

# INSPECTION REPORT

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

Blaydon, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108395

Headteacher: Mrs C Ellis

Reporting inspector: Mr G Brown  
21060

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 198818

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Croftdale Road  
Blaydon  
Tyne and Wear

Postcode: NE21 4BG

Telephone number: 0191 4143108

Fax number: 0191 4142138

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Jenkinson

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
21060	Mr G Brown	Registered inspector
12536	Ms S Bullerwell	Lay inspector
17857	Mr D Walters	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited  
National Westminster Bank Chambers  
Victoria Street  
Burnham-on-Sea  
Somerset  
TA8 1AN

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving two parishes in Blaydon, Tyne and Wear. It shares its site with a large comprehensive school. It is situated in the centre of a well-established housing estate containing a blend of privately owned and council rented properties. Most pupils come from the local area with a minority travelling from more distant communities. Unemployment is relatively high and parts of the area show aspects of deprivation, with a high incidence of social problems. The school is of average size with 235 pupils, aged four to eleven years, almost all of whom are drawn from Catholic backgrounds. There is very little representation from minority ethnic groups and no pupil is at an early stage of English language acquisition. A broadly average number of pupils is entitled to free school meals and 66 pupils are on the school's register for additional needs, including two with a statement of special educational needs and 21 who show a tendency for well above average attainment. Some classes contain mixed age groups. On entry to the reception class (the Foundation Stage) the full ability range is present, but significant numbers of children are below average, particularly in relation to their language skills and personal and social development. The school's mission is to create an ethos of Christian values, attitudes, practice and knowledge and to develop the learning potential of the whole child.

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

St Joseph's is a very good school where pupils achieve particularly well and reach above average standards for their age. The pupils benefit from the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and by the quality of teaching and learning which, together with the curriculum, are very good. The school is highly effective in meeting both its mission statement and basic aims, thus creating a Christian ethos of care, teamwork and commitment among staff, governors and pupils. Given pupils' attainment on entry and the standards they reach, the school gives very good value for money.

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

- By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' standards are above average in several key subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning is frequently very good and plays a significant part in the standards reached by the pupils.
- The quality of leadership offered by the headteacher is excellent and provides the key to a strong and influential school management team.
- The arrangements made for pupils' learning (the curriculum) are very good. Learning opportunities are exciting, challenging, rich and varied, ensuring pupils grow in confidence, knowledge and skill as they move through the school.
- Considerable emphasis is given to the personal development of pupils, including excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This creates excellent working relationships, very good behaviour and a very positive attitude among the pupils towards their learning.

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

There are no significant areas for the school to address.

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

The school was last inspected in November 1997 when weaknesses were identified in relation to information and communication technology (ICT), the management of some subjects and in the overall quality of school development planning. Since that time the school has made very good progress and is now working as a well-established beacon school within the local authority. Standards in ICT are now satisfactory and teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject have greatly improved. Subject leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and are now very influential in helping to raise standards in

their own areas. School development planning is based on wider consultation and is more strategic in nature, covering proposals for improvement in both the medium and longer term. The school's documentation to parents is now fully compliant with statutory requirements. The quality of teaching and learning has improved still further as has the overall quality of the curriculum. The school has also made considerable strides in relation to both local and national initiatives, including an effective approach towards performance management and the strengthening, still further, of its many links with European schools and global citizenship.

## 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	C	C	A	A
mathematics	C	B	A	A
science	B	B	C	C

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

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well and attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, the results of statutory and other tests, combined with inspection findings, confirm the above average standards in English and mathematics achieved by many eleven-year-olds. In 2001, the results in English and mathematics were well above average whilst standards in science were broadly average. Compared to schools in a similar setting, pupils' results showed the same pattern of above average standards in English and mathematics. Indicative results from 2002 suggest that the school will be slightly less well placed, because the current Years 2 and 6 contain a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils and some with learning difficulties. Nevertheless, the inspection confirmed that pupils continue to achieve very well set against their previous learning, with no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well in relation to their individual targets. Higher attaining pupils are well targeted and the inspection showed that significant numbers reach the higher levels anticipated for their age. The school monitors the achievements and standards of all its pupils on a regular basis to ensure they reach their learning potential. By the end of Year 6, most pupils speak with clarity and confidence, read and write competently for their age and use their mathematical knowledge well. Standards in ICT and science are broadly at the level anticipated for the age of the pupils. Standards in other areas of the curriculum are at least satisfactory and many pupils have strengths in art and design, design and technology and music. The school has, generally, a rising trend in attainment in the junior years and this is recorded in their year-on-year targets which reflect high expectations and challenging targets for the future.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and try hard with their work. They respond well to the high expectations of their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are mature for their age and show consideration and respect. Their behaviour is reliable and trustworthy.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are excellent and the school revolves very successfully around its Christian ethos and the importance it expresses for all its pupils. The development of the whole child is a key to the

	success of the school.
Attendance	Above average. The school day starts promptly and efficiently.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is clearly very good over time across the school and leads to high pupil achievement and mainly very good progress. Some excellent teaching occurs in the junior years. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and plan interesting and challenging lessons which stretch children of all abilities. In the reception class, there is very good emphasis on the teaching and learning of basic skills and children make a very good start to their time in school. In both the infant and junior classes, teachers show very good subject knowledge and plan very well, ensuring there is a good pace to learning. Pupils' learning is also well supported by attractive resources and, where possible, by additional adult help. Teachers question their pupils well, make learning enjoyable and meaningful and use the results of tests and other assessments to accurately plan the next stage of teaching and learning. All teachers manage and organise their pupils very well, ensuring they are all included fully in lessons. Most pupils are given individual targets in literacy and mathematics, subjects which are taught particularly well. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including the less and more able and those with any additional needs. The teaching of design and technology, music and ICT is frequently very good, ensuring pupils make rapid progress in these subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality, range and organisation of learning opportunities are all very good and form a growing strength of the school. A full statutory curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. There is important emphasis on citizenship, good health and European and world links.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with additional needs are targeted early and are well supported by carefully planned and stimulating work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are very few pupils from ethnic minority groups. Sound procedures are in place to support such pupils as the need arises.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. A true reflection of the school's values and its concentration on the total growth of every pupil. Strong emphasis is placed on spiritual experiences and on pupils growing and living in harmony with each other.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures are in place for child protection and for the general care and welfare of the pupils. Well-prepared assessments lead to careful monitoring, recording and reporting of pupils' academic and personal achievements.

Very positive relationships exist between school and home. Parents are welcomed into school and their views are sought carefully as to their children's ongoing development and achievements.





## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The leadership offered by the headteacher is excellent and highly influential to the ongoing success of the school. She also generates a strong sense of commitment and teamwork among other staff, all of which impacts strongly on pupils' standards, achievements and progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is well organised and serves the school community well. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities and show some involvement in long-term strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good and a further strength of this beacon school. An efficient and regular analysis is undertaken of what has been achieved in the past, as well as studying targets for future growth and how best to sustain the school's current levels of success.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The accommodation, staffing and learning resources are all used effectively. The annual expenditure reflects closely the school's educational priorities as defined in its annual development plan. Financial planning and monitoring procedures are very good. The principles of gaining best value are known and applied very well.

## 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 school is very well led and managed and parents are made to feel welcome.</li> <li>The pupils achieve well and make good progress because the teachers care and know their needs well. Teaching is very good.</li> <li>The school is helping pupils to become more mature and to accept responsibility for their actions.</li> <li>Children enjoy coming to school and respond well to school life. Their behaviour is often praised by the wider community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents would like to have more opportunities to learn how their children are progressing in class.</li> </ul>

The inspection bears out all the positive points indicated here by parents and indeed recognises many of them as real strengths of the school. The school holds at least two formal open evenings for parents every year (three in reception) as well as providing up-to-date information about the curriculum and distributing annual reports on pupils. Parents are also welcome at other times if they have any concerns about their children's progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' standards are above average in several key subjects, including English and mathematics.**

1. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped consolidate and extend pupils' standards in both English and mathematics. These subjects are given maximum attention and pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills and understanding. In English, additional time is also found for periods of extended writing enabling many pupils to use their reading and writing skills in a wide range of contexts. Literacy and numeracy are also used successfully across the curriculum enabling, for example, pupils to write in a range of styles and for different purposes. Their learning in mathematics is also well supported by the widespread use of computers, with pupils able to handle data in graphic form. Pupils as young as those in Year 1 are encouraged to use ICT to compile their own picture graphs and to devise and answer questions from on-screen information.
2. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 listen well and speak fluently for their age. Older pupils in particular are able to debate and answer questions with confidence. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on the early reading skills introduced in the reception class and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils read widely for both pleasure and information. Junior pupils express a liking for particular authors and most are well aware of different styles of writing including how authors develop characterisation and plot. Several pupils respond to poetry with obvious pleasure and those in Years 4 and 5 are very secure in their understanding and use of words such as 'stanza', 'couplet' and 'chorus'.
3. Pupils' writing is a growing strength of their work in English. Many develop neat, legible styles of their own and pay good attention to accuracy in spelling and grammar. Regular written comprehension is used throughout the school to check that pupils understand what they read and to ensure that they use new vocabulary, clauses and sentences successfully. Much of the pupils' personal and creative writing is imaginative and above average in terms of its length and content. Pupils in Year 5 write very persuasively about the need to look after rainforests, whilst those in Year 6 are able to analyse part of the text of 'Harry Potter' and write down what appeals to them, including how the author develops sympathy with the reader for certain characters. Year 2 pupils wrote some eye-catching pieces about spooky spells, fireworks and enjoying a winter picnic. The same year group are able to produce and refine their weekend news using wordprocessing techniques on the computer. Year 6 pupils learned how to use a multimedia package on the computer to produce some excellent pamphlets about a chosen pet.
4. The school continues to develop pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge very successfully. Some very good work on basic number skills is undertaken in reception and Year 1. By the time pupils enter Year 2, many are confident with mental and written forms of addition and subtraction and have above average knowledge of odd and even numbers and various multiples. By the end of Year 2, pupils have attempted a wide range of work on number lines, shopping with money to 50 pence and beyond and readily point out the pattern of fours, sixes and tens on a number square. Pupils know the basics of fractions, metric measures, time, area and the properties of several shapes, including octagons and hexagons. Teachers skilfully weave mathematical experiences into other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 1, for example, carried out a survey of the different ways they travel to school

and used the data to produce a simple pictogram which was very clear and pleasing to the eye. In science, pupils in Year 4 practised their metric measuring when estimating and calculating the distances toy cars travel as a result of the impact of friction. By the end of Year 6, many pupils handle decimal fractions with confidence and know their relationship to percentages. Although not the strongest area of their attainment, most pupils use their knowledge of numbers and mathematical processes well enough to help solve everyday problems. They also handle data accurately when it is generated through computer studies or science. The inspection showed very clearly the large range of work attempted by most pupils in the course of a year.

5. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in several other subjects are above average for the age of the pupils. The inspection found this to be the case in art and design, design and technology and music. The school has enjoyed a good reputation in these and other subjects for some time. In art and design, pupils enjoy many experiences using a wide variety of media and resources. Their work shows increasing amounts of skill and patience with good observation and technique. Artwork is used well to support and illustrate other subjects. Year 3 pupils made very good drawings of parts of a plant and others in the same year used their studies of the artist Escher to create symmetrical patterns that supported their learning in mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 created some attractive pictures in pastels depicting a child in Victorian times as an aid to their work in history. The same year group made a series of visits to the neighbouring high school and were taught how to use computer-aided design technology to create some very striking images of objects, such as metro trains of the future. Most artwork is very well finished off and pupils show great pride in their achievements.
6. Standards in design and technology are equally good. Pupils in Year 2 used a piece of software to create their own versions of Joseph's multicoloured coat and other infant pupils show above average knowledge and technique when creating their own designs in the style of William Morris and various pop-up mechanisms. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good attempts at designing a shelter and are able to use past experiences and known techniques to design and make their own slippers. The standards reached by pupils in music are generally very good. During the year they participate in a wide variety of musical experiences involving visiting musicians and sing themselves in many choirs, festivals and musical plays. Most pupils perform well after attending workshops and even international events. During the inspection, two excellent lessons with Years 5 and 6, involved pupils performing forms of African music and also musical expression created around sounds made by machines. Such is the strength and quality of provision, most pupils are extremely confident in whatever they sing or perform.

**The quality of teaching and learning is frequently very good and plays a significant part in the standards reached by the pupils.**

7. The school has undertaken programmes of training and self-development to ensure that teachers work as a team and bring excitement, challenge and pleasure to pupils' learning. All staff have high expectations as to what pupils can and should achieve and, within their own classrooms, create a work ethic to match. This ensures pupils' individual needs are very well met and that all pupils regularly taste success in many parts of their learning. Some very good teaching occurs in all classes and some excellent teaching occurs in Years 5 and 6. In the reception class there is very good emphasis on the teaching and learning of basic skills. These are carefully nurtured and developed in later years, with teachers carefully targeting activities alongside those areas of knowledge that pupils will need to access in the later junior years. All teachers carry out tests and other forms of assessment to

ensure they know exactly the point individual pupils have reached and what is needed next to consolidate and then extend their future learning. This was noted in several lessons where teachers were clearly aware of the stage pupils had reached in their use of technical language in mathematics or science, and what was needed to encourage its even wider use. The results of any assessments are used to set accurately the targets for individual pupils, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This represents an invaluable aid to future learning. A real strength of teaching and learning centres on the detailed planning of lessons and general organisation around the curriculum. This is a very inclusive school, in that the needs of pupils with widely varying abilities are targeted extremely well, ensuring that progress is continuous. This is equally true of higher attaining pupils as well as the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The latter has remained a strength of provision since the previous inspection. Many teachers are very adept at linking the various subjects of the curriculum together so that, younger pupils in particular, can view their learning as a whole. The teacher in Year 2 ensured mathematics and science were linked well when pupils compiled their favourite food graphs as part of a 'Good Health' project. Similarly, when pupils experiment with paper in art and design and design and technology, the teacher is careful to build up their English vocabulary with the use of words such as twisting, curling, scrunching and scoring. The use of pupils' homework has improved in recent times and undoubtedly consolidates the learning of many pupils across several age groups.

8. Teachers use their own subject knowledge well to help deepen and extend that of the pupils. Technical vocabulary is modelled well and teachers use a wide range of attractive resources to excite and enthuse the pupils. Where such help is available, teachers use the expertise of classroom assistants and support staff well. In two separate lessons observed in Year 1 classes, skilful teaching led pupils to learning from first-hand experiences. In one lesson, the teacher provided pupils with a wide range of fruit which they had to describe and taste and then record their results. In another, pupils categorised various musical instruments depending on whether they were shaken, plucked or struck. The organisation of the pupils is very effective in such sessions and no time is wasted when bringing challenge and pace to pupils' learning.
9. There are strengths in the teaching and learning of several subjects including literacy and numeracy. The two national strategies in these core subjects have been adopted very successfully and learning is continuous and developmental across classes and key stages. In Year 6, pupils are taught in different sets for mathematics and English; daily groupings which are based on broad levels of prior attainment. This has undoubtedly helped their progress, as the teachers can concentrate on a narrower band of attainment levels in the same class. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT, art and design, music and geography is among the strengths of the school. The teaching of ICT has improved greatly since the previous inspection, as the impact of teachers' training, improved resources and greater confidence, have all begun to take effect. Very good examples of ICT teaching were observed when supporting the learning in mathematics, science, design and technology and geography. The emphasis on links with Europe is extremely successful and teachers skilfully weave European awareness into much that they do, particularly in the junior classes. Where a teacher has a specific flair for a subject, such as in music, they sometimes teach pupils other than those in their own class and this extends learning still further. Many teachers are also adept at teaching personal and social education, including good health. As part of the ethos of the school, staff display pupils' work in exciting, attractive and imaginative ways to help form a continuous celebration of what pupils have achieved.

**The quality of leadership offered by the headteacher is excellent and provides the key to a strong and influential school management team.**

10. The leadership offered by the headteacher is inspiring, effective and highly influential in the life of the school. Her experience and vision sets the tone for much that the school seeks to do and achieve. Pupils, colleagues and parents recognise the quality of her leadership and become committed to the aims and mission statement which underpin school life and give it the drive and direction it seeks. The headteacher is also committed strongly to teamwork and has fashioned together a committed and skilful staff, several of whom, including the new deputy headteacher, form the senior management team of the school. These key staff help to fashion policies and procedures which are accepted and widely adopted by other school personnel. The role of the subject leaders (co-ordinators) has become clearer and more influential since the previous inspection. They now monitor pupils' standards well alongside the quality of teaching and learning in their own areas. This has led to improved policies and whole-school guidance, such as what to teach and when. All staff carry out an annual audit which helps to raise priorities in their own subjects and these are submitted for the annual school improvement plan. The effectiveness and efficiency of school management are also enhanced by the support offered by the school's governing body. This comprises a good blend of experienced and new members, many of whom offer various levels of expertise to school life and administration. The governing body meets fully its statutory requirements in terms of its various representatives, its committee structure and the nature of its business throughout the year. Although improving, governors could contribute even more to strategic planning and the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' standards within the curriculum.
11. The headteacher and key staff in particular, have become very adept at monitoring the past and present performance of the school. St Joseph's beacon school status has led to the sharing of several key aspects of school life with staff and headteachers from other schools. This has inevitably sharpened up the school's own practice in many areas. A key strength of its monitoring programme is the analysis of assessments undertaken with the pupils. This has sometimes resulted in a shift of emphasis within the teaching programme and further improvements in curriculum. The school also assesses regularly its mission statement and general aims set against current practice. In this way the school has continued to build on its past success and ensures it will improve still further in the future. It is an effective school in relation to equality of opportunities for all pupils and in ensuring it is entirely inclusive in nature and practice. The curriculum, special educational needs, staff in-service, child protection and performance management are all good examples of what the school manages effectively and efficiently. The annual school development plan lists clear priorities for the future growth of the school, although the documentation does not always look far enough ahead in terms of its timescales.
12. The school is a very efficient unit and builds carefully on its available finance, staffing, accommodation and resources. The principles of gaining best value for the pupils are well established and used effectively in terms of the finance made available on an annual basis. Specific grants are well directed towards the school's declared priorities. Particular projects, such as the creation of the new ICT suite, the school's beacon status and its recent international award for European and global awareness, are typical examples of the effectiveness of this school in general, and of the quality of leadership and management in particular.

**The arrangements made for pupils' learning (the curriculum) are very good. Learning opportunities are exciting, challenging, rich and varied, ensuring pupils grow in confidence, knowledge and skill as they move through the school.**

13. The learning opportunities across all subjects are well illustrated in a series of curriculum entitlement documents which show very carefully the planned provision across the National Curriculum and beyond. These are extremely well compiled and make it very clear to regular and visiting staff what should be taught in every subject and in each year group. Room is also made for the priorities and strengths of individual staff. An appropriate statutory curriculum is in place supported and enriched by other topics and activities. Many of these add challenge and enrichment to the work that teachers and their pupils do on a daily basis. There is, therefore, very good breadth and balance in terms of pupils' learning. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are very well embedded into pupils' daily learning. A further strength is the inclusive nature of the curriculum, in that the full range of pupils' needs are planned for, from those with special or additional needs to the needs of higher attaining pupils and those who may be gifted and talented. Underpinning much that pupils learn is the school's emphasis on their personal and social development, including spiritual and moral growth. This aspect is dealt with more fully under the next heading of this report.
14. At the heart of pupils' learning are the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the school has spent considerable energy, time and resources in other areas, a combination of which brings 'learning for life' to many pupils. These additional elements include curriculum enrichment given by visits and visitors, extra-curricular activities, the school's European dimension and a school emphasis on good health. From discussions with pupils and the evidence of photographic portfolios, it is clear that visits to museums, art galleries and outings to the seaside continue to provide excellent starting points for discussion as well as extended writing for many of the pupils. Visits by local artists, authors, music groups and overseas visitors create similar opportunities. The impact of some of these activities is beautifully displayed throughout the school and lead to further pleasure and reflection on behalf of the pupils. The school has a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which are well supported by pupils and much appreciated by parents. Only a few, however, are directed at the youngest pupils. Activities which strengthen pupils' skills and experiences include 'Fit for Sport' projects, school choir, 'Early Bird Sports' such as kwik cricket, gymnastics, athletics, skipping and dance. The school's links with European cultures and schools overseas have gained it regional and national awards and add richly to pupils' understanding in geography, history and the arts. Very recently, a small party of staff and pupils were able to visit Romania and the results of their work are proudly displayed around the school. The school's emphasis on good health is a rich part of its everyday ethos and has resulted in several awards.

**Considerable emphasis is given to the personal development of the pupils, including excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This creates excellent working relationships, very good behaviour and a very positive attitude among the pupils towards their learning.**

15. The school has a strong Christian ethos that emphasises the growth of the whole child, not least their personal and social development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are seen as natural extensions of the staff's work among the pupils. The provision in these areas is therefore excellent and is underpinned by the school's working ethos and values. The relationships which emerge help form the basis of the school's working life and from this comes the very good behaviour of the pupils, together with their positive attitudes to learning. As part of spiritual growth, pupils are given many opportunities to explore their own emerging values and beliefs, as well as those of the Catholic Church. The school has been built round a climate of trust in which all pupils can grow, respect others and safely express their

views. The teachers are very good role models in this respect and give full value to pupils' questions and changing needs. Pupils are given space and time for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns, no matter how superficial they appear to be. Many of the quality displays show that pupils' work is thoroughly valued and provide important contexts in which they can ask vital questions such as 'why', 'how' and 'what if?' Much of their work in art and design, music, literature and science is designed to give them everyday opportunities to reflect on their own thoughts concerning beauty, truth, love and goodness. Year 5 pupils were observed reflecting on some of these and other qualities in their own friends during circle time, an informal way of bonding as a class and talking in a non-threatening atmosphere. As part of the school's high expectations on behaviour and relationships, classroom walls display thought-provoking vocabulary such as modesty, thoughtfulness and self-control. Following a visit to Shipley Art Gallery, pupils created some very attractive masks depicting different human expressions, such as despair, joy and fright, and many children stop and discuss or reflect on these every day. Opportunities for spiritual growth are also a rich part of worship, such as that led by Year 2 on friendship and healthy play.

16. Moral development is also an important part of school life. Stories and poetry in literature are used well to bring out the pupils' ability to distinguish between right and wrong. The school has a clear moral code in which pupils are asked to think about the consequences of their own and others' actions. For this reason, pupils are frequently rewarded for doing or saying the right thing. The heart of the behaviour policy is a gradual move towards self-control and taking responsibility for one's own actions. Older pupils debate more tangible, moral and ethical issues, such as war and peace, and how to save wildlife such as seals and dolphins, from persecution. Social development is carefully woven into the excellent relationships which emerge from the school's ethos and working principles. Play and working relationships are very harmonious and pupils and staff have created a community in which all feel valued and worthy of respect. Apart from play, pupils frequently work together in pairs or small groups and are asked by staff to share their ideas, views or answers to questions raised during lessons. ICT and science sessions are good examples of where this occurs. In this way, pupils exercise responsibility towards each other and can reflect on their own contribution to the school community. The notion of global citizenship is a major theme currently running in school. Although small conflicts inevitably occur, most of these are quickly resolved without the need for adult intervention.
17. An understanding of the pupils' own culture, and that of others, is also a strength of the overall provision for personal development. Pupils have little opportunity to play with and explore the views and traditions of children from minority ethnic groups. To counteract this, the school ensures there are many contexts in which pupils can celebrate their local heritage, as well as those of Great Britain, and other diverse countries. The school year provides many opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art and other events that depict a range of cultural opportunities. Studies have been made of the Japanese Year of Culture and the recent World Cup competition led to projects about several of the competing nations. The school's religious education programme enables pupils to learn about the nature of comparative faiths and religions. Year 5 pupils were heard singing a wide selection of African songs and infant pupils follow the adventures of Barnaby Bear as he makes his way to holiday destinations across the globe. The entire school is rightly proud of its most recent international award for its work with no less than 12 European schools and its representative visit to Romania. Pupils are also rightly proud of their own heritage as could be seen when they recently celebrated 140 years of the famous Blaydon Races. During the year, pupils participate in several festivals and local celebrations of music, culture and dance.

18. As a result of such diverse and stimulating provision, the personal development of the pupils has become a strength of the school. Attitudes to learning are extremely positive and most pupils are well focused and enthusiastic. Parents report their children love to come to school. Their involvement in tasks, activities and school life in general is usually very good. Pupils are friendly and welcoming and older pupils in particular respond well when given responsibility. All Year 5 pupils are chosen to have 'special friends' in the reception class with whom they meet up regularly, ensuring they are settled and doing well in school. Pupils are clearly proud of their school and show wide respect for staff, including an appreciation of what they do to support them in their learning.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

The school has no significant areas to improve.

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

The school has very effective systems in place to help support the already very good progress made by the pupils. The school development plan indicates very clearly those areas of school life which are on course to grow even stronger as new initiatives get underway. It is important that these are carried out well and that the school maintains its current stance of welcoming change and building on its already considerable strengths.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	11	5	0	0	0
Percentage	7	36	39	18	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.

### 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)	N/A	235
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	27	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	93 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	26	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (95)	86 (92)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	17	15	18
	Total	31	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (81)	91 (86)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	16
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	30	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (83)	97 (86)	100 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	231
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	26.1

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	560,824
Total expenditure	541,992
Expenditure per pupil	2,307
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,394
Balance carried forward to next year	53,226



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	235
Number of questionnaires returned	122

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	27	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	30	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	39	6	2	2
The teaching is good.	78	20	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	37	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	17	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	40	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	74	26	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	22	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	30	6	2	4

### Other issues raised by parents

A few parents wrote to the inspection team with the view that the drinking fountains were not the most hygienic way of pupils accessing water. A small minority also expressed concerns that improved parking facilities were needed around the school.