

# INSPECTION REPORT

## ST MALACHY'S R C PRIMARY SCHOOL

Eggington Street, Collyhurst, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105532

Headteacher: Sister Regina Flynn

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris  
23696

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 196013

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Eggington Street Collyhurst Manchester
Postcode:	M40 7RG
Telephone number:	0161 205 3496
Fax number:	0161 205 1649
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Murray
Date of previous inspection:	16 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
23696	Mr J Morris	Registered inspector
19426	Mr C Farris	Lay inspector
2911	Mr E Steed	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Ltd  
6 Abbey Close  
Alcester  
Warwickshire  
B49 5QW

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Malachy's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school in Collyhurst, Manchester. It is smaller than many other primary schools with 190 pupils on roll. About a dozen children attend a toddlers group with their parents on Thursday mornings. There are 28 boys and 19 girls in the nursery and reception, who all attend full-time. There are 72 girls and 71 boys in Years 1 to 6. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (76 per cent) is extremely high. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (22 per cent) is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (about 5 per cent) is higher than in most schools. More than a fifth of the pupils are from non-white backgrounds. About a tenth of the pupils are from non-Catholic backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. The school is involved in several national and local initiatives including Excellence in Cities, Primary Social Inclusion and Healthy Schools.

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

This is a very effective school with an excellent ethos. Teaching and leadership are very good. As a result, pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities and they have excellent attitudes to school. The school provides good value for money.

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

- All pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The teaching is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' attitudes are excellent and their behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are very good.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school is particularly successful in promoting the personal development of the older pupils.
- The school meets the needs of all pupils well. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.

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

- The school library.
- Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.

*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 previously inspected in June 1997. Improvement has been good overall. Action has been taken with regard to all the issues raised. Improvement in promoting and monitoring attendance has been very good. Progress on issues relating to some of the other subjects has been limited by the appropriate and successful emphasis on raising standards in English, science, ICT and, in particular, in mathematics. There has been an extensive and effective programme of staff training. Health and safety and accommodation issues have all been addressed, except for the main playground, which is due to be resurfaced in the next few months.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	E	C	A
Mathematics	E	A	A	A*
Science	E	E*	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

A\* means the school's performance was in the highest 5% nationally and E\* means the school's performance was in the lowest 5% nationally.

The school's results in national tests have improved broadly in line with the national trend of improvement, at both seven and 11 years of age. Standards in English and mathematics have improved consistently since 1997. Fluctuations in standards have occurred because in some year groups there was a significantly larger proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school achieved very good results in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 in comparison with similar schools at both seven and 11 years of age. Compared with all schools nationally, standards were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics, at 11 years of age. They were above average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics at seven years of age. The school received an achievement award from the Department of Education and Skills for the results achieved in 2001.

This inspection finds that pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities throughout the school. The current group of pupils in Year 6 is below average in English and mathematics and close to average in science. This group of pupils was well below average at seven years of age. They have, therefore, made good progress and this does not mean that standards have fallen. The current group of pupils in Year 2 is achieving standards that are broadly in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The high priority given to English, science, ICT and, in particular, in mathematics, has resulted in standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history that are not high enough, particularly in the juniors. Pupils in the nursery and reception make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. However, the children are not generally achieving the national early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The school sets challenging targets for 11 year-olds. The school achieved slightly better results than predicted last year and it is likely to achieve results very close to those predicted this year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have individual targets in English, mathematics and science and are making good progress towards them. Pupils with special educational needs are, in the main, successful in achieving the targets in their Individual Education Plans.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils have excellent attitudes to school. They really enjoy school, want to learn and try hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good during lessons and at other times. Movement around the school is orderly. Lunch and break-times are characterised by lively conversation and energetic, happy play.
Personal development and relationships	Children in the nursery settle into school routines quickly. Pupils develop a very good sense of responsibility as they move from year to year. Relationships between pupils and staff and among the pupils are extremely good.

Attendance	Constantly improving and above average for the first time this year.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Teaching was good in the Foundation Stage and infants and very good in the juniors. These judgements are based on lesson observations and supported by the examination of teachers’ planning and pupils’ work. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. English and mathematics, including the key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. The school meets the needs of different groups of pupils well. Teachers have high expectations that all pupils will enjoy learning and make good progress in their work and personal development. Because these expectations are made plain and there is a very high degree of mutual respect between pupils and staff, pupils work hard and persevere when they have difficulties. Consequently, learning is at least good in most lessons and it is often very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides good learning opportunities for all pupils and there are very good links with the local community. However, too much time is allocated to the teaching of mathematics and not enough time is allocated to some of the other subjects. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are very good arrangements for those pupils who have special educational needs and they make good progress, particularly in the key literacy skills. Primary Social Inclusion funding has had a very positive impact.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. This is because of an effective programme of staff training and appropriate classroom support.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school has a very strong Roman Catholic ethos, encapsulated in the school’s mission statement. The provision for the pupils’ development is very good in all respects. This is the main reason why pupils have positive attitudes to school and a strong sense of respect and care for others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school with good regard paid to national and local requirements and guidance. The school has good arrangements to assess what pupils know, understand and can do and teachers use the resulting information well in planning what the pupils will learn next.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership to the work of the school. Staff with key responsibilities are effective in their roles. There is a tremendous sense of common purpose and commitment among all staff, to both the school's very strong Catholic mission and to high academic standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The school benefits from the support of a strong, committed governing body. They know the school and local community very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures to measure its performance and to take appropriate and effective action to improve identified shortcomings.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of available finance, staffing, accommodation and learning resources, except that the school library is not used well as a key learning resource. Increased staffing means that pupils are no longer in mixed age classes and this has helped to raise standards.

The school applies the principles of best value well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Nearly two thirds of parents expressed views about the school. This is a very high level of response. Parents were very positive about nearly every aspect of the school's work, with an extremely high percentage of parents saying that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teaching is good;</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work hard and try their best;</li> <li>• Their child is making good progress;</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed;</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> </ul>	<p>Of those parents who responded, about one in six think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons, particularly for the pupils in the Foundation Stage and infants.</li> </ul>

The inspection team shares the parents' very positive views of the school and finds that there is an excellent partnership between parents, staff and governors. There are very good extra-curricular activities for pupils in the juniors and the school recognises that it could do more for the younger pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **All pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).**

1. This inspection finds that pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities throughout the school. The school's results in national tests have improved broadly in line with the national trend of improvement, at both seven and 11 years of age. Standards in English and mathematics have improved consistently since 1997. The school achieved very good results in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 in comparison with similar schools at both seven and 11 years of age. Compared with all schools nationally, standards were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics, at 11 years of age. They were above average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics at seven years of age. The school received an achievement award from the Department for Education and Skills for the results achieved in 2001.
2. The current group of pupils in Year 6 is below average in English and mathematics and close to average in science. This group includes a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. They achieved standards that were well below average at seven years of age. They have, therefore, made good progress and this does not mean that standards have fallen. Pupils have quite good presentational skills when asked to give a verbal report on their reading. A case study of the author Anne Fine has resulted in the good development of a range of skills including writing in different styles and for different audiences, summarising information and searching the Internet. Pupils' use of punctuation is consistent and generally accurate and they use paragraphs well. However, a weakness in this group of pupils is that their vocabulary is rather limited and their spelling is not consistently accurate. Progress is slower in this area because they do not habitually use dictionaries and thesauri when writing. This is seen in lessons other than literacy lessons. For example, average ability pupils made several spelling and grammatical errors when writing out word problems in a numeracy lesson.
3. In mathematics, the high quality teaching is moving the pupils forward rapidly in mental calculation and a wide range of written tasks. Pupils are confident to ask questions if they are not sure and use what they have previously learnt well when presented with new work. They complete a lot of work in number, shapes and measurement. Average ability pupils have a good understanding of negative numbers and the use of brackets in complex number problems. Although even the most able Year 6 pupils make mechanical errors and misinterpret problems expressed in words, all pupils are improving at a good rate. This is because the teacher explains the importance of showing their working out and checking their answers using their knowledge of the reversibility or not of the four rules of calculation. Most pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between different types of numbers such as fractions, decimals and percentages. Again, the teacher invariably points out errors when marking pupils' work, such as when one pupil wrote ' $39\% = 1/39$ '.
4. In science, pupils have quite a good understanding of experimentation and investigation and scientific conventions. Some pupils have completed investigations and written good quality, well presented reports, for example on conductors and insulators in electricity and the absorption qualities of different types of paper. However, their knowledge is rather patchy and difficulties are again sometimes apparent in written tasks, such as listing household devices and appliances that need electricity to work. In ICT pupils have a good range of skills and satisfactory understanding of word-processing, use of graphics and use of spreadsheets. ICT tasks such as word-processing poems and letters or producing bar graphs clearly reinforce the pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. They have exchanged electronic mail with High School pupils through the 'Cyberbuddies' project.

5. The school has substantial evidence that standards are higher in relation to national averages in other year groups. This includes the national tests and teacher assessments in Year 2, optional assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5 and other standardised tests such as in reading. For example, nearly all the pupils in Year 5 are working at the expected level in mathematics.
6. The current group of pupils in Year 2 are achieving standards that are broadly in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science. All pupils write clearly and the most able do so well with uniform-sized letters and good spacing between words. Pupils use knowledge of phonics well in writing, although there is a tendency to be over-reliant on this. The use of punctuation is good.
7. In mathematics, pupils have completed a good amount of work using a variety of methods and resources including their own exercise books, worksheets and commercially produced workbooks. They are developing a good range of strategies for solving number problems and have a good understanding of odd and even numbers. Most pupils have a good understanding of addition, subtraction and multiplication and use hundreds, tens and units. They know about fractions, money and time and how to read different scales, such as for height and weight. Pupils know about a good range of shapes and have a reasonable understanding of symmetry. In science, a lot of work has been completed over time and much of it is good quality. Pupils know about variation in plants and animals and are beginning to use scientific vocabulary, such as 'investigate' and 'predict', and tables, charts and labels in their written work.
8. It is understandable why the school has placed such an emphasis on English and mathematics, with the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. It has been successful in raising standards in these subjects and in science and ICT.
9. Pupils in the nursery and reception make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. However, the children are not generally achieving the national early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They are very close to expectations in their personal and social development and physical development. However, many of the children in reception still have a limited vocabulary for their age and do not consistently speak in whole sentences. This low level of language development affects their learning in other areas. The children know about letters, sounds and basic punctuation and are beginning to write simple sentences with reasonable accuracy. They use their knowledge of phonics to make sensible guesses. More able children write sentences correctly, such as, "Postman Pat delivers letters" and identify rhyming words. The less able children are not yet writing clearly and, at times, are not able to tell the teacher what they have written.
10. The school sets challenging targets for 11 year-olds, in accordance with statutory requirements. The school achieved slightly better results than predicted last year and it is likely to achieve results very close to those predicted this year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have individual targets in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are, in the main, successful in achieving the targets in their Individual Education Plans. More generalised, whole school targets are also set and made known to pupils. At the time of this inspection, there were extensive displays, in the dining hall, of pupils' work from reception to Year 6. These showed high expectations and good progress in non-fiction writing and problem solving in mathematics and science.

**The teaching is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection.**

11. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. Half the lessons seen were very good or excellent and nearly nine tenths of them were good or better. Because of the limited time available in a short inspection, priority was given to observing teaching in the juniors and, in consultation with the headteacher, the teaching of mathematics. All of the lessons seen in Years 1

to 6 were in English, mathematics, science or ICT. An emphasis was given to communication and mathematics in observations in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in the lessons seen was good in the Foundation Stage and infants and very good in the juniors. These judgements are supported by the examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work.

12. The very good use the school's finances, including additional funding through standards funds, Primary Social Inclusion funding and Excellence in Cities funding has clearly improved the quality of teaching and learning. This funding has been used to increase staffing so that all classes now have pupils from a single year group. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection and it has contributed to the improvement in standards. The skills of both teachers and support staff have been developed through an extensive programme of training. Good use is made of staff expertise. For example, the Year 5 teacher takes Year 5 and Year 6 for numeracy lessons and the Year 6 teacher takes them for literacy. There are three learning support mentors, two of whom work with targeted pupils in Years 5 and 6 and one who works with pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 to 6. Two teachers have been involved in a research project (for three years) looking at pupils speaking and listening skills. The school benefits further from the input of very competent temporary teachers.
13. English and mathematics, including the key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. The teaching of phonics is given a very high priority, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Pupils are grouped by ability in literacy and numeracy lessons and tasks are set that are well matched to the needs of each group. For example, the teacher presents appropriate challenges to the least and most able children, in simple counting and matching activities in the nursery. In such ways, the school meets the needs of different groups of pupils well. There are booster classes on Saturday mornings for specific pupils. A good measure of the effectiveness of the teaching of mathematics is the fact that all pupils asked said this is their favourite subject. On the other hand, many of the same pupils reported that any subject involving writing is their least favourite and mentioned geography, history and religious education.
14. Science and ICT are taught well throughout the school. An excellent science lesson in Year 6, investigating the rates of descent of paper helicopters, featured thorough planning and stimulating delivery of an exciting activity. More able pupils were given an additional challenge in their investigation. This resulted in a very high level of pupil interest and involvement and a clear development of the pupils' understanding of the scientific principles and processes involved.
15. In the nursery and reception, the teachers make effective use of the national guidelines on the six areas of learning to plan and organise activities for the children. They teach specific basic skills well and promote learning through imaginative and exploratory play. For example, children in the nursery use many different shaped wooden blocks to construct complicated looking buildings or pretend a single block is a telephone handset. Learning is fun when you are counting how many toys you have thrown into a box.
16. Throughout the school there are very good relationships between adults and pupils during lessons. Most lessons are characterised by a very busy but calm atmosphere. Teachers have high expectations that all pupils will enjoy learning and make good progress in their work and personal development. Because these expectations are made plain and there is a very high degree of mutual respect between pupils and staff, pupils work hard and persevere when they have difficulties. Consequently, learning is at least good in most lessons and it is often very good.
17. Teachers always mark pupils' work. Written comments reinforce verbal comments during lessons. At best, these comments show both recognition of achievement and effort and draw attention to unacceptable errors or standards of presentation. Arrangements for homework are good throughout the school. There is a homework club, run in conjunction with the breakfast club by the learning support mentors. Teachers set tasks in literacy and numeracy throughout the school and a range of other homework in the juniors. Pupils are reminded about homework, for example, Year 2 pupils were asked to revise their two-times table.
18. It was not possible to observe any lessons in physical education. However, brief 'incidental' observations were made of a Year 6 gymnastics lesson and organised football, basketball and cross-country running activities at lunchtime. An emphasis on the safe handling of equipment,

awareness of personal safety and the promotion of the benefits of personal endeavour and fair play were clear.

**Pupils' attitudes are excellent and their behaviour and personal development are very good.**

19. All pupils have excellent attitudes to school. They really enjoy school, want to learn and try hard. Pupils are polite and helpful to staff and visitors. They are inquisitive and show genuine interest about others in conversation. Pupils say that all the teachers and other adults regularly in school are, "nice, kind and helpful". Very good attitudes to learning and behaviour were noted during formal lesson observations and brief visits to all classrooms during the registered inspector's pre-inspection visit to the school and during the inspection week. Pupils very strongly express the view that they get on with each other and there is no bullying.
20. Behaviour is very good during lessons and at other times. The building has three lengthy corridors and two staircases. Pupils often have to walk a considerable distance between activities. Movement around the school at such times is orderly. For example, when moving between classrooms and the ICT suite, going to lunch or walking to the swimming coach. Lunch and break-times are characterised by lively conversation and energetic, happy play. Good use is made of the different play areas and available equipment. Activities are well supervised and often formally organised by the mid-day staff or teachers. During the inspection, mid-day staff led organised ball and circle games, a teacher did some football coaching and another teacher and governor took a group of pupils cross country running in the nearby parkland. There is a computer club on Tuesdays and Thursdays and a percussion group on Wednesdays. In these ways, pupils are given interesting things to do at playtimes.
21. Children in the nursery settle into school routines quickly and understand that they need to learn on their own at times and get on with others. Pupils develop a very good sense of responsibility as they move from year to year. There are house captains and the school council includes representatives from Years 3 to 6. Pupils use the 'bully box' to say good things about each other as well as reporting difficulties. There are 'healthy school' officers who give out fruit in the mornings. Pupils show initiative, for example when suggesting possible stalls and games for the school summer fair or collecting for charities. Relationships between pupils and staff and among the pupils are extremely good. Older pupils mix with and help younger ones at dinner and playtimes.
22. Rates of attendance have improved constantly since the previous inspection and are above the national average for the first time this year. This is because the school has very good, effective procedures in monitoring and promoting good attendance. Governors emphasise the importance of regular attendance at school to the parents and the office staff are very efficient in following up absences. Examination of registers shows that in some classes, for example the current Year 2, there are long periods of near perfect attendance.

**The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are very good.**

23. The headteacher provides very good leadership to the work of the school. Staff with key responsibilities are effective in their roles. The deputy headteacher understands and fulfils her various roles very well. Leadership of key subjects such as English, mathematics, science and ICT is often very good. There are co-ordinators for all subjects of the curriculum and other key aspects of the school's work such as special educational needs and assessment. There is a tremendous sense of common purpose and commitment among all staff, to both the school's very strong Catholic mission and to high academic standards.
24. The school benefits from the support of a strong, committed governing body. Governors play a significant part in the day-to-day life of the school and, for example, governors were seen helping in the classroom and with sporting activities during the inspection. They know the school and local community very well. Links between the school and parish play a pivotal role in the daily life of the school.



25. The school has good procedures to measure its performance and to take appropriate and effective action to improve identified shortcomings. The school improvement plan (SIP) is a very detailed description of the school's identified priorities, how they will be achieved in terms of both action and funding, who is responsible and how success will be measured. A new model of SIP was introduced after the headteacher and deputy headteacher attended a training course. Although this is an effective tool for the management of change, insufficient attention is paid to planning in future years. Since the previous inspection there has been an extensive and systematic programme of staff training to improve skills in identified areas of weakness.
26. The school makes very good use of available finance, including specific grants, and examples are given elsewhere in this report. There is a good balance of experience among the teaching staff and there are good arrangements to support newly qualified teachers. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are used well to promote the pupils' personal development and academic learning. There have been many improvements to the accommodation since the last inspection when many shortcomings were identified. The roof has been repaired and an ICT suite has been installed. Railings have been replaced or repaired and painted. Outdoor provision for the younger children has been developed, a traversing wall has been created in the main playground and the school shares a new outdoor football and basketball court with the neighbouring Church of England primary school. During the inspection week, work was taking place on a garden area at the front of the school funded by a local environmental award. The remaining issue is the unevenness of the main playground and resurfacing of this is scheduled for this summer. The school is very well maintained and the appearance of the accommodation, such as a total lack of clutter in corridors, makes a significant contribution to the very good learning environment.
27. Financial planning and management are good. A deficit budget at the time of the previous inspection has been eliminated. Available funding has been used very effectively to improve staffing and resources. The school buys into an independent bursar service, which brings in outside expertise and objective information on best practice in other schools. The school applies the principles of best value well. For example, it compares its performance with that of other schools.

**Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school is particularly successful in promoting the personal development of the older pupils.**

28. The provision for the pupils' personal development is very good in all respects. This is the main reason why pupils have positive attitudes to school and a strong sense of respect and care for others. The school has a very strong Roman Catholic ethos. The spiritual and moral development of the pupils is central to the school's mission statement and aims and this is evident in daily practice. It was not part of this inspection to make judgements about the provision for religious education (RE) and collective worship. Therefore, no lessons were seen in RE and, in fact, it was not possible to observe any assemblies. However, the high priority given to the teachings of Jesus and the recognition of a deity is manifest in the school's documentation and daily life and the extensive Sacramental programme. This occurs throughout the life of the school community and was seen in a very good hymn practice for the juniors, prayers in classrooms and when inspectors met with the school governors. Two of the governors are priests and are very regular visitors during the school day.
29. Pupils are given insights into the beliefs and values of others and the value of respecting these. Examples were seen of pupils having studied religious beliefs and cultures other than those grounded in Christianity, such as Judaism and the Chinese New Year. There was an Indian workshop in February 2002. In history, Year 6 pupils are currently learning about ancient Greece. Central to this work is the nature of democracy and links and references were repeatedly made to this when inspectors visited this classroom, for example during a literacy lesson. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is promoted through art and design activities, for example studying famous artists such as Picasso and making African masks.

30. Moral and social development is promoted through the school's common approach to classroom practice and how adults interact with pupils at other times. Pupils are expected to listen to adults and each other and value what others say. The benefits of high standards of behaviour are explained and understood. The recently introduced school council is a very good example of how the school promotes individual and collective responsibility. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have voted for two members of their classes to serve on the council. There is a house points system (based on the patron saints of the countries of the United Kingdom) and there are good opportunities for participation in competitive sporting activities, including football and cross-country running.
31. There are very strong links with the local community, particularly major professional sports clubs in the city of Manchester. An extensive programme of lunchtime and after-school clubs, inter-school competitions and visits and visitors considerably enhances the school's provision for physical education during lessons. Over 200 pupils and 50 adults from St Malachy's and the other primary school across the road, contributed to the re-development of the nearby parkland. This included tree planting and performances. Pupils raise money for Catholic and other charities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 sing in the local church and homes for the elderly. The Missionary Brothers of Charity (who live on site) organise and run a fun club with parents during the Easter and summer school holidays. 'Crucial Crew', road safety, police and fire service personnel all make regular inputs into the school. The very strong partnership between school and parents, clearly further develops the pupils' understanding of and feeling for the local community.

**The school meets the needs of all pupils well. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.**

32. One of the school's aims is to be socially inclusive. This inspection finds that it is very successful in meeting this aim both socially and educationally. There is good equality of opportunity in the delivery of the school's curriculum, including sporting activities, such as cross-country running, musical activities and membership of the school council.
33. There are very good arrangements for those pupils who have special educational needs and they make good progress, particularly in the key literacy skills. Primary social inclusion funding and Excellence in Cities funding are having a very positive impact on this area of the school's work. One of the three learning mentors works exclusively with pupils with special educational needs from Years 1 to 6. This year, and for at least one more year, funding has been used to release the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) from his classroom responsibilities. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. This is because of an effective programme of staff training and appropriate classroom support. There are strong links between the school, primarily through the SENCO, and a range of other local education authority and health services, including the Behaviour Support Service, primary Learning Support Service, Speech and Language Therapist and Ethnic Minority Support Service.
34. Observations were made of staff working with individual pupils or in small groups. As in whole class observations, the positive relationships between adults and pupils were a very important element of the teaching. The pupils are making clear gains towards their individual targets in lessons and are largely achieving them over time. This is because the adults give clear information to the pupils and praise them when they are successful, or if they try hard when they are not. The pupils were confident to "have a go" because they received positive encouragement, for example, when having difficulty choosing between 'sh' and 'ch' sounds. Similarly, in a Year 6 science lesson, a pupil with special educational needs confidently told a member of staff that a paper helicopter would not fly because it hadn't been made properly.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The school library.**

35. The school has resources for learning that are at least adequate, and often good, for all subjects of the curriculum, including English and ICT. However, the school library does not present well as a key learning resource. Many of the books in the library are old and in a rather poor condition. The condition of the decoration and furnishings and quality of labelling and displays is less effective than in the rest of the school and does not convey a sense that this is an important place for learning. There are insufficient high quality books to develop the idea of reading for pleasure in all pupils and to promote the higher order skills of personal research and investigation in the older pupils. Although it is not in the current school improvement plan, the headteacher and deputy headteacher had extensive discussions about the library in March 2002.

### **Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.**

36. The school's considerable successes and strengths in standards, teaching and the curriculum are explained earlier in this report. However, the high priority given to English, mathematics, science, ICT and RE, has resulted in standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history that are not high enough, particularly in the juniors. These subjects are taught throughout the school and pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in the work they do carry out. For example, pupils in Year 6 have produced good written reports, both by hand and using a computer, of their visit to Lytham St Anne's. This was part of a study on coastlines in geography. However, too much time is being given to the direct teaching of mathematics. This is substantially higher than in other primary schools. Consequently, less time is given to other subjects and pupils do not, for example, have sufficient opportunities to record their learning in geography and history, plan and evaluate what they make in design and technology or carry out three-dimensional work in art and design. What is taught is taught well, but the lack of time restricts the breadth of the teaching in these subjects. The school is not teaching all elements of the National Curriculum 2000 programmes of study in sufficient depth. Furthermore, opportunities are missed to reinforce and further develop pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills through these subjects.

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

37. The headteacher, senior staff and governors should now:
- (1) As soon as possible, as finances permit, improve the library as a learning resource, which promotes independent learning and the development of research skills, by:
    - Improving the books by re-organising the current book stock and adding more up-to-date and attractive books, with an emphasis on non-fiction materials;
    - Providing a computer with a library catalogue and CD-ROM facility;
    - Re-decorating and furnishing it to improve the learning environment.
  - (2) Raise standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history by:
    - Reducing the time allocated to the teaching of mathematics and increasing the time allocated to these subjects;
    - Utilising the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to greater effect across the curriculum;

- Fully implementing the programmes of study of National Curriculum 2000.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	6	2	0	0	0
Percentage	6	44	38	13	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than six percentage points.*

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

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	163
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	124

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	41

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### **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 (Year 2)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	12
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	22	22	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (80)	96 (100)	87 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	22	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	87 (100)	91 (85)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	7
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	14	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (50)	74 (44)	84 (44)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	7
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	14	14	16
Percentage of pupils	School	74 (44)	74 (69)	84 (69)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	19
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	8
White	150
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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	1
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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.8
Average class size	20.3

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	270.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	637151
Total expenditure	615882
Expenditure per pupil	3276
Balance brought forward from previous year	67339
Balance carried forward to next year	88608

### *Recruitment of teachers*

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	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
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate = 64**

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	122

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	16	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	80	19	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	26	0	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	63	30	2	1	3
The teaching is good.	84	16	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	22	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	19	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	16	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	68	27	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	21	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	26	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	24	14	3	8