

INSPECTION REPORT

ST DUNSTAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Woking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125238

Headteacher: Mrs A Newling-Ward

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Nelson
20991

Dates of inspection: 18 - 19 September 2000

Inspection number: 224430

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Onslow Crescent Woking Surrey
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert McGinty
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School serves its parish of St Dunstan's in Woking and the neighbouring parish of St William of Send. It is a larger than average school with 383 pupils attending full-time and a further 40 attending on a part-time basis. Sixty children are under six and started the Foundation Stage of their education this September. The children have usually had pre-school experience, some in the independent nursery unit that is sited in the school grounds. Assessments show their language, number and social skills are mainly above average when they start school. Many pupils come from relatively advantaged social and economic backgrounds and those eligible for free school meals are below average. Thirteen pupils have African, Caribbean and Asian heritage and a further 61 are from other European countries. About 11 per cent of the school's pupils use a first language that is not English, above average; this is usually Spanish or Italian. A quarter of the pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is a little higher than the national average. These pupils mainly have difficulties with literacy skills and eight pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective and provides very good value for money. The standards pupils achieve are consistently well above average in national tests, in response to good quality teaching. The school's excellent community ethos is fostered through high quality leadership and management, excellent teamwork, and very good care for pupils' welfare. Pupils are encouraged to behave well and to strive to achieve their best.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers extend the well-planned curriculum with stimulating activities and visits to capture pupils' interest.
- The school's very good provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in good behaviour and very good relationships between pupils.
- The high quality leadership and management promote an excellent ethos for learning through high expectations that are known and understood by all, thus securing excellent teamwork.
- The school promotes a very effective partnership with parents, who are very supportive and proud of the school.

What could be improved

- The standards in information and communication technology for older pupils should be higher.
- The school monitors its performance in many ways, but so everyone involved can be clear about their part in this, the school needs to map out how and when information is gathered, and by whom.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996 when it was judged to be a good school. In 1998, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools named St Dunstan's School as one that was highly successful. The high standards in English, mathematics and science have been sustained over the past four years. The issues identified for improvement in 1996 have all been followed up thoroughly. There has been an improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) and the resources for this. However, there is still more development needed in this subject to ensure that the oldest pupils

achieve the expected standards. The stock of books in the library, and its general organisation, has been improved substantially. Successful new approaches have been developed to ensure pupils choose reading books that challenge them. There has been a good improvement in the emphasis on pupils' multi-cultural experiences. Overall the school has made good improvement in the past four years.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	C
Science	A	A	A	B

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

The results achieved in national tests for 11 year olds in 1999 were well above the national average in the three core subjects. Comparisons with similar schools nationally show that, overall, results were above average. Results have risen in the past four years in line with the national trend. In July 2000 pupils achieved the best results ever for the school; all of them gained the average standard, or better, in English; 90 per cent achieved this in mathematics, and 98 per cent gained this in science, with two-thirds of them achieving above average in this subject. These high standards are confirmed by studying samples of work undertaken by last year's Year 6 pupils. Of particular note is the high quality of their writing. At this very early stage in the school year standards seen in the current Year 6 exceed those expected in English but are broadly average in mathematics and science. The school's own targets, based on assessment tests, indicate that standards are not likely to be as high this year as last. This is due to the nature of pupils' learning needs. Standards in several other year groups, for example Years 2 and 3 are above average. In national tests at age seven, over the past four years, pupils have gained well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In July 2000 almost all pupils successfully gained the expected standards and a high proportion achieved above these in reading and mathematics. The present Year 2 are showing similar high standards already and are confident speakers and quick at mental mathematics. Standards in ICT are rising now pupils have more regular access to computers but the older pupils have gaps in their knowledge of some ICT applications, as they have not experienced the full range of these in the past.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The four year olds have settled very quickly and happily into school and learned the class routines. Key Stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic and confident about their learning. Key Stage 2 pupils work co-operatively in groups and productively on their own.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms

Good. Pupils are polite and helpful to one another and adults. They play sociably together and move around the school sensibly.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are fully involved in school life and older ones have some useful responsibilities which they undertake enthusiastically. They are keen to get involved in the wide range of activities provided by the school.
Attendance	Good and above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually at school.

Samples of work from last year and displays around the school show pupils take pride in their work and are keen to do their best.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall: 37	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 across the school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and over four-fifths was good or better. Almost a quarter of the teaching was very good or excellent. Teaching in literacy and numeracy is consistently good and staff are using the national strategies for these aspects effectively in their daily practice. Teachers have encouraged pupils to improve their mental mathematics skills through a school reward system and this is benefiting their learning in mathematics. The attention paid to developing pupils' writing skills is enabling older pupils to write lively prose and evocative poetry. Literacy and enquiry skills are well taught through other subjects of the curriculum, so pupils produce interesting topic work in geography and history, but the use of numeracy skills is less apparent. A great strength is the excellent teamwork of the staff, who plan together very thoroughly in small teams and provide interesting work for pupils. Setting for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 is allowing teachers to target work very precisely and this is benefiting pupils' learning. It also benefits pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Further strengths are the ways teachers assess informally in lessons, adjust what they are teaching if needed, and discuss with pupils what they have learnt. A minority of older pupils do not respond to this good teaching as well as they might, as they are reluctant to answer questions and put forward their ideas.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, its subjects are well organised and purposeful links are made between subjects. Interesting resources, visits and visitors are used to make pupils' learning exciting and meaningful.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The needs of these pupils, which are largely for extra support in literacy, are met well, as they were at the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school caters effectively for this group of pupils and they make good progress, in line with that of other pupils.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. A warm family atmosphere is apparent across the school. The personal and spiritual development of pupils are high priorities. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and are excellent role models in this respect. Provision for social development is excellent through initiatives that help pupils learn to care for others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety while they are in school. A major strength is the way their academic progress is tracked, for example, through individual target setting in English and mathematics.

Strong links with the Parish and local community add depth to pupils' experiences as does the good variety of extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. In the past two years the acting headteacher has successfully led the school, maintaining the very good management that was the hallmark of its previous headteacher. The acting headteacher has had able support from the other senior managers. The new headteacher has clear goals for the school's future and the management skills to fulfil these.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive of the school; through its committee system it gathers information and an understanding of the school's performance and areas for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has successfully used many measures to reflect on its performance and achievements. It has made good use of its school development plan to prioritise improvements. This plan now needs updating.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's finances are used prudently to meet its priorities, with money wisely set aside for major projects. Since the last inspection many facilities in the building have been improved or redecorated. The school seeks to gain the best value for money when new resources are purchased.

The high quality leadership and management have helped the school to secure further improvements in standards. An outstanding feature is the way all staff work together with clear purpose, as a very dedicated team, for the good of the pupils. It is a key reason for the school's success. This was acknowledged by the recent award of an 'Investors in People' certificate. The school community is very successful in meeting its aims of care and support for pupils with a commitment to high standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school expects children to work hard; they like school and behave well, and make good progress.• Teaching is good and the staff are approachable and caring.• The school is well led and managed.• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents feel homework is not provided regularly enough in some year groups.• A minority want more information about their children's progress.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views held by parents. The team found that homework is used effectively to support learning in school, and to develop good work habits. The formal procedures for informing parents about their children's progress are better than generally found in primary schools. In addition staff are readily available for informal discussions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science.

1. Pupils consistently make very good progress during their time in school. The results of National Curriculum tests, at age 11, in English, mathematics and science over a period of several years confirm this as pupils regularly achieve standards that are well above the national average. In 2000 the results were the best ever achieved by the pupils (English 100 per cent, mathematics 90 per cent and science 98 per cent at Level 4 or better). The increase in the number of pupils gaining Level 4 or better in mathematics was a particular success and reflects the emphasis placed on developing pupils' mental mathematics skills. Staff are still concerned though that mathematics standards lag a little behind those of English and science. The present Year 6, who have only just begun their final year in school, are generally working at above average standards in English but in mathematics their knowledge and skills are closer to average. The school's analysis of assessments shows that these pupils are not likely to reach quite such high standards as those achieved last year, due to their different learning needs.
2. The school's emphasis on promoting reading skills from an early age is supported very well by most parents. There is a strong partnership between the school and parents to help the youngest pupils establish good reading habits. The 'reading passports' and certificates are beneficial in encouraging pupils to extend their reading skills. In discussion, the oldest pupils commented they enjoyed completing the passports when they were younger. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are well above average. In July 2000 over half the pupils gained the more advanced Level 3 reading standard in the national test. Those pupils who reached just the lowest range of the average standard are being well supported now they are in Year 3 with additional literacy help to boost their reading skills. However, a few pupils in this group have very limited concentration and this hinders the progress they make. Pupils who have just started in Year 2 are able to read back the short sentences they have written about cats, they understand how poems rhyme and predict hidden words correctly. By the end of Key Stage 2, test results confirm that pupils have maintained good progress in reading since Year 2. All of last year's Year 6 pupils achieved at least the expected reading standard. A very high proportion, two-thirds, gained the more advanced standard. In discussion, Year 6 pupils spoke knowledgeably about the books they were reading, which were chosen from a wide selection. The issue identified at the last inspection, that able, older pupils were not being challenged to read extensively, has been dealt with successfully.
3. Teachers help pupils to build up their writing skills very successfully. They are given plenty of opportunities to write in different ways, often through other subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Skills such as note taking and searching for information are developed well. Examples of work from Year 2 pupils show that over a year they make good progress in developing their writing skills. They organise stories logically and use interesting words to make their writing more exciting. Spelling and punctuation skills are good and handwriting is usually in an attractive cursive style. The use of word-processing skills to write a report about the sinking of the Titanic was very good. A sentence such as, *'The sea temperature was below freezing, most people died of coldness.'* demonstrates well the development of a vibrant writing style. By Year 6, pupils complete a good range of writing for different audiences, such as diaries, poetry and synopses of stories. Their character descriptions and settings for stories demonstrate an excellent use of adjectives and adverbs to enliven the writing. They can use techniques such as 'flash backs' and alliteration to hold a reader's attention. The key skills of grammar,

punctuation and spelling are usually good. Despite this generally good progress, senior managers are concerned that pupils are not achieving as well in writing as they are in reading. Three-quarters gained the expected standard in the latest national test. The school is considering new ways to try and narrow the gap between reading and writing attainment.

4. The school is using the National Numeracy Strategy well to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills and this is having a good impact on their achievement. Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in ability sets, which, in Years 5 and 6 are smaller than the usual classes. This allows teachers to tailor the lessons closely to pupils' needs and contributes significantly to the good progress pupils make. For example, in lessons on fractions for older pupils, the extension group of higher attainers were challenged to simplify fractions to their lowest form; pupils capable of average attainment revised basic equivalent fractions in their set; the pupils who needed a lot of support were offered plenty of practical experience in dividing equal amounts in their group. The strong focus on mental and oral number work is giving pupils confidence in basic skills, such as the quick recognition of odd and even numbers by Year 2 pupils into the hundreds, and the swift doubling of numbers by average Year 5 pupils. Samples of work confirm that last year, Year 2 pupils achieved well in their mathematics, almost all gained the expected standard in the national test. Two-fifths achieved the more advanced standard. However, not enough of the work shows how pupils are trying out their own methods for working out calculations. Also the work is often undated so it is difficult to judge how much progress individuals have made over a period of time. The latter of these points has already been identified by senior managers and discussed with staff.
5. Pupils consistently perform much better than average in end of Key Stage 2 science tests. Last year an exceptional proportion, two-thirds, achieved the higher Level 5 standard. Samples of work show they have experienced a good range of science to ensure their knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes, and the associated technical vocabulary, reaches a high standard. There is, though, less work demonstrating that pupils are tackling scientific enquiries to a compatible level. They devise their own questions, think of ways to investigate these and understand the principle of making fair tests, but do not readily organise results in graphs and charts or use their knowledge to make reasoned conclusions. The five science lessons observed were well planned and well taught and demonstrate why pupils achieve well in the subject. For instance, the four year olds gave completely rapt attention to a close observation activity with a real fish. They used their senses of touch, sight and smell to learn about its features, asked and answered questions very well, and learned new vocabulary. In a very well taught lesson in Year 2, investigations with magnets were slightly varied so that more able pupils had a more complex task. Pupils were predicting and had a simple understanding of how to make a test fair. For example, one group worked out that they ought to use a ruler to make sure they were using their magnets at the same height. These pupils were able to speak out with great confidence about their investigations and they listened well to each other.

The quality of teaching is good and teachers extend the well-planned curriculum with stimulating activities and visits to capture pupils' interest.

6. Parents appreciate the quality of teaching in the school and rightly regard it as one of its strengths. Teaching is good in all parts of the school with some very good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and over four-fifths was good or better. Almost a quarter of the teaching was very good or excellent. All the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and this demonstrates why pupils are achieving well in the long term. An important strength is the quality of teachers' termly and weekly planning. It is a very thorough interpretation of the school's curriculum schemes and highlights the excellent teamwork of the

staff. They plan together in small teams and provide interesting work for pupils. This is well matched to pupils' differing levels of attainment. The higher attaining pupils are offered challenging work, while pupils who need extra support receive appropriate help from learning assistants and special educational needs teachers to aid their learning. This is enabling most of those with special educational needs in literacy to achieve well and reach expected standards in national tests.

7. Across the school, teaching in literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are using the national strategies for these subjects effectively in their daily practice. Strengths are the ways teachers assess informally in lessons and adjust what they are teaching if need be. For example, in one mathematics lesson the teacher, through her questions, realised quickly that pupils were not as advanced in fractions as was expected and altered the lesson's focus to accommodate this.
8. Teachers organise their lessons well with a good balance between whole-class teaching and interesting practical and independent activities for pupils. They explain to pupils what they intend them to learn right at the start and make sure the main points of the lesson are reviewed towards its end. One very well taught Year 6 lesson exemplified this. Pupils were well motivated to write their own 'Victorian Diary' following up whole-class work on analysing the features of diary writing. This lesson made learning interesting as very good links were made between developing literacy skills, the period of history the pupils were studying and a forthcoming visit. The lesson was concluded purposefully when pupils listened carefully to each other's work and evaluated it with points for improvement.
9. Teachers expect pupils to work hard in each lesson. They set a brisk pace for learning but also allow time for pupils to gather their thoughts before answering questions. An important strength is teachers' varied questioning to explore new ideas with pupils and to encourage them to think. This was seen in Year 1 where pupils had been investigating the best way to knock down play-brick walls. The teacher's gently probing questions about the 'inventions' they had planned was just right for the age group and gave pupils confidence to explain their ideas. Good work habits are encouraged throughout the school and this is demonstrated in the good presentation and organisation of pupils' work as they mature. The samples of work from last year show some very useful target setting and marking that offers praise but also helps pupils understand what they can do to improve. However, there was some inconsistency in teachers' use of marking. This has recently been noted by the senior management team and discussed with teachers.
10. Good features of the school's monitoring are the measures taken to check on pupils' progress. For instance, the targets set with each child in English and mathematics, and in some instances personal development, are valuable ways to help them understand what they need to do to improve, and also provide an informal record for parents. Teachers are also using the evaluation sections on their daily plans appropriately to highlight pupils' successes or need for extra help. Half-termly discussions take place to assess any changes that need to be made in the composition of English and mathematics sets. The assessment co-ordinator undertakes a very detailed analysis of the school's results in national tests to pinpoint any inconsistencies that need to be considered. This information is collated and discussed with staff and the governing body.
11. Pupils enjoy the wide range of visits to places of interest. It is impressive that, in the first few weeks of the academic year, teachers have organised so many visits to support and enliven the curriculum. For instance, Year 4 pupils have been to a replica Anglo-Saxon village to learn about life in those times and support their work in history. Year 5 pupils have explored the local river to give impetus to their geography topic. Consequently, in the follow-up lesson observed, they were

keen to demonstrate their knowledge about the river and local area. Older pupils consider they have a good choice of clubs to attend, enjoy the musical activities, and are looking forward to their residential visit later in the year.

The school's very good provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in good behaviour and very good relationships between pupils.

12. The school's excellent ethos is underpinned by a mission statement and aims, that highlight care for individuals, and encouragement for pupils to strive for maximum personal achievement; all within a strong, spiritual Catholic foundation that promotes moral awareness and a sense of responsibility. These features can all be seen in the day-to-day life of the school. The strong family atmosphere is characterised by the way older pupils are encouraged to be buddies to the younger ones, for instance sharing some playtime activities, and pairing with them to read. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour, and ensure that at the start of each year pupils discuss and agree class rules that are then prominently displayed. Pupils know what is expected of them and usually behave well in lessons and around the school. A few younger individuals find it difficult to conform to the expectations for sensible behaviour, and this occasionally slows lessons down as teachers deal with interruptions. Pupils value the school's systems for rewarding good work and good behaviour. Older pupils appreciate the importance of teamwork in gaining house points, and commented that it took a lot of effort to get all the end-of-year certificates.
13. Teachers use praise and encouragement readily to motivate pupils and boost their self-esteem. Pupils know who to approach when they have a problem and are confident to talk to their teachers; they know they will be treated fairly. In most lessons pupils show they are well motivated and are eager to do their best. Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 5 co-operated very well in groups during practical science activities. Reception children listened very attentively to their teachers and asked thoughtful questions. In contrast some pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 did not seem to have got back into the swing of the new academic year. Their responses to lively and interesting lessons were surprisingly subdued and they were reluctant to answer questions or offer ideas. Several appeared unduly tired at the start of the day. Overall, relationships between pupils are very good. Pupils from ethnic minorities, and those from Europe who speak English as a second language, are fully integrated with their peers, as the school's ethos ensures all are part of the wider Catholic family. Pupils play amicably together, and were sensible when the bad weather meant they had to stay indoors for most of the playtimes during the inspection.
14. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that pupils' personal development is very good. Those pupils who have just been voted as house captains by their peers are proud to be in that position and recognise the importance of their responsibilities. Along with numerous formal jobs that help the school run smoothly, they appreciate that they can be useful as 'listeners' if other children have problems. The school's spiritual and social nature is reflected in the emphasis it puts on consideration for those in less fortunate situations. For instance, parents commented very favourably on the efforts that all pupils and staff make to run stalls and raise money for good causes during Lent. This is part of the excellent social provision that is helping pupils to understand their place in society and what they can do for the wider community. An excellent example of 'taking responsibility' was underway during the inspection as Year 5 pupils had to care for 'egg babies' for a whole week. A wide variety of carrying devices have been designed by the pupils to keep the 'babies' safe on their journeys around the school. An outstanding class assembly complemented this work. It included a baby as a special visitor and helped the pupils articulate their feelings about being responsible and putting someone else first.
15. At the last inspection the school was found to pay good attention to most aspects of cultural development but was under-emphasising activities that would help pupils understand other cultures and faiths. This weaker aspect has now been addressed effectively. The school has

purchased a good variety of multi-cultural books for the library and the heritage of pupils from other countries is sensitively celebrated. A good range of opportunities is provided for pupils to learn about festivals of other faiths, for example, older pupils visit the local mosque. Students from other countries, such as Japan, have work experience in the school and introduce pupils to aspects of their culture.

The high quality leadership and management promote an excellent ethos for learning through high expectations that are known and understood by all, thus securing excellent teamwork.

16. The school has been through a difficult period in the past two years, due to the long-term illness, and subsequent retirement, of the headteacher. The deputy headteacher, in the role of acting headteacher, has ensured that the strong leadership that was the hallmark of the previous headteacher has been maintained. In this task she has been well supported by other senior staff. Overall, senior managers have ensured that good systems are in place and good use is made of staff expertise. These are important reasons why the school is successful and why standards are high. The strengths in the management and organisation of the school were acknowledged recently when it was awarded an 'Investors in People' certificate. The new headteacher, who joined the school at the start of this term, has a clear vision for its future and the leadership and management skills to fulfil this.
17. The shared commitment and sense of teamwork among all staff are outstanding and a key reason for the school's success. These are enthusiastic and knowledgeable professionals who work hard to do their best for the pupils. They are keen to improve their own skills, as seen by the training they have already undertaken in ICT in order to improve their knowledge and teaching skills. Particularly impressive were teachers' knowledge of curriculum developments, and the thoughtful way teams of teachers and subject co-ordinators discussed these and pupils' progress.
18. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It is well informed of the analysis of information from national statutory tests and, through its committee system, it satisfactorily gathers other information about the school's performance. The school development plan has proved to be a useful document over the past few years to successfully guide the priorities for improvement. Now the new headteacher has identified that a new long-term improvement plan is needed. The school is given an average amount of money to spend on pupils. The classrooms and other areas are attractive and well cared for. Several new facilities have been established in the past four years, such as the excellent food technology area. Money has been spent wisely on resources and equipment that are well cared for. Effort is made to be sure that services and new equipment is bought at the best price. The very pleasant learning environment contributes to the calm, orderly tone of the school and is an important way in which the school is promoting its excellent ethos and high expectations. The school is providing very good value for money.

The school promotes a very effective partnership with parents, who are very supportive and proud of the school.

19. Parents who attended the meeting, held for them to give their views, spoke very warmly about the school's good qualities and all that the staff are doing for their children. The efforts the school makes to communicate with parents and listen to their views, and the value that it puts on fostering this partnership are important strengths. New parents are invited to school and provided with 'Welcome' packs. The school provides very good opportunities for parents to understand what their children are learning and the progress they are making. For instance, there is a 'Meet

the Teacher' evening, at the start of each school year so the work of the year group can be discussed, and this is followed up with termly information letters about curriculum activities. Parents are also invited to attend curriculum workshops to help them understand how the school is implementing new initiatives. In addition to monthly newsletters, formal consultation meetings and annual reports, homework books and reading diaries are used as informal means of regular contact. A very good feature is the monthly 'open time' when parents may visit their child's class and look at their current work. They know that teachers are readily available should they have issues that need to be resolved quickly.

20. In response to the school's efforts, most parents are willing to become involved in their children's learning, and the school values this support. Parents, and other volunteers, help in school and accompany pupils on visits. They are regular supporters of the pupils' work for charity, church services and class assemblies. Those who assist groups of children are well briefed, for instance one parent was planting seeds with the youngest children and had written instructions about the questions to ask and the vocabulary to encourage. The parent teacher association (PTA) is a very active body that is well supported and raises substantial funds for the school. Its efforts are much appreciated by the staff and governing body. For example, it has provided several thousand pounds for books to improve the non-fiction library. Families are encouraged to use the school's facilities, such as in summer at the weekends when the school pool is opened and the grounds are used for family picnics. Parents are rightly proud of the school and all it provides. They are confident that their children are happy, well cared for and challenged to give of their best.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The standards in information and communication technology for older pupils should be higher.

21. The teaching of ICT was a key issue at the last inspection. A reasonable amount has been done since then to develop ICT and the teaching is now satisfactory. The standards of work of the older pupils are still too low, as they have not built up a wide enough range of skills. A useful portfolio of pupils' work in ICT has recently been established by the co-ordinator for monitoring purposes. Inspectors also looked at displays and spoke to Year 6 pupils to gather evidence. Across the school, pupils have had a reasonable amount of experience to develop their skills in communicating information by word processing. This work is often good, has real appeal to the reader and shows suitable progression from year to year. Some interesting special projects were undertaken last year by older pupils, such as the work on the local canal and the opportunities that Year 6 pupils had to use ICT on their summer residential visit. However, the examples of ICT usage on a regular basis, to support data gathering and analysis, and modelling, in science, mathematics and geography are sparse. There have been far fewer opportunities for pupils to build up skills in these aspects of ICT than in word processing. For example, pupils in Year 6 are learning to instruct a computer to draw shapes. They have had little experience of this type of programming before and so their skills are not at the expected standard. Year 5 pupils have carefully copied drawings, using a computer art package, but this is work more usually undertaken in younger year groups. The new curriculum the school is using means younger pupils are learning the expected range of activities at appropriate levels of difficulty. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils are working at a lower standard than expected as they have gaps in their knowledge.
22. The school has an effective ICT co-ordinator, in the post for a year, who has undertaken numerous training sessions with the staff to develop their skills in the different aspects of ICT. A

member of the governing body with ICT expertise has helped with this training. Staff knowledge and skills are improving and further training is planned for the coming year.

23. The last inspection report identified the need for more computers. The school now has a computer suite of ten machines, with internet access after considerable fund-raising by the PTA, and allocation of money from the school budget. This is in addition to machines in the classrooms. Pupils are now timetabled to use this facility for an hour a week. This is a new venture and the staff are evaluating it at present. Several 'teething problems' have emerged. For example, the use of one room for library purposes and as an ICT suite means that although ICT is being better served, there are now fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their library skills. Senior managers are considering alternative ways for pupils to make the best use of both these resources.

The school monitors its performance in many ways, but so everyone involved can be clear about their part in this, the school needs to map out how and when information is gathered, and by whom.

24. At the last inspection, teaching and learning in the school were judged to be well monitored. The school has continued to monitor its performance in a good variety of ways:- For example, through high quality analysis of test performance; tracking the progress of groups of pupils as they move through the school; setting targets for individuals in English and mathematics; monitoring pupils' work and the quality of teaching. However, it has no over-arching guidance that maps out how the various aspects of its monitoring activities dovetail together. Managers and governors have no easy overview to ensure everyone knows what monitoring is planned, what is expected of them as individuals, and how the findings are to be gathered together to form a view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recently the new senior management team has identified this shortcoming in the procedures and is preparing to make improvements.
25. Subject co-ordinators are effective and efficiently check on curriculum plans and support colleagues. They draw up annual targets for their areas of responsibility and complete audits to evaluate improvements, in varying degrees of detail. A very brief document, dated 1994, lists what subject co-ordinators are expected to do during non-contact time to manage and monitor their subjects, and in addition they have some further guidance on how to observe lessons. At present the guidance to help them fulfil their responsibilities is not well enough organised.
26. The governing body plans for individual governors to take a particular interest in specific classes and curriculum areas. Several governors make regular visits to classes to help, and gather useful information. However, no written record is filed of when these visits take place, or what has been learned from them. This reduces the value of the visits in helping the governing body build up a picture of the school's performance.
27. The school is now in a position to review its monitoring procedures, and clarify what is expected of teachers, subject co-ordinators, senior managers and the governing body, so the best use may be made of all the information that is gathered.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards and the school's performance further the headteacher, staff and governors should:-

- (1) a) ensure there are enough planned opportunities for pupils to develop ICT skills, across the curriculum and to the expected standards;
- b) monitor the use of the new ICT suite to evaluate its impact on pupils' achievement. *paragraphs 21, 22, 23.*
- (2) improve the guidance that explains the school's monitoring procedures and draws together this information for staff and governors. *paragraphs 24, 25, 26, 27.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	19	62	16	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

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	403
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	125

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	45

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	28	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	31	31	30
	Total	59	59	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (90)	98 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	59	59	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (84)	100 (91)	100 (93)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	27	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	19	25
	Girls	32	30	30
	Total	54	49	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (90)	83 (73)	93 (84)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	16
	Girls	29	29	25
	Total	45	46	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (78)	78 (76)	69 (84)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	344
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

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 year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	715,390
Total expenditure	693,070
Expenditure per pupil	1,915
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,013
Balance carried forward to next year	27,333

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	422
Number of questionnaires returned	149

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	44	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	66	33	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	42	15	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	41	52	4	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	61	38	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	40	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	43	7	1	5

Other issues raised by parents

Several parents wrote to praise the work of the school. A few parents commented about arrangements for homework, consultation evenings and limited places on after-school activities. Other individuals had concerns about large class sizes, and the choice of library books for able Key Stage 1 pupils.