

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ALOYSIUS R.C. INFANT SCHOOL

Somers Town

LEA area: Camden

Unique reference number: 100038

Headteacher: Bernadette Brittain

Reporting inspector: Elisabeth de Lancey
22272

Dates of inspection: 5th-6th November 2001

Inspection number: 195592

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	28 Phoenix Road London NW1 1TA
Telephone number:	0207 387 3551
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Margaret Moran
Date of previous inspection:	3-6 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Aloysius' Infant School is a Beacon School; this status has been renewed for a second period. It is situated in the Somers Town area of Camden in North London. It caters for pupils between the ages of four and seven. It has a small purpose built nursery for 30 full-time pupils which is located in a nearby secondary school. Almost all of the pupils come from the parish of St Aloysius; one third of the places in the nursery are offered to children of other faiths. Places in the school are allocated to children of the Roman Catholic faith. Unemployment in this area is high and almost all families live in rented accommodation. The school is about the same size as other infant schools with a current roll of 210 pupils of whom 106 are girls and 104 are boys which is about the same as at the last inspection. Children are admitted to the nursery in the autumn term following their third birthday. Almost all the children who are eligible transfer to the school in the autumn term following their fourth birthday. They are organised into two single-aged reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below average. They reflect the ethnically diverse neighbourhood of the school. About one-half of the pupils are white and one-quarter are black African. There are also a few black Caribbean pupils. Just over a third of the school's population are refugees, mostly from Africa. Almost three-quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high, and much higher than at the time of the last inspection; 144 of these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. There are two traveller children. Just over one half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is well above average. Of the 71 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, for a variety of moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural problems, five have a statement of special educational needs. This too, is higher than at the time of the last inspection. No pupils are looked after. The school benefits from additional funding from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grants, programmes funded by the Standards Fund and other funds allocated through the Single Regeneration Budget. The school has received the Investors in People Award and the Department for Education and Skills' Award for excellence.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a highly effective school which offers an excellent quality of education to all its pupils. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and they achieve very good standards. This is largely due to the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, the outstanding leadership of the established key staff and the high quality of the teaching pupils receive. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- High quality teaching and well-planned guidance from teaching staff enable all pupils to learn very effectively.
- Children in the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and the reception classes, make an excellent start to school.
- The headteacher's exceptional leadership and management inspires governors, staff, and parents. Together they foster the school's commitment to excellence.
- The school's excellent ethos generated by the values shared by the school, parents and governors creates a positive, harmonious and industrious community.

What could be improved

- There is no aspect of the school which requires significant improvement.

The inspection team endorses the school's current improvement programme, as outlined in the school improvement plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Only one area for development was identified; this was related to pupils' attendance. This has improved; it is now broadly average and above that of similar schools in Camden. The strengths noted during the last inspection have been maintained and in many areas they have improved. Standards have continued to rise and the quality of teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection, when it was considered to be good overall. Standards in information and communication technology are now good. The provision for pupils' personal development has improved. There are more opportunities for pupils to learn independently and to exercise choice. There has been very good progress since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A*	A	A	A*
writing	B	C	A	A*
mathematics	A	B	A	A*

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Pupils' results in the 2001 National Curriculum Tests for seven-year-olds have surpassed previous results. Compared with all schools nationally, they were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, their results were in the highest five per cent. Standards in reading have been consistently high for several years, and results in writing have improved significantly from those in 2000 when they were only average. Pupils' results in mathematics have also improved from those in 2000 when they dipped from their previously high level. This is because the relative weaknesses in these two areas have been identified and action has been taken to tackle them. The subjects are very well led, there has been an effective programme of staff development and teaching has improved. The school's challenging targets based on current assessments of pupils' attainment indicate that standards are likely to be maintained this year.

Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are high and that pupils of all abilities make very good progress. High standards were seen also in music and information and communication technology. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress against the targets set for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make very good progress and attain similar standards to other pupils. There are many pupils at an early stage of learning English. These pupils receive very good teaching from visiting language specialists, teachers and teaching assistants and they make very good progress, in particular, in the learning of English. Children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress and attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they leave the reception classes.

There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very Good: pupils are happy to come to school and respond enthusiastically to the rich range of learning opportunities they are offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very Good: pupils are polite, they behave very well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. In the most inspiring lessons and in school assemblies behaviour is excellent.
Personal development and relationships	Very Good: pupils are considerate towards one another and show respect for different viewpoints. They take their responsibilities very seriously.
Attendance	Satisfactory: attendance is average. The school works hard to promote good attendance.

From the time they start school, children's personal development is very well promoted. Through the school council, pupils take responsibility for aspects of school life. The school's programme for personal, social and health education is excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Excellent	Very good	N/A

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

Teaching in the school is very good overall. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage and very good at Key Stage 1. The high quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the high standards the pupils attain. Throughout the school teaching was excellent in almost one-third of lessons, very good in a half and good in one-fifth. The school successfully meets the needs of all its pupils. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are identified early and given extra support to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language; they use a variety of stimuli and teaching methods to help pupils' understanding. They are well-supported in class by teaching assistants, and specialist support in small groups also benefits these pupils. As a result, they make rapid progress and achieve very well.

All staff maintain very good relationships with the pupils and use praise effectively to model good behaviour and good learning; consequently, pupils are enthusiastic, behave well and display very good attitudes to their work. The teaching of English and mathematics is excellent. Teachers have a good understanding of literacy and numeracy and basic skills are taught very well and reinforced effectively across other subjects of the curriculum. Individual target setting based on teachers' excellent marking and assessments of pupils' work gives them good knowledge of their own learning. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The teaching of music is also a strength of the school and the pupils delight in performing to an audience.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent: the school offers a wealth of rich and stimulating learning opportunities and there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very Good: Pupils are very well supported in class and benefit from very good teaching when they are taught in specialist groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very Good: the school carefully monitors the progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils benefit from a very good range of teaching strategies and make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very Good: pupils' personal development is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Assemblies are well planned and affirm the strong Christian values that the school fosters from day-to-day. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good: staff demonstrate a very high level of consideration and care. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are very good and their health, safety and welfare are given a high priority.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent: the headteacher is an inspirational leader. She has a clear vision for the school and motivates everyone towards it. Members of staff with management responsibilities offer outstanding leadership and work very well together towards a common purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good: Governors are committed and well informed. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and play an active part in providing a clear educational direction for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent: the school successfully monitors its progress and makes very good use of comparative information for the benefit of all pupils. This has a positive effect on their achievement.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent: Educational targets are appropriately funded. Monitoring and evaluation are high priorities. Spending decisions are made according to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • The good quality of the teaching. • The strong personal leadership of the headteacher. • The high expectations of work and behaviour. • The support for children's personal development. • They appreciate the regular workshops which help them to support their children's learning. • They enjoy the annual international evenings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no areas where parents expressed the view that improvements are required.

The inspection team endorses the positive comments made by parents and agree that there are no areas in need of significant improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

1. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and are on their way to reaching or exceeding the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. They are highly motivated, rapidly absorb new knowledge and extend their understanding as a result of the stimulating curriculum and the high quality teaching they receive.
2. Pupils' results in the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' results were in the highest five per cent. Standards in reading have been consistently high for several years and results in writing have improved significantly from those in 2000 when they were only average. Pupils' results in mathematics have also improved from those in 2000 when they dipped from their previously high level.
3. Pupils' performance at the higher level has also improved. In 2001, the percentage of pupils attaining level 3, which is above that expected of seven-year-olds, was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with schools with pupils with similar backgrounds, the results were in the highest five per cent. These results are impressive and show the school's commitment to continuous improvement. Relative weaknesses in writing and mathematics have been addressed. The subjects are very well led, there has been a very effective programme of staff development and teaching has improved. The setting of pupils in Year 2, for English and mathematics, when pupils have the advantage of working in smaller groups with pupils of a similar ability, has also helped to raise standards. Gifted pupils are suitably challenged and a small percentage of pupils reached level 4 in reading. High standards were evident in the work seen during the inspection and all pupils make very good progress in the time they are in school. This reflects the very high quality of the teaching. Appropriately challenging targets have been set for the future.
4. In English, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' oral skills and the use of pupils' writing skills in other subjects. For example; there are imaginatively planned role-play areas in all classrooms which encourage the children to explore different types of language through play. Pupils learn a very good repertoire of rhymes, poetry and songs which are used purposefully to enhance and extend their vocabulary. Many children are able to associate sounds with patterns in the songs and rhymes and make a confident start in reading and writing. By the time they are seven, pupils talk fluently about personal events and their experiences at school. Pupils' reading skills develop well. They have a good grasp of the sound and letter relationship and know a good range of different ways to work out the words they do not know. They read aloud accurately, with good expression and talk enthusiastically about the stories they know. Pupils take their reading books home regularly to share with their families. Many parents give valuable support by reading with their children and this makes a strong contribution to the subject. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes and audiences. They write in simple sentences and use their knowledge of sounds to spell simple words. Higher attaining pupils write very well using an interesting vocabulary, a range of connectives to link sentences and show a good understanding of the use of punctuation. Some excellent examples of lively writing were seen in the biographies of Florence

Nightingale and descriptions of 'The Great Fire of London'. In religious education the pupils compose prayers and write invitations to events such as baptisms and birthdays. They write clear instructions for planting a seed in science and making a book in design and technology.

5. In mathematics, likewise, pupils attain well above average standards by the time they are seven years old. For example, they rapidly add and subtract simple numbers in their heads. They know that 30 is half-way between 20 and 40; 11 is 20 less than 31 and 41 is 10 more. They know when a number is a multiple of 2, 5 or 10 and explain why their answer is correct. Higher attaining pupils show good understanding of place value of numbers up to 1000, and solve problems using three-digit numbers. They use reflective symmetry to classify two-dimensional shapes and extract and interpret information from simple tables and lists.
6. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well and make very good progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. The school carefully monitors the progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, and almost all these pupils make very good progress because staff are sensitive to their needs and successfully promote their confidence. They achieve similar standards to other pupils. Bilingual one-to-one and small group teaching is provided for new arrivals who are at a very early stage of learning English and need extensive language support. They respond well to the teaching and, once their knowledge of English is secure, their achievement matches that of other pupils.
7. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are set appropriate targets and make very good progress towards them. Class teachers and the special education needs co-ordinator ensure that they are given work which is appropriate to them. They are well supported in class, particularly in literacy and numeracy and benefit from very good teaching when they work in smaller groups. The involvement of parents in the 'Fifteen-Minutes-a-Day' before-school programme, to help improve pupils' reading is particularly effective. The pupils involved with this programme make very good progress and by the time they leave the school almost all attain the national average.

High quality teaching and well-planned guidance from teaching assistants and learning support staff enable all pupils to learn very effectively.

8. Throughout the school there is teaching of a high quality. The good teaching identified in the last inspection report has continued to improve. It is now very good overall. This is because staff training and development is a high priority, monitoring systems are firmly established and the staff promote pupils' independent learning. During the current inspection, teaching was judged excellent in one-third of lessons, very good in a half, and good in the remaining one-fifth. In the Foundation Stage, teaching was judged excellent in just under a half of lessons and very good in the rest. In Key Stage 1, teaching was judged excellent in almost one quarter of lessons, very good in almost one-half good in rest. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in English and mathematics.
9. All staff maintain very good relationships with their pupils and use praise effectively; consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about learning and they display very good attitudes to their work. The caring manner with which staff manage their pupils helps each of them to recognise how much they are valued. Teachers encourage pupils' contributions to lessons and, as a result, pupils are highly motivated, eager to do their best and confident tackling new tasks. Teachers are clear what they want their pupils to learn. Their planning is very good, in many instances excellent. Lessons are carefully designed to build on pupils' established knowledge and develop their

understanding. Staff have very high expectations of their pupils. They offer them challenging work, pose probing questions and demand accuracy in pupils' responses. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and provide them with high quality feedback to help them improve their work and sustain high standards. Teachers' outstanding marking, their setting of appropriate individual targets and their requirement that pupils' evaluate their own work help pupils gain a clear understanding of how well they are doing. They conduct lessons at a very brisk pace and provide a very good variety of interesting activities which are well matched to the full range of pupils' abilities and offer appropriate opportunities for independent work. Classroom routines are well established and pupils develop a keen sense of responsibility. Throughout the school pupils of all abilities concentrate on their work and make very good gains in their learning.

10. The quality of educational provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Staff set clear and appropriate targets, and offer effective support to help pupils' conceptual development and their acquisition of English. As a result, each of the pupils makes very good progress and is successful in moving to independent learning. Staff put a high priority on speaking and listening and use a broad range of teaching styles to promote their development. They organise a variety of suitable activities to encourage pupils' language use, to rehearse and explore the language they need. For example, they give them good strategies to help them frame their replies and insist they justify their responses. Staff also promote the use of 'talk partners' so that each pupil has another individual with whom they can exchange their ideas and responses before deciding whether they wish to contribute to class discussions. The staff recognise the pupils' confidence in their use of a number of different languages and opportunities to use and build upon these language skills are exploited by staff. Their contribution is valued by the school and reflected in the multilingual notices and signs throughout the school. It is recognised, too, each morning in the singing of songs, especially translated into pupils' own languages, to celebrate diversity.
11. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. All staff make a valuable contribution to the high quality of this provision by securing a consistent approach in their teaching and an effective exchange of information. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher helped pupils to make very good progress throughout the session by reflecting back their contributions to develop their thinking and the accuracy of their language use. Staff offer pupils with special educational needs very good individual support and ensure they have access to all areas of the curriculum. This instils confidence in the pupils and helps those with challenging behaviour settle to their tasks and supports them at times of need.
12. Staff create rich learning environments in which they offer children opportunities to exercise responsibility. For example, nursery staff encourage children to select appropriately sized papers to make 'The Three Bears' and, on completion, to roll them into cylinders and line them in order of size. From the outset staff promote children's language development by requiring children to be precise in their responses. For example, a YR teacher, holding a string of three beads, gently coaxed a pupil to reflect on her initial response of 'I don't ... that's not five' and rephrase her comment to explain, 'I need to put two more beads on because 5 is two more than 3'. Staff foster pupils' understanding of their own progress; for example, a Year 1 teacher asked a pupil what he had learned and complimented him when he pointed out that his sentences began with a capital letter and ended with a full stop. In addition, a Year 2 teacher encouraged pupils to record what they had learned in their books; one pupil wrote, 'I have learned to double numbers when I am adding'. Pupils' understanding is assessed carefully at planned points throughout the lesson. A Year 2 teacher, for example, asked pupils to explain specific events in the story they had been reading

together. One pupil replied, 'He had too many dinners. That might have been the problem. That's why he went to see the vet.' Staff stress the joy of learning and exploit every opportunity to enrich pupils' experiences. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and pupils' enjoyment and competence owes much to the teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. They use music to promote pupils' cultural awareness through teaching an international repertoire of songs which pupils sing in a range of languages. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. For example, the specialist teachers' class management requires pupils to accept responsibility for organising aspects of the lessons at given stages throughout the sessions. During one lesson, a pupil responded by compiling, on her own initiative, a tabulated record of her group's programming. This school's documentation continues to describe teaching as 'the best job in the world'.

Children make an excellent start in the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and reception classes, which gives them an effective basis for future learning.

13. Children have very good opportunities to become familiar with the staff and the surroundings of the nursery before they are admitted at the beginning of the year before their fourth birthday. They are, therefore, well prepared to start in the nursery class feeling confident and secure. Although the nursery is about a quarter of a mile from the school, there is very effective liaison between the teachers and children in the nursery and the reception classes. As a result, when the children transfer from the nursery, they settle quickly into the routines of the school. Similarly, good arrangements, which include a programme of home and school visits, exist for the children who transfer from other nursery schools.
14. The provision in all areas of learning is very good. A wide range of imaginative and stimulating activities is offered, some initiated by the teachers and others which children choose for themselves. The learning environment is colourful and exciting. Planning and assessment procedures are very thorough and the children are encouraged to reflect upon their achievements. The partnership between staff in the Foundation Stage is very good. They meet regularly to discuss the effectiveness of the provision and review and plan future activities. Children's portfolios, which include dated samples and descriptions of their work and identify the next steps in their learning, give an excellent picture of their progress through the Foundation Stage. The teaching is of a very high quality and the children receive sensitive support from all staff. As a result, children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. By the time they leave the reception classes, they are likely to have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in all areas of learning and some children will be working at the early stages of the National Curriculum.
15. There is a strong emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff stress the importance of children making decisions for themselves in order to promote their growing independence. For example; daily snack time and lunchtime are used to develop children's ability to make considered choices and to emphasise the importance of politeness and consideration for others. By the time they leave the reception classes, the children demonstrate a very good level of maturity and independence for their age and this is shown as they confidently select their own activities and concentrate well on those initiated by adults. They show a good awareness of the needs of others; for example, in knowing how to take turns, to share equipment and to offer help when needed. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children play well together and have excellent relationships with the adults with whom they work. They are eager to learn and to demonstrate what they can do. Their enjoyment of learning is apparent in all their work. Their behaviour is very good.

16. Children make very good progress in communication, language and literacy through well-planned activities related to the appropriate objectives in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and through the language-rich environment of the nursery and reception classes. Great value is attached to talk with the result that children want to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas. The children experiment with, practise and apply their communication and language learning across a wide range of play and practical activities. Many of the children have limited communication skills when they join the nursery but with strong support from the adults they make rapid progress in learning to listen attentively and speak clearly. By the time they leave the reception classes they are developing good skills in speaking and listening. They listen well to their teachers giving instructions, explaining procedures and reading stories and they respond enthusiastically. In both the nursery and reception classes, children rejoice in the opportunities to recall rhymes, sing songs and recount their favourite stories. For example; in the nursery, the children delight in listening to 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' joining in with the parts they know and predicting what will come next. In the reception classes, they recall accurately the stories they have heard sequencing events correctly and describing characters and their actions well. Children in the nursery have very good opportunities to record their own marks and symbols; for example, when writing letters to the three bears. By the time they leave the reception classes, most children form letters correctly and write their names accurately. They recognise and order the letters of the alphabet and know the sound they make. They read a good range of familiar words and take their reading books home regularly to share with their parents. Pupils' reading and writing benefits from the displays of stimulating dual language materials, such as labels, captions, vocabulary lists and 'class' books which include examples of children's writing.
17. Staff are good at exploiting opportunities to develop children's understanding of mathematics and encouraging the correct use of mathematical language in all aspects of their work. For example, in their outdoor play, at snack time and at registration they encourage children to count, to describe shape, size and position. In the nursery there is a strong emphasis on teaching counting and one-to-one correspondence, on the recognition of quantities to five and developing children's understanding of comparative size. The children use their knowledge effectively as they prepare food in the Three Bears' cottage, selecting the appropriately sized mixing bowl for each bear, filling numbered cups with water and erecting three brick towers with the construction toys. Reception children build successfully on the skills developed in the nursery and regular counting and number recognition activities are incorporated into the daily routines. The children count to 10 and many count beyond. They know how many there will be if there are one, two or three more or less. All the children know a good number of counting rhymes and songs that enhance their mathematical learning.

The headteacher's exceptional leadership and management inspires governors, staff and parents. Together they foster the school's commitment to excellence.

18. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her exceptional management together with that of the established key staff have created a dedicated staff team whose continuing success has been ably supported by informed and committed governors and through warm and sympathetic relationships with parents. At the heart of the school's vision is a secure and exciting learning environment in which all pupils have every opportunity 'to develop their full potential'. This extends to their taking responsibility for their involvement in the life of the school, whether in their own learning or in the organisation of the school through their role on the school council. The staff's excellent daily practice and the pupils' very responsible attitudes and outstanding achievements are the hallmarks of this successful leadership and management.
19. The school strives for success through its high quality procedures for strategic development. Improvement is carefully planned and resources are precisely targeted. Initiatives are thoroughly prepared, delegated sensibly with responsible staff given appropriate time for their conception, implementation and monitoring. This is very good practice. Implications for professional development, acquisition of learning resources and project management are thoroughly researched and appropriately financed. Budgeting and the prioritising of the planned distribution of resources are the responsibility of all key staff. Criteria to judge success are an integral part of this process and are carefully defined to ensure the school's review and evaluation procedures are used effectively to sustain its success. For example, staff are provided with regular non-contact time to carry out their management duties, there is a planned professional development programme for all staff and identified needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils are addressed through well-structured budgets. This last example illustrates the effectiveness of the school's measures to track all pupils from their admission to the school and identify their needs. The school's response to such findings has included purchasing, from its own budget, speech and language support for specific pupils. It has also extended to the temporary employment of an additional teacher, with a defined qualification, to advise staff, liaise with parents, and teach a specific group of pupils identified as not making sufficient progress in their learning.
20. The school's strategies to meet the needs of all pupils are very effective and encompass positive support for all its pupils. It successfully challenges its higher attaining pupils and provides extra help for those who need additional support. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school and benefit from the rich and stimulating range of activities which it offers.
21. To secure the effectiveness of its management systems the school has in place comprehensive monitoring and evaluation procedures for which all staff have some defined level of responsibility. Experienced subject co-ordinators monitor teaching and assess pupils' progress in their own subject areas. Teaching assistants and learning support staff monitor pupils' work and contribute to the evaluation of their own professional achievements and developments. This well-designed and structured approach to judging the success of its procedures is a significant feature of the school's dissemination of its good practices which follow from its Beacon status. Termly programmes are planned rigorously by the senior management team and organised effectively by the headteacher. An integral part of these programmes is the assessment of the needs of those with whom the school works and their participation in the evaluation of provision. The staff recognise that their involvement contributes significantly to their own professional development and to the school's continuous review of its practices. This includes the school's follow-up visits, some months later,

to those they have worked with to assess whether, and in what way, its contributions have proved effective.

22. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. Many are fully involved in the daily life of the school as employees or visitors. All members of the governing body have agreed responsibilities which they carry out conscientiously, drawing on their wide ranging personal and professional expertise. They have complete trust in the staff with whom they work as part of an integrated school team, and every confidence in the headteacher and her day-to-day management of the school. They are appreciative of the advice and guidance they receive regularly from the headteacher and key staff. For example, subject co-ordinators report annually to governors to appraise them of sustained achievements, issues for development and the progress of their own long-term plans.
23. Governors take an active part in strategic development: planning, monitoring and review. This extends to the compilation and monitoring of the governing body's own annual plan and its detailed, three-year plan for each of its committees. They see their role as critical friend and that of overseeing standards as essential aspects of the planning cycle. Through their successful fulfilment of these roles they are fully acquainted with where the school is successful and where it can improve further. The governors' financial management and disciplined distribution of resources is guided by the principles of best value and is very effective in enabling the school to reach its declared goals efficiently. For example, its well-attended, annual meetings with parents are used imaginatively to canvass parental opinions in small groups led by individual governors before issues are addressed in a plenary session that many parents may find intimidating.

The school's excellent ethos generated by the values shared by the school, parents and governors creates a positive, harmonious and industrious community.

24. The school welcomes all pupils and is very successful in creating an ethos which is firmly based on respect and care for others. It is a stimulating community in which everyone is valued and the learning and participation of all pupils is central to its work. The school values the individual, seeks to develop the whole child and works to enable all children to achieve their full potential. The pursuit of excellence informs all aspects of the school's work. It seeks to develop high esteem in all, to promote mutual respect and responsibility and attaches a high priority to creating strong links between school, church, home and the local community. This is underlined by the school's excellent programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship.
25. Teachers take care to ensure that all pupils have equal access to every aspect of the curriculum and vary their approaches to ensure that everyone is included. The school is sensitive to the needs of pupils from different cultural traditions. Very good attention is paid to sharing and celebrating cultural diversity; for example, teachers make a conscious selection of resources to present positive images of people and places. This has a very good effect on promoting tolerant and caring responses one to another and creating a harmonious community.
26. The school promotes pupils' personal development very well. Its provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development permeates the whole curriculum. Assemblies and collective worship are well-planned and well-led affirming the strong moral and Christian values that the school promotes in its everyday life. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop reflective thinking in prayers at the beginning and end of the school day and through listening to stories with moral dilemmas. Very good

opportunities are provided for the pupils to reflect on moral and social issues through developing rules for various aspects of school life. These include rules for the classroom, the cloakrooms and the playground.

27. Staff encourage pupils to develop self-confidence and self-reliance and parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of community and citizenship through the school council and pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils are further helped to develop an understanding of society through opportunities to take responsibility for routine tasks and assist in assemblies, and they respond well to this trust.
28. There are regular opportunities for pupils to enjoy exciting experiences which enrich and extend their learning. This provision helps to develop pupils' enthusiasm for school. The school is justly proud of its very good reputation for music which is an intrinsic part of school life. There are regular concerts during the school year where pupils perform for their parents; a brass ensemble and harpist have also performed recently for pupils. The music club provides a very good opportunity for pupils to develop their musical skills and to learn a tuned instrument. Participation in the Camden Music and Drama Festivals help to develop pupils' self esteem and confidence. Pupils also participate in a range of educational visits to local galleries and museums. The youngest children regularly visit the local market which develops their knowledge and understanding of the world. The school offers its oldest pupils a good range of clubs which include computers, Lingala, sewing and music. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 regularly visit the local sports centre to develop their ball skills and the school pays for all the pupils in Year 2 to have swimming lessons.
29. The school values the important part that parents play in their children's learning and the support and encouragement they give to homework. Parents are very satisfied with the education provided by the school and the progress made by their children. They report that their children like coming to school, that their behaviour is good and that the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. Parents also believe that the teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. They feel that the school works closely with them and are comfortable about approaching the staff with questions or concerns. They particularly like the excellent range of weekly workshops, including the computer clubs for parents and their children, which cover a wide range of areas and help them to support their children at home in a more informed way. Parents comment very favourably on the International Evening when families of many cultures come together for celebration.
30. The high quality of displays demonstrates the staff's commitment to providing a learning environment where pupils' achievements are celebrated and shows the high regard in which the school holds the distinct contribution of each pupil.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

31. No major areas of weaknesses were identified.

The inspection team endorses the school's current development programme as outlined in the school improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	10	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	30	50	20	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents five percentage points].

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12	99

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9	62

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	144

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	30	27	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	29
	Girls	26	26	27
	Total	52	54	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	95 (90)	98 (92)
	National	(83)	(84)	(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	29	25
	Girls	26	26	25
	Total	52	55	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	95 (90)	88 (88)
	National	(84)	(88)	(88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	34
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	57
Any other minority ethnic group	25

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	720732
Total expenditure	736395
Expenditure per pupil	3558
Balance brought forward from previous year	98173
Balance carried forward to next year	82510

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

119

Number of questionnaires returned

52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	21	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	19	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	75	15	2	0	8
The teaching is good.	75	19	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	27	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	23	2	0	8
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	73	25	0	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	81	15	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	27	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	33	4	0	12