

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST ANNE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St. Helens, Merseyside

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104805

Headteacher: Mr J Shutt

Reporting inspector: Mrs W Knight  
12172

Dates of inspection: 5th - 6th February 2002

Inspection number: 197728  
Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Monastery Lane  
Sutton  
St Helens  
Merseyside

Postcode: WA9 3SP

Telephone number: 01744 811670

Fax number: 01744 817471

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Knowles

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
12172	Wendy Knight	Registered inspector
1329	Kevern Oliver	Lay inspector
30418	Margaret Barrowman	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Schools Inspection Unit  
The University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B15 2TT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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>10</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Anne's is an average sized Roman Catholic (Aided) primary school serving a local parish. There are currently 266 three to eleven-year-olds on roll but it has a declining intake like all schools in St Helens. The nursery provides morning sessions only. An average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals but the ward in which the school is situated has fewer than average advantaged households and the majority of the housing is rented. The school has been subject to frequent vandalism and break-ins. There is a significant amount of pupil mobility. No pupils have English as an additional language. Most pupils are white. A below average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. The school is within a recently formed Education Action Zone and its headquarters are in the school building. Attainment on entry is below average in language, and, especially, in personal and social development.

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

This is a good and effective school. Standards in English are above average and in mathematics are well above average in national tests. The teaching is consistently sound and sometimes better. The school is very well led and effectively managed. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Provides an encouraging, supportive learning environment where pupils mature, develop and learn effectively.
- Teaching is good in nursery and reception and is providing a very secure basis for future learning.

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

- Further development of pupils' speaking skills to aid thinking and reasoning.
- More regular daily challenge for higher attaining pupils.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the school was last inspected in September 1997 it has improved significantly:

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved; they are now more confident about speaking in front of others.
- Aspirations have been rising through enrichment activities and independent work.
- Skills in design and technology and information and communication technology have improved and are now average.
- Handwriting and presentation are better, particularly in the infants.
- Reports to parents now meet requirements although they still do not always indicate precisely what pupils need to do to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	C	B	B
Mathematics	B	D	A	A
Science	B	E	C	B

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

In 2001 the school's results in national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science compared with similar schools. Infant pupils achieved average results in their national tests. There has been sustained improvement over a number of years.

By the end of reception children are meeting most of the nationally agreed goals, although inspectors judge pupils' speaking skills to be below average throughout the school. By the end of the juniors inspectors judge that pupils read competently and write satisfactorily. They can use appropriate strategies to do mental arithmetic and calculate accurately. Pupils use their literacy, numeracy and computer skills effectively in many other subjects. They have sound scientific knowledge. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to the skills they have when they start school. The school set realistic targets and was successful in exceeding them in 2001.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and participate with enthusiasm in all the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good around the school and good in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and these help pupils to be mature, thoughtful and co-operative. They carry out any duties responsibly and are confident to take the initiative.
Attendance	Average compared with schools nationally.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

Children in nursery and reception classes are well taught. Their next learning needs are identified and work is planned accordingly. There is systematic teaching of basic reading and number skills. Adults place suitable emphasis on the development of speaking and social skills and teach by example. Children's interests are used to good effect and a stimulating environment is provided throughout the school. In the infants and juniors English and mathematics are satisfactorily taught, with an appropriate focus on reading and calculating. Lessons are well planned and use a range of methods and resources to enable pupils to learn satisfactorily. Activities do not always take sufficient account of pupils' capabilities, though, and higher attainers are not always regularly challenged. While teachers have improved their questioning to involve pupils it does not necessarily promote thinking and reasoning. Marking is encouraging, but seldom informs pupils what they need to do to improve. As a result, although pupils regularly acquire new skills and knowledge they are not necessarily putting their efforts where they would be most productive.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Appropriate opportunities are provided, and work is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Professional assistants and teachers provide suitable support to pupils in class so that they are able to complete similar work to their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision, with regular spiritual experiences and many opportunities to consider other people and understand their values. There are high expectations of pupils' conduct. Useful chances are planned to experience a range of art, music and historical places.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Adults know pupils well and are concerned about them as individuals as well as following procedures which ensure their health and safety.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher clearly strive for continuing high standards and maintaining a caring ethos. They manage the school effectively to achieve these aims.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors actively support the school and carry out their responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has the proper procedures for monitoring its work and gathering information on how it is doing in relation to test results.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of available resources, including using the building for the Education Action Zone team.
Principles of best value	The school applies these principles to ensure it gets value for money from its services. It regularly compares its results with those of schools in the locality and the borough.



## 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>• The quality of the teaching</li> <li>• The way the school helps pupils to become increasingly mature and responsible</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed</li> <li>• The progress pupils make</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility of junior staff for informal discussion</li> <li>• Information about children's progress</li> </ul>

Parents were unanimous about the quality of the teaching and how well the school helps pupils to become increasingly mature and responsible. Inspectors mostly agree with what the parents see as strengths. With regard to parents' concerns, inspectors feel it is unfortunate that the newly erected security fencing has caused restriction of access to the school for junior parents. The notice informing visitors of entry arrangements exacerbates any frustration caused by the fencing. However, the need for security does have such inevitable consequences. Because the school has recently changed its arrangements for discussing pupils' progress to accommodate changes in the teaching staff, a significant number of parents expressed concern about opportunities to meet staff. This is understandable, since meetings will come nearly two terms into the school year, but equally new staff need time to assess pupils before they can usefully discuss their work with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **Provides an encouraging, supportive learning environment where pupils mature, develop and learn effectively**

1 The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher actively promotes the school's positive ethos where children are encouraged to work co-operatively, and this remains a significant strength of the school's provision. Both senior staff know individuals well, value them for themselves and respect their differences and personalities. This results in pupils wanting to participate, to respond to the adults responsible for them and to make constructive relationships. They become keen learners with mature attitudes to education so that they can benefit fully from what is offered.

2 Constructive relationships pupil to pupil and between pupils and adults are at the heart of the ethos and result in mutual respect and genuine concern for others. Children in Year 1, for instance, have produced booklets about the adults who help them, and these include the cleaners and dinner ladies as well as classroom staff, making children aware of everyone's contribution and building respect for all adults who work in the school. Such good relationships allow parts of lessons to be exciting or amusing without detracting from what is being learnt. In a Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher changed the proportion of money to be spent from her pay to allow for a hypothetical party and there were humorous asides and much laughter about the need to buy a special dress from the remaining money. A reception teacher showed concern for children who had not eaten anything before coming to school and she sensitively explained why breakfast is important. Regular routines ensure pupils who are sick or injured are well looked after, including, for example, letters which are sent home if pupils bump their heads.

3 Pupils' personal interests are valued. In Year 1 everyone shared the joy at a pupil's birthday, while in junior assembly the teacher used the *Pop Idol* television programme to draw out moral issues of adulation and made pertinent reference to Jesus and the Crucifixion. These occasions create engagement in what is being taught and also enable teachers and peers to offer constructive criticism. In a Year 4 art lesson, for instance, the teacher tactfully suggested ways to improve pastel pictures of chairs which had been inspired by the Van Gogh painting and as a result pupils also commented on each other's attempts in a sensitive manner.

4 The mutual respect also encourages children to use their initiative if they see something which needs to be done. A Year 3 pupil unobtrusively shut the classroom window when the wind blew over books on display and in Year 4 another pupil, on seeing the likelihood of musical instruments being damaged when the class stood up to sing, moved the equipment out of harm's way. Pupils are trusted to take responsibility from an early stage and they respond by fulfilling any duties sensibly and conscientiously. Two reception children are used regularly to take the register to the office; by Year 6 a pupil takes sole responsibility during assembly for ensuring the recordings of music for entry and hymns are correctly played with minimal direction.

5 High expectations of behaviour, to which pupils respond well, enable teachers to plan interesting and stimulating activities and waste no time in establishing order. Because of the certainty that pupils will behave well, pupils in Year 5 were able to conduct their science investigations on changes in pulse rates out of doors. The annual production of *Annie Junior* was extensive, involving scores of pupils, and required sustained commitment and discipline. Although no play equipment is provided at playtimes, pupils play sensibly and amicably. The

deputy headteacher is able to take an assembly on her own with all junior pupils present. Pupils are regularly praised for their good conduct and their efforts, and because they are keen to please this results in an orderly, calm and friendly community.

6 Because teachers put a great deal of time and effort into celebrating pupils' work, the pupils reciprocate with commitment to doing their best in whatever is asked of them. An interesting learning environment is provided through displaying a range of historical artefacts, quizzes, examples of the work of famous artists, books and pictures of India and photographs of school events displayed alongside children's work. The pupils' work is thoughtfully exhibited to show it to best advantage. For example the Year 1 finger paintings of water lilies inspired by the Monet painting are displayed with prints of the original on a carefully chosen background colour and bordered by a frieze of Monet's signature. The artefacts and books can be safely left in the certain knowledge that pupils will not damage them.

7 Pupils have learnt from the way the school is run that co-operation and concern for others helps daily life, so pupils spontaneously provide assistance to peers in lessons. For instance, Year 5 pupils prompt each other while reading aloud in a literacy lesson and Year 2 pupils share the results of their measurements taken during a numeracy lesson. This co-operative attitude also enables pupils to work together effectively in groups as was observed, for example, in a Year 4 art lesson when pupils jointly produced a large collage.

8 The school's ethos also creates circumstances where pupils are proud of their work and take care to present it neatly. They become increasingly confident about their achievements and are justifiably proud of them. This confidence means they are well prepared for secondary education and to contribute to the community as citizens.

### **Teaching is good in nursery and reception and is providing a very secure basis for future learning**

9 Teaching in nursery and reception is good and sometimes very good. Three quarters of the lessons observed during the inspection were judged good or better and the remaining ones satisfactory. Lessons in creative areas were the ones which were satisfactory.

10 What children already know and can do when they start school is quickly assessed and recorded so that the information can be used to ensure children make best progress. Because the school is aware that many children have less than average skills in language and social development there is a strong emphasis on planning activities which promote the necessary skills to enable children to progress as quickly as they can. Parents are welcomed into school so that they can feel confident about what happens to their offspring and can discuss any problems and concerns, making them full partners in their children's education. Children are actively encouraged to bring in things from home to support their learning. During the inspection one child in reception observed that a speech mark looked like a whistle so the teacher suggested the child should bring in the whistle so that they could see if it did. Children had also brought in a range of items related to the letter of the week (j) and had found interesting examples. Such valuing of children's ideas and contributions has a positive effect on their willingness to learn and the way they communicate. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting praised the informal homework in the nursery and reception.

11 From admission to school there are high expectations of children's behaviour. Children in the nursery are expected to share toys and to be kind to each other; any squabbles are dealt with kindly but firmly with an emphasis on how the offending behaviour upsets the recipient. Children are also taught routines to good effect, lining up in an orderly way, for instance, behind the 'Stop' sign while waiting for classmates to be ready to go outside. They are also expected to be tidy, to be aware of hygiene when handling animals and

to fasten their own clothes. Strategies such as sending children to join the queue for the mid-morning snack by the letter of their names ensure they do not have to wait too long, and they are expected to be polite when given their food. Routines are then developed further in reception to promote independence. To undertake role-play, for instance, children don a pig or wolf hood before they play in 'the house of bricks' which effectively regulates the number there whilst appealing to the children. Sharing is actively discussed in the context of benefit for all. Children are allowed to enjoy activities and exhibit excitement because teachers are able to control such responses effectively.

12 The teachers use a variety of useful devices for developing children's language. Children regularly join in many songs and rhymes - and are actively encouraged to do so if they are reluctant to participate. Sessions are provided where children talk about what interests them so that they have something they wish to say; role-play encourages children to act out the stories they have heard and activities such as handling the guinea pigs in nursery provide them with new experiences to relate. All the adults in nursery and reception question children effectively to draw out their thoughts and extend their utterances, which for some children are commonly only single words at first. In class sessions they question as appropriate. Open-ended questions enable all to contribute, while lower attainers are directly asked questions they can answer. Teachers pose more challenging questions for higher attainers. In a literacy session the teacher variously asked, "What is an author?", "Who drew the pictures?" and "How do you think he felt?" in the early part of the lesson; in a numeracy lesson the teacher asked which number was missing as an extension to a counting activity. Teachers also introduce children to the correct vocabulary and use it precisely so that children know that words in some contexts have exact meanings.

13 Effective teamwork enables teachers to use all the children's time productively. In nursery, for instance, the teacher engages children in letter recognition while the nursery nurse counts to 4 with each child as they collect their snacks. In reception the professional assistant pretends she cannot read so that children can use their developing skills to 'help'. The two reception classes are timetabled for creative activities so that one teacher can sit and work with a group while the other oversees the other activities and supports or challenges children as they work or play. The use of professional assistants in the infant and junior classes is not as effective as in nursery and reception. These useful adults often have no definite role to fulfil during whole class introductions and plenary sessions.

14 Staff have been successful too in creating a vibrant environment where there is not only lots of children's work on display but also things to do and books to read or look at. Work is regularly planned to provide a good balance of teacher-directed tasks and opportunities for children to make choices and follow their own interests. However, creative activities, where there could be more individual responses from children, are often very prescriptive. Adults actively model, demonstrate and show children how to do things. This enthuses children and captures their interest because they can achieve success. In a reception physical education lesson, for instance, the teacher showed the children how to move like various animals and the children copied or thought out their own movements.

15 Basic skills are well taught and regularly practised, including during odd moments such as when lining up for lunch. Teachers use every opportunity to recognise letters and to count. They actively encourage children to look for clues in the pictures when reading, to use letter sounds to help with unknown words and to 'write' their own messages and letters. Essential skills are practised orally, visually and kinaesthetically<sup>1</sup> so that all children have the chance to learn in a way which suits them.

---

<sup>1</sup> Using touch or movement

16 As a result of the good teaching, by the time children reach the end of reception they have made good progress and have acquired many skills which they can use during their time in the infants.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Further development of pupils' speaking skills to aid thinking and reasoning**

17 The senior staff in the school recognised the importance of the key issue about speaking identified at the last inspection because of the large number of pupils whose speaking skills are limited when they start school. Teachers have fulfilled all the plans to promote pupils' skills. In response to the key issue, steps have been effective in improving pupils' confidence in speaking in front of a large group and in public. There is active development of speaking skills for children in nursery and reception. School productions provide useful opportunities for pupils to rehearse and present speech, and role-play and group activities are included in planning for younger pupils. In lessons teachers do include some open-ended questions as well as ones requiring factual answers. The school is now ready to develop these skills further to help pupils use their language to surmise, hypothesise, try out ideas and persuade.

18 Teachers in nursery, reception and Year 1 often model language for the children, as seen in a Year 1 handwriting lesson where the teacher described a castle while executing writing patterns. They also provide whole sentences where children give a single word and correct any misuse by repeating the words as they should have been said. This is seldom done for older pupils, though; if they offer short answers or grammatically incorrect responses they are not always guided towards more effective speech. When pupils do want to talk about something they are sometimes stopped from doing so even if it is relevant. In a Year 2 design and technology lesson, for instance, one pupil wanted to talk about trucks, which was relevant to the construction of vehicles being undertaken. However, by Year 6 some pupils do still offer contributions that are not relevant and are not helped to understand why remarks need to be focussed on the matter in hand. In most classes over half of the pupils rarely volunteer to say anything, and it is even rarer for anyone to ask pertinent questions.

19 Teachers do use some open-ended questions with the whole class when introducing new work, recapitulating what has been learnt or exploring discoveries but they too often accept in response one-word answers, vague replies or incorrect information. Whole class sessions to conclude lessons provide a forum for pupils to talk about what they have done, but they are less frequently used to extend pupils' use of language for further reasoning. Teachers sometimes resort to providing answers themselves because pupils are struggling to do so. In a Year 4 music lesson the teacher asked pupils what they expected the song *Bongo Joe* to be about. Despite several attempts at getting pupils to connect ideas and come up with a sentence, it was the teacher who eventually provided, "It will be about a bongo-player called Joe". Teachers of junior pupils seldom provide pupils with the time and opportunity to formulate a fuller reply or to improve the clarity or explicitness of an offered first thought. As a result, when a question demands a generalisation or requires pupils to draw a conclusion, very few pupils are willing to attempt an answer and even fewer can explain their thinking. In a Year 6 geography lesson, for instance, pupils are asked to say why they think certain types of shop are common in Southport, having discussed its importance as a tourist town. They struggle to state that the shops in question, such as those selling souvenirs, are there to exploit the tourist trade. The same class have problems stating precisely how they calculated half of 7.8, although their answers are correct and they have clearly known what to

do. Their answers are commonly interspersed with "Miss" when they cannot decide how to express themselves.

20 Questioning is still not used to best effect on occasions when pupils need to explore their ideas in preparation for writing. In a Year 2 literacy lesson pupils who wanted to offer contributions about animals from their experiences were not encouraged to do so and indeed the teacher had in mind some prescribed answers. Subsequently, pupils wrote limited descriptions. In the better lessons teachers pursue full answers to their questions until they receive a satisfactory answer from a pupil by using any ideas which are offered and asking supplementary questions in order to develop them. More often, though, teachers provide full answers themselves from the germ of an idea and pupils repeat back what they have been told rather than finding alternative ways of answering. Thus they are not regularly learning the process of formulating a full reply. Chances for pupils to explore answers with a partner before offering them to the class are seldom provided. On occasions, teachers' attention to lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs is focussed on telling them how to complete a piece of work rather than listening to what they say about it so that misconceptions can be clarified. In a Year 5 numeracy lesson, for instance, pupils ordering decimal numbers were told what to do to get the right answer rather than asked how they had reached their answers. When pupils have information to contribute to the class which they have acquired independently, they usually read it verbatim rather than contributing a verbal summary of the relevant facts. As a result, they do not learn to assimilate the facts and present them to suit the audience and the occasion.

21 Group work is suitably planned to provide more opportunities for all pupils to speak, as in a Year 2 geography lesson when pupils contributed to a group list of daily work done by their mothers in preparation for comparing women's work in Chembakoli. However, teachers do not necessarily maximise the chances in such lessons. They do encourage and value contributions, but do not always refine pupils' ideas or assist pupils in expressing them more precisely or effectively. Similarly, while role-play is used regularly in nursery and reception, older pupils seldom participate in such activities or in structured drama or debate where they can take sides in an argument. In physical education and music it is not a regular requirement for pupils to appraise each other's work.

22 Teachers do frequently introduce the relevant technical vocabulary for different subjects, and explore the use of interesting words for effect in English lessons. However, they do not always insist that pupils' attempts to use words are precise enough, and they seldom explore a range of possibilities from which the most suitable is then chosen. This results in missed opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary and to understand that in certain circumstances only a particular word will do. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils were told that 'estimate' meant 'guess', and that it is not possible to be wrong because it is a guess. However, the teacher failed to distinguish the importance of taking account of what information is available before making an estimate rather than guessing freely. In a Year 1 art lesson and in a Year 3 science lesson pupils used words to discuss texture which were not quite what they meant. For instance, one used 'rigid' for a pebble, while another pupil offered 'soft' to describe incisors. The teachers did not talk about the meanings of rigid and soft and offer more suitable alternatives. Similarly, in a Year 3 literacy lesson opportunities were missed to extend pupils' vocabulary when words with silent letters were being selected. Pupils offered examples like 'comb', 'thumb', 'knickers' and 'knock', but the teacher did not seek less commonly used ones such as 'limb' and 'knuckle'.

### **More regular challenge for higher attaining pupils**

23 Since the last inspection the school has successfully raised aspirations towards achieving higher levels in national test results, and the proportion of pupils attaining these has

increased. It is apparent from the work in pupils' books in the upper juniors that in mathematics a significant contributory factor in these results is the tasks set. There is clear evidence that higher attainers are provided with more challenging work on a regular basis. In Year 5 this commonly includes problem-solving activities which enable pupils to search for pattern and generalise results. Current arrangements for two ability sets in Year 5 does make this easier to plan, and are certainly effective. Where class teachers are responsible for the full ability range and all subjects, higher attainers are often set similar work to their peers but there were some notable exceptions during the inspection. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, for instance, following a discussion of a shared text looking at balanced arguments, the higher attainers were given a completely new (and unseen) passage from which to identify points for and against allowing football games on the playground. They were expected to apply the principles practised on the original text, and to use their information and communication technology skills to record their work. Other pupils completed the work begun during the whole class introduction. Another significant factor is the high expectation that pupils will use their literacy and numeracy skills in all their work. In Year 2 science, for instance, pupils are already taking measurements and recording results using graphs. During the inspection pupils compared the travel of vehicles on different slopes and measured with paper strips which were then used to create a bar chart. This gave immediate reinforcement and application of mathematics work in non-standard measures.

24 Nevertheless, it is much more common for all pupils to be given the same task, and this is even more limiting for higher attainers when it takes the form of a worksheet. At worst, higher attainers complete these worksheets in a very short time and have no further challenge. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, for instance, higher attaining pupils quickly identified the superlative adjectives in a given passage, but then had no opportunity to extend the work by using them in their own writing or considering how they might be used for particular effects. When such activities are given to higher attainers they are frequently completed well within the allotted time and there is nothing further for pupils to do. Instead of pupils making an effort and working productively, time is wasted and progress is limited. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, for instance, pupils who had completed the task of balancing parcels using cubes, marbles, corks and conkers started to play with insufficient direction.

25 Expectations of higher attaining pupils are often too low when class work is set. In a Year 3 science lesson, for example, the first part of a worksheet required pupils to colour the three types of teeth (incisors, canines and molars) which had been identified previously. In this lesson the same basic facts had been reiterated at great length which was unnecessary for a significant proportion of the class.

26 It is shortcomings in knowing precisely what pupils are capable of doing that create some of these situations. While teachers usually mark pupils' work conscientiously and encouragingly they less frequently identify areas for improvement. The last inspection report commented on this shortcoming, which is most evident with higher attaining pupils. In mathematics, for instance, some Year 6 pupils are given areas for improvement, but the higher attainers seldom are. At best, evaluative comments identify pupils' strengths as seen in a Year 2 science book where the teacher had written "works methodically and is able to interpret a chart", but such statements are rarely used to indicate next steps. However, in a Year 3 sketchbook a good balance was achieved between praising detailed observation and requiring further attention to size.

27 Target-setting has been identified by the school as an area for development and this will usefully outline for teachers what pupils could be expected to know or understand next. At present, it is at an early stage. In Year 4, for instance, pupils have termly targets for science, but because these are identical for all pupils the amount of challenge for higher attaining pupils is low. Moreover, one of the two targets is not actually about science learning, but

about presentation. By creating a system of developmental steps, targets can be used effectively to ensure higher attainers learn at an optimum rate. The school is taking the opportunities provided by the Education Action Zone to install information and communication technology systems to track pupil progress. During the inspection a consultant was downloading a program which enables teachers to use all its accumulated assessment data more efficiently. This will enable teachers to identify potential higher attainers and ensure they are being suitably challenged.

28 The school provides some useful opportunities for independent work by providing displays, books and charts around the classroom to which pupils can refer, by setting appropriate homework tasks where they may pursue their own interests and by offering regular chances to work largely unsupervised on the computer. However, within the lessons most work which pupils do is either heavily directed by the teacher or else there is too little intervention so that pupils are not required to discuss their thinking. In a Year 2 science lesson, for instance, two of the activities provided pupils with the opportunity to discover how sand can drive a wheel and to explore the effect of pushing and pulling forces on a tricycle. The exploration of wheels being driven was largely undirected and needed some questions to focus the pupils' attention. The outcome of the pushing and pulling activity was recorded by cutting and sticking on a worksheet so higher attainers who had talked about and observed the forces were only able to record a limited amount of what they discussed. Similarly, pupils who pursue their own lines of enquiry through homework tasks seldom have the chance to follow this up in class. As a result, pupils are not developing their independence in the most effective ways to promote their own learning on a regular basis.

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

29 To continue to improve the school and ensure all pupils make best progress the school should:

- (1) Ensure further development of pupils' speaking skills to aid thinking and reasoning by:
  - continuing to model and correct spoken language throughout the school;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to formulate answers and practise ways of contributing by working together in pairs and groups;
  - actively encouraging pupils to ask questions, hypothesise, explain and debate;
  - requiring pupils to explore a wider vocabulary which introduces precise meanings and nuances of words.

*Paragraphs 17 - 22*

- (2) Provide even more regular challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
  - extending planned opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in a range of different situations;
  - ensuring work is well matched and challenging for the pupils concerned;
  - providing opportunities for higher attaining pupils to make choices in lines of enquiry and methods of recording.

*Paragraphs 23 - 28*



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	7

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	10	23	0	0	0
Percentage	0	3	29	68	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 three 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)	12	242
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	38

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

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	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (91)	85 (89)	88 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	85 (89)	91 (83)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	19	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	28	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (80)	91 (74)	97 (80)
	National	75(75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	29	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (80)	88 (74)	94 (80)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	211
Any other minority ethnic group	

*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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26.6

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

### **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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	535564
Total expenditure	528849
Expenditure per pupil	1966
Balance brought forward from previous year	24784
Balance carried forward to next year	31499

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	39

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	28	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	34	0	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	34	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	64	13	0	3
The teaching is good.	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	36	15	15	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	41	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	45	0	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	35	16	14	3