

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. WILFRID'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burgess Hill

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126061

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Faulkner

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: May 20th – 21st 2002

Inspection number: 198294

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Close, Queen Elizabeth Avenue, Burgess Hill, West Sussex.
Postcode:	RH15 9RJ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss. C. Hinde
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School is located near the centre of Burgess Hill in West Sussex. Pupils are admitted between the ages of 4 and 11, and come from the local town as well as the neighbouring parish of Keymer. There are 376 pupils on roll, and they are taught in 14 classes, with two classes for each year group. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, and pupils come from largely favourable home backgrounds. There are 28 pupils on the register of special educational needs, with 4 pupils having a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below national averages. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school is above average. There are 19 pupils with English as an additional language: Cantonese is the predominant mother tongue of these pupils. Only 2 pupils are in the early stages of English language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a very strong Christian ethos. Pupils are valued and their accomplishments celebrated. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and members of staff are dedicated and very hard working. Pupils achieve high standards in many subjects and are well motivated and enthusiastic. The school is very well led by the headteacher, who has managed school improvement very effectively. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high scores in National Curriculum tests and make good progress overall in English, mathematics, and science throughout the school.
- Pupils' attainment is good in history in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design in the reception year and Years 1 and 2.
- The headteacher provides very strong and purposeful leadership and has established a very clear and shared vision of what sort of school this should be.
- There are very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school's work.
- The school provides a wide range of interesting learning opportunities.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development results in their very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour.
- The programme for gifted and talented pupils is highly successful.

What could be improved

- Younger pupils have too few opportunities to extend their writing.

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 progress since the previous inspection in 1998, particularly in the last two years since the appointment of the present headteacher. Standards have risen throughout the school, and weaknesses in design and technology and information and communication technology have been addressed. There is a more balanced curriculum and the role of governors has been developed. The work of the school now has a very clear purpose, with the headteacher establishing high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. This means that the school is in a strong position to improve further.

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	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	A	B	C	
science	A	A	A	A	

Pupils' performances in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved over the last three years. They confirm that pupils achieve well throughout the school and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

Children achieve good standards in their first year in school. They are on target to exceed expectations for their age in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children have good reading, speaking and listening skills, but their writing skills are less well developed. Personal, social and emotional development is a strength of attainment, with children showing good levels of independence and developing very good relationships with each other and adults in the school.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing and science. The results of National Curriculum tests confirm that pupils do not achieve as well in writing as in similar schools. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write purposefully in different curriculum areas. This means that they do not produce the range of work expected for their ability, and the quality of their handwriting and spelling is variable.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science. These subjects are taught well, with the high expectations of teachers ensuring that pupils' needs are met successfully.

Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in information and communication technology throughout the school, in art and design in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2, and in history in Years 3 to 6. Good progress has been made in developing skills in design and technology since the last inspection, and standards are now in line with national expectations.

The school makes very good use of assessments of pupils' attainment to help set targets in English and mathematics. These are based on a good knowledge of pupils' prior learning and are realistically challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very happy at school and are keen to learn. They are attentive in lessons and most concentrate well, even when expected to sit for long periods.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and at playtime.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well together. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility. They do this conscientiously,

	showing very high levels of maturity.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with national averages.

There have been a comparatively high number of fixed-term exclusions of a small number of pupils over the past year. These have been carried out appropriately and have been successful in helping to maintain a calm atmosphere in the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers' lesson planning shows clearly what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn. Lessons include an interesting range of practical activities that help pupils to concentrate well and try hard. Very good relationships with their teachers ensure that pupils feel secure and valued. Behaviour is managed well, creating a calm and friendly working atmosphere. Well trained teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively during group activities, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. Resources, including information and communication technology, are used effectively to make learning interesting and purposeful. Occasionally the pace of lessons slows during whole-class work, and some pupils lose concentration at these times.

In the reception year, teachers are successful in settling children into a school routine, and provide them with good opportunities to increase their independence. Personal, social and emotional development is taught particularly well in this year group. In Years 1 and 2, learning is made meaningful by including many interesting practical tasks. Pupils have good opportunities to increase their learning by interacting with interesting displays, linked to the topics they are studying.

Literacy and numeracy skills are taught particularly well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils work in groups according to their prior attainment in these subjects, and they are given good opportunities to use the skills they have learnt to support their work in other subjects. In these year groups, teachers have higher expectations and mark work to show pupils how to improve. This marking results in pupils being inspired to try harder and produce more demanding work. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are met well in lessons, and their levels of reasoning are especially well developed in specific lessons in Years 5 and 6. However, in Years 3 to 6, opportunities are missed for pupils to show their independence or collaborate with others. Older pupils complete too many photocopied worksheets in preparation for National Curriculum tests. This also limits the range of activities that are planned for part of the year.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the needs of all pupils are met well. There are good cross-curricular links, with very good use of information and communication technology to support learning. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to make learning interesting and purposeful. Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported through specialist teaching in withdrawal groups and the effective use of teaching assistants in class lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Although there is little specialist support available, teachers plan well for the needs of the small number of pupils with English as an additional language.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils learn to care for each other and for others less fortunate than themselves. Assemblies are thoughtful and promote spiritual values well. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about their own culture and beliefs. However, there are fewer opportunities in lessons for pupils to learn about non-European cultures. Displays around school do not reflect the cultural diversity of society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is effective in promoting the welfare, health and safety of all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has established strong relationships with the whole school community and there is a very strong commitment to school improvement. All members of staff share the headteacher's vision for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They are very supportive of the school's work and very committed to developing the school further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is very thorough monitoring of teaching and learning. Action plans are clear and focused, and show clearly how improvement will be ensured. Monitoring by the governing body is less well developed, although they are kept well informed by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Budgeting is very systematic. Decisions are carefully made on the basis of ' <i>How will this help the school to improve?</i> ' The school actively seeks the views of parents about its work and is beginning to implement the principles of 'best value'.

The lack of a library is a weakness in accommodation, meaning that pupils have fewer opportunities than usual to develop and practise research skills. A spacious refurbished library was due to open shortly after the inspection had finished.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Teachers are approachable. • Parents are kept well informed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework provision. • The range of extra-curricular clubs.

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. The inspection team support parents' positive views. Inspection findings are that there is good provision for pupils to attend activities outside lessons. There are several sporting clubs and matches for older pupils, a choir and school band and various other clubs. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve high scores in National Curriculum tests and make good progress overall in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.

1. Pupils achieve high standards and make good progress throughout the school in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Pupils' progress is good in history in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 confirm that pupils are achieving well in most aspects of English, mathematics and science. In the tests in 2001, results in reading were well above the average for all and similar schools. In mathematics, results were above average when compared with all schools and broadly average when compared with similar schools. In writing, test results were above average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Writing continues to be a comparative weakness of attainment in the early years, with teachers having too low expectations of what pupils should achieve. In science, teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 show that attainment is above average when compared with all schools and broadly average when compared with similar schools.
3. National Curriculum results at the end of Year 6 have been consistently high for the last four years. In 2001, they show that pupils' attainment was well above average in English and science when compared with all schools and similar schools. In mathematics, pupils attainment was above average when compared with all schools and broadly average when compared with similar schools. The local authority provides detailed analysis of test data for Key Stage 2, comparing pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 with their attainment at the end of Year 2. This shows that pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
4. Inspection findings confirm that pupils are making good progress in many subjects, with standards of attainment of the current Year 6 being well above average in English, mathematics and science. These subjects are taught well, with the high expectations of teachers ensuring that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are met well.
5. Pupils develop very good literacy skills by the end of Year 6. They are given many opportunities to speak to audiences. They develop very high levels of confidence, talking maturely to teachers, classmates and visitors. They listen well to each other and respect views that are different from their own. Pupils read confidently, with good expression and good levels of understanding. Even the youngest children in the reception year are confident in using their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to attempt to read unknown words. Pupils enjoy reading, and are keen to talk about books they have read at school and at home. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are given good opportunities to write for a range of purposes. This is seen to good effect where pupils write in a range of styles, including descriptions, reports, stories and poems. They are taught to write for many different purposes, for example producing very good quality letters following a visit to the National Gallery. Older pupils use an extensive vocabulary, showing good levels of creativity in their story and poetry writing. For example, during a poetry lesson, a pupil described a train as *'like a bullet with no expectations, this monstrosity never passes in peace, the baby's cries drowned out by the noise'*. Writing is less well developed in the reception year and Years 1 and 2. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write purposefully in different curriculum areas. This means that they do not produce the range of work expected for their ability, and their handwriting and spelling are variable in quality.
6. In mathematics, pupils have a very good knowledge of basic number concepts. By the end of Year 6, pupils can work out calculations in their heads quickly and have a very good understanding of how to apply their mathematical knowledge to real life problems. Pupils devise

their own formulae for solving everyday problems and explain their strategies clearly to other pupils.

7. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' data-handling skills were identified as a weakness. This is no longer the case, and pupils now develop very good skills because they are given good opportunities to handle various forms of data for different purposes. In the reception year, children produce well presented graphs showing the different colours of house doors. As they get older, pupils begin to present data in a variety of formats, making good use of block graphs, line graphs, tally and pie charts to show what they have found. By Year 6, pupils confidently use line graphs to convert miles to kilometres and analyse data to test probability against reality.
8. Pupils make very good use of information and communication technology to present data. This is a strength of attainment in this curriculum area, where standards are above average overall. Pupils make charts and graphs using computers and begin to enter data into spreadsheets, showing for example the results of a science experiment with parachutes. Pupils develop good word processing skills, presenting written work in a variety of ways, using their computing skills to make their writing interesting to an audience. Pupils have a good knowledge of the many applications of information and communication technology and understand that it involves more than just working on the computer. Even the youngest pupils confidently use tape recorders and understand how information and communication technology can be used in everyday life. Pupils begin to carry out research using the internet or CD-ROMs, and they do this confidently. Pupils are beginning to use e-mail as an everyday form of communication. For example, Year 3 pupils have 'e-pals' in Australia with whom they communicate regularly. By Year 6, pupils are able to produce multi-media presentations about their school, using a variety of computing techniques.
9. A strength of attainment in science is pupils' ability to apply their very good scientific knowledge to practical situations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations and to find things out for themselves. Pupils do this confidently in lessons and through focus weeks, such as the recent 'energy week' when a range of practical activities are set up over a whole week, with pupils working on different activities on the same theme. Pupils' work shows a very clear progression of skills from year to year. Children in the reception classes designed and made windmills and carried out interesting investigations into how bubbles move when they are blown. Pupils develop a good understanding of what is meant by a fair test, for example when investigating the impact of sail size on the movements of land yacht models in Year 5. By the end of Year 6, pupils make accurate predictions and record their findings in a good variety of ways, for example, acting as 'wind detectives' to find the windiest place in the school grounds.

Pupils' attainment is good in history in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design in Years 1 and 2.

10. History is taught well in Years 3 to 6 and this helps pupils to achieve good standards. Pupils are very keen to learn about life in the past and they develop a good historical awareness. This is because of the imaginative and enthusiastic way in which history is taught to older pupils. They are given good opportunities to learn about the history of their own locality and to carry out detailed studies of different periods in history.
11. There is a very good practical focus to activities, which helps to make learning very purposeful and interesting. As a result, pupils develop good historical skills and this is a particularly strong feature of attainment. Pupils confidently find information from a range of sources and make sensible interpretations of data. Pupils in Year 5 successfully used newspaper advertisements from the Victorian period to find out about the Pleasure Gardens that used to exist in Burgess Hill. They make good use of literacy skills in history lessons, with much of their writing showing a good empathy with what life was like in the period being studied. For example, pupils in Year 4 write with great feeling about what it would have felt like to have been a centurion in Julius Caesar's army when they invaded Britain.

12. Pupils' attainment in art and design has improved since the last inspection, when it was satisfactory. Pupils now make good progress in the subject and produce some good quality work, especially in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2, and in the art club in Years 3 to 6.
13. In the reception classes, children know how to mix colours and make a beautiful range of pink tones when working in the style of Klee. They make effective use of space when painting figures and make very successful clay house number plaques. In Year 1, pupils paint self-portraits showing good attention to detail in their clothing. They make vibrant pictures in the style of Van Gogh's 'Starry night', and interesting sculptures and collages from natural materials. Pupils in Year 2 make careful block prints and detailed pastel pictures of flowers in the style of Mackintosh.
14. Effective teaching in Year 6 encourages pupils to concentrate hard in lessons and produce good quality drawings of objects showing scale and shading. A professional artist volunteers to teach pupils in Years 3 to 6 on a regular basis. In an art club session for pupils in Year 5, pupils used watercolours to produce landscapes of very good quality.

The headteacher provides very strong and purposeful leadership and has established a very clear and shared vision of what sort of school this should be.

15. The quality of leadership and management has improved significantly since the appointment of the present headteacher in January 2000. Members of staff speak very positively about her leadership. They identify many improvements and feel that they have been given a greater role in managing the work of the school. This has helped to raise staff morale to high levels. There has been a very fast pace of change, but it has been managed very effectively. The work of the school has a very clear purpose, with the headteacher establishing high expectations for pupils' academic and social achievements.
16. The resolve of the headteacher to ensure school improvement is evident in all aspects of its work. There is a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in school and a strong Christian ethos has been established. There is a climate of openness and honesty and, as a result, all members of the school community feel valued. The achievements of pupils are celebrated in many ways and they are helped to become mature and responsible individuals. Teachers have been given the opportunity to take an active part in leading curriculum development. There have been very good opportunities for professional development and this has had a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The role of teaching assistants has been developed and they are now an established and important part of the school team. They too have been given good training opportunities. For example, they have received school-based training in the use of information and communication technology in the classroom.
17. The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on very thorough monitoring of the school's work. She has established clear systems of communication to ensure that members of staff are informed about and involved in school management. There are regular professional development interviews with teachers and teaching assistants, as well as meetings for teachers in the different year groups. The headteacher has encouraged members of staff to work together to learn new skills. For example, the benefits of recent training in the development of painting skills are evident throughout the school.
18. The quality of teaching and learning is very effectively evaluated. The headteacher has established a climate where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers is accepted as an everyday part of life. This has led to teachers becoming more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards has been developed, and they now have clear responsibilities for managing change and ensuring improvement. They have regular opportunities to monitor teachers at work in their classroom and use the information gained from this, and other forms of monitoring, to identify how they are going to improve standards in their subjects. Action plans are clear and focused to show how improvement will be ensured. The recently established 'middle management team' gives co-ordinators good opportunities to develop their management skills and prepares them well for

senior posts in other schools.

19. The appointment of the deputy headteacher has provided further impetus to school improvement. She is very enthusiastic, sets a very good example in the quality of her teaching, and works well alongside the headteacher in leading and managing the school. As a result, there is a strong and very effective management team. They meet together to plan school improvement, to discuss how this is to be achieved and to evaluate progress. Decisions are carefully considered, but, where necessary, the headteacher will make decisions that are not universally popular if she feels that they are in the best interests of the pupils. For example, shortly after her appointment, the headteacher altered the time allowed for the teaching of swimming. Some parents were unhappy about this, but, as a result of this change, there is now a more balanced curriculum and pupils continue to achieve good standards in swimming.
20. The role of the governing body has improved since the last inspection and they now take a more active part in strategic planning. They are very supportive of the school's work and very committed to developing the school further. There are several committees that meet regularly and perform useful roles. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on visits to school as well as on the detailed information that is provided by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Governors are given detailed feedback on test results, and use this data effectively to gain an understanding of what could be improved. This is effective in helping them to gain a wider perspective on the school's work.
21. The headteacher and senior members of staff offer very high levels of pastoral care. The school has worked hard to ensure that teachers have manageable workloads. Members of staff are dedicated and very hard working. They have their pupils' well being and education at the forefront of their planning at all times. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose throughout the school is a significant feature of its work. This means that the school is in a very strong position to improve further in the future.

There are very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school's work.

22. There has been a considerable improvement in links with parents in the last two years. The headteacher and members of staff value parents' support and work hard to foster it. They are very successful in achieving a strong partnership between home and school. Parents are very interested in the school and support it well. This was demonstrated by the very positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaires.
23. Strong links with parents are encouraged as early as possible, and there is a very effective home visiting programme for new children. This includes children who are joining St Wilfrid's from other schools at any time during the school year. These visits help parents to understand how the school is organised, give them opportunities to ask questions in confidence and ensure that they feel valued members of the community right from their first contact with the school.
24. Parents are provided with very good information about the school's work. There are weekly newsletters and regular updates about curriculum developments. For example, the design and technology co-ordinator produced an informative report for parents showing how weaknesses in the subject, identified in the last inspection, had been addressed. Parents are invited to regular meetings about the curriculum. The termly year-group information meetings are particularly valuable in ensuring that parents understand what their children are being taught and how they can support learning at home in the coming year. Parents who are not able to attend these meetings receive a written report to ensure that they do not miss out on any important information.
25. Parents are encouraged to celebrate their children's achievements at class assemblies. The school is very aware that not all of its parents are Catholic, and works hard to ensure that they feel as much a part of the school community as other parents. For example, there are meetings for these parents so that they can find out more about the school's distinctive Christian ethos.

26. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress. There are termly parent/teacher consultation meetings, detailed annual written reports on children's attainment and progress and termly records of achievement. In addition, parents receive a termly target sheet, showing the main targets for individual children in the coming term in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets are reviewed with parents at consultation evenings. This very high level of information sharing ensures that parents are able to give their children good support at home.
27. The headteacher ensures that parents are consulted regularly about different aspects of the school's work. Annual questionnaires enable parents to contribute to the development of the school improvement plan and give them an opportunity to raise any specific concerns. The results of questionnaires are analysed in great detail and issues are followed up where necessary.
28. Parents report that they feel encouraged to help in and around the school. Although a relatively small number of parents help in school on a regular basis, those who do make a valuable contribution to learning. In a history lesson, for example, a parent talked to the children about the school when it was first built. There is a very active and successful parent/teacher association that arranges a good number of social events. The funds raised by the association have a good impact on the work of the school.
29. Parents find the school warm and welcoming, and feel comfortable about approaching staff if they have a concern. Inspection findings support these very positive views.

The school provides a wide range of interesting learning opportunities.

30. Throughout the school, a well planned curriculum provides pupils with a good breadth of meaningful learning opportunities, preparing them well for the next stage in their education. Members of staff work together in pairs to plan for each year group. This means that the teachers' good ideas are successfully shared and pupils are given equal opportunities within year-groups. Lesson planning is more consistent than at the time of the last inspection when some lessons included too many activities. Most plans state clearly what pupils are expected to learn, and the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are met well. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection when statutory requirements were not being met in design and technology and information and communication technology, and there was a poor balance between the provision for different subjects.
31. In the reception year, children are given a good range of interesting activities when they first arrive at school in the mornings. This helps them to settle into school successfully and enables them to concentrate well in whole-class sessions. An attractive and safe outdoor area is used effectively for a range of adult-led and independent activities, and the range of choices helps maintain a peaceful atmosphere in the classes. Independent activities are often thoughtfully planned to link with other aspects of the children's learning. For example, when studying the book *'We're going on a Bear Hunt'* in literacy, children extended their knowledge by retelling the story with objects in the sand tray and by painting pictures about it.
32. In Years 1 and 2, effective use is made of displays to help pupils extend their learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 are invited to name musical instruments and complete puzzles depicting life cycles. Investigative work is a particular strength in science, where pupils have very good opportunities to make their own suggestions about how tests can be performed.
33. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are organised into groups according to their prior attainment in English and mathematics, and this means that their needs are met particularly well. Where possible, teachers plan projects that give pupils the opportunity to learn skills from more than one subject at a time. For example, a history topic on the Tudors gave Year 6 pupils the opportunity to design and make flamboyant Tudor head-wear, learn Tudor music and improve their literacy skills by writing good quality 'newspapers' about events from the Tudor period. Cross-curricular links are particularly well developed in Year 4.

34. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to extend the pupils' learning. For example, children in the reception class enjoyed learning about the history of the school from a past pupil. In Year 1, pupils visited a local toy museum as part of a history topic, giving them a good opportunity to handle and learn about toys from the past. Older pupils benefited from a workshop run by members of a national orchestra and extended their geography skills on a residential visit to the Isle of Wight.
35. The school has effective links with other schools and local industry, and this aspect of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. For example, pupils take part in an annual 'food week' where they try to improve on the products made in a local supermarket as part of their study of food technology. This is very popular with the pupils whilst enabling them to extend their knowledge of how food technology is relevant to everyday lives. Older pupils take part in a local recorder festival, and younger pupils join with other schools to make music.
36. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs has been maintained since the last inspection, with an improvement in the provision for pupils who have been identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are very well thought out and used effectively to provide suitable support. Effective teaching assistants enable these pupils to gain full access to activities in class.
37. Very good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. In Year 2, pupils learnt to use 'spray' and 'flood fill' tools as part of an art package when making pictures in the style of Mondrian. Pupils in Year 5 use a data-handling package to make graphs and charts showing their preferences for types of biscuit.
38. Literacy and numeracy skills are extended well in other subjects in Years 3 to 6. For example, pupils in Year 3 read aloud a newspaper article about VE celebrations during a lesson about World War 2. Pupils in Year 4 wrote stories for the pop-up books they made in design and technology. Pupils in Year 6 use their mathematical knowledge to help them plan the dimensions for their controllable vehicles, inspired by 'robot wars'. The use of literacy skills is less well developed in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are given fewer opportunities to write purposefully in different subjects.
39. A significant number of parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings are that, as at the time of the last inspection, there is good provision for pupils to attend activities outside lessons. There are several sporting clubs and matches against other schools, a choir and various other clubs, including an ICT club for older pupils.
40. A comparative weakness in curriculum provision is the temporary absence of a library due to recent building work, and this limits pupils' opportunities to carry out independent research. In addition, preparation for National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 sometimes restricts the curriculum.

Very good provision for pupils' personal development results in very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour.

41. The school's programme for pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility, such as being the class helper of the day. Pupils in Year 6 have the chance to become a prefect, and carry out tasks such as setting up the computer suites and showing visitors around the school.
42. There is a very successful school council for pupils in Years 3 to 6, where a range of relevant topics and concerns, such as 'bullying', can be discussed. As a result, action is taken to improve school systems. For example, pupils can put concerns about bullying into confidential 'bullying boxes' and a system of 'bully buddies' has been established to help support pupils at playtimes. Members of the school council are very positive about this opportunity to do something helpful and meaningful for their school.
43. Members of staff set very good examples for moral and social behaviour, and develop very good relationships with each other and the pupils. Pupils develop effective relationships with each other and grow in confidence. They help each other by sharing resources sensibly. Teachers show pupils respect by listening to and valuing their comments and suggestions. For example,

in one science lesson in Year 2, the teacher took pupils' ideas for an investigation into 'what plants need to grow' very seriously, encouraging some deep thinking.

44. Younger pupils are given good opportunities to improve their independence by making choices in their learning and by taking turns and discussing a range of topics with a partner. For example, in the reception year, children are expected to take responsibility for selecting an activity and recording their choice. Children respond quickly when asked to pack away at the end of lessons and take responsibility for washing palettes after painting. In Year 1, pupils collaborated well when listing events seen at a fair. Pupils in Year 2 shared ideas for a science investigation well.
45. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils are eager and keen to learn. Their attitudes towards learning have improved further and are now very good, because the school has developed effective procedures for promoting positive attitudes to learning. Certificates are awarded for good effort and pupils respond well to the consistent praise and encouragement from members of staff.
46. Pupils' behaviour is managed successfully, and clear expectations and a positive approach are successful in most cases. Pupils take part in drawing up rules for the playground and in school, and most respond well. There have been a comparatively high number of exclusions of a small number of pupils over the past year. These have been carried out appropriately and have been successful in helping to maintain a calm atmosphere in the school. There is no evidence of the challenging behaviour observed at the time of the last inspection, and most parents agree that behaviour at the school is good. The school runs very successful 'social skills' groups when needed. In these very well taught sessions, pupils improve their self-esteem by sharing their feelings and experiences with each other. They also learn helpful strategies for keeping calm and dealing with upsetting situations.

The programme for gifted and talented pupils is highly successful.

47. The school has very successful procedures for identifying and supporting gifted and talented pupils. Over a third of the pupils appear on the register for specific attention in certain subjects, including practical subjects such as design and technology. This means that some pupils with special educational needs in literacy are recognised for their particular talents in other areas of the curriculum, and this helps to raise their self-esteem. The school has made support for gifted and talented pupils a priority, and makes very effective use of funding to provide a teacher to support work in this programme.
48. There is a high acceptance rate for pupils attending enrichment courses. Pupils have very good opportunities to carry out challenging tasks, including high quality play and poetry writing and difficult mathematical problem solving. All lessons are planned to an exceptionally high standard, records are kept of pupils' responses, and pupils participate in evaluating their own learning. The quality of teaching during the ethics and philosophy lesson observed was excellent, promoting thinking and reasoning skills of the highest standard. Parents are very pleased with the quality of this provision.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Younger pupils have too few opportunities to extend their writing.

49. Members of staff are aware of the need to increase the opportunities for children in the reception year and pupils in Years 1 and 2 to write purposefully. Whilst most pupils attain the expected level (Level 2) in writing at the end of Year 2, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in this aspect of English. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils should produce, and spelling and handwriting vary in quality. Teachers do not show what they expect pupils to achieve next time when marking their work.
50. Several pupils do not form their letters correctly, and this makes their writing slow and laborious. Whilst pupils are encouraged to write for themselves, they are not always challenged to write a little more or think about the way they have spelt some words. Pupils become over-reliant on adult help when spelling new words. This limits their independence and slows the pace at which they work because they waste time waiting for help. In contrast, in the reception

classes, children develop bad habits when forming letters because they are not given enough support.

51. When learning about other subjects, pupils usually write only short accounts, limiting their opportunity to show the extent of their knowledge. At the moment, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to write purposefully in different curriculum areas. This is in contrast to the good opportunities that are given to pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some writing tasks, such as regularly writing 'news' about the weekend, are not stimulating and lack challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- ◆ Raise standards in writing in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 by:
 - Increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through purposeful writing tasks.
 - Ensuring that planning in all subjects identifies opportunities for developing writing skills.
 - Giving pupils more opportunity to spell independently.
 - Ensuring that pupils are taught how to form letters correctly, so as to increase the legibility and speed of their writing.

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

22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	13	8	0	0	0
Percentage	4	19	48	29	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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

365

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

4

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

4

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

28

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

19

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

19

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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	21	34	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	33	34	33
	Total	51	51	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (92)	93 (94)	93 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	20
	Girls	33	31	33
	Total	51	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (92)	89 (92)	96 (90)
	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	32	27	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	30
	Girls	27	24	27
	Total	55	51	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (94)	86 (92)	97 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	25	29
	Girls	24	22	27
	Total	48	47	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (80)	80 (88)	95 (98)
	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	2
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	306
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	193

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	655189
Total expenditure	651518
Expenditure per pupil	1724
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2389
Balance carried forward to next year	1282

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	365
Number of questionnaires returned	123

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	43	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	56	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	65	6	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	43	20	4	1
The teaching is good.	45	52	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	46	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	54	10	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	47	46	1	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	56	1	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	56	11	5	9