

**INSPECTION REPORT- Draft 5**

**ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

COVENTRY

LEA area: COVENTRY

Unique reference number: 103704

Headteacher: Mrs P Ham

Reporting inspector: Mrs Diane Lever  
13132

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 196324

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Winsford Avenue Allesley Park Coventry
Postcode:	CV5 9HZ
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Appropriate authority:	Board of Governors, St John's C of E (Aided) Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Joy Sweatman
Date of previous inspection:	July 7 <sup>th</sup> 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St John's is a Voluntary Aided Church of England primary school of average size, with 214 boys and girls aged four to eleven years on roll. Pupils are taught by eight full-time and one part-time teacher. The number of pupils having special educational needs, including statements, is well below the national average. The school serves a well-established area of mainly owner-occupied housing, although about one quarter of the pupils comes from out of the locality. Overall, pupils come from more favoured home backgrounds than the national average. The numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Almost all pupils come from a white British background and speak English as their first language. Most pupils have experienced some form of pre-school provision before entering the reception class. The attainment of pupils on entry is above that found in most schools.

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

This is an effective school which is over-subscribed. The school's strong ethos for learning and high expectations of pupils reflect the very good leadership and management of the headteacher. The school has emerged from a period of difficulty even stronger in terms of its sense of purpose and commitment to improvement. The school's strategies for the inclusion of all pupils in the education provided are successful in ensuring equal opportunities for learning. Overall, the teaching observed during the inspection was good, often very good and occasionally outstanding. This, together with pupils' good behaviour and very good attitudes, ensures that pupils make good progress overall as they move through the school. As a result, levels of attainment are well above those found nationally by the time pupils leave at eleven years of age. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards attained by Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science are well above those attained nationally. Standards in history, geography, music, art and information and communication technology (ICT) are above those expected of pupils aged eleven.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is often of very good quality and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and make a significant contribution to their rate of progress.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership, management and overall direction for the work of the school.
- Teachers and teaching support staff, under the leadership of the headteacher, demonstrate very strong commitment to change and development.

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

- Too few pupils in the infant classes achieve the standard they are capable of in mathematics.
- There is insufficient match of work to pupils' abilities, particularly to the abilities of higher attainers.
- Assessment information is insufficiently used to plan the next stage of pupils' learning.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1997. Since then, and in spite of difficulties relating to staffing changes, the school has made significant improvement in a number of areas, particularly under the leadership of the current headteacher. The high standards described in the last inspection report have been maintained in many areas and improved in some, such as writing, and particularly imaginative writing, in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching has improved overall. Teachers plan and record what is taught and the school is beginning to monitor teaching and the curriculum. Improvements to the curriculum include the planning for literacy and numeracy, which is very thorough and in line with national strategies. Planning for other subjects is in place but is now ready for review so that it reflects recent legislation. A programme of personal, social and health education has enriched the curriculum. The establishment of a School Council has strengthened opportunities for pupils' personal development. The creation of the suite for ICT has improved provision in this subject. An appropriate curriculum is in place for pupils in their first year at school, and there is greater opportunity for them to enjoy lessons outside. Through the leadership of the headteacher, the school has developed a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. Systems to analyse test results and pupils' progress in English, mathematics and religious education are in place, as are plans to extend these to other subjects. Communication with parents is much improved. The school now regularly provides parents with information about what pupils will learn. The school is well placed to sustain the current levels of high performance.

## 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	A	A*	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	B
science	A	A*	A	A

**Key**

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

The attainment of pupils entering the Reception year is above that found nationally. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards above those expected for their age by the time they begin Year 1.

Since 1997, standards attained by pupils aged seven in national assessments have fallen in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because fewer pupils than might be expected attain the higher levels. Standards nevertheless remain above those achieved nationally in reading and writing, and in line with the national picture in mathematics. The outcomes of teacher assessments in science indicate that pupils' performance is similar to that found nationally. Attainment in reading is particularly strong. Pupils' work seen at the time of the inspection is generally of a standard higher than that typical of seven-year-olds.

Standards attained by eleven-year-old pupils in English, mathematics and science have remained at

least well above those typically attained nationally by pupils of this age. Targets set for the attainment of Year 6 pupils have generally been met. Compared with the performance of similar schools, pupils' attainment is well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The work of pupils currently in Year 6 confirms this picture. The presentation of the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is of a consistently very high standard. Their written work in English, and particularly their imaginative writing, is of very good quality. In mathematics, the standard achieved by higher attaining pupils is not significantly different from that of other pupils. The skills of literacy and numeracy are generally developed well as pupils move through the school, and particularly well in the upper junior years. The limited evidence available indicates that standards in ICT, history, music, art and particularly geography are above those expected for pupils aged eleven. During this short inspection, there were insufficient opportunities to see enough work in physical education and design and technology on which to base judgements about overall standards. Religious education was not inspected by the team, but by a diocesan representative present during the same week.

The good rate of progress made in the Reception year slows somewhat during Years 1 and 2 to a generally satisfactory rate. This steady progress continues during Years 3 and 4, and accelerates sharply during Years 5 and 6. The rate at which pupils make progress as they move through the school reflects not only the quality of teaching they enjoy, but also their behaviour and attitudes to learning.

The school is making good progress towards meeting the realistic and appropriately challenging targets it has set for pupils' academic achievement this year.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are clear about why they come to school and are keen to learn and succeed. Older pupils demonstrate a particularly mature approach to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Standards of behaviour are generally high, reflecting staff expectations. Some immature behaviour in the infant years slows the pace of pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very secure. Pupils' personal development is on occasions limited by the nature of tasks they are given to do. Pupils work well together, are self-assured and display a confidence that equips them well for the next stage in their learning.
Attendance	Very good. There are no recorded unauthorised absences.

Pupils' attitudes, relationships, attendance and punctuality make an important contribution to the progress they make and the standards they achieve.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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 inspectors visited the school over two days and observed twenty lessons. All class teachers were seen teaching at least twice. The teaching of English was observed in all but one class, and the teaching of mathematics similarly. Although teaching was observed in only some of the other subjects of the curriculum, this sample does provide a clear picture of the overall quality of teaching in the school.

Teaching seen was of good quality overall, and never less than satisfactory. Examples of good, very good and outstanding teaching were seen in the junior age classes, the majority in the upper years. This high quality teaching promotes very effective learning and, as a result, pupils attain levels of performance well above those typical of eleven-year-olds.

The teaching of English and literacy skills was very good overall. Its increased effectiveness in Years 5 and 6 was due to the teachers' enthusiasm, subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn. The teaching of mathematics, and especially of numeracy skills, was of good quality. The teaching of other subjects of the school's curriculum was effective in developing pupils' skills in numeracy and especially literacy. The attention given to reading skills in the infant years is particularly effective. Teachers are adept at using a variety of resources, including support staff, to provide an interesting range of learning experiences. Individual lesson plans are detailed and provide a sharp focus for pupils' learning. Questions probe pupils' thinking. In the majority of classes, relationships promote very good attitudes.

Teachers use a limited range of strategies for matching work to the needs of all pupils. This is particularly evident in mathematics and the work of higher attainers. Practice varies but overall is barely satisfactory. The management of pupils' challenging behaviour in a small number of lessons is inconsistent and does not make use of appropriate strategies.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, and is enriched by the attention given to the performing arts and pupils' personal, social and health education. Literacy skills are developed well across all subjects. Learning experiences that recognise the full range of pupils' abilities are limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of the support staff ensures that pupils with special educational needs have access to the full range of learning experiences enjoyed by other pupils. When this support is unavailable, they sometimes struggle to complete tasks that are not modified to reflect their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Good. Provision for pupils' social development is particularly effective, enabling pupils to work together successfully. Within

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	the subjects of the curriculum, provision for moral development is very good and for spiritual development it is good. The development of pupils' awareness of their own cultural heritage is stronger than provision for increasing their awareness and understanding of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils' health, welfare and safety is paid careful attention. Assessment information is insufficiently used to plan the next stage in pupils' learning.

Overall the breadth of the curriculum represents a good range of learning opportunities.

### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's management of change is a strength of the school. She receives good support from senior teaching colleagues and the governing body.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They have a growing awareness of their changed role, and are keen to act as a "critical friend" to the school and to the headteacher in particular.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The involvement of staff in this process as curriculum managers is limited.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. In determining how funds available to the school should be used, the governing body applies the principles of best value appropriately. Financial planning is, however, limited to one year, and reduces the usefulness of longer-term plans for improvement.

The overall effectiveness of leadership and management places the school in a strong position to move forward and improve even further.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and are happy there</li> <li>• The standards the school achieves and the progress their children make</li> <li>• The high expectations the school has of its pupils</li> <li>• The school's willingness to listen to and act on their concerns</li> <li>• Improvements in communication and the greater access they now have to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons</li> <li>• More consistent use of homework</li> <li>• More information about how their children are getting on</li> <li>• Closer links with parents</li> </ul>

<p>information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The greater opportunity they now have to be consulted and involved in their children's learning</li> </ul>	
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The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views, and their comments about homework. Considering the small number of teaching staff, the inspectors feel that the range of activities provided outside lessons is acceptable. Although the amount of information sent to parents, including reports and newsletters, has improved greatly in recent years, the style and clarity of information is somewhat formal and not always written with the reader in mind. The school, under the guidance of the headteacher, has invested a generous amount of time and effort in building closer links with parents. It recognises, however, that there is still room for improvement in this aspect of its work. The inspection team agrees that this is the case.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Standards attained by Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science are well above those attained nationally. Standards in history, geography, music, art and information and communication technology (ICT) are above those expected of pupils aged eleven.**

1. The inspection took place at the beginning of the spring term. A considerable amount of pupils' work was available for the inspectors to examine. This, together with the observation of lessons, talking to pupils and reviewing teachers' records, provided clear evidence of pupils' attainment on which secure judgements could be based.
2. The standards seen at the time of the inspection confirm the picture provided by national assessment results over the past four years. This shows that in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the standards attained by pupils have remained at least well above those attained nationally by pupils aged eleven. What makes the school's performance particularly impressive is the number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) in national assessments. This is especially noticeable in English and science. In these subjects, pupils who took part in national assessment tests in 2001 attained standards well above those found in similar schools (defined as schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals). In mathematics, the attainment of the same pupils was above that of similar schools.
3. Pupils assessed in 2001 had previously taken part in national assessments in 1997 when aged seven. Performance data indicates that in English, their attainment in 2001 was well above that of all other pupils who attained standards similar to the school's in 1997. In science, it was above that of such pupils, and in mathematics it was in line with the performance of the comparable group of pupils.
4. The work of the current Year 6 pupils indicates that these high standards are being maintained and are likely to be reflected in the results of national assessments later in the year. Pupils' performance in English is particularly strong. They use language very effectively to imagine, explore feelings and mood and create atmosphere. They can choose the appropriate form of writing for the purpose they intend, and successfully sustain the reader's interest. They use metaphor, simile and personification with confidence. For example, during a lesson observed a pupil wrote, "The wind blew through the trees like a swarm of angry bees chasing their prey". Pupils' work is always very well presented. Grammar and punctuation are invariably correct and spelling is almost always accurate. The quality of their imaginative writing is largely the result of the very good teaching they experience in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' marking supports the work well, giving clear indications as to why the work is good and showing how it can be improved still further.
5. In science, pupils use correct scientific vocabulary when reporting on reversible and irreversible changes occurring when substances are heated. They evaluate the factors to be considered in order to ensure an investigation is conducted as a fair test, for example when dissolving different substances. They carry out measurements of force in newtons using a forcemeter, and can explain the effect of gravity on a ball being kicked, a see-saw and an astronaut in space. Factfiles pupils complete for living organisms such as otters and kingfishers put the research skills they have learned in English lessons to good use.
6. In mathematics, pupils use the four rules of computation with numbers including

thousands. They multiply decimals, understand reflective symmetry and create nets for solid shapes with accuracy. They are able to calculate percentages of whole numbers such as 15 per cent of 490. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, show similar levels of understanding. They are able to explain how they solve problems and discuss their work with confidence.

7. Standards in ICT, history, geography, music and art are of a similarly high standard, as demonstrated by the work of the pupils currently in Year 6. Through investigations, such as exploring the way moving water acts on materials, pupils draw conclusions about geographical processes. They can explain why these produce the effects they do and what impact this can have on the environment and on people. An example of this is the work they did about the river Tay, describing the changes that occur in and around the river as it moves towards the coast.
8. Pupils' work in history is typified by the evaluation of photographs as a reliable source of evidence, linked to a study of evacuation in the Second World War. They describe war from the alternative viewpoints of a pacifist, Fascist and others affected by conflict, also expressing their own opinions on the issue.
9. The teaching of ICT as a subject in its own right has had a significant impact on standards. Pupils now use ICT in most subjects of the curriculum, as a tool for the recording of their work. On other occasions they have used it to design a classroom for 30 pupils, and to create portraits using line patterns. The work seen in Year 5 is of a high standard. This was evident in a lesson that was observed in the computer suite, when pupils produced spreadsheets and interrogated them in order to complete the tasks set.
10. The singing heard in assemblies when the whole school was present was of a very good standard. Pupils sang with enthusiasm and confidence, in harmony and with very clear diction. The string orchestra, some 30 pupils strong and including violins, violas and cellos, played three-part pieces accurately, with a brisk pace and to a high standard.
11. The art work displayed around the school reflected the same high standard, whether demonstrated in paintings, drawing or designs. Winter landscapes involving cold colour washes as a background to ink-blown trees; paintings in the style of Clarice Cliff; line and pattern portraits based on Picasso's drawing of Dora Maar, and hats designed and created for characters such as Puck, Bottom, Titania and Oberon as part of the school's production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' are typical of the breadth and quality of pupils' accomplishments.
12. The high standards attained are the outcome of the good teaching seen throughout the school, which is frequently very good and occasionally outstanding in the upper junior years. This, together with older pupils' excellent behaviour and very mature attitudes to learning enables the rate at which pupils make progress to accelerate in Years 5 and 6, and results in the quality performance seen.

**Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is often of very good quality and sometimes outstanding.**

13. The inspectors visited the school over three days and observed twenty lessons. Of these, six were observed in Years 5 and 6. Lessons in English, mathematics, ICT, history and physical education were observed. The quality of teaching in these six lessons ranged from good to excellent, and was of very good quality overall.

14. What makes the teaching particularly effective is the very good subject knowledge of the teachers, together with their understanding of how pupils learn. Their personal interest in and love of literature enables them to provide pupils with stimulating, challenging experiences. This, together with the effective use of national guidance on the teaching of literacy, moves pupils forward at a brisk pace in their learning. As a result, the quality of pupils' imaginative writing is particularly noteworthy. Teachers are confident to use demanding texts such as Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and Dickens' 'Great Expectations' when engaging pupils in analysing a plot and commenting on the author's use of language. This is demonstrated well in the pupils' rewriting of the meeting between Pip and the stranger. Exploration of contrasts between the book and film version of Dickens' novel is also very good, pupils writing clearly and persuasively about the impact on the reader/viewer of the different approaches. The teachers' own understanding and appreciation of literature allows them to lead all pupils in probing discussions about the authors' work. Their enthusiasm is transferred to their pupils who are in turn developing a love of literature.
15. Other aspects of English work are dealt with in a similarly stimulating way, and teachers' high expectations result in the accuracy of pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. In a lesson about simile, pupils quoted examples from a text studied previously, - "*She sat like a mermaid in a tide of tumbled boxes*" - (Leon Garfield) to demonstrate their understanding. Standards of presentation are very high for all pupils, regardless of their ability.
16. The teachers' same high expectations are evident in science, where pupils enjoy a broad range of experiences designed to give them a secure understanding of scientific processes. Pupils' recording of investigations they design, carry out and evaluate is increasingly detailed and varied in its style. For example, in recording their investigation of how long sugar took to dissolve at varying temperatures, pupils completed charts and graphs with great care and accuracy. In discussions and their writing, pupils make good use of the scientific terminology that teachers include in lessons as a matter of course.
17. In mathematics, all pupils benefit from the wide range of learning opportunities provided. Investigative work makes demands on and strengthens pupils' problem solving skills. Teachers' high expectations and brisk pace in the practising of mental calculations ensure that pupils' skills are well developed in this respect also. The successful implementation of national guidance on the teaching of numeracy has improved the quality of the teaching of mathematics.
18. Teachers bring the same confident subject knowledge, and awareness of teaching strategies designed to get the best out of pupils, to other subjects of the curriculum. This was seen in a physical education lesson when Year 6 pupils were required to refine gymnastic sequences they had been working on for several weeks. The teacher used the strategy of asking a group to perform their sequence, and the class was invited to comment on how specific elements of it could be improved. The quality of their evaluations, together with the teacher's perceptive input, focusing on connecting movements, shapes and balances, made the lesson very effective in helping all pupils improve their work.
19. Of significant benefit to pupils is the marking by their teachers of the work they do. This is consistently used not only to let pupils know why the work is good, but also to leave them in no doubt about what they need to do to make it better. Standards lower than pupils are

capable of are not accepted, whereas pupils' efforts to improve their work are recognised and celebrated.

20. Throughout the school, the detail included in teachers' lesson plans contributes to the effectiveness of teaching in all classes. However, plans rarely indicate provision of tasks designed to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities. Very good plans for support staff, giving precise details of what the purpose of the lesson is and how they should support pupils, are a strength. Incorporating the recording of assessments made, they provide valuable feedback to teachers when planning pupils' next stages of learning.

**Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and make a significant contribution to their rate of progress.**

21. Pupils enjoy school and are happy there. They are eager to talk about their work and what is happening. They settle quickly at the start of lessons, showing interest in their work and enthusiasm for what they are asked to do. They are keen to demonstrate their recall of earlier learning, for example in a design and technology lesson with infant pupils. When the teacher showed them a model of the playground slide they had made the previous week, pupils were eager to describe the problems they had encountered.
22. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in pairs and small groups. They do this naturally and with obvious pleasure, regardless of gender. They share materials and handle them sensibly, as when Year 4 pupils used mirrors in a lesson about reflective symmetry. Pupils of all ages take turns in discussions and use their highly developed speaking and listening skills well. They support one another and offer valuable suggestions about how the work they are doing can be improved.
23. Pupils' books, art-work and completion of practical tasks such as mathematical and scientific investigations demonstrate a sense of pride in the appearance of their work. The presentation of work is of a good standard throughout the school, and especially worthy of comment in Years 5 and 6. Here, pupils' response to the opportunities made available to them demonstrates a maturity of outlook more commonly found in pupils several years older. Their eager participation in the School Council and sense of responsibility for whole school issues reflect this maturity, which owes much to the way teachers deal with pupils as young adults.
24. Assemblies provide an example of the positive attitudes all pupils bring to their work in school. Pupils of all ages volunteer to take part in dramatic presentations, and contribute thoughtful comments about the stories they are told.
25. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, they are confident, articulate, self-assured young people, well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

**The headteacher provides very effective leadership, management and overall direction for the work of the school.**

26. Since her appointment, the headteacher has managed the school through a period of unusual turbulence, resulting from changes in staffing. Her vision for the school's future, representing significant change of overall direction, has been realised in terms of what has already been achieved. This is a direct result of her dynamism, physical effort and leadership skills, and the support she has received from the governing body, teachers and teaching support staff.
27. Prior to the appointment of the current headteacher, the school had enjoyed a long period of stability. Systems, procedures and practices relevant to that period in the school's history were well established, and successful in terms of the standards the school achieved and its reputation in the community it served.
28. The headteacher, appointed in 2000, recognised the need for change if the school was to continue to maintain its high standards and deserved reputation. Her intentions were somewhat thwarted by the staffing difficulties she then encountered. She nevertheless persevered with her intended course of action, at the same time managing the ongoing problems relating to staffing. Her success is indicated by the maintenance of the standards achieved by pupils, the acknowledgement of staff and governors of the need for change, and the commitment of those involved in the school to the process of development and improvement.
29. Through her knowledge of current educational developments and good practice, the headteacher has led the way in introducing changes to curriculum content, teaching methodology and school self-evaluation. Under her guidance, crucial elements of curriculum development have taken place. These include the introduction of a curriculum designed to meet the needs of pupils in the Reception year. A programme of personal, social and health education has been successfully introduced. The creation of a computer suite has resulted in improved provision for ICT. A commitment to the successful implementation of national guidance on how literacy and numeracy skills should be taught has seen major developments building on the foundation stones already laid.
30. The headteacher has recognised the school's partnership with parents as an area ripe for development. Much time and effort has been devoted to this. Regular newsletters give details of planned events as well as the work their children will be doing. Although the style and format of the newsletters is somewhat formal, their introduction has been appreciated by parents. Workshops, designed to raise parents' awareness of the teaching methods used in the school, have been equally well received. The accessibility of the headteacher and other staff, and the school's prompt response to issues raised by parents are also seen as significant and valued improvements.
31. Under the guidance of the headteacher, the school has made important strides in the process of self-evaluation. Procedures for the monitoring of teaching and the analysis of the school's performance data have been introduced. Although there is work still to be done in relation to this, the outcome of current practice is the school's knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses based on secure evidence.
32. The relatively small size of the current staffing complement creates difficulties in allocating



leadership of each subject of the curriculum to individual teachers. The headteacher's introduction of curriculum teams, each containing teachers representing the infant and junior phases, and responsible for the development of specific subjects of the curriculum, is an appropriate response to this situation. Although it is too early to judge its effectiveness, the strategy has the enthusiastic support of the teaching staff and successfully draws them together in addressing curriculum issues.

33. Throughout this period of change, the headteacher has not only communicated her vision of the school's future, but also secured the support and commitment of staff and governors to the developments needing to take place. She has given the staff a unity of purpose and successfully built a whole-school team of professionals working towards a shared goal. At the same time she has recognised the challenge this represented to individuals, and provided practical support to enable her colleagues to make the necessary changes in their thinking and practice. As a result, she now leads a team of skilled professionals united in their beliefs about how the school can build upon its justified reputation as a very good centre of learning.

**Teachers and teaching support staff, under the leadership of the headteacher, demonstrate very strong commitment to change and development.**

34. In a school of this size, the amount of staff movement that has occurred in the last two years is significant. This followed a lengthy period of staff stability, the school having enjoyed the leadership of the previous headteacher for over twenty years. The current headteacher's appointment, initially on a temporary basis in January 2000, became permanent that Easter. The long-term absence through ill-health of the deputy headteacher further destabilised the staffing, and was only resolved in July 2001. In the same month, four experienced members of staff left the school, for a variety of reasons. These included the part-time music teacher, as a result of whose teaching the school had a well-deserved reputation for musical excellence.
35. In the short time available before the start of the autumn term, the governing body appointed a deputy headteacher from within the school and made three teaching appointments. These included two newly qualified teachers, both of whom had been trained for the junior phase. September 2001 therefore saw half the teaching staff assuming new roles and responsibilities. The staffing complement also included five education assistants, who had worked in the school for a number of years.
36. The inspection took place just over a term later. During the autumn term, under the guidance of the headteacher, the school had made the development of a whole-school approach to teaching and learning a focus of its work. This decision recognised the need to bring the teaching and support staff together with a shared sense of purpose. Underpinning this was the equally important need to develop a sense of "team" and corporate identity.
37. Progress in achieving these objectives has been remarkable, due to the great amount of effort of all concerned. The clear definition of the headteacher and new deputy headteacher roles served as a useful starting point. A newly formed senior management team has very quickly grown into a cohesive group offering valuable support to the headteacher. Their involvement for the first time in the creation of a new plan for the school's development did much to promote a sense of ownership and shared purpose. The staff now feel valued as professionals and appreciate the consultation process they are invited to engage in. They are aware that, in management terms, they have much to learn, and regard professional development opportunities such as participation in the local education authority's

management course as timely and relevant to their needs.

38. The support for the newly qualified teachers has come from all members of the teaching staff, but particularly from the experienced teacher who acts as their mentor. The written programme of support has been closely followed. The teachers' introduction to the school's procedures, systems and related documentation has been gradual and enabled them to assimilate information over time. A programme of visits and contacts has been tailored specifically to their needs, and the process has been well managed. They value highly the support and advice of their mentor and other colleagues, which has been immediate and willingly given. The result of this is that they have settled quickly into the school routines and become members of the school "team" in a relatively short amount of time.
39. The school has capitalised on its current mix of new and experienced members of teaching and teaching support staff. The headteacher's recognition of the need for change has been welcomed. Her sensitive handling of the implications of change for individual members of staff has gained their enthusiastic support. At the same time, her reliance on the valuable experience of longer-serving colleagues has also been well received. The successful management of change has resulted in staff cohesion and strong commitment to the concept of building on current success to ensure future improvement.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Too few pupils in the infant classes achieve the standards they are capable of in mathematics.**

40. Since 1998 standards in mathematics, as judged by the outcome of national assessments of pupils aged seven, have declined from being well above the standard found nationally to now being close to the national picture. The school's performance in the latest national assessments (2001) was well below that of similar schools (schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals).
41. Closer analysis of the school's performance data indicates that, whereas in reading, writing and science the number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in national assessments in 2001 was similar to the national picture, in mathematics it was well below. It is this specific weakness in pupils' attainment that is affecting the overall profile in mathematics. The work of pupils in the infant classes, as seen in their books and in the lessons observed during the inspection, confirms this view.
42. The school is aware of this situation, and has analysed the outcomes of national assessments to establish precisely what action is needed to improve performance. Greater emphasis has been placed on the teaching of mathematics than was previously the case, the school having concentrated on literacy as an area for development. Staff participation in a five-day course on the teaching of mathematics is beneficial in improving teachers' skills and understanding.
43. Early identification of pupils as higher attainers relies on teacher assessment, without the support of any external validation. This places an unnecessarily heavy responsibility on teachers, and can lead to insecure assessments. The nature of mathematics requires that teaching builds in a structured way on pupils' learning. Inaccuracies in assessing pupils' abilities lead to teaching that does not match work sufficiently to their needs.
44. Current practice in mathematics involves similar tasks being given to all pupils, regardless of their ability. Lower attaining pupils, with the effective support of education assistants

and teachers, are generally able to achieve standards similar to other pupils in their class. Higher attaining pupils, however, complete the tasks without difficulty or challenge to their mathematical skills and thinking. This lack of match of work to their abilities results in them not being moved on in their learning at a rate sufficient to enable them to attain the standards they are capable of.

**There is insufficient match of work to pupils' abilities, particularly to the abilities of higher attainers.**

45. Evidence from teachers' plans, pupils' work and lessons observed indicates that throughout the school and in all subjects it is common practice to set similar tasks for all pupils, regardless of their abilities. Teachers rely on the outcomes of tasks to indicate the levels of pupils' performance. Strategies to match work more precisely to pupils' specific abilities are limited, although good practice was observed in a Year 4 mathematics lesson.
46. The effects of giving similar work to all pupils are less apparent in English, where in some classes pupils have individual termly targets to work towards. For example, in the Year 2 class these include correct use of capital letters and full stops, and for higher attaining pupils the use of a wider and richer vocabulary. Pupils are very aware of their targets, and how striving to achieve them will help them improve.
47. However, in the main this "one task for all" approach results in most pupils completing the same work to a similar standard. Teachers' expectations of most pupils are generally high. Lower attaining pupils are able to work to a standard similar to that of others because of the good quality support they receive in all classes, and the very good teaching they experience in the upper junior years. Occasionally, a small number find it difficult to finish the recording of their work, for example in science, albeit in discussions they clearly have the same degree of understanding.
48. The outcome of this approach is most apparent in the work of pupils of higher attainment, whose books are hardly distinguishable from those of other pupils. Although standards are generally high, the completion of tasks by pupils of lower and average ability to a standard similar to that demonstrated by higher attainers, particularly in mathematics, does suggest that this latter group are capable of even more and are sometimes in need of greater challenge.

**Assessment information is insufficiently used to plan the next stage of pupils' learning.**

49. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work by teachers is generally limited to English and mathematics. Plans to extend current practice to other subjects of the curriculum are at an early stage of realisation.
50. Not all assessments of the outcomes of lessons concentrate on what pupils have learned. Some relate only to what pupils have done, and are of little use as indicators of progress. The limited use of strategies to match tasks to pupils' abilities and identified needs indicates that, even when assessments relate to pupils' learning, they are not referred to sufficiently by teachers when planning future lessons. This has implications for pupils' progress, rate of learning and the standards they achieve.
51. An exception to this practice is the assessment made by support staff of small groups of pupils they work with on specific tasks. The detailed plans for the next stage of learning created by teachers as a result of these assessments is evidence of the good practice already

in place. The quality of individual plans for a pupil with special educational needs who attends the school one day a week are exceptional in their clarity, detail and sensitivity to the pupil's needs.

52. The effects of this limited use of assessment outcomes are also offset in Years 5 and 6. Here, teachers' marking of pupils' work and verbal feedback in lessons gives pupils a very clear picture of not only the quality of their work and the reasons for this, but also what they need to do to make it even better. This high level of individual support successfully motivates pupils to make even greater effort, and raises their overall levels of attainment.

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

To support the realisation of its aim of pursuing academic excellence, the school should now:

- (1) **Increase the number of pupils aged seven attaining the higher level in mathematics in national assessments.** The school should review and amend the content of teachers' plans, including learning activities and methods used in teaching mathematics in the infant years. In particular, lesson plans should indicate the use of a range of teaching strategies designed to match work to pupils' needs and abilities.

*Reference to this issue can be found in paragraphs 38- 42*

- (2) **In all subjects of the curriculum, provide greater match of work to the needs of pupils of differing abilities, particularly higher attainers.** The school should review the quality of learning opportunities provided across the curriculum. Individual lesson plans should recognise the needs of pupils of differing abilities, particularly ensuring that higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately.

*Reference to this issue can be found in paragraphs 43 - 46*

- (3) **Build on the emerging good assessment practice in English and mathematics, extending it to all subjects of the curriculum. Use the outcomes of such assessments to plan the next steps in learning matched to pupils' identified needs.** The school should reinforce the use of assessment as an indicator of pupils' learning needs in English and mathematics. It should establish consistent practice by all teachers in the use of such assessments when planning future work. Following this, established good practice should be extended, in a manageable form, to other subjects of the curriculum.

*Reference to this issue can be found in paragraphs 47 - 50*

## 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	7

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	3	8	6	0	0	0
Percentage	15	15	40	30	0	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. Care should be taken in interpreting these percentages, as each lesson represents 5 percentage points.*

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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	214
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	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	0	16

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils	
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0	5

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils	
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0	3

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.4
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	18
	Girls	11	11	10
	Total	30	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	97 (94)	93 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	18
	Girls	11	10	10
	Total	30	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	93 (100)	93 (100)
	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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	18	15	33

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	18
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	31	29	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (100)	88 (97)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	30	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (100)	94 (100)	97 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	199
Any other minority ethnic group	8

*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***

### ***Financial information***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27:1
Average class size	31

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	454,653
Total expenditure	445,613
Expenditure per pupil	2016
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,159
Balance carried forward to next year	44,199



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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	116

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	37	9	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	47	7	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	46	17	3	2
The teaching is good.	49	39	6	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	43	18	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	35	9	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	3	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	32	19	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	39	45	9	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	47	5	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	38	16	7	12