

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BARNABAS CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Erdington, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103412

Headteacher: Mr M R Le-Worthy

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Allcock
19834

Dates of inspection: 19th – 20th September 2001

Inspection number: 196397

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Church of England Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Spring Lane Erdington Birmingham |
| Postcode: | B24 9BY |
| Telephone number: | 0121 464 5813 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs F A Ordidge |
| Date of previous inspection: | 9 th June 1997 |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a seven-class school, which also has a nursery. It has 259 pupils on roll, including those attending part-time in the nursery, so is bigger than the average. It serves its local area in Erdington, Birmingham but some 15 per cent of pupils come from further afield to take advantage of its distinctive Anglican ethos. Over 30 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minorities, with almost seven per cent speaking English as an additional language, a high proportion. About 12 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, broadly average. 17 per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is higher than both the national and Birmingham averages. Children enter the nursery with broadly average levels of attainment, as measured by the local education authority's baseline assessment procedures.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Barnabas is an effective school, with many good and very good features. The pupils reach high standards and achieve well by the time they leave the school in the assessed core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There are several reasons for this. There is good teaching of a well-devised curriculum. Pupils display very positive attitudes to their learning and behave very well. Staff know and look after them very effectively. The headteacher provides very clear educational and pastoral direction for the school. He is well supported by the staff, governors and parents, who have very positive views of the school. The school has many strengths but due to very high running costs, it offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain well above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good, promoting effective learning from the pupils.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team, creating a culture of academic success within a caring Anglican ethos.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to work and behave very maturely, which effectively promote their good level of attainment.
- Staff know their pupils very well and care deeply about them.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average due to the inadequate amount of time pupils spend using computers and the teachers' lack of confidence in teaching them key skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school had no key issues to address when it was last inspected in June 1997. However, it took careful note of minor weaknesses identified and improved these aspects of its work, following a detailed action plan to improve its performance. As a result, governors are now very active in their monitoring role and use an agreed format when observing lessons. Boys and girls have equal access to extra-curricular activities, though not all parents are sure that provision is sufficient. Homework is a positive feature of the school's work and helps pupils attain high standards. Staff new to the school are well supported, so that they quickly become effective members of a dedicated and close-knit team. Improvements have also been made in the area of developing closer community links, though the size of the school's catchment area makes this difficult. The very helpful business links have been maintained.

There have been major improvements to the buildings and environment, including an additional classroom for small group work and developing and re-equipping the secure play space for Foundation Stage children. The new ICT suite is targeted to raise pupils' below average standards later this term when the school takes delivery of the new computers on order. Improved procedures to monitor pupils' performance, both that of individuals and groups, are helping sustain high standards. Targets are now more challenging and, linked to higher quality of teaching and learning, mean that the school is well placed to maintain its upward trend in test results. Improvement is good overall.

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 |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 |
| English | A | A | A | A |
| Mathematics | A* | A | A | A |
| Science | A | A | A | A |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Key | |
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |
| well below average | E |

The high standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 are a significant strength of the school. Standards fluctuate more at Key Stage 1, due both to the different attainments seen within cohorts and also to the relative strength of the teaching team in the two key stages. Children enter the nursery with broadly average attainments. During their time in the Foundation Stage they make good progress in all areas of learning. They attain very high standards in their personal, social and emotional development and good standards in all other areas, showing good achievement by the time they enter Year 1. Progress slows at Key Stage 1 but pupils' achievement is still satisfactory overall. The standards seen during the inspection indicate that current Year 2 pupils are attaining broadly average standards in writing but that they are above in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in mathematics and science are above average.

Results in the 2000 end of Year 6 National Curriculum tests show that standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been consistently high over the last three years compared with all schools. The 1998 mathematics result placed the school in the top five per cent nationally. The comparison with schools with similar levels of free school meals also indicates well above average attainment. The school has maintained well above average attainment over this period and also matched the upward trend in standards seen nationally, from this high base. Targets have been unchallenging in the past but are now more realistic, given the school's record. This was made more necessary, as the 2001 results, for which no comparative figures are yet to hand, showed a decline in standards, especially in mathematics at the expected Level 4 and in all three core subjects at the higher Level 5. The value added for the 2001 Year 6 group, since it reached above average standards in reading and writing and average standards in mathematics in the 1997 end of Year 2 tests, has been considerably below that which the school has come to expect. This has caused staff and curricular changes, which the school expects to return the end of Year 6 results to previous levels, especially given the high standards this group achieved in 1998. Evidence from lessons seen during the inspection, in the first month of the school year, indicate that standards are above average in English and mathematics and well above average

in science. However, standards in ICT are below average. The school has identified this area as one on which it intends to concentrate. Provision will be much improved and the subject manager will work alongside her colleagues to support teaching and help raise standards in this vital area. Achievement by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 is good overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils come to their lessons keen to take part and learn and work very hard in them. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good throughout the school and in the playground. There have been no exclusions in recent years. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Boys and girls from all ethnic and social backgrounds work and play happily together. Personal development is very well promoted by the school's curriculum. |
| Attendance | Good. Below average levels of unauthorised absence. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Very good | Satisfactory | 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 is good overall. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. It was good or better in 78 per cent and excellent or very good in 39 per cent. This shows significant improvement over the high standards seen in the last inspection and promotes good quality learning by pupils.

English and mathematics are well taught from the nursery onwards. Teachers plan tasks carefully to match pupils' prior attainment. Some mathematics lessons for Year 6 are taught in sets, which enable teachers to plan work for a smaller range of attainment than normal. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and quickly acquired, including by pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, who are well supported. Pupils are very well managed in well-planned and resourced lessons of brisk pace. This ensures that they acquire skills and understanding quickly, often supporting their work by independent study, sustaining concentration even when lessons are timetabled for long periods. Excellent teaching of English in Year 5 and physical development in reception were seen. All teaching seen by the very effective staff team in the nursery was very good. Good and very good teaching of science was observed, including in the crucial Years 2 and 6, where insistence on appropriate scientific language and the effective application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills were good features. Too little direct teaching of skills or evidence from lessons or completed work in ICT was seen, indicating low levels of teacher confidence and competence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Sound. All statutory requirements are met. Subjects are given appropriate consideration in a well thought out and balanced curriculum, except ICT. The range of activities outside lesson time is limited at present. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils are quickly identified and good provision, both inside and outside class lessons, is made for them promoting effective learning and good progress. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Good. Children in the nursery and reception classes are well supported, so that by the time they enter Year 1 most have independent skills and need minimal further support. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. The school's effective personal, social and health education programme promotes pupils' very positive attitudes, very mature behaviour and very constructive relationships. The strong Anglican ethos pervades the school's work in this aspect. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Very good. Very effective procedures and systems in place to ensure pupils' welfare in a safe and supportive environment. |

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good overall. Very strong leadership by the headteacher has established a clear sense of purpose and direction to the work of the school. Recent major changes in key personnel and roles have not yet been thoroughly resolved. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good. Governors are knowledgeable and have forged an effective critical partnership with the school. Statutory requirements are met in full. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good. A reflective school using improvement planning effectively to redress identified weaknesses and build on academic standards. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. Available money well used to support agreed priorities, applying appropriately the principles of best value. |

The headteacher provides very clear educational and pastoral leadership. He is well supported by governors and the cohesive staff team. All are committed to maintaining high academic standards, within the school's strong Anglican ethos, using effective analysis of the

school's performance, good development and monetary planning and regular monitoring. The recent promotion of an effective deputy headteacher has left a post that is proving difficult to fill. Senior staff members have taken on new roles and responsibilities to cover the current situation. Improvements to the school's accommodation have enhanced provision, including a very well planned, newly built computer suite.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most

- High expectations that their children will work hard, attain high standards and make rapid progress.
- The good behaviour, which means that their children enjoy coming to school and are becoming mature and responsible.
- The quality of teaching is good, including the provision of the right amount of homework.
- The quality of leadership and management.
- They appreciate the accessibility and responsiveness of staff and the quality of information and reports they receive from the school.
- They feel that the school works closely with them and is responsive to questions and problems.

What parents would like to see improved

- The range of activities the school provides outside lessons.

Inspection findings fully support parents' many very positive views about the school. There are limited opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities. The school has plans to reinstate the computer club when the new hardware is installed. Dance and drama clubs are also to be introduced. It believes that pupils do get opportunities to compete against other schools in sporting events but acknowledges that eleven-a-side football and cricket are not currently among them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils attain well above average standards by the end of Year 6.

1. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2000, pupils' results in English, mathematics and science were well above average, both when compared to all schools and to schools with similar levels of free school meals. This followed three years of similar or even better results, as in 1998 when the mathematics result put the school in the top five per cent of all schools. The school has maintained the same upward trend as seen nationally but from a much higher base. Results have been more variable at the end of Year 2. This is due to a number of factors. Children enter the school, either into the nursery when they are three or reception a year later, with broadly average attainments as measured by the local education authority's baseline assessment procedures. However, some years the baseline indicates above average attainment in one or more aspects. Some year groups have not had sufficient time in school to achieve well by the time they reach the end of Year 2 and take the National Curriculum tests. Some contain large numbers of pupils with English as an additional language, often at an early stage of acquisition. Others have significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. Furthermore, staff change has meant that there has not recently been a consistent Key Stage 1 team in place, so teaching quality, as monitored by the school's own procedures, has varied.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage, both in the nursery and reception classes, get off to a flying start to their education. The quality of teaching and curricular provision is very good. In lessons seen during the inspection, children were already attaining above average standards. They achieve well and the vast majority are on target to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1, with the higher attaining likely to have made the transition to the National Curriculum.
3. In some recent years, and in lessons seen during the inspection, progress slows after the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain broadly average standards in writing, but standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science, achieving satisfactorily over their Key Stage 1 career. However, work seen from last year indicated above average attainment promoted by effective teaching. 2001 National Curriculum test results confirm this view.
4. 2001 test results at the end of Year 6 show a decline in standards from those seen over the previous four years. Comparative figures for schools nationally are not yet available but pupils did not gain as many higher Level 5s in any of the three core subjects. This will have had an impact on the school's score, based on an allocation of points to the levels reached and a comparison made with other schools. The dip was most pronounced in mathematics, where the pupils' result was also below that normally reached at the expected Level 4. Fluctuations of this kind are not uncommon in schools with a one-form entry or smaller, as it often reflects academic differences across year groups. However, the 2001 group had attained above average standards in reading and writing and average standards in mathematics in the 1997 tests at the end of Year 2, therefore achievement for this cohort will not reflect the school's usual high expectations. Inspection evidence

shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in English and mathematics and well above average standards in science. In the Year 2 tests in 1998, this class attained well above average standards. The inspection took place in only the third week of the school year, so the strong Year 6 teaching team, augmented three days a week by the headteacher in mathematics lessons, could well repeat that result.

5. Work seen during the inspection shows that standards in literacy are above the national average. The literacy hour is well established and effectively taught. Additional time is devoted to extended writing. This means that some days, pupils from as early as Year 1 have two one hour sessions on formal English, which does not reflect a balanced curriculum or make use of rich sources of writing in other subjects. Basic skills are not always well taught and progress can be impeded, especially for the higher attaining pupils, by needless repetition. This was seen in Year 3 when a handwriting lesson concentrated on forming and joining letters that many pupils had already shown they were capable of doing earlier in their books. The tasks were not sufficiently well matched to pupils' prior attainment to challenge them all. The school has identified writing as a major focus for improvement but may wish to consider how extended writing could be developed in other areas than English, thus promoting writing skills and literacy more widely across the curriculum. Good opportunities are provided in subjects including science, history and geography but effective targets established in English are not reinforced and marking is more cursory than in formal English lessons. Reading skills are well taught and widely applied in lessons. Almost all pupils are confident readers and, from an early age, they talk with animation about favourite books and authors. Year 2 pupils have well developed strategies for reading unknown words in unfamiliar texts. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils apply skills of inference and prediction and discuss cause and effect in stories they are reading. Average attaining readers are fluent and apply good research skills confidently. The small number of lower attaining pupils do not all have well developed strategies for accessing new words, for instance when using reference books, but are confident when using contents and index pages to find information they need.
6. Numeracy standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The oral and mental session at the start of mathematics lessons is well used to teach and reinforce key skills, including rapid recall of number facts and tables. Pupils are confident when dealing with numbers mentally and use appropriate mathematical language when answering; usually challenged by the teacher to explain the strategies they applied. Planning is detailed and well matched to the range of attainments and special needs seen in classes. The inclusion of the headteacher in Year 6 teaching means that planning is matched to a narrower range of attainments and so is targeted more accurately on individual need. Lesson objectives are made very clear to pupils at the end of each section of numeracy hours. However, lessons can over run, as teachers do not always monitor the amount of time devoted to each lesson component. This can lead to a rushed or partial summary session or a reduction in time allocated to subjects planned for later.
7. Pupils attain well above average standards in science by the end of Year 6. Science is well taught throughout the school. In Year 2, the teacher insists on scientific terminology and carefully promotes thorough acquisition of the investigative process. In Year 4, pupils were asked to follow up at home the lesson on the development of the skeleton as people grow, measuring older siblings and adults. In Year 6, a very well paced lesson on the earth and beyond, focusing on the first moon landing, required pupils to use very

specific language. For example, knowing the difference between mass and weight and to write very detailed reports at a high overall level of understanding and knowledge.

The quality of teaching is good, promoting effective learning from the pupils

8. The quality of teaching has been improved, from an already good level, since the last inspection. Then there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and fewer very high quality lessons seen. In the latest inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. 78 per cent of teaching seen was good or better and 39 per cent excellent or very good. Criticisms about the quality and consistency of homework have been eliminated. Parents now almost all agree that the school has got the balance right. 99 per cent of parents expressed the view that overall teaching standards at the school are high. Regular monitoring by the headteacher, subject managers, governors and local education authority advisory staff to a common format has resulted in clear targets and guidelines for improvement being agreed for individual teachers. Teaching is now good overall.
9. There are differences in teaching quality within and between key stages. Teaching is very good for children in the Foundation Stage. In both the nursery and reception, teaching is never less than good and it is mostly very good or excellent. Teachers show thorough understanding of how children learn and teach them the basic skills very carefully in very well planned lessons. Children are sensitively managed and lessons are very well organised. Practitioners work very effectively as a team in the nursery, sharing planning, assessment and lesson leadership to the benefit of the children. As a result children are very keen to learn, acquire new skills and understanding and build on them very quickly. They already persevere at tasks for extended periods, showing good concentration and determination. Teachers promote this by the range of teaching styles they adopt, so that while some lessons are adult led, children soon acquire the capacity to choose, promoting their independence and their more direct involvement in their own learning. In an excellent lesson seen in reception, the strong staff team was joined by two parents, a mother and a father. This helped to staff further a very vigorous and active physical development lesson and gave additional good role models to the children.
10. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is sound overall. There is a new staff team in place. A newly qualified teacher in Year 1 has joined her more experienced colleague, in her second year as a temporary teacher at the school, in Year 2. The inspection came right at the start of the year but already relationships were good in each class and pupils were acquiring new skills and knowledge briskly. Teachers manage their classes effectively and plan carefully, particularly for the basic skills, which they teach well with high expectations of their pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons.
11. Teaching is good for pupils in Key Stage 2. Over 80 per cent of lessons seen at this key stage were good or better. Teachers manage their classes very effectively, allowing good relationships and inventive methods to be used, without fear of discipline problems. Pupils respond very well to the latitude they are extended. They behave maturely, work hard both when working at guided tasks or when researching, using computers or engaged on other independent tasks. Planning clearly identifies extension activities for the highest attainers, who thrive on the additional challenge they are given. As in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, where pupils worked at a complex investigation developing a decimal number chain showing perseverance and well above expected mathematical

understanding. Excellent teaching of imagery and metaphor in an English lesson in Year 5 produced outstanding learning and behaviour from the pupils. They answered very well constructed questions and responded to energetic and dynamic teaching by producing mature poems of their own using language very sensitively. The only unsatisfactory elements within teaching were seen in Year 3, where methods used in a literacy lesson did not engage the pupils. For example, they could not all see and follow a shared photocopied text and the lesson pace was slow. However, teaching for these pupils was satisfactory overall.

12. Good teaching is a strong feature in work in English, mathematics and science promoting the high standards pupils reach and the good achievement they make over time. Teaching is also good in all other subjects seen except information and communication technology. The only lesson seen was satisfactory, though the methods used and the way the pupils were organised were unhelpful and the standards pupils attained were below average.
13. Good teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language means that they learn well and make good progress compared to the targets on their individual education plans and prior attainment. This good achievement is seen both in class lessons and when pupils are withdrawn to work in small groups, led by the special educational needs co-ordinator or the teacher employed through funding specifically to support pupils from ethnic minorities. Good provision is made. Pupils' individual needs are identified early and clear targets set out for them. The teachers have a calm but firm approach. Learning support and integration staff offer high quality support. The provision for special educational needs is further enhanced by very good links forged with a local special school with Beacon status.

The headteacher, staff and governors work well together, creating a culture of academic success within a caring Anglican ethos.

14. The headteacher has a very clear vision of what the school should provide for the pupils. It focuses on success in lessons and tests, within an inclusive provision aiming to develop pupils, from all backgrounds, in all aspects of their learning. The very strong emphasis the school places on personal, social and health education is much valued by the parents. They see their children becoming more mature, showing tolerance, concern and respect for others and pride in what they do. Staff work well together as a team, showing respect and commitment to the school and each other and acting as positive role models to the pupils. The recent promotion of a valued deputy headteacher has necessitated role change, which has not been completely resolved. The post has not yet been filled and it may prove difficult to appoint. There are two temporary appointments currently in post, while the school goes through the process of permanent appointment and the attendant reorganisation of class and subject responsibilities. This has placed an additional burden of management on the headteacher, who discharges it well along with his very effective educational and pastoral leadership.
15. The governing body are knowledgeable and willing partners in the running of the school. Each governor has direct links both to a class and a subject and maintains regular contact with both by visits to the class and meetings with the subject manager. Following recommendations in the last report, governors have redefined their role in the monitoring of teaching more rigorously. They now have a helpful format to support this key element

of their work. They hold the senior management of the school to account for any issue that they feel needs redress. They are proactive as well as reactive, initiating implementation of the bullying policy not waiting for it to be brought for ratification. The governing body is directly involved in development and budget planning, and monitors the financial state of the school closely. For instance, it sanctioned a large carry forward figure well aware that much of it was needed to create and equip the computer suite. However, though their monitoring of the budget is thorough, the impact of spending on standards is not so robustly evaluated. Governors are active in ensuring that all their statutory responsibilities are fully met, often through their sub-committee network. The sub-committees regularly recommend improvements based on their assessments of the school's needs. For example, the curriculum sub-committee was instrumental in recommending termly assessed tasks in writing in response to the school's perceived need to improve that aspect of English.

16. The school evaluates its work effectively. Data from national and local education authority sources on its performance are analysed carefully and improvement planned. There is more attempt made to analyse test results by gender, background, ethnicity and date of birth, though the school acknowledges that this is an area for development. Targets for improvement are now more challenging for groups of pupils. Individual pupils are set targets by their teachers, based on an accurate assessment of strengths and needs. The headteacher, subject leaders, governors and local education authority advisory staff all monitor classroom practice and performance. Teachers are provided with detailed feedback and areas for improvement are agreed. This has helped to raise the standard of teaching since the last inspection.
17. There were no key issues to address following the last inspection. Despite this, the school devised a detailed action plan to improve the minor weaknesses inspectors had highlighted. This is a reflective school where planning for improvement is thorough. There is a core plan for the current year, with very detailed analysis of costing and responsibilities, for targets set and careful analysis of success by stating criteria and monitoring procedures by which it will be measured. Priorities for three future years are established, with draft targets suggested, supported by considerable information on the subjects and aspects to be developed. Previous years' targets are closely analysed and the audit presented indicates a clear commitment to institutional improvement.

The pupils have very good attitudes to work and behave very maturely, which effectively promote their good levels of achievement.

18. The school regularly plans opportunities to promote pupils' social and personal development, within the curriculum, in assemblies and social times and during visits, residential courses and extra-curricular activities. Pupils' self-esteem is well promoted further by the good displays of their work that are seen around the school. Pupils respond very positively and behave very well in lessons, in the hall and playground and when representing the school as ambassadors, for instance on visits or to sporting events. Parents are particularly proud of the way their children behave on these occasions. They report very positively on the impact this has on the reception they receive when they move on to secondary schools. The inclusive nature of the school's provision has ensured that groups of pupils get on very well together, so no overtly racist or sexist behaviour is seen. There have been no exclusions in the recent past. In lessons, assemblies and group

activities seen during the inspection, behaviour was excellent or very good in about 50 per cent and good in most of the rest. It was never less than satisfactory. This has a positive impact on the good progress pupils make, as lessons proceed unimpeded by routine disciplinary matters and the learning environment is calm and purposeful.

19. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They demonstrate an eagerness for their learning. They show very positive attitudes to collaborating with each other and their teachers in the pursuit of their learning and personal development. This promotes very good quality relationships throughout the school. The school makes a very good range of class and whole school opportunities for them to take responsibility and show independence, promoting pupils' very good personal development. Parents reported overwhelmingly to inspectors at their meeting or in the questionnaires they returned that their children like school and that it is having a very beneficial effect upon their social skills and personal responsibility. They feel their children are being taught very clearly the notion of citizenship. These positive responses to the school's provision have a direct impact on how and what pupils learn and promote the speedy progress they display in lessons and the good achievement they make during their time at the school.

Staff know their pupils very well and care deeply about them.

20. Very good systems are in place for the care and welfare of pupils. The very effective child protection procedures are well known to all staff, who are alert to, and aware of, the need to ensure the best interests of pupils. There are deeply embedded systems in place to promote good behaviour and actively manage any bullying or racism, should it occur. This includes an effective recording and reporting mechanism, were incidents to happen, including physical restraint, should it be needed. The school has very well defined policies for reporting accidents and the effective management and administration of medicines. Staff and governors are routinely involved in the regular audit undertaken to ensure a safe and secure school and the action planning this promotes. This results in very good whole school procedures for health and safety.
21. Parents feel very well informed about their children's progress at school. Assessment procedures are rigorous and the school uses evidence gained effectively to plan next what individuals and groups need to do to achieve well. Parents are well aware of the well established and highly effective system for monitoring absence and promoting improved attendance. The good attendance, including no unauthorised absence in the last school year, helps promote pupils' standards effectively. Parents have very positive views of the school. It is popular and over-subscribed. The admission procedures mean that some parents whose children attend the nursery part-time cannot secure a place for them to enter the school full-time. Many parents whose children stay at the school for their entire primary career are concerned about the lack of suitably accessible Anglican secondary schools.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average due to the inadequate amount of time pupils spend using computers and the teachers' lack of confidence in teaching them key skills.

22. There has been very limited improvement in ICT since the last inspection, when standards throughout the school were found to be above average. However, despite this positive judgement, there was insufficient evidence in 1997 that skills of controlling and modelling were in place, much as is seen now. The school acknowledges that ICT is not one of its current strengths. There are targets for development on its current improvement plan, both for this year in detail and subsequent years in outline. The building and equipping of a superb computer suite, now completed, is the first step towards raising pupils' standards. The delays and legal wrangling, associated with Internet connections, involved in the process, have disappointed the school. However, all that now needs to happen is for the computers themselves to be delivered and installed and the detailed plan can unfold.
23. Pupils throughout the school have below average skills and understanding in this increasingly key subject. There was only one lesson where direct teaching of skills was seen during the inspection. In an analysis of ICT within classes during an extended period one afternoon, only one computer was actually in use, in Year 1. Others were switched on but not in use or actually switched off. This low level of engagement is indicative of the standards pupils display. This was further emphasised by the scrutiny of pupils' completed work, mainly from the last academic year, and a detailed analysis of teachers' records. By the end of Year 2, pupils have had experience of using the computer to write simple stories and to communicate other information and to record a survey on how pupils get to school by creating a graph. There was no evidence that pupils could save and retrieve their own work. In the one ICT lesson seen, Year 2 pupils displayed below average skills in entering information. Many did not understand the function of the space bar and shift key when using the keyboard to word process. Higher attaining pupils were not aware of the function of the caps lock to change case. In this lesson the teaching of basic skills was satisfactory overall.
24. By the end of Year 6, pupils have extended their range of ICT experiences, including using spreadsheets and making a multimedia demonstration. Good work was seen supporting attainment in history when pupils created a range of charts and graphs based on the 1841 census of the Chester Road area of the city. However, ICT is not routinely used to support pupils' work widely across the curriculum, although isolated examples in such subjects as art and music are seen. The adoption of the Qualification and Curriculum Association's model scheme of work has helped ensure that all statutory requirements for the subject are met. However, many of the aspects of ICT are not sufficiently in evidence. The strands of modelling and using simulations, controlling events and sensing data, and using e-mail are in an embryonic stage. The school acknowledges that much more work will have to be done when the computer suite is operational.
25. Ambitious plans have been made. The subject manager is energetic and knowledgeable. Her current role will allow her considerable class non-contact time to work alongside

colleagues and to deliver model lessons, to the benefit of pupils and staff alike. An honest appraisal of staff competence and confidence with ICT has been undertaken and teachers are keen to improve and build upon their personal skills. A wide range of in-service training for individuals and whole staff groups has been planned, some delivered by outside providers, some by the subject manager passing on her own skills and knowledge. Targets have been set for the school, classes and teachers and this is an area that governors and parents will be monitoring closely. Parents said at their meeting with inspectors that they anticipated that the enhanced ICT provision would make a “huge difference.”

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

26. In the context of the school's many strengths, the headteacher, governors and staff should address the following in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education still further:

- (1) *Raise the pupils' levels of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) by:
 - increasing the amount of time pupils spend using computers and other ICT products to further develop their skills and understanding in the subject; (paras. 23, 24)
 - improving staff competence and confidence in the subject by the provision of suitable in-service training; (paras. 12, 25)
 - developing ICT to support pupils' learning widely across the curriculum. (para. 24)

*Already identified on the school's current improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 23 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 14 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 2 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 9 | 30 | 39 | 22 | 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 four 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) | 22 | 215 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | - | 25 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | - | 4 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 2 | 37 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 15 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 5 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 8 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2000 | 14 | 16 | 30 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 9 | 10 | 12 |
| | Girls | 15 | 13 | 14 |
| | Total | 24 | 23 | 26 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 80 (88) | 77 (85) | 87 (96) |
| | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| | Girls | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| | Total | 25 | 26 | 26 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 83 (92) | 87 (96) | 87 (92) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86) | 88 (87) |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2000 | 16 | 16 | 32 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 14 | 16 | 14 |
| | Girls | 14 | 13 | 16 |
| | Total | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 88 (91) | 91 (91) | 94 (97) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 14 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 14 | 13 | 16 |
| | Total | 28 | 28 | 31 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 88 (91) | 88 (91) | 97 (97) |
| | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69) | 79 (75) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 31 |
| Black – African heritage | 2 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 8 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 |
| White | 150 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 21 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

| | |
|--|--------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 23.1:1 |
| Average class size | 29.6 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 7 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 117.5 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|--------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1.0 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22.0:1 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 32.5 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 11.0:1 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2.0 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 4.0 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 1.0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 2.0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0.0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 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.

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2000/01 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 553573 |
| Total expenditure | 537841 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2270 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 62250 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 77982 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 272 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 74 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 65 | 29 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 66 | 30 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 61 | 34 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 42 | 53 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good. | 76 | 23 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 53 | 43 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 84 | 14 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 80 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 64 | 31 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 82 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 67 | 29 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 28 | 46 | 18 | 5 | 3 |