a lack of emphasis on the subject in some year groups with a lack of time given to some units of work which current planning has sought to overcome.

10. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in geography was judged to be unsatisfactory at the end of both key stages. The school has since put in place an updated scheme of work, produced a clear and helpful policy to support teachers, and improved planning and assessment procedures. Pupils currently at the end of each key stage achieve standards that meet national expectations.

11. In history, the previous inspection found that although standards at the end of Key Stage 1 met requirements, attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. The school has done much to improve the situation, and pupils' achievement now matches national expectations at the end of each key stage.

12. Standards in music and art are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.

13. Standards in physical education are average at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection in Key Stage 2 where attainment was below expectations and progress was unsatisfactory.

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

14. At the time of the last inspection it was noted that pupils enjoyed coming to school. All children behaved very sensibly at the busy road outside, waiting to use the crossing patrol. They respond well to routines set up by the school, for instance queuing up to remove their coats in turn. Pupils display a very positive attitude towards their school, tackling work with enthusiasm and good concentration. No differences in attitudes between boys and girls, or between different age groups, were noted. Behaviour in class remained good even when a group of pupils did not fully understand the task in hand. More able pupils work independently with confidence, and all pupils co-operate well in paired or group activities. Mixed gender or ethnic groupings work together with equal ease, sometimes discussing their tasks but generally just quietly getting on with them. Pupils with English as an additional language and traveller children have good attitudes towards school for most of the time.

15. Pupils quickly learn the rules of 'circle time'<sup>6</sup> and take them seriously. They feel able to express their feelings about a variety of issues, and are confident that their teachers will respect their views. Relationships in the school are a particular strength: pupils trust and respect their teachers and learning support assistants, who need to spend little time on disciplinary matters in the classroom. A group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils particularly appreciated systems enabling them to signal privately to their teacher that they wanted to talk to them confidentially, in one case by dropping a note with their name into a 'chat box'. Pupils valued the personal, social and health education teaching they had been given on growing up, drugs education and other sensitive matters. All pupils, even the very youngest, are very aware of the Catholic nature of their school, and of the rituals associated with it. Reciting grace before lunch, crossing themselves in assembly and so on, are very much part of school life. Nevertheless, older pupils when questioned showed an open minded interest in other religions such as Islam and Judaism. No oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, sexism or racism, was observed during the inspection, and parents and staff are confident that it is not a problem.

16. Attendance in the last academic year was below the national average and unauthorised absence was above. This is partly due to prolonged absence of some traveller children. One pupil was excluded for three fixed periods. Punctuality in the mornings is unsatisfactory. During the inspection each morning, and in every class, there was a stream of children arriving late. These late arrivals were generally not bus travellers, but had either been walked to school or come by car. Their lateness was more the responsibility of their adult carers than any fault of their own.

17. At lunchtime in the main hall the noise level is very high and the atmosphere is stressed, hurried and unpleasant. Behaviour in the playground sometimes verges on the aggressive: for example when hats, gloves and shoes are snatched from their owners and thrown about. The youngest children, who do not have a separate play area, tend to hang round the doors and complain that they have 'nothing to do' at playtime. Many of them responded enthusiastically when a learning support assistant encouraged them to do the 'Hokey Cokey' and other songs and dances.

18. Pupils are given a range of responsibilities, helping in their classrooms at all ages, and the Year 6 pupils have additional duties, such as keeping an eye on the youngest children at playtime. Children are encouraged to raise money for good causes: for example Comic Relief and Children in Need.

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

19. The quality of teaching constituted a serious weakness in the school at the time of the last inspection with 25 per cent which was unsatisfactory. Considerable improvements in teachers' understanding and skills have been achieved as a result of very good monitoring by the headteacher and senior management team. As a result 96 per cent of teaching observed was satisfactory or better, with 62 per cent good or better. 10 per cent of lessons were very good and one Year 1 mathematics lesson was excellent. Observed teaching was formally judged as good throughout the school, being of equally good standards at both key stages. Every lesson of the 14 seen in reception was good and because of this consistency, teaching is judged very good for this age group.

20. All teachers had at least one lesson in the good category and six staff at least one very good session. The contribution made to teaching of those specifically involved in special educational needs (including support for physical needs), English as an additional language and individual music lessons is good. Teaching for traveller children, fully included within classes, is satisfactory.

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<sup>6</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.

21. Literacy teaching is a strength of the school. Seven out of the eleven very good lessons observed were in this curriculum area. Over 70 per cent of English lessons were of good quality. Numeracy is taught well, especially at Key Stage 2, but could be further improved by closer attention to the amount of time recommended for mental work by the National Numeracy Strategy.

22. Characteristics of good teaching in this school are in:-

- Good planning: which clearly builds upon pupils' previous experience and sets specific objectives which are well communicated to pupils;
- Very good relationships: which establish mutual respect and mean pupils are encouraged to participate, sometimes as equals: for example 'circle time' where Year 1 pupils freely expressed their interpretation of real and imaginary, in terms of God;
- Good questioning: which often seeks to involve all pupils and specifically challenges more able pupils: for example in a Year 5 science lesson on sound higher attainers were asked how they would modify the experiment;
- Setting appropriate challenge: by presenting work at different levels to classes of wide ranges of ability.

23. Areas for future development which would make teaching even better feature:-

- Improving some teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching ICT and increasing the emphasis placed on the subject: for example data handling to support other curriculum areas;
- The pace of some lessons, especially in physical education where pupils, having warmed up, then cooled down while waiting either to be told what to do, or for their turn;
- In-service training required to develop teachers' confidence in physical education and music where pupils' learning is sometimes restricted by a lack of expertise;
- Ensuring that work is not too difficult: for example there were instances in Year 6 in English and mathematics where expectations were too high and the majority of pupils failed to understand.

24. The four per cent of lessons judged less than satisfactory were spread across five different staff, representing a range of experience, in both key stages. This in no way indicates that teachers are in themselves unsatisfactory, rather that, as the school is already aware, they have specific areas for development.

25. Teachers manage homework effectively and there are good links with parents over what is expected, especially regarding reading for Year R and Key Stage 1. Parents rightfully believe teaching is good at the school. However, a high proportion of parents queried the lack of extracurricular activities organised by staff. The inspection team appreciates the potential difficulties associated with schools with catchment areas which are large, but judges that, although opportunities have been available in the past, currently they are missed to extend and enhance the teaching of the curriculum. This is most obvious in the areas of physical education and music.

26. Overall the school has done very well to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The effect on pupils' learning, and their levels of achievement, has been marked and the school is well placed to develop teaching even further.

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

27. The school provides a good quality curriculum with a broad range of relevant learning opportunities. There has been a significant improvement in the breadth of the curriculum and

the quality of planning for all subjects as a response to the weaknesses identified by the last inspection. The curriculum is balanced well with the exceptions of ICT, which has been underrepresented in the curriculum throughout the school, and design and technology, which has lacked emphasis in some year groups.

28. The curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good with the exception of the outdoor facilities. This is due to the lack of provision of a securely enclosed outdoor play area with appropriate play structures, which limits ongoing opportunities for physical development. Children's physical development is at present fostered through opportunities to use the school hall and playground. Learning experiences are carefully planned to cover all aspects of the Early Learning Goals for younger children. There is an appropriate emphasis on language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Overall, the quality and range of learning experiences provided is good.

29. The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education to include aspects of sex education and the dangers of drug misuse. Discussions, debates and visits support the provision for citizenship but this aspect is not formally documented and structured. The school has very effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy and its implementation of the numeracy strategy is satisfactory. In some instances, the structure of the numeracy session does not reflect the National Numeracy Strategy, especially for mental arithmetic, which limits achievement in this aspect of the subject.

30. The curriculum is extended appropriately by visits to places of scientific, geographical and historical interest. It is suitably enriched by visitors to the school. A residential trip to France for Year 6 pupils has a positive impact on the breadth of learning experiences for those who can participate. The range of extracurricular activities is limited and the majority of pupils have no experience of belonging to school clubs. This restricts their opportunities for shared and competitive sport, music and other leisure activities.

31. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. There is early identification of needs and these are well met by appropriate planning and the good support given by learning support assistants. In a few instances, however, a heavy reliance is placed on those supporting the teacher to deliver aspects of the curriculum. In the absence of a permanently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator there are insufficient opportunities for monitoring these aspects. There is good provision for pupils with significant difficulties and the school's policy of inclusion works successfully, notably giving very good support to those with physical special needs. Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and their needs are well supported. Traveller children are fully included into the school when they attend.

32. Good links have been established with the schools to which most pupils transfer at the age of eleven. Teachers meet regularly throughout the year, pupils have a day visit to their new school and records of achievement are appropriately transferred. There are suitable links with the major pre-school provider so that most children meet their new teachers before starting school and settle into school life confidently when they enter the reception classes.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This aspect has maintained its position since the last inspection, but some improvements have been made to provision for pupils' spiritual development through including the study of other faiths, such as Hinduism and Judaism. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Through school assemblies and class discussions the school provides pupils with an insight into values and beliefs and gives opportunities to reflect upon these and children's own experiences. Every classroom has a special corner established to encourage thoughtfulness and prayer. There are some spiritual links with the curriculum, particularly art and music but there is room to extend these further.

34. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Overall, pupils behave very well throughout the school, particularly so in lessons, and have very good relationships with each other. Pupils know right from wrong and the school provides a clear policy on the expectations for good behaviour. However, at lunchtimes this is less well applied.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones. Pupils raise money for numerous good causes and take part in visits, and older pupils in residential trips. However, there are limited opportunities for older pupils to take on extra responsibilities and to use their initiative, although some pupils do write and produce a school newspaper regularly. Currently, there are no extracurricular activities for pupils to take part in to help develop their social skills and, although it has been provided, presently there is a lack of small play equipment for pupils to use at playtime to support this.

36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are taught to appreciate different cultural traditions, mainly through the appreciation of art, music and dance. However, provision to develop pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of society, although improved since the last inspection, is still an area for development.

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

37. Attendance procedures are satisfactory. Registers are correctly completed, and monitored weekly by the headteacher and administrative officer using a computerised system. Any unexplained absences are initially followed up on the day by the school office and thereafter using a variety of pre-printed letters. The school vigorously promotes regular attendance and daily punctuality through its prospectus, governors' reports to parents, and monthly newsletters. The education welfare officer visits the school fortnightly, and works closely to try to ensure all pupils attend regularly. The school does not have a significant problem with parents removing their children for holidays during term time. Teachers rely on children's verbal assurances that they have informed the office of their late arrival. There is no system to provide confirmation that they have done so. Children are registered as 'late' by the office until 9.30 and as 'unauthorised absence' thereafter.

38. The school is not fulfilling some of the formal requirements for child protection procedures. However, it should be stressed that all staff are aware of the need to be sensitive to signs of physical or emotional abuse amongst pupils. Staff know pupils well and have their trust, and would immediately raise any concerns with the headteacher, even though some teaching and non-teaching staff were unaware that she is the designated Child Protection Liaison Officer. At present the headteacher is the designated member of staff who has received full training on this topic, since the deputy head's post is currently vacant. However, six teachers have received training from an outside provider.

39. The school has very good systems for monitoring personal development. Careful records are kept and analysed, and this ensures progression between classes and supplements teachers' good knowledge of pupils. The school has a growing reputation for its support of special needs pupils (in particular those with physical needs) and some parents specifically said that they had chosen the school for this reason. At the parents' meeting before the inspection, it was felt that the Christian values of the school were very clear and that the school valued children as individuals. Annual reports include comments on personal development: children comment on their progress and are aware of their personal development targets. Parents were aware that teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, and these are often explicitly stated at the start of lessons. Every week a special 'achievement assembly' is held when teachers nominate children to receive stickers and certificates of achievement, both personal and academic. Children are awarded housepoints during the week for effort and achievement: the house captains are elected by Year 6.

40. The programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) is currently under review to take account of new government initiatives, but it is well established and planned to ensure progression throughout the school. Children in Year 5 and Year 6 found the

information about puberty and about social problems they had been given in personal, social and health education valuable and interesting. Circle time is a regular feature throughout the school, clearly linked with assemblies and following a whole school plan. Older pupils are given sex education which follows diocesan guidelines.

41. Behaviour management in the classroom is consistent and successful for most of the time. The system is based around a seven-point 'code of conduct' which is very clearly conveyed to parents and children. Each class draws up its own rules based on the code. In general, teachers need to spend very little time on disciplinary matters: simple stratagems, such as a raised hand, are sufficient to obtain silent attention from pupils. The school adopts a strong line towards unacceptable behaviour. Parents of the few children who lie, steal, swear, have tantrums, throw things or damage property get a pre-printed letter from the headteacher asking them to ensure that their child does not behave in this way again. The management of behaviour at lunchtime and playtime, however, is not so successful. The lunchtime supervisors tend to adopt a confrontational style with the children, as do some playground supervisors. In both cases supervisors lack strategies which would help them control children and there is too little to do outside during break. There is a need for more training for these staff to help them adopt a style more in keeping with the school's generally low-key approach.

42. Arrangements to ensure the health and safety of children are satisfactory. The school has a regular programme of risk assessment following local education authority guidelines. The headteacher and site manager walk round the site weekly and a full risk assessment is done with the governors' premises committee termly. All staff regularly inform the head or site manager of any perceived risks, and the school consistently promotes healthy and safe living through its personal, social and health education programme. All helpers in school are police checked. There are four first aiders amongst the staff, all of whom have completed a five day course. All qualifications are up to date. A first aider is always present when pupils are on site. There are first aid boxes in all classes and separate boxes to take on school trips. There are regular fire drills and the extinguishers and alarm systems are regularly checked, and the fire brigade made a safety check of the building within the last two years. The doors to the cleaners' and site manager's cupboards are kept locked. Children who feel unwell, or who have long-standing medical conditions, are assured of sympathetic and supportive care.

43. A number of minor issues with regard to the site and health and safety were noted, and a list has been supplied to the governors. Provision for health and safety is satisfactory, and it is not considered that any of these hazards put the children at particular risk.

44. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are very good. This represents a marked improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when they were judged to be sound. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science (and recently ICT), very good records are kept, indicating how well pupils have achieved, and where they have problems. This information is used well to set individual targets for raising pupils' levels of attainment. The school has successfully developed a whole school approach to assessment and record keeping of pupils' performance in all other subjects, together with that of personal development. In these non-core subjects, pupils are assessed against agreed criteria at the end of each topic. Pupil attainment for each subject is given in a very clear and well structured annual report form.

45. Good use is made of assessment information gathered soon after the youngest children in the Foundation Stage start school, to plan learning to match individual abilities. This information gives the school an accurate picture of the range of attainment on entry so that the progress made by individual children through the Foundation Stage can be assessed.

46. Teachers carry out assessments at particular points of pupils' time in school, including a baseline profile on entry, statutory assessments at ages seven and eleven, and optional

assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5. These, together with 'end of topic tests', enable staff to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress as they move through the school. Teachers carry out detailed analyses of assessment results to determine how curricular provision needs to be modified to improve pupils' attainment. In so doing, the school has successfully addressed the criticism within the last report that stated the school made insufficient use of assessment information. The school is in the early stages of compiling moderated portfolios of pupils' work in each subject to support staff in assessment activities.

47. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and supported well. Those with English as an additional language, and traveller children, are monitored through the use of agreed local authority procedures. Assessment of pupils' performance forms an integral part of teachers' planning, and, as such, helps ensure pupils are set tasks suitably matched to their ability; an aspect considered in need of improvement in the last inspection.

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

48. At the time of the last inspection parents expressed positive views of the school, and felt well informed about its activities. Parents' responses on this occasion were overwhelmingly positive: in particular parents feel teaching is good, the school has high expectations of its pupils, and teaching and non-teaching staff are friendly and approachable. Parents are confident that staff know how their children are progressing, and that any complaints will be quickly dealt with. The only area of concern is the lack of extracurricular activities, although some parents feel that a selection of playground toys, rather than formal lunchtime clubs, would be a good idea.

49. The school has a variety of very effective links with parents. Before children join, their parents are given a pre-school pack of activities, and are invited to visit the school with their children. Each year group has a meeting early in September, when class teachers meet all the parents, and explain what work their children will be doing during the year. There is a formal parents' evening each term. In addition, the school stresses its open-door policy: parents can speak to the headteacher informally any morning, and arrange to see her or the class teacher at short notice. Parents are invited to assemblies, masses and special presentations, although space may limit the numbers who can attend any one event. The quality of information is good. The school produces a monthly newsletter with diary dates and brief details of forthcoming activities, and year groups send out their own information. The headteacher ensures that parents who are unable to read English are kept fully informed. Since shifting the time of curriculum workshops from evenings to Monday mornings, the school has had a regular attendance of about 70 parents and much interest has been generated. Annual reports to parents were redesigned last year, to report on individual progress rather than reiterating curriculum information and the quality of these is good.

50. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. Most parents make good use of the home-school reading diaries and support their children's homework as required. About a dozen parents and grandparents help regularly in school in various ways, in the classroom or the school library. Parents are always willing to help on school visits, and when asked, to assist with fundraising events staged by the Friends' Association, which is chaired by the headteacher. The association stages three events a year, as well as discos for the children and, occasionally, social events for parents. It raises about £3000 annually.

51. However, a significant minority of parents fail to realise the importance of punctuality and consistent attendance, despite regular appeals in the school newsletter. During the inspection every morning saw a stream of children arriving between five and twenty minutes late. The headteacher has had to send out a hundred letters in one term asking parents to explain why their children were absent from school because no explanation had been given. This casual attitude of some parents towards attendance and punctuality means that the first lesson of the day is often disrupted, and that some children do not receive all the education they deserve.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The strategic management of the school is much better than at the time of the last inspection and is now good. The headteacher, through good analyses and evaluation, has established very clear educational direction and priorities in the school's management plan. Effective links are made with finance. The headteacher leads the staff as a good team and ensures that there is a common commitment to raising standards. This, together with the staff's very good relationships with pupils, means that the school's ethos is very good.

53. The school's stated aim to encourage personal development as well as academic success, builds on the good level of pastoral care identified in the last inspection. The school has made very good progress in addressing the issues of serious weakness highlighted in the previous full report. Improvements to planning, assessment, teaching and monitoring have all been successfully continued since the interim follow-up inspection of July 1998. On the basis of good management, its policies and procedures, the school is now considered well placed for future developments.

54. Since the negative comments of the last report, the contribution that governors make is improved. Their understanding of issues concerning the management of the school is sound overall, and in the cases of special educational needs and finance, good. Governors support the head well and are playing an appropriate part in appointing a new deputy head and special educational needs co-ordinator.

55. The school maintains good job descriptions and the role of subject managers is clearly identified. The effects of good delegation and a high level of support in terms of non teaching release time for management duties means most subjects are well managed, especially English and mathematics.

56. Very effective management of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs means that provision is good and pupils make good progress, notably those with physical needs. Outside agencies and support for those pupils with English as an additional language and for traveller children are well managed. Such pupils are given appropriate individual support and fully included into school life.

57. Pupils and behaviour are managed well in lesson time. This is particularly successful in the Foundation Stage and for pupils who have individual education plans identifying behavioural targets. Consequently the effects on learning are positive and because pupils' attitudes and concentration spans are good, teachers are able to focus on learning objectives for most of the time. However, arrangements for lunchtime in the dining hall are poorly managed. There is considerable congestion, pupils eat with their coats on and there is much confusion in a confined space. Supervisory staff are not well deployed. Noise levels rise to unacceptable limits and children, having buffeted one another due to the lack of space, sometimes continue arguments out in the playground. A radical review of the management of how pupils sit, enter, move and exit, together with how sandwich boxes are to be stored is urgently required to improve efficiency. Providing children with a more ordered environment is necessary to make mealtimes more closely reflect the school's caring ethos.

58. Improving the quality of the playground surface is already a priority identified by the school and local education authority. The introduction of small play equipment for pupils to use at breaktimes would improve behaviour and make supervision management easier. Providing more training for lunchtime supervisors in how to manage children would reduce the possibility of confrontation and enhance still further the school's ethos.

59. The standard of financial planning and management, together with that of financial control is good. The small number of recommendations for improvement, raised by the school's last audit of its financial management systems, has been addressed in full. In contrast to the findings of the last inspection, the budget is closely linked with the prioritised

targets within the school's strategic improvement plan. Governors are closely involved in budgetary matters, and all expenditure, including specific grants and resources for aspects such as special educational needs, and the support for pupils with English as an additional language, is carefully targeted and used to good advantage. Although the school's documentation indicates a very high projected financial carry over from the current financial year, further analysis confirms most of the funds are already committed to agreed improvements and initiatives, leaving the governing body with an appropriately sized contingency fund. In keeping with the school's good application of 'best value', all spending decisions are evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of their impact on the quality of education.

60. There are sufficient and suitably qualified staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage of learning. All subjects now have a manager to oversee development, but this has not always been so, with the result that physical education and music have suffered from gaps in subject development. The school's strategy for staff training and development is good and takes place linked to individual and whole school needs. This is organised effectively by the manager for continuing professional development and suitably covers performance management requirements. All staff have appropriate job descriptions linked to their subject responsibilities and action plans. The staff handbook sets out clearly school routines. However, although non-teaching lunchtime staff have received some training for their role this is still underdeveloped in terms of the management of pupils. Newly qualified teachers receive good support from the school and their mentors and have time away from their classes for training and preparation. Temporary teachers working in the school feel well supported by the headteacher and staff. The school is committed to supporting the training of student teachers and has strong links with teacher training institutions. There is an effective manager with responsibility for the organisation of students within the school and liaison with institutions. Overall, teachers are well deployed and provide effective support for newly qualified teachers: for example working alongside them in classrooms.

61. At the last inspection the accommodation was described as good, being clean, bright, and well maintained. The only criticism made was that there was no secure play area for the youngest children. The standard of the accommodation is still good overall, and there have been some significant improvements. An attractive extension contains a new classroom and a room for special needs work, and most pupil toilets have been modernised (the remaining ones will be, by the end of the current term). One playground has been resurfaced, and the school has been made fully accessible to wheelchairs. A shower and physiotherapy room for disabled pupils has been installed in the Early Years block.

62. The school occupies two buildings, facing each other across the middle of three playgrounds. The main building is spacious, with a glassed central library area and wide corridors providing plenty of room for small group work. The classrooms are adequate for their current class sizes, and all have their own cloakrooms. Other rooms include a staffroom, school office, separate photocopying/storage room, special educational needs room, head's office, and medical room. The hall is barely adequate to accommodate the whole school, and space is further reduced by the awkward storage of lunchtime and physical education equipment around the walls. This has a negative effect on mealtime arrangements. However, there is plenty of storage space which is well used. The main building is in a good state of maintenance internally and externally. The Early Years block is largely open plan, which produces some noise intrusion during lessons. However, staff do not find this a problem. The classrooms are barely adequate for their present class sizes. In addition to classrooms, the block contains the deputy head's office, a medical room, quiet areas off each classroom, a disabled toilet/shower room, library, and a small assembly area. Storage space for resources, and cloakroom areas for children, are adequate for present needs. Both buildings are cleaned daily to a high standard. A few minor problems were noted inside the main building. Pupil toilets are housed at the end of the library. This means there is some lack of privacy for those using the toilets, and some intrusion of noise and smell into the library and quiet working areas. The heating system of fans is noisy, and sometimes (for

instance in the hall during assembly) makes it hard to hear what is said. There are leaks from the glass roof over the library.

63. Externally, the school has three tarmac playgrounds which are adequate in size for the present numbers. The one used by the youngest children has some playground markings, a small wooden 'adventure' area and two picnic benches. The other two each have a bench but no other features. Attempts by the school to plant flowers and shrubs at various times have been consistently thwarted by vandalism. Beyond the playgrounds, the school has access to large grass playing fields owned by the city council, although discussions about their future are currently taking place. The external fences are in a good state of repair. A mobile classroom, housing a teacher training unit, has just been installed on the playing field. The school has two designated staff car parking areas outside the fences. Security systems are good. The three gates to the busy road are kept locked during school time. The playgrounds are currently featureless, pending scheduled resurfacing work. Presently there is little for the children to do or to look at: for example an environmental area, sculptures or mosaics. The 'adventure' area is currently unusable because heavy rain has washed away the bark chippings, and it is very small for the number of children. One playground is intended to become a car park for trainee teachers and their instructors, and a new playground is to be made on the far side of this car park on the school field. There is still no secure play area for the under fives, as recommended in the last report. Parents commented that the playgrounds become waterlogged in rainy weather, but the inspection did not afford an opportunity to investigate this.

64. A key issue in the last report was to improve the resources in those subjects where they were unsatisfactory. Good progress has been made and, whilst some improvements are still needed, there are now no serious weaknesses. Improvements have been made in the following areas:-

- In English there were serious weaknesses. Funding from the National Literacy Strategy has helped the school to provide updated resources. The school has funded a new reading scheme;
- Mathematics was weak in information and communication technology resources to aid mathematics learning. This was much improved, but has been set back again with new computers which are not compatible with the old software;
- Science resources were weak. Money has been spent to remedy this, largely successfully. There are some exceptions where sharing limits learning;
- Design and technology resources were weak, but are now just satisfactory;
- Geography and history both had weaknesses that have now been remedied, particularly with some useful artefacts for history. Use of CD-ROMs is developing and the Internet will soon be on line;
- Music resources were weak, but are now satisfactory, although there are insufficient CDs for music from other cultures;
- Physical education resources were poor and not well organised. Small equipment is now satisfactory, although some large gymnastic equipment is unsuitable. Storage is still not well thought out;
- Library resources were low. The library is now well stocked, well organised, and areas are clearly labelled;
- Resources for the Foundation Stage remain good, although some are looking 'tired' and need renewal. The school recognises the need for a more secure outdoor area for young children.

65. The school's unit cost per pupil is above average. However, when taking into account:

- Pupils' attainment on entry;
- Good added value in terms of standards when pupils leave;
- The quality of the school as a community and the education it provides;
- The overall effective deployment of staff and use of resources;

Holy Family Catholic Primary School now gives good value for money. This represents a very good improvement since the last report when the school was considered to give unsatisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. The following issues should be seen in the light of the very good progress achieved since the last inspection. The school has already identified some of these areas for development in its improvement plan. In order to continue to further improve the school headteacher, governors and staff should:-

- **Raise** standards, as planned, in information and communication technology (ICT), particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
  - Ensuring full coverage of the required programmes of study;
  - Improving teachers' confidence, knowledge and understanding of the subject;
  - Developing the use made of ICT to support other subjects;
  - Increasing resources still further.

Paragraphs: 3, 8, 23, 25, 27, 83, 95, 105, 107, 116, 131, 133, 134, 136.

- **Improve** the quality of teaching for physical education as planned by developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Paragraphs: 23, 25, 27, 146, 148, 149, 150.

- **Raise** standards of design and technology as already begun, by increasing the emphasis based on the subject, and monitoring that aspects planned for are completed.

Paragraphs: 3, 9, 112, 114.

- **Improve** organisation and arrangements for lunchtimes in the hall, providing more training for lunchtime supervisors; and developing, as planned, playground activities for pupils at breaktimes.

Paragraphs: 17, 34, 35, 41, 57, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64.

- **Overcome**, as recommended by the previous inspection, pupils' lateness; continuing to convince parents of the need for pupils to arrive on time.

Paragraphs: 16, 37, 51.

In addition governors may consider the following minor issues for inclusion in their action plan:-

- Providing, as intended, a secure outdoor area for physical development opportunities for the Foundation Stage.

Paragraphs: 28, 61, 63, 64, 65, 74.

- Developing a programme of extracurricular activities.

Paragraphs: 25, 30, 35, 48, 136, 152.

- Continuing to attend to minor issues of health and safety as brought to governors' attention.

Paragraphs: 38, 43, 63, 149, 151.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

115

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

45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	52	34	4	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)	437
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	107
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	199
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6
<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	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
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	36	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	28
	Girls	32	35	35
	Total	58	62	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (88)	97 (81)	98 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	26
	Girls	31	33	30
	Total	57	60	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (86)	94 (93)	88 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

### 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	18	30	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	16
	Girls	27	20	27
	Total	39	32	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (63)	67 (66)	90 (64)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	15
	Girls	27	23	23
	Total	39	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (58)	77 (66)	79 (66)
	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	7
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	347
Any other minority ethnic group	14

*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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Average class size	31

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

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	372

*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	3	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
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	£
Total income	787761
Total expenditure	755490
Expenditure per pupil	1871
Balance brought forward from previous year	18775
Balance carried forward to next year	51046

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	430

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	30	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	25	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	3	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	39	6	2	0
The teaching is good.	83	16	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	27	9	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	20	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	38	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	24	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	32	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	26	20	8	25

*Percentages above do not equal 100 due to rounding.*

Twelve parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the start of the inspection, and a further five parent representatives met with the lay inspector during the inspection.

## **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**

67. The Foundation Stage of learning has maintained and improved upon the strong position reported in the last inspection report. The manager and staff have developed a comprehensive and up to date scheme of work and policy for this stage of learning. Planning takes account of recent national developments in literacy and numeracy with detailed and well thought out work taking place on these aspects each day.

68. The two reception classes covering children in the Foundation Stage, under fives and those aged five, are well established and efficiently organised. The overall, good teaching provided is having a positive impact on improving children's learning. The class teachers and the learning support assistants work very well together as a team to ensure very good quality provision and support at all times. The Foundation Stage of learning is well led by the manager and there is a good and clear direction for development. There is good balance between the formal teaching of skills and practical and creative activities. Skills teaching is well thought out and imaginative, and stimulates and extends learning well: for example the teaching of handwriting through a series of practical and formal activities.

69. The attainment on entry for most children is below average. This is confirmed by the initial assessment undertaken at entry. Most children under five are making good progress from entry. Evidence indicates, that by the time they are five, the majority of children have achieved well, to attain the Early Learning Goals in communications, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. Those children capable of higher attainment are well provided for and their achievements are above average in all Early Learning Goals. Many children start school with poorly developed speaking and listening skills, but they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Those children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards the targets set for them.

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

70. Many children enter the reception classes with limited experience in working and playing alongside others in order to develop their personal and social skills. By the time children leave reception most have made good progress and are attaining the Early Learning Goals in this area. This shows good achievement from entry and reflects well upon good teaching, which skilfully extends children's understanding of their actions and social awareness of others through games and discussions. Children are enthusiastic about their learning and are quick to help each other and to share what they have learnt with adults. All adults present good role models, joining in with children's activities and discussions. Children respond well to encouragement and show good social consideration towards each other, treating each other with courtesy and respect: for example when working together and sharing construction materials whilst making models of toys and buildings. Children are encouraged to think about their feelings and the feelings of others as part of their emotional development and show good understanding in this. For example, when children talked with their class teacher about how they would help cheer someone up who had lost their friend in the playground, they gave some thoughtful replies.

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

71. Many children start school with poor speaking and listening skills and they are making particularly good achievements in developing these. All adults consistently and actively encourage children to answer questions about their learning. For example, children gave a wide range of words, such as "scrunchy", "fluffy" and "prickly", to describe the objects they found in a 'Feely' bag. Children engage in role play and have many well structured

opportunities for speaking to each other and listening to each other and to stories. Children enjoy looking at and sharing books with adults. Many children can read simple sentences. Reading and phonics are taught systematically and children are encouraged to use letter sounds, which they have learnt, to help them read new words. Children are achieving as expected in their reading development, but they are making good progress in acquiring a love of reading, partly through taking books home to share with an adult. Most children can form letters and write their names with many progressing to writing simple sentences or stories: for example some children had written about their simple science experiments. By the time children end the reception year, most have made good progress and are attaining the Early Learning Goals in this area. Good teaching impacts well on extending learning from entry and in particular challenging those capable of higher attainment to achieve standards higher than those expected.

### **Mathematical development**

72. Children benefit from good teaching, which has a clear focus on developing their mental arithmetic skills. Teachers use songs and number rhymes to make learning fun. All children can count to ten with many to twenty and some well beyond. Children use mathematical language with growing confidence and many can explain simple addition problems. Higher attaining children can add on more numbers up to twenty in their heads. Most can add on numbers up to ten, such as one more than six is seven, and have progressed well to counting backward from ten. There is broad coverage of shape and measurement and good opportunities for constructive play to develop mathematical language. For example, children could explain if the models, which they were making, had tall or long and big or little features. Children could point out shapes, such as squares and circles in these models. By the time children end the reception year, most have made good progress and are attaining the Early Learning Goals in this area. Teaching is good with good use made of games, such as a skittles addition game, to help children, particularly higher attainers, progress well in their learning.

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

73. Children are encouraged to learn about and to investigate their surroundings and to find out about how things are made and how they work. They are keen and show much interest in the world around them. Children find out about the weather, animals, plants, the past and the area in which they live. In scientific investigations, children record their findings, such as when writing about their observations when planting seeds or painting different types of leaves. Children can sort different objects for different reasons, such as toys being suitable for a baby. There is access to computers and with adult help children can key in some words and follow a simple program. A range of suitable model making equipment is provided and with much enthusiasm children can manipulate and construct to make various finished objects. There is good teaching and provision in this aspect and most children make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

### **Physical development**

74. Children have access to the school hall and playground for physical education lessons. The outside area is used for other activities, such as riding tricycles and in warmer weather, using sand and water trays, listening to stories and playing games. These activities are well planned and supervised, but do not take place in a secure fenced area, although plans are now being developed to provide this. When taking part in physical education activities, children show a growing awareness of space and can move around in a number of different ways, such as walking, running and skipping, confidently. Children make good progress and can work with partners: for example when rolling hoops or throwing balls to each other. Good teaching encourages children to work at a brisk pace and to improve their performance. Children engage in warm up activities to start their lessons and to cool down at the end. In

this area of learning, most children make good progress to attain the Early Learning Goals, with higher attainers well challenged.

### **Creative development**

75. A good range of opportunities is provided for children's creative development. Children learn to draw and paint and make models. Children can mix colours and they used this knowledge well when painting pictures of different toys. They learn numerous songs, which they often accompany with actions, and can play simple percussion instruments, such as tambourines and triangles. Children sing such songs as the 'Spider Song' well. Many children can clap out the rhythm of their names. Children are given some suitable opportunities for role play and they take part in this with enthusiasm. Good teaching encourages and extends learning, particularly for those capable of higher attainment, in for instance, their artwork based on observational drawings. For example, children were encouraged to look carefully at the toys being drawn and to explain what they could see. In this area of learning, most children make good progress to attain the Early Learning Goals.

### **ENGLISH**

76. The last inspection judged overall standards to be below average at the end of both key stages in English. Since then, the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and undertaken detailed analyses of assessment results to inform modification of curricular provision. Further improvements include the development of helpful assessment procedures that enable staff to track individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses, and the improvement of reading resources. Together, these strategies and improvements have led to a year on year rise in standards.

77. Results of the end of Key Stage 1 assessments for 2000, showed that whilst standards in reading were above average, they were well above average for writing. Results were well above those of similar schools<sup>7</sup>. At Key Stage 2, although results were similar to those expected of eleven year olds, they were well above average when compared with similar schools. When analysing results by gender, at the end of Year 2 boys outperformed girls in reading, whereas their attainment in writing was similar. For eleven year olds, results followed the national trend with girls outperforming boys.

78. Of pupils currently in Year 2, a little over a half have special educational needs. Just under a half of those in Year 6 have such needs. Inspection evidence confirms that each year group attains overall standards in line with those expected nationally for their age. Pupils' achievement represents good, and, on occasions, very good progress over time for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language. Traveller children make satisfactory progress when they attend.

79. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening throughout the school, and, at the end of each key stage, achieve standards expected of pupils of their age. The opening and plenary sessions of the literacy hour are used well to improve skills in this element of English. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen attentively to teachers and other adults, and to each other's contributions in lessons. Pupils readily take part in oral work, knowing their contributions will be accepted even if they are not accurate. This applies to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Pupils show growing confidence in asking and answering questions, and are keen to read aloud to an audience examples of what they have just read or written. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils respond readily to questions, discuss constructively and use a breadth of vocabulary including subject specific terms, to express themselves clearly.

80. In reading, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Pupils develop fluency and confidence in their reading by using a variety of strategies to decode new words,

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<sup>7</sup> Similar schools refers to those schools with between 8 and 20 per cent free school meals.

including a well taught and sequenced programme of phonics. They read with expression and understanding. Pupils express opinions about the main events in the story and predict what will happen next. In shared reading activities, pupils enjoy providing alternative words for those already within the 'Big Book' text. Pupils are introduced to simple reference materials. They know and talk about the index and contents of a book. Attainment for pupils now at the end of Key Stage 2 is average. Pupils read complex texts with expression and accuracy. They have sound comprehension and comment perceptibly on issues raised within texts. They consider how vocabulary is used to convey and discuss character, setting and plot, as when Year 6 discussed imagery and mood of a scene from 'Tom's Midnight Garden' to good effect. When reading poetry, pupils have an appreciation of alliteration and the poet's use of onomatopoeic words, which they say with enthusiasm and appropriate expression. Inspection evidence confirms the majority of pupils read regularly at home as well as at school. Reading skills are used to good advantage in all areas of the curriculum, to gain information from reference material, and increasingly, through the use of the Internet.

81. The school has responded well to the recommendations of the last report to improve resources for reading. In addition to implementing a new reading scheme, library facilities have been improved. Books are clearly arranged, and, from a young age, pupils know how to find a book on a given subject. The school has been successful in its encouragement of older pupils to join their local library. Many pupils are now regular library users, and pupils in Year 6 frequently bring in books to supplement the school's materials for their weekly 'A to Z' individual project research activities.

82. Standards in writing at the end of both key stages meet expectations for pupils' age, and this represents good learning. The teaching of grammar and punctuation is developed systematically within the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. At Key Stage 1, pupils have good opportunities to write down their thoughts, and to extend simple sentences into more complex ones using connectives. Pupils use their developing writing skills to compose simple stories, to write letters, and to produce accompanying captions for work. By the end of Year 2, handwriting is above average. At Key Stage 2, pupils write for a range of audiences, using a variety of genres. Well crafted poems are written on a variety of subjects. Pupils draft and edit interesting reviews and synopses of books, and undertake work on play scripts, sometimes word processing and editing direct to screen, as in the case of Year 5 pupils working on their 'abstract poems'. In general writing, pupils make satisfactory use of paragraphs, and correctly use a wide range of punctuation. In stories and persuasive writing, most pupils commence with a clear introduction, followed by a series of well ordered points that lead to a considered conclusion. Effective use is made of dictionaries and thesauruses to support writing and to develop and broaden vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, pupils write with a fluent and clear cursive style, and work is presented well.

83. Pupils' writing skills are used and developed soundly in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils become legionaries in the Roman army, and write letters home from Britain. In geography, pupils write to compare and contrast lifestyles in different environments around the world. In science, pupils record and write about their investigations. Through the varied use of traditional tales, modern stories, books from other cultures, and non fiction texts, English makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Currently there is too little evidence of ICT for word processing to support English.

84. Pupils enjoy English and respond well to the literacy hour. They respond well to challenging work and to searching questions posed by teachers. They sustain concentration well and listen attentively to teachers and to each other. Pupils work co-operatively in groups and handle books with care. When asked, pupils willingly explain what they are doing. They take pride in their work and show a sense of achievement when they complete tasks.

85. The quality of teaching is judged to be good overall, a marked improvement on the last inspection. Whilst 97 per cent of lessons observed were judged satisfactory or better, including 62 per cent good, and a further 19 per cent very good, one lesson was judged unsatisfactory. In this lesson, pupils were set tasks not suitably matched to their abilities,

and, as a consequence, they made too little progress. Teachers plan very effectively to the guidelines of the literacy strategy, and, at the start of each lesson, pupils are given a clear explanation of objectives to be met. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and this is used very effectively to stimulate pupils' imagination and enthusiasm. Further good features of lessons are the brisk pace and the good level of questioning which involves all pupils. In nearly all lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. The good work of the well briefed learning support assistants is a significant reason why pupils achieve well. Their work is particularly noted in the support of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Assistants' close work with teachers enables these pupils to make good progress in terms of prior attainment.

86. The subject has benefited from strong leadership. Very good procedures are in place to monitor what pupils know and can do. These include regular assessments of pupils' performance, and individual targets being set for all pupils. Whilst the current subject manager, in conjunction with her 'shadow manager' monitors planning and evaluates standards, the headteacher and senior management team monitor the quality of teaching. It is planned that following appropriate training, the subject manager will undertake lesson observations. All issues raised in the last report have been addressed fully. In association with the Institute of Education in London, the school is now involved in research into ways in which pupils' performance in writing can be improved. The school has gained a Best Practice Research Scholarship from the DfEE in order to develop writing in Year 6.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were well above average at Level 2, the expected level, compared with schools nationally and when compared with schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was below the national average, but in line with similar schools. These results are a good improvement since the last inspection when attainment was well below expectation. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were below the national average at Level 4, the expected level, compared with schools nationally, but in line with similar schools. At the higher Level 5, the results were in line with the national average, but well above those of similar schools. There has been a steady increase in performance over the past four years apart from a dip in 1998 due to a lower ability year group and five pupils missing Level 4 by one or two points.

88. Inspection findings show attainment to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This shows good achievement at both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils started from a low baseline, and there are 54 per cent of pupils on the special needs register. Pupils have therefore achieved well to reach their present standard. Similarly, the present Year 6 pupils achieved standards below expectations when they were in Year 2, and as there are 45 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register, this shows they are achieving well.

89. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress.

90. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. Many can record number sentences from given word problems, where their reading skills are well used, and often related to real life situations. For example, pupils went to their class shop to buy two items. They had to add the cost of the two items, taking the total from £1 to find out how much change they would have. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the names and properties of a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.

91. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of the number system, including numbers to 1000, fractions and decimals. They accurately calculate using the four operations

of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Quick mental recall of multiplication facts to 10 times 10 is encouraged and is developing well. Higher attaining pupils have a good awareness of how to estimate and check answers using calculators. Most pupils are neat and accurate with their geometric drawings. They name and classify a variety of shapes, and can calculate perimeter and area.

92. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good. In nearly 50 per cent of lessons observed, teaching was good, very good or excellent. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly in teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Some good aspects of teaching observed in many lessons are:-

- Detailed lesson planning, usually including different work for different groups of pupils;
- Good pace where pupils are encouraged to work hard, often within set time limits;
- High expectations of work and behaviour, with pupils managed well;
- Higher ability pupils extended and challenged well;
- Lower ability pupils supported well by learning support assistants;
- Very good relationships which help to create a purposeful working atmosphere.

Together, these positive aspects are ensuring that pupils are achieving well, for their ability, in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

93. In a small minority of lessons, there is room for improvement in certain areas. Although the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well, there are occasions when the structure of the lesson is not as effective as it should be because of poor time management. For example, on two occasions the brisk opening to the lesson with mental and oral work dragged on too long, not at a brisk pace, which then led to insufficient time for an effective plenary session at the end. This left pupils without the opportunity to discuss and consolidate the work they have been doing. Although the work of the learning support assistants is a strength in the majority of lessons, there are occasions when they are not effectively deployed and staff are unable to give support to those who need it.

94. Numeracy skills are well used in other areas of the curriculum. In science, pupils observe and measure accurately in their experiments. In history, pupils can order numbers to 2000 on their timeline, and in geography, they use co-ordinates in mapwork.

95. Pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is underdeveloped. The school had made good progress in this area, but with new computers, which are not compatible with much existing software, plans are in place to address the situation.

96. Good quality marking, informal observations, reviews of lessons and a variety of formal assessments, are all used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment, and to track their progress from year to year. National Curriculum test results are analysed thoroughly, and used to help plan future work to eliminate gaps in pupils' knowledge by setting sufficiently challenging tasks.

97. The school operates a variety of systems for grouping pupils for their mathematics lessons. In Year 5 extra teachers are made available. However, more thought is needed to ensure that the most efficient and effective use is being made of these and the school's permanent teachers.

98. The school has made good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection in:-

- Matching work to pupils' abilities;
- Lesson planning;
- Assessment procedures;
- Teaching;
- Monitoring by the subject manager.

These factors have been instrumental in the good improvement which has been achieved in pupils' attainment.

## **SCIENCE**

99. Standards in science are broadly average throughout the school. In year 2000 teacher assessments showed that seven year old pupils attain results close to average overall. In scientific enquiry when compared to similar schools pupils achieve above average results for those attaining higher than expected levels. Pupils' achievements were average for the expected levels. Test results for eleven year olds were average for expected levels and below average for the number of pupils achieving higher levels. When compared to similar schools, results are above average for expected levels and average for higher levels. These results show significant improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below average for seven year olds and just in line for eleven year olds.

100. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry to the school, the standards of work in the Foundation Stage and the above average level of special needs, pupils have a good rate of learning throughout the school. There is an improvement in the rate of learning in science for all pupils since the last inspection. This is because pupils are clear about what they are meant to be learning, lessons are well structured and there are challenging activities. Pupils in Year 1 learn that darkness is the result of the absence of light. They discover that a torch will enable an object in a black box to be seen. They develop their predicting skills well and begin to record their findings. They take home their black boxes to demonstrate to parents and thereby have an opportunity to reinforce their learning. Pupils in Year 2 learn about pushing and pulling. They develop an understanding of how a force can make an object speed up and explain their work to the class.

101. Pupils in Year 3 develop a clear understanding that different food types fulfil different needs and that a varied, balanced diet is essential for good health. They categorise common foods into those we need for growth, activity and good health. They compare their results and begin to understand the connections between cause and effect. In Year 4, most pupils are able to predict correctly the final temperature when conducting an experiment designed to demonstrate that water 'equalises' at room temperature. During their lesson pupils learnt how to ensure they were setting up a fair test and how to read the thermometer accurately.

102. In Year 5, pupils gain good knowledge and understanding of sound transmission by devising a fair test to discover which materials are most effective insulators. They make predictions, carry out their experiment, compare results and draw conclusions as part of their scientific investigation. Pupils in Year 6 have extended their recording skills and many are able to construct successfully their own key: for example to identify birds. They develop a sound knowledge of scientific vocabulary, such as producers and consumers, when describing food chains. Whereas most pupils have a good grasp of the process involved in dissolving solids in water and can write a report of their experiment with clear explanations, some are unsure about the reversal process especially lower attaining pupils. Teachers use a scientific word bingo game to consolidate pupils' knowledge. This reinforces pupils' knowledge and ensures good gains in learning over a period of time. Pupils learn to measure weight in Newtons and understand about the conflicting forces of gravity and up-thrust when they conduct an experiment with objects in water.

103. The quality of teaching in science is good overall for younger pupils and satisfactory overall for older pupils. It is good in Years 2, 3 and 6. There were some good lessons in other year groups. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. This represents a major improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory for younger pupils and, although sound overall for older pupils, there were some unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching has improved because lesson planning follows a good format with clear learning intentions and pupils are well managed. Where teaching is good, assessment of progress is used

effectively to inform pupils of their next steps in learning. In half of the less effective lessons the teacher input was too long and pupils were inactive for overlong periods. These lessons were typified by tasks which did not take account of pupils' differing levels of attainment.

104. Pupils' response in science lessons is good. In some lessons it is very good, especially for the younger pupils. Pupils listen carefully, observe closely and are keen to answer questions and share their ideas. In a few lessons pupils lacked engagement with the task because the practical groups were too large and they had to wait too long for a turn. This was due to insufficient resources.

105. The subject manager provides good leadership. She is fully aware of the lack of ICT being used within the subject and is introducing science challenges to extend higher attaining pupils. Opportunities to monitor teachers' planning and lessons have been used well to raise the subject's profile and pupils' standards. The curriculum is enhanced by annual visits for most year groups, which embody aspects of environmental science, such as pond, river, farm, common and local street surveys.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. Evidence from lesson observations, work samples, links with other subjects and planning indicates that for the majority of pupils their attainment is in line with what is expected for their age by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This represents a similar picture of attainment as that reported on at the time of the last inspection, with again, those pupils capable of higher attainment achieving above what is expected. Pupils experience a broad curriculum covering the National Curriculum, which includes the teaching of skills, use of different materials and the appreciation of famous and other artists' work.

107. At Key Stage 1, pupils can mix colours to make different shades of one colour: for example green or red. Pupils use sketchbooks well to draw and record their observations. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to explore and mould clay and to make three-dimensional objects. For example, pupils in Year 2 were making faces based around a balloon covered with papier mache and moulded to make individual characters, each to a different design. Pupils could talk about their characters and one was making a clown while another a waiter. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to use their sketchbooks well to make designs and to record their observational work. For example, pupils have made good progress to make detailed observational drawings of different objects which show lines, tones and textures used well to convey volume, mood and style. Each pupil has a portfolio of work, which shows examples of paintings, drawings and pattern work as well as colour mixing, use of tones and texture, and these provide good evidence of good progress over time. All pupils have studied the work of a number of famous artists, such as Cezanne and Gauguin and their styles of work. Some pupils have looked at the work of other artists when, for example, learning about different techniques such as using pastels or crayons for still life drawings of fruits, vegetables and other objects. There are some links to other subjects, such as English and history, but links to information technology appear less developed.

108. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good overall and in one lesson, it was very good. In this very good lesson, very effective questioning extended pupils' learning further and pupils gave good suggestions on how to improve their work, such as placing their drawing in the middle of the paper. High standards were promoted effectively and pupils were inspired to do better. Throughout, teachers show good knowledge and understanding and teach skills well. Overall, teachers plan their lessons to extend the learning of pupils of all abilities and some good work results from this. Teachers are well supported by the scheme of work and use this effectively to plan their individual lessons. Some appropriate use is made of day to day assessment to extend learning, but this could be developed further.

109. Overall, pupils display good and often very good attitudes to learning. Pupils show a good understanding of skills and are keen and well motivated to apply this knowledge to their work. Tools and materials are shared without fuss and pupils appreciate each other's efforts.

110. The subject is well co-ordinated with some monitoring of the use of sketchbooks having already taken place to improve standards. A suitable subject development plan is in place. There is a good range of resources, which are well looked after and satisfactory in quantity. Display throughout the school is attractive and promotes learning well and covers a number of different subjects as well as art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. Only two lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. Examination of planning, documentation, discussion with staff and pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work provided additional evidence.

112. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 2 but below average at the end of Year 6. This judgement is broadly similar to the previous inspection although there have been significant improvements in several aspects of the subject. The skills of researching, planning at an increasingly complex level, and lack of pupils' evaluation of their work were all criticised in the last report. These skills have all improved throughout the school, since the last inspection. However, there has been a lack of emphasis on the subject in some year groups which is now being addressed. Over time this had resulted in certain units of work being omitted or receiving inadequate coverage, particularly for older pupils. Some classes do not follow the school's agreed scheme of work closely enough. This limits development of the specific skills which have been planned to ensure regular gains in design and technology learning. Standards are affected by the lack of time given to some units of work. For example, there is evidence of design without making, and the quality of some finishing techniques on models needs improving.

113. The overall rate of learning for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs is sound throughout the school. Learning is good when pupils are asked to recall techniques they have used before and combine them in new situations. For example, Year 2 pupils made sock puppets and practised various fastenings such as sewing. In Year 4, these skills were further developed when pupils made money containers using textiles. Pupils in Year 1 designed and made moving pictures using hinge and slide mechanisms and then evaluated their finished products well. In some projects there is evidence of good subject coverage. For example, pupils in Year 4 proposed their initial ideas for wallets with the user in mind. They modelled these ideas testing different fabric properties and recorded their chosen design using labelled diagrams and simple explanations as part of the design process.

114. In the small number of lessons observed the quality of teaching was sound. Teachers state clearly their learning objectives in planning and there is evidence of good evaluative marking in pupils' books. However, some teachers lack confidence in the subject. They have received valuable support from the subject manager by the provision of termly project boxes with books and guidance for each topic. However, teachers need additional support in order to raise standards. Currently there are no opportunities for the subject manager to work alongside colleagues in the classroom.

115. Pupils' response in lessons is good. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and they are keen to answer questions. They work with enthusiasm when designing and making and they use tools and materials sensibly.

116. The subject manager provides good supportive leadership. She monitors the termly planning and audits curriculum coverage throughout the school. She has ensured that the scheme of work study units develop the subject's specific skills. She has identified the need to promote the use of control technology and increase the depth of coverage in some topics. A good start has been made in recording and assessing pupils' work.

117. Resources are generally adequate as there are sufficient tools and constructional apparatus. The subject is well supported in some classes by parent helpers.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in geography was judged to be unsatisfactory at the end of both key stages. In order to raise standards, the school has since put in place a new scheme of work to ensure appropriate subject coverage, produced a clear and helpful policy to support teachers, and improved planning and assessment procedures. Resources have been improved across the curriculum.

119. Only one lesson could be observed during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils and staff, together with a review of work and planning, confirms that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make sound progress as they move through the school. Pupils currently at the end of each key stage achieve standards that meet national expectations.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a clear understanding of their immediate locality. They draw simple maps of their routes to school, which include features of the nearby area. Pupils know the countries that make up the United Kingdom, together with a range of background information relating to each. They particularly enjoy learning about the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' and receiving cards he and his minders send from different locations, and finding the various places on maps. They have a clear understanding of the seasonal changes in weather, and the effect this has on life in general. Pupils compare and contrast their life on the outskirts of Southampton with that on the fictitious 'Island of Struay'. They identify similarities and differences, together with perceived benefits and drawbacks of their urban way of life when compared with the rural confines of a small island. Pupils consider what each lifestyle has to offer, which they prefer, and give reasons for their preferences.

121. Pupils at Key Stage 2 build well on what they have learned earlier. They undertake a detailed study of an Indian village and discover the many differences between their own life style and that of a child within the village. Such elements of the curriculum make valuable contributions to pupils' cultural understanding and development. Pupils in Year 5 consider environmental issues when researching whether or not the High Street in Shirley should be closed to traffic. They devise and produce questionnaires for shoppers and traders, and undertake traffic counts when considering the positive and negative aspects that pedestrianisation might have. As part of their work on river systems, pupils in Year 6 were observed using grid references correctly to track the routes of several major rivers around the world. Pupils develop understanding of the life of rivers through work on the local Test and Itchen. On maps, pupils track both rivers from source to the sea at Southampton Water; understand and most explain clearly the terms source, tributary and meander. Pupils have a clear understanding of the power and devastating effect of weather, climate and geographical features through reference to recent flooding across the region.

122. Pupils show positive attitudes to geography and are enthusiastic about their work. They work well either by themselves or with others, frequently discussing the tasks on which they are engaged. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was judged to be good. Planning was clear, tasks were interesting, and good provision was made for pupils at all levels of attainment.

123. The subject is well co-ordinated by a manager who has a clear insight on how to further develop geography across the school. Priorities for consideration in the subject improvement plan include staff training regarding the requirements of the National Curriculum, together with further purchases of relevant resources, including videos and CD-ROM computer programs. Whilst assessment of pupils' skills and understanding of each topic are already good, in

order to support teachers' assessment of pupil performance further, a portfolio of pupils' work for each year group, indicating levels of attainment, is in the early stages of preparation.

## **HISTORY**

124. The previous inspection found that although standards in history at the end of Key Stage 1 met requirements, attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. The school has done much to improve the situation. A clear and helpful policy is now in place, together with a detailed scheme of work that complies with recent National Curriculum guidance. Resource levels to support pupils' learning have been improved, and are now judged to be good.

125. Only two lessons were observable during the inspection. Evidence from these, together with scrutiny of pupils' work, review of planning, and discussions with pupils and staff, confirms that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make sound progress in their development of historical knowledge and skills. Pupils' achievement now matches national expectations at the end of each key stage. When they attend, traveller children make satisfactory progress.

126. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of chronology and change. Their learning is supported by the effective use of artefacts. For example, pupils in Year 1 compare and contrast toys from years ago with those of today. In Year 2, a good range of Victorian artefacts not only enables pupils to begin to understand everyday life of that era, but helps them to learn the importance of primary sources of evidence in telling the story of our heritage.

127. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn in detail about life in Roman Britain. History really comes alive when pupils visit Fishbourne Roman Palace, and when they receive a visit from a Roman legionary. In an observed lesson, pupils showed a clear understanding of the events leading up to the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain. They successfully undertook research to compare and contrast Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon ways of life. In Year 5, pupils undertake detailed studies of several aspects of life in Ancient Egypt, using information from approved Internet sites to good advantage. Linked with their studies of Britain since World War II, pupils in Year 6 study the 'story' of the local Millbrook estate and its development through to the present day. Pupils benefit from talks given by those who have been residents on the estate from its earliest days, and can talk about the changes that have taken place over the years.

128. Pupils show positive attitudes towards history, and their enthusiasm is especially evident when they handle and discuss artefacts. In both lessons observed, pupils were attentive, eager to respond to questions, and listened carefully, not only to their teacher, but to the comments and information their friends had to offer.

129. In both lessons observed, teaching was judged to be good. Lessons have clear objectives that are explained carefully at the start of the session. Teachers provide interesting activities and make effective use of resources in order to reinforce pupils' understanding of the concepts being taught. For example, in order to develop understanding of how sources of evidence provide us with historical information, pupils in Year 4 become archaeologists as they examine pots and other artefacts to elicit information on life in Ancient Greece. Planning is thorough and pupils' performance for each topic is carefully assessed against a set of agreed criteria. The subject plays an important part in the provision of pupils' cultural development.

130. The subject is co-ordinated well by a manager who has played a significant role in raising both the subject's profile and standards achieved by pupils. She is now in the early stages of developing a portfolio of pupils' annotated work across the school to support staff with assessment activities.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been significantly improved since the last inspection. As a result, standards have been improved and are now in line with what is expected nationally by the age of seven. Work currently undertaken by those in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and does have good features: for example the introduction of research work using the Internet in Year 6. However, due to the subject having been underemphasised (and in some classes this is still the case) pupils, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, have not covered all the prescribed areas of study. Statutory requirements are not yet met and standards by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 remain unsatisfactory. Too little work has been completed, especially in control technology, and very little in monitoring.

132. By the end of Year 2 when pupils are seven the majority, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have a sound understanding of how to enter, save and retrieve their work. They are proficient at using the mouse and keyboard to give commands to the computer and higher attainers are able to amend their efforts, changing fonts and sizes whilst word processing. Those traveller children whose attendance is regular achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have regular experience in discussing how ICT affects everyday lives: for example at the checkouts and tills of shops; and are beginning to follow computer programs to investigate real and imaginary situations.

133. Pupils, by the end of Year 6, can use computers as word processors, save and retrieve their work and interrogate databases. A Year 6 class was observed exploring information from CD-ROM and the Internet and individual pupils were able to describe work they had previously covered when following simulation programs in geography and history. However, discussions with staff and pupils and reference to school records show Year 6 pupils will not have covered all the necessary programmes of study before they leave. For example, very few pupils are able to produce and modify the kind of multimedia presentations expected of this age group and their experience of applying ICT in other subjects to store, analyse and interpret data is too limited.

134. The quality of ICT teaching has been improved since the last inspection through in-service training and much better lesson planning, which identifies clear objectives. A very good system of assessment and record keeping of pupils' work has enhanced teaching. The success of ICT teaching varies from class to class depending on the confidence, knowledge and understanding of staff. For example, there are good features in lessons taught by the subject manager in Key Stage 1 and by staff whose initial training as teachers has included a good grounding in the subject. However, too little time is given to the subject in some Key Stage 2 classes and gaps in teachers' competence restrict pupils' learning. The manager is aware of the need for more rigorous monitoring of the quality and frequency of ICT teaching to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunity to achieve expected standards.

135. The school is aware of deficiencies in ICT and the subject's underemphasis. Very good planning is now in place which should enable pupils to have covered all aspects required in sufficient depth by summer 2002 and further in-service training for staff and additional support from the subject manager is planned for this year.

136. Substantial improvements to resources and the addition of two suites of personal computers (PCs); one for each key stage, are likely to produce much better results. However, these additions are very recent and progress in this respect was unsatisfactory until this school year. The school is aware that more computers are needed to bring the ratio of pupils to computers closer to what is expected nationally and to enhance work in class to support other subjects. More stools are required in both suites to enable pupils to sit properly at computers, and in the Key Stage 1 area, a reduction of the number of pupils working is needed to make more efficient use of the space.

137. Overall, developments in ICT since the last report have improved pupils' learning, and pupils' attitudes and interest levels are high. The subject is well placed for future improvement.

## **MUSIC**

138. There were few opportunities to observe music in Key Stage 1. However, from the one lesson observed, together with looking at planning and talking to pupils, evidence suggests that attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations. Pupils sing a number of songs from memory, with many able to clap a steady pulse in time with the music.

139. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils listen well to appreciate music from different times, and identify when certain instruments are prominent. For example, they recognised when brass and strings were playing in Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition". Pupils express their feelings when hearing the music, such as, "It sounded like people just about to go to war." Opportunities for musical appreciation are missed when nothing is mentioned about the music played to enter and leave the hall for assembly. Pupils recognise repeated rhythmic patterns, and are able to clap their own rhythm whilst others are clapping something different. When composing, pupils are competent when investigating sounds with percussion instruments. They organise their musical ideas to represent parts of a story, such as ice melting in the sun and a 'cataclysmic explosion'. Pupils sensibly rehearse their playing, enabling them to perform to others.

140. Evidence from a video of their Christmas performance indicates that pupils can sing well, although the examples heard in assembly were sometimes lacklustre. Overall, too little attention is paid to improving the quality of singing in music lessons.

141. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall. However, there is a marked difference in the knowledge and understanding of the visiting specialist teacher compared with the majority of the teaching staff. The specialist teacher uses her knowledge well, and involves all pupils in the lesson so that they have plenty of opportunity to investigate sounds and rehearse their music making. Although many other teachers lack specialist knowledge, they are preparing themselves well and producing satisfactory, and occasionally good lessons. However, a lack of knowledge is sometimes a hindrance: for example when talking about musical instruments and the families to which they belong. On other occasions, the pace of lessons is too slow, with too much teacher talking and not enough pupil performance.

142. Some pupils benefit from instrumental tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers. Recorder and guitar tuition is provided by the school's own staff. All this teaching is of good quality, and the pupils achieve well. Although these pupils occasionally play in concerts or assembly, and in lessons, too few opportunities are provided for them to play in school.

143. Changes in music subject management, with nobody in post last year, have led to some lack of continuity and direction for music. With no scheme of work and no effective record keeping system, there has been no certainty that pupils build upon their musical skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress through the school. The policy has now been reviewed and a scheme of work is being developed. Assessment objectives have been written for each year group. This is a positive start by the new subject manager.

144. There is a good range of percussion instruments for pupils to develop their composing and performing skills. These are well stored and accessible to all classes with the use of a trolley. More listening resources for pupils to appreciate music from different cultures, and teaching resources to give teachers more ideas for planning their work, are on the music development plan.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. Standards in physical education are average at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection in Key Stage 2 where attainment was below expectation and progress was unsatisfactory. This has been brought about by in-service training for teachers, which has improved the quality of teaching and has had a positive effect on learning and pupils' achievement.

146. Pupils in Key Stage 1 throw and catch bean bags and balls with skill levels appropriate for their age. In gymnastics, they find different levels when travelling, and show control when balancing. They work conscientiously on the tasks set for them, but sometimes these tasks do not challenge them sufficiently. Safety is obviously of paramount importance, but on occasions, teachers play too safe, and do not allow pupils to challenge themselves sufficiently, even when working on the floor. For example, when performing balances on the floor, only about a quarter of the pupils were allowed to work at a time, with three quarters sitting watching. This denied the pupils the opportunity to co-operate with others in finding their own working space, and to practise their balancing skills. On occasions like this, pupils do not reach their full potential.

147. In Key Stage 2, some pupils' skills in dance are limited by their attitude. However, in one Year 6 lesson, the teacher worked hard on both dance skills and attitudes, and considerable improvement was made in both by the end of the lesson. In games, pupils have satisfactory throwing and catching skills where they are able to pass the ball with concentration on speed and direction. They are developing football skills appropriate to their age in dribbling, passing and receiving the ball. The school has limited access to swimming facilities, with daily sessions only for three weeks each year. These are for Years 3, 4 and 5, who have five mornings for a week each. No records were available, but the information provided is that all pupils leaving Year 6 last year were able to swim 25 metres.

148. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2, although many lessons suffer from wasted time. This includes the speed of changing and too lengthy explanations from the teacher, whilst pupils are just sitting listening. Often, there are good demonstrations by teachers, and good teaching points are made to help pupils improve. For example when catching, an emphasis was placed on watching the ball into the hands, and when dribbling, pupils were encouraged to keep the ball close to their feet. However, there are occasions when there is too little guidance on how to improve standards. In good lessons, there is a variety of activities, starting with practising balls skills, moving on to small sided games. These challenge pupils well and give them plenty of practice to improve their skills.

149. Lessons usually begin with a brief warm up, but rarely are any stretching exercises undertaken, and rarely is the purpose of a warm up mentioned. Opportunities for links with science by talking about the heart rate, and what happens to the body during exercise, are missed. Good attention is paid to correct clothing and removing jewellery, but still some pupils wear rings and often long hair is not tied back, both being potential hazards.

150. Pupils enjoy most physical education lessons. They are very keen and enthusiastic and work hard, as they did when practising their football skills. They behave well and get into pairs or groups with little fuss. Good attention is paid to equal opportunities, with boys and girls encouraged to work together. However, too many pupils do not take part in physical education lessons because they have forgotten their kit.

151. Small equipment is generally sufficient, although sometimes more available balls would enable more activity. Storage of the equipment in a cupboard away from the hall is less convenient than it would be in the hall cupboard designed for that purpose. Some gymnastic equipment is suitable, but other pieces are large and unwieldy for pupils of this age.

152. The school occasionally offers some extracurricular activities to promote standards in team games, and teams are sometimes entered in local tournaments. However, currently this provision is very limited and opportunities are missed to further develop pupils' games

skills, and to help them become involved in activities beneficial to their personal and social development, and their health and well being.