

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST VINCENT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111376

Headteacher: Mr G Barker

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Dawson  
11608

Dates of inspection: 30 – 31 October 2001

Inspection number: 196824

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Finlay Avenue Penketh Warrington
Postcode:	WA5 2PN
Telephone number:	01925 726544
Fax number:	01925 721770
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms F McNulty Smith
Date of previous inspection:	23 – 26 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
11608	Anna Dawson	Registered inspector
9624	Graeme Norval	Lay inspector
30824	Brenda Clarke	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Quality in Focus  
Thresher House  
Lea Hall Park  
Demage Lane  
Lea by Backford  
Chester  
CH1 6LP

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Vincent's Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Warrington. It is about the same size as most other primary schools. It mainly draws its pupils from the Catholic community within the parish of St Joseph's. Most pupils have attended a nursery or a playgroup before they start the reception class in the year they become five. Pupils enter the reception class with a broad range of attainments which are overall above average in social, language, and mathematical skills. There are 255 pupils on roll in full time education; of these 138 are girls and 117 are boys. They are grouped in ten classes. The number of pupils on roll has increased from 237 at the time of the last inspection in 1997. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs. This is just below the national average of 23 per cent. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is below average. There are 4 pupils or 1.6 per cent of the roll eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average of 19.7 per cent. Most of the pupils are of white European origin. Four pupils come from Pakistani or Chinese heritages. All but three pupils, who are fluent in English, speak English as their first language. Other main languages include Urdu, and Cantonese. The school has a stable population. Since 1997, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased. There is one pupil who is academically gifted. The school has a stable staff and there are no problems recruiting staff.

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

This is a good school with a Christian ethos. The quality of relationships within the school is very good. Because the quality of teaching is good overall the pupils make good progress overall in English, mathematics, science by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils' attainment is above average when they start school. Most attain well above average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English by Year 6. The headteacher gives excellent leadership and receives full support from the deputy headteacher, a hardworking staff and an effective governing body. There is excellent educational direction and vision. The school is well thought of by the parents and the community. The school gives good value for money.

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

- The pupils attain good standards overall in English, mathematics and science.
- The pupils learn well because they are taught well.
- Excellent educational direction is set for the school.
- Because there are very good relationships within the school, the pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- The curriculum is rich and the school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.

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

- Standards in writing among the average attaining pupils.
- Resources for teaching information and communication technology.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement overall since the last inspection in 1997. The school has successfully dealt with the key issues from the last inspection, which were concerned with improving standards in science and the schemes of work in all subjects, apart from English and mathematics; improving resources for science and information and communication technology; improving the quality of teachers' assessment to help pupils improve their work; providing more opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects. There has been very good improvement in the standards and resources for science and good improvement in the resources for information and communication technology. There are now good schemes of work for all subjects. The quality of assessment is very good. There are planned opportunities for writing across the curriculum. The school has also successfully implemented the Foundation Stage of learning for pupils in the reception classes and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The curriculum has been revised in the light of new requirements. There is good improvement in almost every other aspect of the work of the school.

## 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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	A*	A	A	well above average A
Mathematics	B	A*	B	C	above average B
Science	A*	A*	A	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The school has improved the standards in English, science and mathematics since the last inspection in 1997. This is recognised by their recent Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Over the last five years, the pupils' performance has been above the national trend. The varying number of pupils in each year group and their individual attainments causes fluctuation in the overall standards that pupils attain. The results should be treated with caution as there are relatively small numbers of pupils taking the tests, which diminishes the statistical reliability of the data. In the 2001 tests, standards are not as high as they were in 2000. This is because there were a larger number of pupils with special educational needs taking the tests which lowered the overall test results for the 2001 year group.

For the current groups of pupils in Year 6, standards are well above average in mathematics and science and pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills. They are above average in writing. Relative to pupils' attainments on entry to the school, their achievements are good. In information and communication technology, standards are average throughout the school. Pupils' attainment is hindered by a lack of resources. The school is currently working

towards raising pupils' attainments in writing and increasing its provision in information and communication technology. In the Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress in all areas of learning and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year.

The school has set challenging targets and is on course to meet its targets this year. In 2001, the targets were exceeded for English and science significantly with all pupils, except one, including those with special educational needs, gaining the expected levels. In mathematics, all except two pupils gained the expected levels and the target was met. Mainly, this was because of the effective teaching methods and high expectations of the staff.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They concentrate very well during lessons. They enjoy school and take very good care of their resources and the building.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and in and around school. Pupils are welcoming and polite to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respect the views of others and play and work happily together. This is evident in the very good relationships between pupils, staff and other adults who work in the school.
Attendance	Pupils are punctual and attendance is well above average.

The positive approach towards encouraging good behaviour and attitudes to work and self-respect and respect for others, is central to the school's Christian aims and values. This is a happy community where the pupils' attitudes to learning are a major contributing factor to their good achievement.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 and learning is good overall and a strength of the school, helping pupils to learn well. Clear objectives and demonstrations of what pupils are to learn help them, step by step, to progress well. Teachers' high expectations of pupils and the very good relationships within the school promote pupils' good achievement. The teaching was very good in seven lessons, good in 11 and satisfactory in the remaining nine. The quality of teaching was best in the Foundation Stage and for pupils aged seven to 11. The basic skills



of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. Information and communication technology is taught through all subjects but is hampered by a lack of resources. Teachers work successfully together, sharing their expertise, using time and resources very effectively. The support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. In the very good lessons, the teachers apply the methods advocated in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very carefully and thoroughly and use a range of other teaching methods to maximise pupils' learning. The staff take care to fully include all pupils in lessons and all other aspects of school life. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. They are effectively helped by the teaching assistants. Those who are gifted academically and the higher attaining pupils are attaining as well as they should. There is good provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The cultural heritages of pupils from a range of backgrounds and cultures are celebrated throughout the curriculum. The staff in the reception classes use their assessments very effectively to plan a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities for all pupils.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum for pupils in the reception classes is well planned and leads effectively into the National Curriculum. The curriculum for pupils throughout the school is rich and broadly based. Appropriate provision is made for teaching the pupils about the misuse of drugs, health and sex education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The teachers identify learning difficulties early. The pupils make good progress in class when they are helped by the teaching assistants. At times when they do not receive additional help, they make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for pupils who speak English as an additional language. They have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and their achievement is similar to that of all other pupils. The school takes care to celebrate the cultural heritages of all of its pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' personal development. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of the pupils. Good procedures promote pupils' good behaviour. Procedures for assessment are very good and the staff use assessments of pupils' work very well to plan their lessons. Effective procedures are applied for child protection.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. The parents think highly of the school and are appreciative of the care given to their children. Most help their children to learn very well at home and a minority help pupils well in school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher gives excellent leadership. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the staff work together very well and give excellent direction to achieve the aims of the school. They are successfully improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive of the school. They receive very good information from the headteacher and staff and work effectively to meet the school's targets and fulfil their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good systems for evaluating its performance. All the staff work very hard to improve their practices and overcome any weaknesses. The headteacher and subject leaders have started to evaluate teaching and learning successfully to improve the quality of education provided.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of the building, time, staff and the budget to help children learn. The school is currently spending delegated funds to enhance the staffing level.

There are sufficient teachers and the teaching assistants are well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The shared commitment and capacity to succeed by the whole school community are excellent. The school constantly seeks to find best value for money and make the best use of its budget to raise standards. The accommodation and the provision of resources to help pupils learn are satisfactory overall. However, there is a shortage of resources in information and communication technology and for large outdoor play equipment for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That their children make good progress and achieve high standards.</li> <li>• That the quality of teaching is good and pupils are expected to do their best.</li> <li>• That pupils behave well and there are good relationships between pupils and staff.</li> <li>• That the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• That they feel comfortable about approaching the school with queries or concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like more information about the curriculum and feel that the school does not work closely enough with them.</li> <li>• A minority of parents would like more extra-curricular activities for their children.</li> <li>• Some parents would like their children to have more homework.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the very positive views of the school held by the parents. The school has a very good partnership with parents. The quality and range of information sent to parents are good. The amount of homework falls within the normal range expected nationally for pupils of this age. Homework is planned well by the school to consolidate and extend what pupils study during the day. The extra-curricular activities are good for a school of this size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **The pupils attain good standards overall in English, mathematics and science.**

1. Pupils achieve well by the time they reach Year 6. The success of the work of the staff was recently recognised by an Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The quality of teaching and the pupils' interest and involvement in lessons results in good learning. Consequently, over time, pupils make good progress in knowledge, understanding and skills. This applies in particular to English, mathematics and science.
2. Very good improvement has been made in the standards of science since the last inspection. One of the issues for development from the last inspection in 1997, was to raise pupils' attainment in science. In 1997, 55 per cent attained the expected level in science. In 2000 this percentage significantly improved to 97 per cent. This represents a very good improvement of 42 per cent. In 2001, this trend continued with 95 per cent of pupils gaining the expected level. Overall, the trend for school improvement has been above the national trend since 1997 for English, mathematics and science. In these subjects, pupils achieve well to exceed the national averages at the expected and higher levels by Year 6. However, this is not at the expense of other subjects.
3. Variations in national test results from year to year are largely due to a few pupils performing at a slightly lower level than others and missing a level by one or two marks. This adversely affects the overall scores for the whole group. Because the school successfully identifies individual needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language, the gifted and most able, both boys and girls make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are helped in small groups or individually. Overall, their progress is satisfactory.
4. In 2001, pupils attained well above average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, pupils attained well above average standards in English and science and average standards in mathematics. Several pupils on the register for special educational needs for learning difficulties in mathematics in 2001 adversely affected the overall percentage of pupils attaining at the expected levels. Most pupils attain the expected levels in Years 2 and 6, apart from some on the register for special educational needs. Standards in reading are high throughout the school. The school is currently working on improving standards in the content of pupils' writing where not as many of the average attaining pupils are attaining at higher levels in comparison with reading, mathematics and science. Nationally, pupils' attainment is lower in writing than in mathematics or science. However, some average attaining pupils do not get enough help to improve their narrative writing and, as a result, do not do as well as they should. While pupils write well overall, some of the average attaining pupils lack the imaginative and adventurous use of vocabulary in their writing that would take them onto to the next level.
5. The provision is good for pupils in the reception classes. The curriculum is good overall as the staff plan a wide range of interesting and relevant activities to meet the needs of the pupils for all areas of learning. However, in physical development too few resources are available for outdoor activities and insufficient use is made of

the outside environment in other areas of learning. Improvement in resources and the use of the outdoor environment is prioritised for development. Teachers record pupils' skills effectively as they progress through the curriculum. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception classes falls within a wide range but overall is above average. As a result of the good teaching in the reception classes, pupils are making good progress. By the end of the reception year, most are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Most of the pupils for example, record and solve simple addition and subtraction problems. Most learn letter sounds and names well and have started to read. The staff are skilled in discussion, identifying accurately pupils' achievements and identifying when help is needed.

### **The pupils learn well because they are taught well.**

6. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. The teaching was very good in seven lessons, good in 11 lessons and satisfactory in nine lessons. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. In most lessons, the teachers effectively use the methods promoted by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils, well prepared resources to meet the needs of all the pupils and useful summaries at the end of sessions to secure the learning and inform the teachers how well the objectives have been achieved.
7. In the very good lessons between Years 4 to 6, teachers move learning along at a rapid pace. The pupils make rapid progress because they frequently revisit their existing knowledge which they are then able to use in their new learning. The teachers frequently and successfully question pupils to test their understanding. They use a variety of methods and activities to match the learning styles of the pupils. For example, during a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 4/5, the teacher began summarising pupils' previous knowledge of fractions and decimals. The response of the pupils in answer to questions quickly allowed the teacher to see how well the pupils understood. The use of a measuring stick was effective as a visual aid to help pupils grasp the equivalent values of fractions as decimals. A brief discussion made clear the application of using fractions and decimals to solve everyday problems involving money, for example. Some pupils then used the computer successfully to apply their learning and accurately recorded their answers to solve problems. The range of a variety of methods and resources used consequently promoted pupils' learning. Because the expectations set by the staff were high, the pupils were challenged very well to meet the targets set and knew how to improve their work. The quality of pupils' work reflects the high expectations of the teachers who use marking and the setting of personal targets, to help pupils improve. The displays of pupils' work around the school challenges pupils to find out further information. This creates a positive learning environment. Where teaching and learning were satisfactory, the pace of pupils' learning was slower than it could have been. This was because the teachers misjudged the pace of the lesson and spent too long summarising previous learning in their introductions at the expense of new learning. Consequently, insufficient time was spent on learning new knowledge and skills.
8. English, mathematics and science are taught well overall. In English, pupils are taught the basic skills of these subjects well which are often applied in other subjects. Reading, handwriting and spelling are taught well and consistently developed across the curriculum. The *POPAT* (Phonics Training Scheme) presently used by the staff for pupils aged five to seven, is particularly effective in

pupils' learning their letter sounds and simple spelling patterns. The scheme helps pupils to hear, say and recognise letter sounds in the beginning, end and middle of simple three and four letter words. This prepares the pupils well in the skills they need as they begin to read and write. In reading, the access to good quality resources, promotes pupils' very good attitudes to reading and enjoyment of books. However, although there are two main areas where books are centralised, there is no designated library area where pupils can learn how to look up information or research their topics. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and write neatly and legibly. The school encourages pupils to attain higher standards in writing. In mathematics, pupils are confident in their understanding of pattern and relationships between numbers and their operations. A good emphasis is placed on pupils understanding and explaining how to solve problems from an early age. In science, the skills of predicting, observation, testing, recording and drawing scientific conclusions are developing well throughout the school. In information and communication technology, pupils are learning skills well but with limited resources. By Year 6, pupils use spreadsheets, interrogate databases and use the Internet to research the topics they study in history and geography, for example. The staff use information and communication technology appropriately to support learning in all other subjects. However, there are insufficient resources to enable pupils to spend time in independent work so they are able to apply their skills in a variety of ways in subjects.

9. The teaching assistants make an effective contribution to the pupils' learning because they are deployed well and receive effective training for their work. They most frequently assist the lower attaining pupils and the pupils who speak English as an additional language who need the most help in learning. These pupils are either helped in class or withdrawn in small groups from lessons. The very good relationships that the assistants have with the pupils are particularly effective in boosting pupils' confidence in learning and answering questions. The assistants are skilled in interpreting the content of the lesson so that pupils are studying the same curriculum as the other pupils in the class, but at their level. Consequently, these pupils are achieving as well as all others when they are helped this way. However, when there is no help in class, where there are a greater number of pupils (up to 36 pupils), they receive less individual help. As a result, they make satisfactory progress. This is partly because the work is often not matched well enough to their individual needs. The teachers help the higher attaining and gifted pupils, ensuring they are learning as well as they can.
10. Teachers have good subject knowledge and between them there is particular expertise in English, mathematics and science. In subjects such as physical education, music and art and design, visiting speakers and specialist teachers or sports coaches help to further enhance the curriculum.
11. Homework throughout the school is used well to extend what pupils learn in their lessons. As well as providing regular spelling, reading and number tasks, teachers ask pupils to carry out additional research. The activities help to consolidate their learning during the day and successfully promote research skills. However, some parents are unsure of the benefit of topic research. Sometimes, pupils bring in their independent research irrespective of homework. This is always celebrated and rewarded by the teachers.

## Excellent educational direction is set for the school.

12. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. A very clear management structure is in place. All members of staff with responsibilities work together very well to carry out their roles. This results in an excellent direction that implements the school's aims of providing high quality education aiming for the pupils to become effective *life-long* learners. Members of the governing body are supportive of the school. They are very well informed by the headteacher and the staff and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. The parents and pupils are fully informed and consulted in the school development planning process.
13. The school's self evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the commitment of the whole school community to succeed are good. Since the last inspection in 1997 there has been very good improvement. All the issues from the last report have been addressed. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the Foundation Stage of learning for pupils in the reception classes. The staff have kept pace with the rapid changes in information and communication technology, ensuring it is taught in all subjects. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored well in English and mathematics to ensure that staff are meeting the needs of all pupils. The results of the monitoring along with the teachers' assessments of pupils' progress aid lesson planning. Consequently, the teaching and learning are good overall. In other subjects, however, although there are plans to monitor teaching and learning by the subject leaders, this is still in an early stage of development. This limits the advice and help the subjects leaders are presently able to give to colleagues.
14. There are rigorous procedures for assessing pupils' work to find out if the standards are high enough and where improvements can be made in English, mathematics and science. Data analysis is taken seriously by the school on the principle that *If you don't keep the score you may think you are winning when, in fact, you could be losing.* The school identifies strengths and weaknesses from the results of national tests, which are compared with national and similar schools. Pupils' achievements are tracked through school year by year and help is placed where it is needed most. The school has been particularly successful in raising the attainment of the below average and average attaining pupils. In 2001, all the pupils in Year 6 last year, except for one or two attained the expected levels in English and mathematics. The school is equally successful in meeting the needs of the higher attaining pupils and the pupils who are gifted academically. Consequently, because of the good quality teaching and the high expectations held of all pupils, the pupils are learning and achieving well. The school encourages gifted pupils to take their learning further by attending a summer school. This year, where the standards are not as high in writing, the priority is to raise the quality of pupils' performance.
15. Strategic planning is good. The school's improvement plan is based on raising standards. To this end, the governors are keen to make the best possible staff appointments to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The system for performance management is fully in place. The headteacher is keen to find out about new initiatives and to train staff in the most up-to-date methods. For example, the school uses particular methods to accelerate pupils' learning. These methods were used most frequently in the very good lessons, where the teaching method was most closely matched to pupils' individual learning styles. Thus the school improvement plan becomes an effective tool which is used well to aid the continuing development of the school.

16. The school is continually seeking improvement. At present, the school is aiming for *The Basic Skills Award* and the *Healthy Schools Award*. The *Investors in People Award* is planned for future development. The successful outcomes of bids that are made enhance the educational provision. For example, the extension of the existing accommodation as the number of pupils on roll has risen. The governors make careful considerations before expenditure. The school is presently spending the delegated funding prioritised to enhance the staffing.

**Because there are very good relationships within the school, the pupils have very good attitudes to learning.**

17. The Christian ethos and very good relationships within the school create a successful learning environment. The pupils are eager to learn. They ask questions confidently when they want to find out information or don't know the answer. The staff are vigilant to ensure all pupils are helped very well in their learning. They take particular care to involve pupils with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language in all the educational activities offered by the school. Any emotional or behavioural difficulties are resolved at an early stage. Because the pupils are happy, settled and valued by the staff for the contributions they make, they learn well.
18. The staff work hard to promote a positive ethos for learning from the moment pupils start school. Their teacher individually welcomes them. The staff recognise that this is an important condition for successful learning. The staff work very hard to give praise for effort throughout the day. They reward pupils for their responses to questions or the effort put into their work. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and are motivated to learn. This is also reflected in their very good attendance. The positive attitudes towards their work are reinforced by the excellent and consistent manner in which staff mark pupils' written work. The context of the pupils' work is clearly written, which allows any reader to quickly understand the set objectives. The teachers give a balanced view of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' work. They always write a positive comment followed by any points for improvement. This helps pupils to understand what they are doing well and where they need to improve while at the same time maintaining pupils' motivation to succeed. This contributes significantly to pupils' personal development as they reflect on the quality of their work. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are becoming effective communicators, giving mature and well thought out answers to questions. For example, pupils in Year 6, in a literacy lesson were articulate, giving sensible explanations as they discussed the style and use of language found in newspaper reports.

**The curriculum is rich and the school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.**

19. All subjects are being taught well from a rich broad curriculum. Because the curriculum is very well planned, the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are consistently well developed as pupils become older. The teachers' and governors' aim for pupils *to have a rounded education* is well developed. This is very good improvement from the last inspection. The visitors and specialist staff who come in to teach art and design and music, or help to take the pupils on visits to places of interest, successfully contribute to pupils' learning. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils have opportunities for learn to play the guitar or the



recorder and there are clubs for board games, art and a story club. Pupils take part in competitive sports and coaching by the local rugby team. All of which are popular choices by the pupils.

20. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. The Christian ethos of the school is strongly represented in the everyday life of the school, especially in school assemblies. The staff set a good example to pupils in their relationships with pupils and other adults. Praise and rewards for good work, behaviour and thoughtful acts of helpfulness and kindness are key to promoting good attitudes to work and responsible and caring attitudes to others. The teachers encourage pupils in lessons, to reflect on moral and social issues that concern them in whole-class discussions known as *circle times*. Pupils discuss and resolve issues that concern them with the help of their teachers. The school is currently developing a school council to provide an official platform for discussing and resolving pupils' concerns.
21. The staff promote good relationships at playtimes. Any racist or bullying remarks are promptly acted upon. The supervisor has regular meetings with the headteacher who is then able to sort out any problems quickly. Thus shared high expectations of behaviour are upheld by the whole school. Because the school rules are clearly displayed and agreed by staff and pupils, pupils feel responsible for their actions. They know the teachers value their opinions as they annually make their contributions to the school improvement plan. Pupils in Year 6 act as prefects, each having a particular responsibility to help others abide by the school rules and to help with the smooth day-to-day running of the school such as collecting the registers and preparing the resources for assemblies. Pupils' social development is extended through extensive residential visits organised for Years 2, 4, 5, and 6. All of which offer opportunities to study of the environment at first hand. These experiences make a significantly positive impact on pupils' personal and social development.
22. A significant feature of the school is the Saint Vincent de Paul Group. The pupils aged between nine and 11 volunteer to organise charitable fundraising activities, visit the elderly in the parish and help out at local nursery groups. Each Easter and Christmas, they organise a party for the elderly residents in the community. This makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal and social development as well as benefiting the community. The pupils are good role models for others in the school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Standards in writing among the average attaining pupils.**

23. The content of pupils' writing is the major focus for the school improvement this year. Pupils' handwriting is neat and legible and well formed. The standard is consistent throughout the school. The effort that pupils make to do their best is evident in their good standards of presentation. Spelling is developing well. The teachers have adopted a number of initiatives such as *POPAT* and the spellings recommended by the National Literacy Strategy so that pupils progressively build up their knowledge and understanding of common spelling patterns and words. Teachers plan a range of opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in narrative

and story writing, not only in the literacy hour but also through other subjects. However, while staff are very good at identifying where pupils need to improve their work, in practice the targets set for improvement are not always sharp enough in demonstrating improvement. Some pupils know where they need to go next, but the staff do not always communicate clearly to pupils how to improve their writing. While the lower attaining and the higher attaining pupils are achieving well, a minority of average attaining pupils could do better with sharper personal targets and more opportunities to practise their skills. For these pupils, the development of more adventurous and imaginative vocabulary would help them to attain at the higher levels. For example, in Year 2, the average attaining pupils generally write clearly, legibly and have begun to develop some characteristics of narrative style. However, some pupils' work lacks imaginative vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils' writing is thoughtful and lively and most use punctuation correctly. However, some lack the precision and imagination in their choice of vocabulary.

### **Resources for teaching information and communication technology.**

24. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a suite for the teaching of information and communication technology. Standards in information and communication technology are average. The teachers are currently undertaking the national training programme and are becoming more confident in teaching the subject. Because information and communication technology is planned and taught in all subjects, the pupils are succeeding. Many of them also use information and communication technology to do their homework. Teachers make good use of the resources to enable pupils to practise and consolidate their skills. Despite the good improvement of resources since the last inspection, there are not enough computers to effectively teach a whole class or teacher resources to demonstrate the appropriate skills. When pupils are limited to sharing computers between three and teachers spend time demonstrating skills on each computer because there is no teaching board, learning is restricted to a satisfactory level. This subject is recognised for development by the school. By Year 6, for example, pupils learn to use different methods to find out, interrogate and organise information, such as their work on understanding spreadsheets. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities, because of the lack of resources to work independently, evaluate and make improvements to their work. This would lead them to a better understanding of their topics and enable them to use information and communication technology more effectively to present ideas and information in a variety of ways.

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

25. The governors, headteacher and the staff should:

- (1) Improve pupils' attainment in writing by:
  - setting more challenging targets for some of the average attaining pupils who are attaining close to the higher levels
  - clearly communicate to pupils the skills they need to improve their work.
  
- (2) Work towards improving the existing resources in information and communication technology so that pupils may independently practise, evaluate and apply their knowledge confidently.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	11	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	27	40	33	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 two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	255
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	15
	Girls	20	19	18
	Total	32	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (100)	91 (100)	94 (100)
	National	84 (83)	85 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	15
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	32	33	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	94 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	88 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	20	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	18	15	19
	Total	34	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (97)	86 (94)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	18	15	19
	Total	34	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (94)	84 (94)	95 (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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	252
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*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)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: Y[ ] – Y[ ]**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

*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	1	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	459 566
Total expenditure	434 902
Expenditure per pupil	1 747
Balance brought forward from previous year	39 455
Balance carried forward to next year	64 119

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate 49%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	255
Number of questionnaires returned	125

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	35	6	2	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	37	5	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	40	24	2	10
The teaching is good.	57	32	3	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	46	18	2	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	29	6	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	26	2	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	41	44	10	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	31	5	4	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	39	3	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	34	22	10	15