

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST AUGUSTINE'S RC SCHOOL**

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104100

Headteacher: Mrs T **Willmott**

Reporting inspector: Mr D Clegg  
4341

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 194231

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whitefields Road  
Solihull

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Taggart

Date of previous inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Augustine's RC is an average sized primary school catering for pupils aged four to 11 years. There are 214 pupils on roll organised into seven single aged classes. There is also a part-time nursery class catering for 30 children aged three and four years. All the pupils come from a Roman Catholic background. Whilst the majority of pupils live locally a significant minority travels from outlying villages and parts of the town outside the immediate locality.

Almost all pupils are white; seven pupils are white European and two pupils are Black-Caribbean. A very small number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and no children speak English as an additional language.

The school serves an advantaged area of the West Midlands; only two pupils receive free school meals, a figure well below the average.

There are 59 pupils on the Special Education Needs register, 11 pupils have individual education plans (IEPs) but there are no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs, again a below average number. The main difficulties experienced by pupils on the register are specific or moderate learning difficulties.

When children enter the school they are attaining standards that are well above the average for their age.

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

St Augustine's RC Primary School is a good successful school. High standards are a major characteristic with many pupils achieving well in English, mathematics and science. Good teaching contributes to the success that pupils achieve. The school is well managed by the head teacher working closely with key members of staff and the governors. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Seven and eleven year olds achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science
- Pupils have very good attitudes to work, form good relationships and behave very well
- The quality of teaching is good
- The provision for the under-fives is very good
- Leadership and management give a clear sense of purpose and direction

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

- Provision in mainstream lessons for the small number of pupils with specific learning difficulties
- The consistency and quality of the marking.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and since then has made good progress both in overall improvements and in addressing the issues identified in the last report. High standards for 11-year-olds have been maintained and standards for seven-year-olds have improved. Progress for the great majority of pupils is good and at times very good for the under fives.

The quality of teaching has improved and it is now more consistent through the school. Key members of staff make a more significant contribution to the school's achievements. The tracking of pupils' attainment against targets is helping the school to have a secure understanding of the priorities for development. Monitoring and

evaluation systems are much stronger. Assessments are used to target support, although in some lessons there are still some weaknesses in catering for the full ability range.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	A*	A*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A	A	B	
science	C	C	A	A	

The overall results for 11-year-olds in 2000 are well above average in both English and science in comparison with all schools and also with schools with a similar intake. The standards attained in English indicate that the school is in the top five per cent of all schools. Standards in mathematics are well above those of all schools and above those of similar schools. The majority of pupils throughout the school achieve well and attain the standards that they should. There is very little difference between the performance of boys and girls.

The school is particularly successful in enabling pupils to gain high standards in English with well over half of eleven-year-olds achieving above average levels in national tests.

Standards attained in National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds are also well above most schools and above or well above those of similar schools. A key feature of the school's success is the very good start children get in the nursery class, where they make good or very good progress. By the age of five the majority of children are working at levels well above those usually found at this age.

The positive picture of results is a consistent one. Over the past three years the standards attained by seven and 11-year-olds in both English and mathematics tests have been consistently above or well above those of other schools.

Pupils with special needs benefit from the specialist help they receive in support groups which often helps them to achieve well. Occasionally, pupils with specific learning difficulties could make more progress in mainstream lessons.

The school has set challenging targets and aims for 96 per cent of 11-year-olds to achieve at least average levels in both English and mathematics in this year's tests. The school also has realistic and sensible targets for the proportion of pupils who should reach the higher levels.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	COMMENT
Attitudes to the school	Very positive attitudes to school contribute to the success that pupils achieve. Lessons are characterised by hard work and high levels of concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and courteous and show a good sense of responsibility.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils form constructive and beneficial relationships with staff and with each other. The oldest pupils are sensible and mature and are well

	prepared for the next stage in their education.
Attendance	Excellent.

A particular strength in this aspect is the manner in which children work together. They co-operate and collaborate very effectively and help each other to succeed. In all classes, pupils develop productive working habits as they move through the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 overall quality of teaching is good. All the teaching is satisfactory or better and in about 66 per cent of lessons the teaching is good or very good. The good teaching meets the needs of the great majority of pupils and is a significant factor in the school's success. The majority of lessons are well paced and teachers make significant demands on pupils who respond positively to the challenges presented to them. In a very small number of lessons the same degree of challenge is not evident and pupils do not learn as fast as they might. Teachers' own subject knowledge is good and this gives them the confidence to move learning on at a good rate. Resources are well used to make learning interesting and stimulating and the well-qualified classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress that pupils make. Good planning gives most lessons a clear focus and activities are generally effective in teaching what pupils need to learn.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective in the small groups that are withdrawn from mainstream lessons. Occasionally, the work planned for pupils with specific learning difficulties in lessons is not at the right level and their progress could be better.

Some thorough and on-going assessments of the progress made by children in the nursery and reception class results in them making consistently good, and sometimes very good, progress. The marking of older pupils' work is inconsistent and is not used in the most beneficial manner. Too often pupils are not given enough help in identifying what they need to do to get better.

Good use is made of the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. English and mathematics are well taught, although more focused teaching of calculating strategies could be undertaken at the start of numeracy lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good, broad and well balanced curriculum. Very good curriculum provision for the under fives.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good support in withdrawal groups. Work is not always well matched to pupils' needs in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision. Opportunities for social and moral development are integral to many lessons. Assemblies contribute to spiritual development and <b>pupils are given</b> some opportunities to become familiar with a number of different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know pupils very well and offer a good level of care and welfare.



There are good systems to ensure pupils' health and safety and these are monitored regularly. Assessment and recording procedures are generally effective although the information is not always used as well as it could be to plan lessons. The procedures for child protection are secure and the teacher responsible is well trained and knowledgeable.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	COMMENT
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	A strength of the school. The head teacher, working closely with key members of staff and the governors, provides a good sense of direction and purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and fulfil them fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school is using performance data to set targets and identify priorities for action. There are good systems to analyse strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are well used and make an impact upon the standards that pupils achieve.

The school is particularly successful at tracking pupils' progress and this is leading to some good intervention to help pupils to achieve well, particularly at the top end of the school. The school development plan is well thought through and a helpful guide to school improvement.

### 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>• Children enjoy coming to school</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• The way the school works with parents</li> <li>• The information about how their children are progressing</li> </ul>

The parents are fully justified in having the confidence they have in the school. Pupils are very positive and enjoy their lessons, they make good progress and behave well. Teaching is good, the school's expectations are high and pupils are helped to grow up. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited for the younger children although there is an appropriate range of activities for the older pupils. The school makes reasonable efforts to involve parents in the life of the school. There are appropriate arrangements to keep parents informed about what is going on through newsletters and annual reports to parents fulfil statutory requirements.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

#### Seven and 11-year-olds achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science

1. The very good base of skills in literacy and numeracy that is established in the nursery and reception class is successfully built upon as pupils move through Years 1 and 2. As a result, almost all achieve at least average levels by the age of seven and many are working at higher levels in both English and mathematics.
2. Almost all five and six-year-olds make good progress in writing, moving from composing short sentences to re-telling stories with some detail and writing accounts of events and letters. Many children start to develop a good command of language as they introduce, for example, rhyming words and alliteration into their written work. They learn to pose questions, for example for an imaginary interview with Florence Nightingale, and to write simple character profiles. By the age of seven many children make imaginative use of language, for example in well-structured accounts, simple poems and summaries of the main points of a story. Lower attaining pupils write reasonable structured accounts and stories, although often still with 'invented spellings'. Higher attainers use a range of punctuation for effect, introducing for example, capital letters and exclamation marks to engage the reader's interest. Many have a good command of language, writing, for example 'the lighthouse was very cold, dark and gloomy'. However, there are some persistent weaknesses in spelling, with many competent and confident writers spelling commonly used words incorrectly. Pupils begin to make good use of their literacy skills across the curriculum, writing for example, facts about the Great Fire of London in history, labelling diagrams and noting observations in science and composing prayers in religious education. Seven-year-olds are generally enthusiastic and very competent readers. They take books home regularly, buy books and borrow them from the library and can talk about their preferences, for example for poetry or joke books or a particular author or series. Many explain a storyline in some detail, showing good understanding of events.
3. Six and seven-year-olds also work at a good level in mathematics. The majority begins to see patterns and relationships in number and to apply what they know to solve simple problems. Most six-year-olds add and subtract to 30 and often beyond, using a variety of methods. They add one digit to two digit numbers and can increase two digit numbers by 10 up to 100. The majority of seven-year-olds are aware of number order to 100, add and subtract two digit numbers and are working in the early stages of **multiplication and division**. They measure accurately using standard units, interpret information on graphs and begin to solve problems, for example in calculating change and finding the difference between numbers. Higher attaining pupils are confident in applying their number knowledge working with problems up to 100 and often show understanding of quick methods of calculating, for example by 'rounding up' or working to the nearest ten. Most lower attainers are working at least average levels, which represents good achievement. They add and subtract to 50, recognise odd and even numbers and increase numbers by 10, but are not always able to apply their knowledge in problem-solving.
4. Pupils develop a good base of knowledge in science. Five and six-year-olds are encouraged to observe carefully, for example as plants are grown or as they learn about the materials used for everyday purposes. By the age of seven they have a good awareness of many basic elements of all areas of the subject. They know what plants need to grow and are aware of the constituents of a healthy diet. They record sources of sounds and begin to understand how sound is heard. They have good awareness of the properties of materials, explaining, for example that foil 'bends and stays in shape but you can't stretch it'. Pupils begin to record their findings using

diagrams and labels and often write detailed descriptions of their observations, for example of the changes that occur when materials are heated. Some higher attainers categorise information clearly and begin to show good scientific reasoning as they hypothesise about the reasons for change.

5. By the time they leave school the great majority of 11-year-olds are achieving at least average levels and many are achieving higher levels of attainment. Pupils are very well equipped to take advantage of the next stage of their education. They are enthusiastic and fluent readers with a clear idea of what they like and dislike. They talk knowledgeably about different genres of writing and clearly enjoy a good range of fiction including classics such as 'Oliver Twist', adventure yarns such as 'The Thirty-Nine Steps' and modern works by J K Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. They are articulate and lively as they chat in a good-natured fashion about the books they have read and enjoyed. They respond to what friends have said, arguing for their own preferences and sustaining a sensible level of discussion and debate.
6. Written work is also of a high standard. The majority of pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Written work matures; spelling mistakes become less frequent, grammar is correct and what is written is more interesting and better structured. Pupils achieve well, partly due to the good range of opportunities they have to write for different purposes and in different ways. For instance they write poetry, stories, lists, letters and instructions as well as using their writing skills in subjects such as geography, history and science. Some of the very effective written work from pupils in Year 4 included summaries of books they had read. These were sharp and to the point giving a good insight into the main themes and events of the book 'Riley, aged 10, wants a new pet. Grandpa is a real grump'. Teaching is effective in encouraging pupils to explore the writing process, so that pupils have chance to think about the different parts of a piece of writing. and are taught how to improve their work through drafting and editing. This results in some good, interesting writing that gives the reader a good insight into character and setting or successfully conveys atmosphere. For instance a poem about night included 'Night was as black as a witches cat'. A story about a young girl used words sparsely but gave a well defined picture of what the setting of the story might be, 'Rosie did not feel loved.....her mum and dad were always too busy working'.
7. Good accurate writing is also evident in how pupils record science experiments, they use lists, charts and annotate diagrams and explain what they have done in a straightforward manner. Some written work in history is effective in exploring points of view, for instance the letters from a Jarrow marcher to the government explaining their plight.
8. The great majority of pupils are very competent in mathematics and many 11-year-olds have a very good grasp of how numbers work. They use what they know to solve challenging problems. Pupils work very confidently with high numbers fully understanding place value and applying this to decimals, often working to three decimal places. They also use the four operations very successfully with whole numbers and decimals. They have well developed, effective ways of working mentally, using counting on and back to rapidly work out answers. The higher attaining pupils solve complex problems involving several operations, for instance in working out the area of compound shapes, with given lengths to two decimal places. They understand the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages, working out for instance that  $5/10 = 0.5 = 50\%$ , or the price of items with different percentage reductions. Overall, pupils have a very strong base of mathematical understanding.
9. Most pupils have a good level of understanding about the work that they have covered in science. Year 3 pupils are successfully getting to grips with the properties of different materials and they are also learning about the importance of fair testing, for example when applied to creating solutions. Good work by the older pupils shows an understanding about

how different forces operate, knowledge about the features of living things and healthy lifestyles and experiments into how various substances react when put into water. A key feature of much of the science work with the older pupils is the good use of numeracy skills. In much of their science work pupils measure and record using graphs, charts and diagrams. They time the descent of spinner, measure upthrust by calculating different weights and create line graphs showing the variation of pulse rates.

### **Pupils have very good attitudes to work, form good relationships and behave very well**

10. Throughout the school pupils have very positive attitudes, are keen and enthusiastic about learning and respond well to opportunities to work independently and in pairs or small groups.
11. The youngest children quickly develop good learning habits and are confident in making choices about their activities. They readily talk together about their activities, as nursery children did as they observed the bobbing movements of colourful plastic fish in a water tray, and are very willing to share equipment and take turns. Children work with perseverance and sustained concentration, for example in carefully cutting and sticking shapes and in finding and copying their name cards when their work is completed. They respond well to opportunities to use their initiative, as some demonstrated when they chose to make playdough mice to link with the current work on nursery rhymes. They are keen for others to succeed; reception children readily joined in a game to spot and find missing objects from the 'giant's' possessions. They were very eager to help individuals who had to track these down by following a sound trail, spontaneously clapping in accompaniment to the drumbeat played by the teacher and adjusting the pitch as a child got close to a hidden object.
12. Seven-year-olds are enthusiastic about the breadth of the curriculum that they are offered. They spoke animatedly about topics studied in history such as the Victorians, the Great Fire of London and the life of Neil Armstrong. Some are stimulated to search out further information in visits to the library and bring in objects related to the areas studied. They enjoy art, particularly the opportunity to make observational drawings, and the range of visits to local places of interest, such as the church, and to those further afield, such as Safari World. They respond well to opportunities to work together; some collaborated informally as they searched for words in a dictionary, helping each other to locate definitions. They appreciate the equipment that they have in the playground, the quality of the school lunches – particularly special elements such as pancakes on Shrove Tuesday – and the fact that they are well supported; as one said 'the teachers get on really well with us'.
13. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, the pupils listened with rapt attention as the teacher read an extract from 'The Iron Woman'. They responded well as attention was drawn to the author's skilful use of language, many eager to offer a view on the impact of the descriptive vocabulary and the use of short sentences for effect. They readily explained how it made them feel – 'terrified', 'anxious' or wanting 'to read on'.
14. The oldest pupils are very mature and sensible and take their work very seriously. They are committed to learning and enjoy the success they achieve. Pupils arrive at lessons well prepared and equipped to learn, work very hard and maintain a high level of concentration.
15. Pupils eagerly join in lessons, responding to questions and giving thoughtful and considered answers to the teacher's inquiries. They form constructive relationships and learn from each other. They co-operate to good effect, as Year 6 pupils showed as they worked on a short improvisation during a very successful drama lesson. The groups of five or six pupils quickly put together a short scenario. They negotiated roles, decided on the dialogue and the nature of

the drama. The result was a series of effective dramatic episodes depicting the murder of Duncan by Macbeth.

16. Pupils are very positive about the help they are given and appreciative of the way that learning is made interesting. They enjoy what they do and are keen to respond to a challenge. Throughout the school good work habits are encouraged and sustained. Pupils are very attentive and listen carefully to what teachers and other adults are saying. Any slight restlessness is usually the result of teaching that lacks pace when pupils become impatient with having to sit and listen too long.
17. Behaviour is very good. Lessons are conducted in an atmosphere that promotes learning. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute significantly to this, but teachers also maintain a good work rate and ensure that pupils are fully occupied with work that is generally suitable to their needs. Good discipline is generally maintained through interesting work and the demands that are made on pupils and by effective classroom management.

### **The quality of teaching is good**

18. The good quality teaching is a key factor in ensuring that pupils achieve well at each stage of their learning. Teachers work hard and prepare lessons carefully. They make good use of the two national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, although they are also aware that many of the older pupils are progressing beyond the work prescribed for eleven-year-olds. For instance the higher attaining pupils in mathematics work with the numeracy framework outlined for Year 7. The teaching of mathematics is generally good or very good but occasionally, there is not enough direct teaching of calculating strategies in the early parts of lessons.
19. Good classroom management combined with teachers' good subject knowledge makes sure that lesson move on at a good pace. A Year 5 lesson about the Greeks was sharp and to the point. A clear introduction captured pupils' attention through references to work done earlier and effective use of an over-head projector and good questions made sure that pupils extended their understanding. Worksheets provided a good level of challenge for all pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties.
20. In the majority of lessons teachers have high expectations of what their pupils might achieve and what they might learn. These high expectations are, for instance, evident in the nursery class. Here, children develop language through role playing familiar nursery rhymes and are encouraged to write letters using parchment in the rhyming castle role-play area. The nursery nurse sits with the children and encourages them to write letters that she will sign as 'the royal secretary'. Children respond very enthusiastically to this challenging activity; they maintain a high level of concentration, show a determination to succeed and are already beginning to write their names and distinguishable individual letters. Equally high expectations are evident in lessons with the older pupils. In a Year 5 literacy lesson the teacher used technical language as she referred naturally to 'annotations', 'illustrations' 'skimming and scanning' texts. In mathematics with the Year 6 pupils work is challenging and makes significant demands upon their calculating abilities.
21. Children in the nursery class achieve very well. The team of adults work very well together and make regular thorough assessments of what children need to learn next. This enables them to make sure that individual children are given a range of activities that are carefully designed to ensure their progress.

22. Learning resources are well used. Teachers make good use of over-head projectors to make texts accessible to all pupils, individual 'white boards' and markers are used to ensure that all pupils answer questions. During a Year 1 science lesson exploring materials, the teacher had assembled a good range of materials to emphasis the different types of material and to help to extend children's vocabulary. Big books were used effectively in Year 2 to show children how to use a contents and glossary page.
23. The teaching of small groups is generally effective. Those pupils with specific learning difficulties benefit from the focused and concentrated support they receive when they withdraw to the 'rainbow room'. Teaching is skilled and knowledgeable; clear introductions recap what has been learned earlier and support is given to individuals through questions and encouragement that give them confidence to contribute. These lessons are often intensive, but very productive and beneficial.

### **The provision for the under fives is very good**

24. The high quality of the provision for under fives ensures that the youngest children get a very good start to school and are well prepared for the move to more formal aspects of learning at the start of Year 1. The majority of children attend the nursery on a part-time basis before moving to the reception class at the start of the year in which they will be five. In both the nursery and reception year, all aspects of learning are carefully planned and children benefit from the opportunities to work and play in a well-resourced and stimulating environment supported by a good level of staffing.
25. Nursery sessions are well organised to provide a good balance between large and small group activities, directed tasks and opportunities for children to work independently and to make choices about what they will do. Areas are imaginatively organised to engage the children's interest and to stimulate ideas. There is, for example, a good range of costumes and props for role play so that children can work together to plan imaginative scenarios and develop their speaking and listening skills. Adults are well deployed to support learning; both the teacher and the nursery nurse make very effective use of talk to extend children's understanding and to encourage them to apply what they have learned. This was a good feature of an activity that involved making honey sandwiches which had strong links with mathematics. The nursery nurse talked about how many sandwiches might be needed for everyone in the group to have one, about cutting them into halves and quarters and about the shapes that were made as the sandwiches were prepared.
26. In both the nursery and the reception class there is a strong focus on teaching early literacy skills. Nursery children are encouraged to recognise and to attempt to write their names, with notable success in many cases. There is a strong emphasis on appreciating sounds and rhymes; during the inspection nursery rhymes were being used as a stimulus for a wide variety of activities. Children listened to taped rhymes as they worked, often operating the tape recorder independently and singing along with the rhymes; some 'wrote' royal letters on parchment paper and many were very confident in conveying their ideas using a series of marks, sometimes with recognisable letters. In the reception class children make word 'beanstalks', writing words that begin with the same sound on leaves and sticking them on the stalks. Attention is drawn to word patterns and commonly used words through displays and use of big books and story boards. Children are encouraged to match words and pictures, to order words in sentences so that they make sense and to use what they know about initial sounds to make reasoned guesses at new words. They are introduced to the structure of the literacy hour in exciting and imaginative ways so that they respond with enthusiasm and interest in discussion, for example, about events and characters in traditional tales.

27. Close links between the nursery and reception class ensure that children gain maximum benefit from all elements of the provision. Nursery children start to make regular visits to the reception class in the summer term before they transfer, planning the activities that they will do there so that they become very familiar with the environment. Reception children have the opportunity to spend some time in the nursery during the afternoons so that they can still engage in structured play as well as participating in structured tasks led by the nursery staff. Detailed planning at all levels ensures that children have access to a wide range of experiences that promotes their learning in all areas. Their progress is carefully tracked through informal and structured observations and the information is used to plan key experiences to build on what children already know and can do. Baseline assessments in the reception class are analysed to highlight areas of need and to make decisions about curriculum planning.
28. The outcome of the good teaching of the under fives and the carefully planned curriculum is that almost all children make good and sometimes very good progress in their early years of school.

### **Leadership and management give a clear sense of purpose and direction.**

29. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in March 1997. The school has put in place secure systems to monitor and evaluate its work and key members of staff have a clearer role in ensuring that high standards are maintained.
30. The school development plan is a useful guide to school improvement and focuses upon appropriate priorities for sustaining and building on high standards. When children enter the reception class, the information from early assessments gives the school a clear view of the potential level of achievement for each child. This information is used as the basis for tracking all children in the early years of schooling. The school uses other information about pupil performance to set targets for each year group and individual pupils. The targets acknowledge the current high standards by including targets for the higher attaining pupils. These targets are reviewed by the senior managers and help to ensure that teachers expectations are appropriately high.
31. Key members of staff, especially those with responsibilities for literacy and numeracy, have good opportunities to support colleagues. They observe teaching and provide feedback to teachers, evaluate a range of pupils' work and monitor what teachers are planning. This also helps to maintain standards and ensures that pupils are achieving as much as they can. It is also resulting in better standards of teaching than were evident in the last inspection.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

#### **Provision in mainstream lessons for the small number of pupils with specific learning difficulties**

32. The school generally provides well for those pupils who are identified as having special educational needs. There have been improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the manner in which the provision is managed. However, there is a small group of pupils with significant and specific learning difficulties who do not always receive the amount of support and help they need in mainstream lessons.
33. The main reasons for the lack of support is too little planning for the specific needs of pupils in lessons and not enough consideration about how targeted support and help given in withdrawal sessions can be supplemented and enhanced by work in the mainstream lessons. This results in

some work in lessons which is not well matched to pupils' needs. Overall, teachers do not make enough use of information from pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) when planning lessons.

34. The level of work is not always directed at pupils' needs so their progress is not as good as it could be and the targets set by the class teacher, or those outlined on IEPs, are not consistently guiding the work that they are offered. For example, one pupil had an appropriate target which was to learn to use capital letters accurately. However the work that she was given was not focused on this target and indicated unrealistically high expectations given the level of skills apparent in her written work. In some pupils' books work is rarely finished so work-books are punctuated by large blank areas.
35. Occasionally, because the work is not suitable for pupils' needs they switch off from lessons and do not benefit as much as they should from listening to what the teacher is saying or explaining. On other occasions there is unintentional insensitivity towards pupils with specific needs. For instance, in some classes they always sat together and therefore feel more self-conscious about their difficulties. Occasionally the questions they are asked highlight their difficulties or they are unnecessarily singled out to be reminded about particular aspects of their behaviour.

#### **Marking could be used more effectively**

36. Pupils' work is regularly marked but the quality of the marking is inconsistent. There are occasions when comments are diagnostic or evaluative, indicating, for example, that a child has made good use of a word list or has accurately demarcated sentences. This occurs more frequently with higher attainers than with those who often struggle to record and whose efforts are often unrecognised. Generally, however, marking is very superficial with a general response such as 'good' or a comment or question related to the content of the written work. Although helpful short-term targets have been introduced for individual pupils, marking is not linked closely to the targets set to indicate the progress that is being made towards them.
37. Approaches to correcting spelling are variable. On occasions there is too much emphasis on incorrect spellings, to the extent that work is heavily marked and there is little focus on the quality of the writing. On other occasions, persistent errors in writing commonly used words by pupils who otherwise demonstrate confidence and competence in written work are not picked up. As a result, they continue, for example, to write 'ver' instead of 'very' and 'there' without an 'e' at the end.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

38. In order to improve further the head teacher, staff and governors should

##### **Ensure that teachers take more account of the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties when planning lessons by:**

- using individual education plans (IEPs) more effectively to plan work carefully matched to pupils' needs;
- building on the work provided in the withdrawal groups.

##### **Ensure that marking is used in the most effective manner by:**

- making sure that the marking policy is fully implemented;



- giving all pupils a clear indication of what they need to do to improve.

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **Provision for special educational needs**

39. The school identifies four pupils with special educational needs who require ‘increased levels of support and provision (Stage 3 of the Code of Practice) and seven who require additional planning (Stage 2). These pupils have individual education plans (IEPs). In addition 44 pupils are identified as requiring “extra help or support” from the class teacher (Stage 1). The school also supports a small group of higher attaining pupils who require extension activities. Within a good school policy, the roles and responsibilities for teachers and parents are identified and the provision is set within the school’s overall mission statement that “All members of the school will be equally valued...”.
40. Provision for special educational needs is good overall It is clearly planned with good specialist teaching and is well resourced. As a result of the specialist teaching those pupils who experience learning difficulties progress well over time. However, many classroom teachers are not using a wide enough range of techniques for supporting and challenging these pupils within mainstream lessons.
41. The special educational needs policy and provision seek to support three types of difficulty. The provision is largely targeted on developing skills in those pupils who experience real problems with literacy or numeracy. Additional literacy support is also provided for the 44 pupils with less significant difficulties and this is a realistic use of support time. However, the numbers involved at present mean that those with the greatest need sometimes receive the same level of support as those with less. The time of support staff is therefore not always effectively targeted to promote significant progress for the eleven pupils identified as needing IEPs. The school uses support services for advice, but the outcome does not always lead to a productive discussion that involves the class teacher and helps to clarify the support that might be provided in mainstream lessons.
42. Pupils generally make good progress through both key stages and many pupils who enter the school with significant difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics reach average attainment levels by the age of eleven. The very positive attitudes of support staff and many class teachers contribute to this progress. Above all, these pupils benefit from highly skilled support teaching. Specialist teaching sessions in withdrawal groups is always good and often very good. The sessions are well matched to individual needs, lessons are well paced and the resources available are of a high quality. In a very good Year 2 support lesson, four pupils worked on the development of speech in stories. Using speech bubbles, the teacher encouraged each pupil to make up short sentences which they then inserted in the bubbles. The activity was introduced slowly so that pupils did not get discouraged and as the short lesson continued it was noticeable that children who were reluctant to contribute in mainstream classroom lessons blossomed and gained in confidence. The obvious progress of each pupil was built upon the excellent relationship between teacher and children and the enthusiasm to succeed that the pupils themselves demonstrated.
43. Class teachers are very aware of those few pupils with significant learning difficulties. However, they do not always possess the range of support skills to extend these pupils in mainstream subject lessons. Questions and tasks are often the same for all of the class and this means that those with language or numeracy difficulties who struggle to understand or cope with a task can lose interest. In some classes teachers have a good range of support skills,

employing questions and using language that help pupils with special needs contribute with confidence. In a very good Year 5 history lesson, for example, the class teacher made a specific point of asking reticent pupils at least one question and during group work sensitively supported those with language or writing problems. However, there has not been enough opportunity for teachers to share their approaches and to identify the strategies that are effective in catering for pupils with specific difficulties.

44. Many elements of the planning for special needs are good. Every effort is made to ensure that support teaching does not remove pupils from important lessons. Each pupil identified as needing an IEP has targets relating to specialist support, classroom teacher and parents. These work very well for the support staff and provide practical advice for parents. The targets for classroom teachers are not always clear enough to provide a strong basis for adapting materials within the classroom. Pupils occasionally contribute to their own target setting, but this excellent process is at an early stage.
45. The provision for special educational needs is well resourced and the accommodation for teaching withdrawal groups is excellent. This gives support work a high status within the school. It also contributes to motivation and thus to pupils' progress. The co-ordination of support, the delivery of specialist teaching and the links with additional literacy strategy staff have been developed well.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	19	43	38	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	215
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	59

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
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	14	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	15	15	16
	Total	29	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (91)	97 (82)	100 (94)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	14
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	23	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (82)	83 (88)	93 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	13
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	30	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (84)	90 (91)	100 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	13
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	30	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (94)	93 (94)	100 (88)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	30.7

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	450,154
Total expenditure	449,473
Expenditure per pupil	1,897
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,898
Balance carried forward to next year	44,579

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	244
Number of questionnaires returned	140

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	39	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	43	4	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	41	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	44	14	5	3
The teaching is good.	50	39	4	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	48	24	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	39	8	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	43	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	25	51	21	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	44	43	4	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	52	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	36	26	4	8