

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CLARE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104648

Headteacher: Mr M Hennessey

Reporting inspector: Miss J H Sargent
21113

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 4th March 2003

Inspection number: 246396

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Garmoyle Close Liverpool
Postcode:	L15 0DW
Telephone number:	(0151) 733 4318
Fax number:	(0151) 735 0172
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father A Prescott
Date of previous inspection:	10 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
21113	Miss J H Sargent	Registered inspector
11437	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector
29261	Mrs P Ward	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	8 - 13
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	13 - 14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	14
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	15 - 19

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Clare's Voluntary Aided Catholic School is situated three miles south east of Liverpool city centre. It is an average sized primary school which draws its pupils from the three socially diverse wards within the parish of St Clare's. Two hundred and eight pupils are in full-time education at the school and 45 children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. The number of boys and girls in the school is roughly equal, but there is a gender imbalance in some year groups. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is well above the national average. There is a wide range of ethnic backgrounds represented within the school, although a significant majority of pupils come from a white UK heritage background. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is higher than in most schools, although there are none in the early stages of English language acquisition. There is a very small number of children from refugee families. The school has seven classes in addition to the Nursery classes – one for each year group. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below that found nationally. The range of needs includes learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is slightly below the national average. Most pupils have experience of pre-school education in the school's Nursery classes. Some year groups have suffered from an unusually high number of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than the usual time of admission. This high mobility can include as many as 67 per cent of the pupils in a single year group. Attainment on entry to Nursery is below that found nationally for the majority of children, although each year group contains some children whose attainment on entry is better than that which might be expected for children of a similar age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Clare's is a good school in which pupils work hard and achieve well. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national averages. Standards are affected by the high level of pupil mobility. The headteacher and staff create an atmosphere in which all pupils are eager to work and proud to share their achievements. The headteacher provides very positive leadership. He is effectively supported by a well-informed governing body and hard working and dedicated staff. The school has a caring, Christian ethos and works hard to be inclusive of all of its pupils in all of its work. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology are good.
- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and the governing body are very good and they are focused on the continual improvement of the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, resulting in very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The school has developed good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attendance rates and the high number of latecomers.
- The marking of pupils' work.
- Standards of presentation of pupils' work.

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 November 1997 and has made good improvement since then. The issues that were raised have all been effectively addressed. The school's senior managers now monitor

teaching and the outcomes help to inform the school's plans for teachers' continuing professional development. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. A policy to develop independent learning has been put into practice across the school. Teachers' planning has been developed to ensure that it addresses the needs of higher attaining pupils and a good system of target setting has been developed. The targets set are challenging for all pupils and help teachers to consider whether or not the work that they are setting will stretch all of their pupils. The school makes good use of the information that is generated from its records. A significant investment has been made in information and communication technology through the creation of a new computer suite and the installation of computers in all classrooms. Training has been given to all staff and a teaching assistant has been employed to help teachers get the most out of the new technology. The governing body has undertaken a self-evaluation exercise and has also reorganised its committee structure to help it become even more effective. Standards in national tests have fallen since 2000, but this has been due to the high number of pupils joining and leaving the school and differences in the attainment levels of particular year groups. Standards in mathematics have been lower than in other subjects and Key Stage 1 has been weaker than Key Stage 2. The school has identified this issue and has started to take steps to improve pupils' work in mathematics. The school has both the commitment and the capacity for continued improvement.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	C	A
mathematics	A	B	D	B
science	A	A	C	A

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

Standards within each year group can vary, partly depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and also on the levels of pupil mobility. For the Reception Year seen at the time of the inspection, most children are likely to meet the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals and a small number are likely to exceed them. Standards for pupils in Year 2 are above national averages in reading. They were in the top five per cent of schools nationally in 2002, when compared with schools with similar intakes. In writing, standards are satisfactory. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory and in science they are good. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, the performance of pupils at the end of Year 2 exceeded the national averages for reading and writing, whereas in mathematics, the performance of all pupils was below the national average. For pupils of this age, standards in mathematics are slowly improving as a result of the school's actions. At the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, pupils' performance in all three subjects exceeded the national average. The school has received two achievement awards in recognition of its improved standards in 2000 and 2001. In 2002, 67 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 had not completed all their schooling at St Clare's and this contributed to the lower standards seen. The school sets well informed and appropriately challenging targets. Standards in information and communication technology are good. The school enables all pupils to achieve well, including higher attaining pupils, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their work. They are enthusiastic learners who want to do well. They work co-operatively and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils work and play together very well.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships are very good. Pupils are respectful and are happy to share and take turns.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory with a high rate of authorised absence. The level of pupil lateness is also unsatisfactory.

There is a lack of clarity in the school's interpretation of authorised and unauthorised absence. For a minority of pupils, poor attendance and persistent lateness affect the standards that they can attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	very 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 has improved since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching observed was good overall and often very good. Teachers make good use of target setting data. They have a good understanding of what pupils know and what they need to learn next. Careful planning ensures that pupils usually receive work that is well matched to previous learning. Teachers' expectations are high, although they are sometimes insufficiently high regarding the presentation of pupils' work. Teachers' marking is not always effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills are effective and pupils make good progress. The teaching provides well for pupils who are higher attainers and for those with special educational needs. Occasionally, more could be done for pupils who are lower attainers. All pupils are keen to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers and work hard in their lessons. Effective use of classroom support staff throughout the school has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is well planned and is inclusive for all pupils. Information and communication technology is effectively used to support learning across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive carefully planned support which helps them to become more confident in their work and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good support is provided for pupils with English as an additional language. They make good progress and achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Pupils reflect on how their own lives and actions can affect others. They enjoy having responsibilities and receiving awards in recognition of their very good work or behaviour; they are well prepared for living in a culturally diverse society. Pupils become thoughtful and polite

	individuals.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are sound arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. The procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress are good.

Provision for information and communication technology has been carefully developed by the school. Pupils benefit from using the newly created suite and their learning is having a positive impact across the curriculum. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and activities are well attended. There is a good partnership between the school and parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The experienced and caring headteacher provides very good leadership for the school's continuing development. He is well supported by the deputy head and other senior staff. Curriculum managers make good contributions to the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective and has a very good understanding of the school and its work. Governors take their roles very seriously and devote a lot of time to working on behalf of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's self-evaluation procedures are good and the outcomes are used well to guide the school in its continuing improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of its strategic resources. There are strong links between improvement planning and financial decisions.

There is an adequate number of teaching staff who are well supported by a good number of experienced classroom assistants. The school is well resourced and the building is very clean and well maintained. The school gives very good consideration to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good and teachers have high expectations. Children like school and are making good progress. The school is approachable and works closely with parents. The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant number of parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside lessons. Some parents feel that the school could give more information about their children's progress.

Several written responses accompanying questionnaires indicated that parents would like to see both a wider range of activities outside lessons and activities which were open to a wider age range. The judgement of the inspection team is that the range of activities is good. The age of the pupils attending the activities is similar to that found in most schools. Pupils enjoy and benefit from attending. Parents attending a meeting with inspectors felt that they received an appropriate level of information about their children's progress. The inspection team agree that this is so. Most parents expressed positive views about the school and its work and the inspection team supports these views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to achieve well.

1. The good quality of teaching across the school enables all pupils to achieve well relative to their abilities. This includes higher attainers, pupils speaking English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' expectations are high and they encourage pupils to work hard and so make good progress. The quality of teaching observed was good or very good in three-quarters of the lessons seen and satisfactory in just under one fifth of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Excellent teaching was observed in a Reception literacy lesson.
2. Teaching is very good overall in the Foundation Stage and good for all other pupils. The very good teaching seen in the Foundation Stage ensures that priority is given to developing children's language and social skills. This enables children to become more involved in classroom activities and they quickly begin to achieve well and make good progress. The good teaching across Key Stages 1 and 2 builds progressively on previous learning, with good attention being given to the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Targets are set and shared with individual pupils, so that all involved in the learning process are clear about what must be done to ensure that pupils continue progressing and achieving well.
3. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in each lesson. They plan lessons based on their knowledge of what pupils know and understand. As a consequence, pupils learn new knowledge and skills in a systematic way and their learning is secure. This was seen in a mathematics lesson for a group of pupils from Years 1 and 2 who have been identified as having special educational needs. Pupils' individual education plans and progress in previous lessons were used to inform the lesson plan. Questions were carefully phrased and pitched at exactly the right level to offer challenge to each pupil. Tasks were well chosen. One group consolidated existing learning on place value and broadened their understanding. For a second group, a well-chosen computer program helped them to rehearse their knowledge of numbers to 20. Their recall became quicker as they worked. All pupils achieved well relative to their abilities. In some other lessons, the work given to some pupils who are lower attainers is not matched sufficiently well to their previous learning and they sometimes do not achieve as well as they could. This was particularly noted in some mathematics work at Key Stage 1.
4. Teachers are successful in using prior learning when they introduce new work. In a science lesson for pupils in Year 6, pupils were introduced to a new topic on materials. The teacher encouraged pupils to discuss and predict what might happen when materials are mixed. Pupils drew on previous scientific learning and suggested sensible outcomes using appropriate scientific vocabulary, for example, a pupil suggested that a saturated solution might be the result of the mixing. The teacher further developed this link with previous experiences throughout the lesson and used demonstrations to sustain pupils' interest and increase their knowledge. The final part of the lesson was used effectively to consolidate the learning that had taken place during the lesson and to assess what pupils knew, in preparation for the next lesson.
5. In the most successful lessons, teachers and support staff work together well. There is attention to detail in planning and classroom assistants are well briefed about the purpose of the lesson and the activities which will take place. Adults are clear about their roles in children's learning and they engage fully with pupils, giving praise and making learning enjoyable. All pupils are expected to listen carefully and work hard at their given task. This was seen in an excellent literacy lesson in the Reception class. The teacher and children began by sharing the story of 'The bear and the scary night' together whilst the classroom assistant observed the children and noted their responses as part of the assessment system. Children were totally transported by the story and tried to predict what might happen, keeping their fingers crossed as the pages of the book were turned. Questions that were asked about letter sounds were well focussed and offered challenge for all children. As the work became more difficult, the classroom assistant quietly gathered lower

attaining children together so that she could support them. When children moved to their tasks they knew exactly what they had to do. Most children worked independently using very good resources, showing perseverance and very good concentration. The excellent teaching enabled all children to achieve at the highest levels and develop very positive attitudes to learning.

6. These very good attitudes to learning are seen across the school. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour are usually met, allowing teachers to teach without distraction. Teachers facilitate good quality discussions which incorporate and value pupils' contributions. Teachers ask questions which effectively assess pupils' learning and they then use this knowledge when planning lessons. The pace of lessons is brisk and sustains pupils' interests. The good teaching across the school results in pupils having positive attitudes to learning and making good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils want to do well because they feel valued and they put their efforts into achieving well.

Standards in information and communication technology are good.

7. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in information and communication technology were judged to be in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress was described as 'lacking experience in a sufficiently wide range of contexts'. The headteacher and governing body showed the necessary vision to use available funds to improve the school's facilities. The creation of a new computer suite and the provision of a good number of computers with a good specification, together with a good range of software for all age groups has had a noticeable impact on pupils' learning and the standards of their work.
8. In addition to the acquisition of equipment and the changes to the building, all staff engaged in training to improve their knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology. Their training also emphasised the learning potential of the subject and teachers have been keen to make use of this. Teachers now use computers to support learning in most subjects. In a mathematics lesson for younger pupils with special educational needs, the computer suite was prepared with a program which helped pupils to understand place value. Four pupils used a computer each to allocate tens and units for given numbers and then checked to see if they were correct. They made good progress. For these pupils the reward for a correct answer was a response by an animated mouse. This made their learning fun and gave them great motivation to succeed.
9. In order to help teachers make the best use of the school's new facilities and so raise standards, an assistant has been employed to manage the computer suite. Teachers liaise with the assistant and she prepares the machines for the pupils by loading the appropriate programs before they arrive. This results in classes making good use of the maximum amount of teaching and learning time available to them. The assistant also helps pupils with their work while they are in the suite.
10. Pupils receive a broad range of interesting and valuable experiences throughout the school. Work on display shows how information and communication technology has been used effectively in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and art. In the Nursery, children learn how to control the computer by using a mouse or the keyboard. In Reception, children use the mouse to control a computer and practise their reading with animated, talking books. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils used the computer to create a simple pictogram representing the number of birthdays in their class each month. In Year 5, pupils work on producing spreadsheets to help them cost a birthday party. In Year 6, pupils continue with data handling work and produce more complex graphs.
11. The good work seen shows how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding become more sophisticated as they move through the school. In Year 2, pupils produce pictures of synagogues showing the Star of David. By Year 3, pupils create very good images showing silhouettes of well-known buildings on the Liverpool skyline. It is easy to identify buildings such as the Roman Catholic cathedral with its distinctive roof design. In Year 5, pupils use data logging to create detailed graphs which they annotate. In Year 6, pupils use control technology to give instructions for computerised movement and use word-processing to present their work attractively. Pupils were due to begin to learn about sending e-mails shortly after the inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 2

continue to use and develop their skills at a computer club outside lessons.

12. The school rightly takes pride in the improvements made in information and communication technology provision and in the good standards attained by the pupils. Further developments are planned. The vision of the school's managers and the hard work and commitment of the staff have been central to the raising of standards in this subject.

The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and the governing body are very good and they are focused on the continual improvement of the school.

13. At the time of the previous inspection the leadership and management of the school were judged to be good. The findings of this inspection are that the headteacher and the governing body of the school work together very effectively to provide very good leadership for the school. They receive good support from key staff at the school. Pupils' levels of attainment and achievement are at the heart of the majority of decisions made by the school's managers. Effective action has been taken to address the issues raised at the previous inspection and through self-evaluation, new challenges for the school have been identified and addressed.
14. The governors retain a very good overview of the school's work through reports from the headteacher or deputy head and presentations by teachers about the subjects that they manage. Individual governors regularly work in classrooms gaining a good understanding of the school and its work and also giving very practical support to the school. Staff governors and parent governors play a very active role in the governance of the school, conveying the concerns or opinions of the people that they represent. Governors take their role very seriously and are far from complacent about the part that they play in the school's life. They have recently undergone a self-evaluation exercise with the local education authority, entitled 'How prepared are you to govern?' As a result they have revised their committee structure to make their work more effective and more efficient.
15. The school's development plan is central to much of the work of the governing body. Each year there is wide consultation with parents and staff to find out where it is felt the school needs to improve. The school's attainment data are analysed, targets are discussed and outcomes from the monitoring of teaching are also considered when identifying where attention needs to be focused. The initial plan is drafted by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, using all the data and information available to him. His experience and knowledge of the school and its pupils result in useful evaluations of the work being done and also confront the areas where it is believed that the school could improve. Governors discuss the draft development plan and will request a change of priority if necessary.
16. School improvement is closely linked to financial planning. The governing body receives regular financial reports from the headteacher and gives serious consideration to the financial advice it receives from the local education authority. The governors are keen to get the best value for money and are following advice to reduce their budget surplus. They have agreed to use the surplus to provide additional classroom support.
17. Areas identified as priorities in the school's plan are allocated budgets to support their development. An example of this can be seen in the effective development of information and communication technology through the creation of the computer suite and the employment of a technical assistant.
18. Staff training is also linked to development work to ensure that maximum benefit is gained from courses that are attended. Further value is gained from staff training opportunities through focusing on issues which have arisen from monitoring the quality of teaching. The headteacher reviews notes made by senior staff on lessons that they have seen and if appropriate, teachers are given opportunities to further develop their skills.
19. The headteacher and the governing body work together very well and demonstrate a clear, shared capacity to make further improvements and have a strong will to succeed. The headteacher works hard to draft plans and put plans into action within the school. He makes regular reports about their progress to the governing body. His methodical and thorough implementation of the school's

effective development plan results in well-considered work which helps to raise standards and improve the quality of education that the school provides.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, resulting in very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.

20. Pupils' very good attitudes are fostered through the school's caring, Christian ethos. Parents report that their children like coming to school and enjoy their work. Staff know pupils well and value the contributions that they make to lessons and school life. Pupils are polite and courteous. They are friendly and sociable, always acknowledging visitors as they pass them. This judgement represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when the four areas of provision and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationship were all judged to be good.
21. The school's acts of collective worship and class prayers have a clear spiritual content and pupils are reverent and reflective on these occasions. In their lessons, pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the world around them and the effect that they can have on the world and on other people. For example, in a lesson about personal, social and health education, pupils in Year 1 considered the question, 'What makes a good friend'. When looking at a book about friends, they drew on their own experiences and identified things that they do for their friends and things that their friends do for them. They agreed on three qualities which make a good friend. As the discussion was being drawn to a close, one pupil volunteered that 'A friend is someone who loves you'. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils learned the valuable lesson of not judging people by their appearance. They discussed photographs of different unknown people and answered questions about them. In a cleverly thought out final part to the lesson, all the people were revealed to be homeless sellers of the 'The Big Issue', much to the pupils' surprise. This gave a powerful and memorable message to the pupils.
22. The school has a very positive approach to developing pupils' moral and social awareness. It has devised a number of schemes for rewarding good behaviour and hard work. Pupils can win awards for good work or good deeds. These awards can be for individuals, for classes who have worked together or for one of the school's four houses, which draw pupils of different ages together. The schemes motivate pupils to behave well and work hard. In an assembly for younger pupils, the promise of a merit mark for the class which walked out of the hall in the smartest, quietest line resulted in silent, well-formed lines of pupils. Each week a 'Pupil of the Week' is acknowledged in assembly and their success is celebrated. Bronze, silver and gold awards are given to individuals in the autumn, spring and summer terms, respectively. A Good Citizen Award is sponsored by one of the major banks and is awarded to a pupil at the end of the school year.
23. In assembly, pupils sit in house groups. This reinforces the need to work together as part of a team. The house which wins the most points each week wins the privilege of going into lunch first for one week. This is very popular with pupils, who politely remind any forgetful adults! In Year 6, a boy and a girl are appointed as house captains for a term. These are pupils who are seen as setting a good example to others. Pupils know that they can go to their house captain with problems at playtimes. The mixing of pupils into house groups which include pupils from different classes gives a new sense of belonging to the pupils and encourages different groups of pupils to care about one another and take an interest in one another.
24. The school council is a recent development at St Clare's. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 represent their class at meetings where they discuss school matters and suggest solutions to problems. For example, in the autumn, pupils resolved the issue of allowing conker competitions to take place whilst ensuring that other pupils were not accidentally hurt. In this way they learn the process of compromise and learn about consideration for others. The importance of the council is emphasised to pupils by the interest taken by the governing body, who ask to be kept informed of the decisions and suggestions that are made.
25. Pupils have rich and varied experiences of different cultures. Learning takes place through many subjects of the curriculum. In Nursery, children celebrate Chinese New Year. In Year 2, pupils visit a Sikh temple as part of their studies. They also learn about the Jewish faith, how Jewish people

live and where they worship. In Year 4, pupils learn about Diwali and the celebrations that are held by Hindus. In learning about Islam, pupils find out about the importance of Ramadan and the celebration of Id.

26. The school has recently been involved in the Greenhouse Project, a multicultural arts project. Pupils in Year 5 worked with the Greenhouse team on a production which was first performed for the school and then before a larger audience at a local theatre. Pupils also learn much about their city and about Britain, its history and its culture. For example, visits are made to Croxteth Hall to study life in Victorian times. Pupils in Year 5 completed a history trail in the city of Liverpool and Year 3 pupils created computer drawings of the Liverpool skyline.
27. Pupils draw on these varied experiences in many aspects of their school life. Parents report that they believe that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible citizens. The pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships make a significant contribution to the quality of education and the standards achieved.

The school has developed good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress.

28. The headteacher and the governing body regard the school's target setting procedures as being central to the work that they do. They use them as an effective management tool, using outcomes from data analysis to inform the school development plan.
29. In seeking to raise standards the school's philosophy is that 'it is better to aim high and undershoot than to hit a low target'. Targets in English and mathematics for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are both realistic and challenging in forecasting the results of national tests. There is a shared will to meet these targets, involving teachers, pupils and parents.
30. All teachers are aware of the targets that have been set for their classes and evaluate lessons to check that pupils are making appropriate progress towards their targets. Planning shows that teachers are very conscious of pupils' progress when they plan and set work. Planning is done for four levels of ability in each class.
31. Pupils' involvement in the target setting process motivates them to make additional effort in their work. The shared interest in improvement between teachers and pupils is effective in helping pupils to achieve well. Parents are also given advice on how they can help so that the improvement process becomes a real partnership in learning.
32. The school uses a number of assessments to check on pupils' progress. On entry to Nursery, the school uses its own baseline assessment based on the Early Learning Goals and the Stepping Stones which lead to these. In Reception, a further assessment is made to check on progress and ascertain where work is needed. Commercial tests are used throughout school for each year group, giving the school a good indication of how pupils are progressing. The results from these assessments are carefully studied by the school's senior managers and the subject co-ordinators. The information gained is used to inform teaching, develop targets and guide the management of the school.
33. The school also analyses data it produces from target setting. It has just started to investigate differences between the progress and standards achieved by girls and boys and by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. This work is still at an early stage of development and no helpful information had been produced at the time of the inspection.
34. Pupils with special educational needs have carefully written individual education plans. These plans are detailed and indicate appropriate targets in English and mathematics. Where pupils work with a teacher in a small group, elements of their individual plans are effectively used to ensure a good match between previous learning and the next task that they are given. An evaluation is made at the end of each lesson to assess how much progress the pupils have made towards achieving a target on their plan. This meticulous planning, matching of work and evaluation and assessment of the lesson are instrumental in helping these pupils to achieve well.

35. A careful record is kept of pupils who have left or joined different year groups and the year group in which the movement occurred. Within these lists a number of pupils are identified as being transient, only staying a few months at the school. The information reveals a high level of pupil mobility within the school, which affects all year groups. For example, in 2002, 67 per cent of pupils who sat national tests in Year 6 had attended other schools previously. Information about changes in roll is useful in helping the school to understand why certain year groups do not make the progress over time that had been expected.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are a valuable management tool and an important element of teachers' planning. The information is used effectively and is helping the school in its work to raise standards.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' attendance rates and the high number of latecomers.

37. Attendance levels at the school are below the national average and are unsatisfactory. The school's detailed analysis of the progress of its pupils shows a clear link between pupils' attendance rates or regular lateness and their levels of attainment and progress. The school has started to address the issue of attendance by employing a member of staff to contact the parents of pupils who are absent on the first and second days of absence. Attendance levels are showing slight improvement as a result of this action.
38. Registration procedures are efficient and registers are marked at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. There is, however, a lack of clarity in the school's interpretation of which absences should be authorised and which unauthorised. Registers indicate that all absences are authorised by the school and that there are no unauthorised absences. Current practice is that as soon as parents provide a reason for their child's absence, the school will automatically authorise the absence, without considering whether the reason given is acceptable. This is a weakness in the school's procedures which should be addressed to ensure that pupils and their families understand the importance of attending school regularly.
39. The level of pupil lateness is also unsatisfactory. A minority of pupils from across the school are persistent latecomers. The school is working closely with the education welfare officer, who visits the families of these pupils to impress upon them the importance of punctuality and attendance and the effect it can have on progress and attainment.

The marking of pupils' work.

40. The school has no agreed policy for the marking of pupils' work and the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent across the school. The marking of pupils' work is an important part of a school's assessment procedures, being the first level of assessment that a teacher makes and assisting in the promotion of higher standards.
41. Scrutiny of work shows that some teachers carefully mark scripts, commenting on strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work. Other marking lacks rigour, using a simple tick and giving no indication of how well the work meets expectations or what the pupil needs to do to improve their work. Some samples of work show no indication of having been marked.
42. In samples of work seen, the best marking is constructive and evaluative, indicating the next step in a pupil's learning. It insists on work being dated and gives pupils guidance on how they can improve their work, for example, in spellings or in the use of punctuation. Teachers share their high expectations with pupils about the quantity and the quality of pupils' work. They give praise and encouragement for good work, indicating what pupils have done well. In mathematics, where marking is effective, corrections are expected, completed and marked.

43. In other work seen, marking is inconsistent in its expectations and in the range of comments made. Some marking gives insufficient guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work. This was particularly noted for some higher attaining pupils. The presentation, content, spelling and punctuation of the work sometimes pass without comment when there is a need for improvement. In some mathematics books, several pieces of work remain unmarked. Comments for some pupils attaining at lower levels are unduly negative in their tone and over time some of these pupils appear to lose some of their motivation. In mathematics, a consistent approach is needed over corrections, ensuring that they are both requested and marked.
44. The school has developed a number of effective procedures for the formal assessment of pupils' work, but has not yet considered a whole school approach to the marking of pupils' work which will give pupils guidance and assist in the promotion of higher standards.

Standards of presentation of pupils' work.

45. The school's classrooms, corridor and hall have attractive displays of a wide range of attractive, well presented work. The presentation of the work on public display indicates that pupils have a sense of audience and that teachers value pupils' work. This high standard of presentation is not always seen in the work which pupils record in their books. Most pupils take a great pride in their work and present it neatly and with care. A minority of pupils take insufficient care with their work and produce work which is untidy and has many mistakes. They show little sense of audience. The lack of care that some pupils show is sometimes left without comment when teachers mark work.
46. When writing, it is the school's policy that pupils should not use joined script until Year 4. Writing which relies on using an unjoined script is a method of recording which is too slow for some pupils and their work becomes untidy in their haste to record their ideas. For some older pupils who use joined script, the content of their work is often good, but their work makes a poor impression on the reader when it is spoilt by words that are crossed out untidily.
47. In mathematics, pupils use squared books to record their work but it is not always well set out. Most pupils find squares helpful in laying out their work, but a significant number of pupils do not make good use of the squares and present their work in an untidy and disorganised way. Some pupils also reverse numerals when they record their work. These errors are often passed over when work is marked and so the presentation of work remains incorrect.
48. The school shows high expectations in many facets of its work, including its displays of pupils' work. There is now a need for these standards to be consistently promoted and seen in all the work that pupils complete, whether or not it is on public display. Pupils always need to be aware that there is an audience of teachers, governors, parents and visitors who are interested in looking at their work and therefore they must always produce work that is their best.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed. In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- i) improve pupils' attendance rates and reduce the number of late-comers by:
 - ensuring that parents and pupils understand the importance of regular attendance and punctuality; and
 - reviewing and clarifying the reasons for authorising pupil absences and following up unauthorised absences.
- ii) develop a positive approach to the marking of pupils' work which will consistently promote higher standards.

- iii) improve the presentation of pupils' work by:
- reviewing the school's approach to the introduction of joined script;
 - raising teachers' expectations of presentation when marking pupils' work; and
 - ensuring that pupils understand that their work should always be their best.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	9	8	4	0	0	0
Percentage	5	41	36	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	37

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	10	17	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	25	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (81)	89 (85)	89 (78)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	25	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (78)	81 (78)	93 (81)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

The results of National Curriculum assessments at Key Stage 1 are reported in total and not by gender, as the number of boys in Year 2 was fewer than 11.

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
	2002	15	11	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (96)	73 (80)	81 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	20	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (80)	73 (76)	85 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	134	2	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	19	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5:1
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	170

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.25:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	552,304
Total expenditure	554,480
Expenditure per pupil	2,498
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,564
Balance carried forward to next year	39,388

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	248
Number of questionnaires returned	161

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	35	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	30	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	31	3	2	2
The teaching is good.	73	26	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	39	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	15	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	65	23	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	22	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	28	12	5	11