

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST RC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Bromley Cross, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105249

Headteacher: Mr R McGloin

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th February 2003

Inspection number: 246466

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided Catholic
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Darwen Road Bromley Cross Bolton
Postcode:	BL7 9HT
Telephone number:	(01204) 333440
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Dobson
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd - 26 th February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Bromley Cross, north of Bolton. It is a Catholic Voluntary Aided primary school. With 97 boys and 89 girls on roll, the school is below average in size compared with other primary schools nationally. Most pupils are white, although a few are of mixed ethnic origin. No pupil has English as an additional language. Nineteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is broadly average. However, some year groups have more pupils with special educational needs than others. For example, 28 per cent of pupils in Year 3 have been identified as having special educational needs, while in Year 6 very few have special educational needs. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or physical disabilities. One per cent of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Pupils enter the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry is average, although it is above average in speaking, listening and personal and social confidence.

The school received achievement awards in 2000 and 2001 for improved standards in Year 6. In 2001 it gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Investors in People award in 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St John's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils have good attitudes and behave well. Standards in the present Year 6 are well above average in English, above average in mathematics and design and technology and average in science. This particular year group of pupils achieved well at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics. They have made good progress since then in English and design and technology, and satisfactory progress in mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although it is unsatisfactory in writing in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Good attention is given to ensuring that all pupils are treated equally and have the same level of access to the learning opportunities provided. The leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the value for money provided by the school.

What the school does well

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and design and technology.
- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They work and play amicably together and have good relationships with the adults in school.
- Good attention is given to pupils' personal development. Pupils are helped to become more mature and responsible.
- There is good care for pupils' personal wellbeing. As a result, they are secure and happy at school.
- The partnership with parents is strong.

What could be improved

- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing from entry to the school to the end of Year 2. Writing standards are below average in Year 2.
- Activities in the reception class that children undertake without the teacher do not always have a clear enough purpose.
- Throughout the school, work is not always well enough varied to meet pupils' differing needs.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how they can improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in February 1998. Standards in design and technology are better, having previously been below those expected nationally. The use of homework has developed well. The accommodation has been improved and all classes are now taught in proper classrooms. The checking of teaching and learning has developed satisfactorily and the weaknesses in teaching identified in some year groups at that time have been dealt with adequately. Staff changes have

rectified shortcomings in how well senior post holders are involved in the management of the school. While there has been some improvement in the identification of, and support for, higher attaining pupils, this is an area in which further work is still needed.

The present standards in Year 6 are better than at the last inspection, although those in Year 2 are not as high as they were. Strengths have been maintained in the provision for pupils' personal development, the care for their welfare and in how the school works with parents. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships have also been sustained. The school is satisfactorily placed to achieve further 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	B	A*	B	C
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

Key

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The above table shows that pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well above the national average in mathematics and science and above the national average in English. Compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance was well above average in mathematics and science and average in English. The evidence from pupils' school work is that standards at this point in the present Year 6 are well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. The difference between the standards seen now in pupils' school work and the 2002 test results is largely a reflection of the natural variations found in year groups of pupils. It also shows the success of the school's efforts to improve pupils' writing in Year 6. However, in mathematics and science it indicates that not enough pupils are presently working at a level higher level than that expected of most Year 6 pupils. This is even though the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was well above the national average in both subjects in 2002. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics and science.

The overall trend in the school's end of Year 6 results has been above that found nationally since the last inspection. The school sets appropriately ambitious targets for English and mathematics and is making satisfactory progress towards them. Although girls tend to do better than boys in the English tests, there is no evidence of girls making better progress than boys in the work seen during the inspection. In mathematics and science, boys and girls achieve equally well.

In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002, pupils' results were above the national average in writing, but below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. As in Year 6, there is a different picture in the work seen at this point in Year 2 owing to the natural variations in year groups of pupils. Standards now are average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress in reading and mathematics. However, the writing standards in Year 2 are not high enough and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in writing in Years 1 and 2.

Standards are above average in design and technology in Year 6. Not enough information was gathered to make secure judgements on standards in other subjects in Years 2 and 6.

Children in the reception year make satisfactory progress overall, but their progress in writing is unsatisfactory. Most children are on course to achieve the nationally expected standards at the end of the reception year, except in writing. A good proportion is likely to exceed them in speaking, listening and in

personal, social and emotional development, maintaining the strengths in their attainment on entry. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school. Most are keen to learn and settle quickly to work in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well during lessons and at other times, such as when moving about the school or when at play. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together and with the adults who help them. The school is a harmonious community in which all groups of pupils mix well. Pupils respond very well to opportunities for initiative and responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. Last school year the attendance rate was in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Although not quite as good this year, it is being maintained at a higher level than in most primary schools.

Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, together with their very good attendance and punctuality, all help to create an environment supportive of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, 18 lessons were observed. Teaching and learning were at least satisfactory in 17 of these. In six lessons, teaching and learning were good and in one they were very good. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English, including the basics of literacy, is good in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in the reception year to Year 2. In the reception year to Year 2 teachers do not develop pupils' skills in writing well enough, although speaking, listening and reading skills are taught satisfactorily. Teaching and learning in mathematics, including the basics of numeracy, are satisfactory throughout the school. With the exception of the teaching of writing from reception to Year 2, the school meets all pupils' needs satisfactorily. However, work in lessons is not always varied enough to meet pupils' differing needs. In particular, teachers do not always provide additional challenge for pupils with potential for higher attainment, especially in mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is effective teaching of design and technology in Years 3 to 6. In the reception year, sufficient attention is given to children's personal, social and emotional development to maintain the strengths in this area in their attainment on entry to the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. All the required subjects are taught and there is particularly good development of literacy skills across the subjects in Years 3 to 6. The range of activities additional to lessons, such as clubs and sports, is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school welcomes and successfully provides for pupils with a range of special educational needs. Teaching in small groups taken out of class and the help of support staff in lessons ensure pupils make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Good overall. There is strong attention to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The outcomes are seen in the good behaviour and

spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	relationships. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The pastoral care is good and there is good attention to pupils' personal welfare. The school has good assessment procedures and uses the information from these satisfactorily.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher ensures that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, sets clear standards for care for pupils and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities. The headteacher and staff team are satisfactorily focused on improving the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are very supportive of the school and committed to ensuring that it meets its aims. However, they are not always sufficiently evaluative of what the school does in order to challenge it to greater effectiveness.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that the headteacher is aware of the main strengths and weaknesses in teaching. In most cases, effective support is given to individual teachers when necessary. However, there is not always a sufficient whole-school thrust to deal with areas requiring improvement across several year groups.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Good financial planning ensures that monies, including specific grants, are targeted on identified priorities for pupils' education. However, there is not enough analysis of how the use of resources benefits all pupils. Satisfactory consideration is given to whether the school provides best value for pupils and their parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. • Behaviour is good. • The range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The information they receive on their children's progress.

Overall, parents are very happy with the school. Inspection evidence supports the positive views, but not the views of a few parents concerning the above areas requiring improvement. Inspectors found that homework is used well in most classes and that the information provided to parents on their children's progress is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and design and technology.

1. Immediately after the last inspection the school's results in English improved. In the years since then, the results have been maintained at a level at least above the national average and in 2001 they were in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The evidence from pupils' school work is that standards at this point in the present Year 6 are also well above average. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress from Year 3 to Year 6. The most significant gains are made in Year 6 where teaching is most effective. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to progress at a similar rate to other pupils through effective targeted support matched to their needs. Although girls tend to do better than boys in the national tests, there is no evidence of girls making better progress than boys in the work seen during the inspection.
2. Standards of speaking and listening are above average. Pupils in Year 6 are confident and articulate communicators. They answer questions clearly in lessons and give extended answers when talking to adults in one-to-one situations, for example to explain an investigation they are undertaking in science. Almost all pupils have a good awareness of how to adapt their style of spoken language according to their audience. This is seen in informal conversation and at other times when more formal standard English is used. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, such as during question and answer sessions.
3. Reading standards are well above average in Year 6. Pupils enjoy reading stories as well as non-fiction books and other material such as magazines. Most read every night at home. Many choose challenging texts such as 'The Lord of the Rings' by J R R Tolkien and 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' by Lewis Carroll. Most have effective strategies for reading unfamiliar words and readily apply their knowledge of letter sounds. Higher attaining pupils successfully work out the meanings of words they do not already know, such as 'ostler', by reading on and deducing it from the text. Most pupils successfully scan pages to pick out information and confidently use encyclopaedias. Library skills are good.
4. Writing standards in Year 6 are well above average. Almost all pupils have a good understanding of how to adapt their writing according to its purpose and intended audience. This is evident, for example, in stories, biographical writing, balanced arguments and poetry. Higher attaining pupils in particular write with a very clear personal voice, sustaining and developing ideas effectively and using language well to describe or set a scene. Many pupils show a good awareness of how to develop a narrative or tell the reader about the characters in their stories, including through dialogue. Most pupils correctly organise their writing in paragraphs, although there are some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Almost all pupils have neat and fluent handwriting. Some have a particularly mature style.
5. A higher than average proportion of pupils is already working at the level expected at the end of Year 6 across all aspects of mathematics required by the National Curriculum. This is evident, for example, in practical problem-solving relating to money, weights and measures. Pupils competently multiply and divide three-digit numbers by two-digit numbers. They make effective use of calculators to solve number and money problems as well as having effective mental strategies to calculate. Most pupils have the expected knowledge for their age of fractions, decimals and percentages and, for instance, halve and double decimals to one decimal place. Most pupils competently create and interpret graphs, such as pie and bar charts, and have a secure understanding of probability. Mathematics standards now in Year 6 are much the same as at the last inspection. Teaching in this key area is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. As a result the good standards achieved by the present Year 6, when they were in Year 2, have been sustained.
6. Design and technology standards have improved well since the last inspection when they were below average. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding for their age of the process of designing,

making and evaluating. This is seen, for example, in their designs for tents. Pupils have carefully studied a variety of shelters, thoughtfully considering their fitness for purpose including suitability of the materials used. To decide on the best materials to use for their own tents, pupils have tested a range of materials for strength and have investigated procedures for waterproofing. Following production of their carefully researched products, pupils have competently evaluated all aspects of their task at a higher level than is normally found in Year 6.

7. Pupils' good progress in English and design and technology in Years 3 to 6 is a direct result of good teaching. Throughout these year groups pupils are given a good range of opportunities for writing, not only in English lessons but also in other subjects, such as history. Following the 2002 National Curriculum tests in English, the school identified that pupils were doing better in reading than in writing. The Year 6 teacher in particular has responded to this by giving careful focus to the development of pupils' skills in writing for different purposes. In a very good lesson on writing a balanced argument, pupils very effectively increased their awareness of this type of writing. They were able to do so because the teacher gave a clear demonstration of writing. She spoke her thoughts aloud as she wrote to show pupils the thinking necessary to create a balanced argument. In this lesson, the teacher had high expectations of the standards that all pupils were capable of attaining and pupils responded very well to the challenge. Many appropriate opportunities are also provided for reading in other subjects. In a Year 3 science lesson, for example, pupils studied reference books as they developed their understanding of teeth and dental hygiene.
8. Many interesting and stimulating projects capture pupils' interest in design and technology as they move up from Year 3 to Year 6. These not only motivate pupils but also challenge them to achieve well, increasing the quality and sophistication of their designs, models and evaluations. There are good opportunities for pupils to make their designs personal, for example when making moving monsters in Year 4. Although the co-ordinator is not a design and technology specialist, she has given good support to her colleagues to improve the quality of teaching of this subject, for example accessing information for them on the Internet. A long-term plan of work has been introduced based on national guidance. Assessment procedures have been put in place to ensure that work is set at the right level.

Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They work and play amicably together and have good relationships with the adults in school.

9. Children in the reception class settle well and are socially confident. They know the school routines and what is expected of them at different times. This is seen, for example, as they line up on the playground to go into school at the end of lunchtime or as they sit in a circle on the carpet for the register to be taken at the start of the day. They do not speak when their teacher or the nursery nurse is speaking to them or when it is another child's turn to answer a question. They have relaxed and friendly relationships with each other and share toys and resources amicably, such as in the 'Mrs Wishy Washy' role-play area. When investigating a large tray of cooked pasta, for example, they took turns to use the objects placed in it. Children in the reception class behave very well.
10. Throughout Years 1 to 6 most pupils have good attitudes to school and are keen to learn. Those in Year 6 have particularly mature and responsible attitudes and want to do well. Their pride in their school work is evident in the good standard of presentation. Most pupils settle well in lessons and get on with their work without wasting time. They respond particularly well to challenging activities. Year 3 pupils, for example, worked intensively for a full afternoon on three well-organised science activities that developed their knowledge and also required them to think carefully for themselves. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their very good attendance.
11. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Most pupils move sensibly about their classrooms and to other parts of the school. Movement to the hall for assembly or hymn practice, for example, is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well on the playground and those who want to play energetic games do not disturb others who prefer to be quiet. They take care with school property and respect other pupils' belongings. No pupil has been excluded for either a fixed period or permanently for many years.
12. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for their personal

development. They conscientiously carry out responsibilities as school council representatives and as classroom monitors. Year 6 pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to look after the reception children through 'gardener' and 'seed' relationships. This helps the young children to settle into school and is appreciated by their parents.

13. Pupils get on well with each other and with the adults in school. They are friendly, yet courteous and polite, when speaking to adults. Relationships are good between boys and girls and pupils of all ages. Those with special educational needs are well integrated and several examples were observed of other pupils offering help to those with learning difficulties. The school is a harmonious community. All the strengths found in this area at the last inspection have been maintained.

Good attention is given to pupils' personal development. Pupils are helped to become more mature and responsible.

14. The school places importance on the all-round development of pupils as individuals. It succeeds in its aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development in a caring Catholic community. Inspectors agree with parents' views that the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible. Pupils are helped to develop spiritually through assemblies and daily prayers.
15. All staff provide strong role models for pupils' moral development. A clear and consistent message is given as to how pupils should treat others, with emphasis on considering the impact of their actions on others. The school's code of conduct has a positive tone and points out what pupils should do rather than what they should not do.
16. There are many good opportunities for pupils to develop socially. In addition to older pupils looking after younger ones, the new school council provides pupils with a real voice in what happens in school. Classes discuss issues before and after their representatives attend meetings. Pupils are given responsibilities, for example as house captains or vice captains, and in carrying out other duties about the school, such as performing the role of librarian. All Year 6 pupils are prefects. An extensive range of activities additional to lessons, such as clubs and sports, helps pupils to develop team spirit and gives them further opportunities to work and play together. A residential weekend at an adventure centre not only allows Year 6 pupils the chance to work, play and live together away from school but also boosts their self-esteem and develops inner resourcefulness. Through raising funds for charities, pupils gain an awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.
17. Highlights in pupils' personal development, such as awards received, are noted in record of achievement folders. There is also good recording of pupils' progress in different elements of their personal development on charts in their personal, social and health education files. All the strengths found in this area at the last inspection have been maintained.

There is good care for pupils' personal wellbeing. As a result, they are secure and happy at school.

18. The school recognises that pupils need to feel secure and happy at school if they are to learn effectively. The pastoral care for pupils is good. Staff know pupils well and there is a warm family atmosphere in the school. Teachers are quick to respond if they have a concern about any pupil's welfare and, where appropriate, such concerns are shared among the staff. In particular, any incidents of bullying are dealt with sensitively not only to eradicate them but also to help the bully realise the implications of their actions. The school does not tolerate any form of harassment or unkindness. Pupils are confident that they can turn to an adult for support should they need to do so.
19. The school is particularly responsive to the specific requirements of pupils with special educational needs. It goes out of its way to welcome and accommodate pupils with a wide range of needs. Provision for these pupils is well supplemented through the use of outside agencies. A soundfield system has been installed in every classroom to support hearing impaired pupils. Special arrangements are made as required for pupils with physical disabilities.
20. Child protection procedures are properly in place. Good attention is given to ensuring pupils' health and safety. The caretaker checks the site daily for potential hazards and the building committee of

the governing body undertakes full health and safety checks termly. Risk assessments are undertaken frequently and requirements are met for the testing of fire alarms and electrical appliances.

21. The school is effective in promoting good attendance, even though this is not an area in which a great deal of effort is required. Parents understand their role in notifying the school if their child is absent. The care for pupils' personal wellbeing is a further area in which the school has maintained all the strengths found at the last inspection.

The partnership with parents is strong.

22. As at the last inspection, the school has a good relationship with parents and carers and works hard to involve them actively in the education of their children. Parents who made their views known are very supportive of the school and there are many things that they like about it. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school and are being helped to become more mature and responsible. They appreciate the good standards of behaviour of most pupils and the wide range of activities additional to lessons. Few issues cause parents any concern. The inspection findings support parents' positive views.
23. The school provides parents with good information about their children's progress and about general matters. In addition to pupils' annual reports, which are broadly satisfactory, there are parent consultation meetings each term. Parents value these and the close co-operation that they provide between home and school. At the autumn meeting, parents discuss academic and personal targets for their child with the teacher and at the spring meeting these targets are reviewed and updated. A particularly good feature is that parents are sent their children's exercise books once they are filled up, so that they can see the progress made. Parents are also made aware of their children's successes through 'Well Done' postcards that pupils receive through the post at home. Parents are given details of the topics to be studied for the term, together with information on homework expectations. Regular workshops explain aspects of the curriculum and help parents to support their children's learning at home. There are frequent newsletters and correspondence on other issues and events. The prospectus and governors' annual report both provide comprehensive information for parents, although some details are not in the form statutorily required.
24. The headteacher makes a point of being available to parents at the start and end of the school day. This ensures that any concerns can be quickly dealt with, which is appreciated by parents. Teachers are also easily accessible to parents and most parents say that they find the school approachable.
25. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning and to the life of the school. A number help in classrooms and on outside visits and provide valuable support. Others help with additional activities and clubs, such as football. Parents support school events well, for example attending weekly family assemblies when children's achievements are recognised and joining with the school in religious celebration. A home-school agreement is in place and most parents provide help to pupils with their reading and other homework.
26. The school has a very active Friends Association, which organises social and fund-raising events. These generate significant income, which is used to purchase resources, for example computers and computer software, which benefit the pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop its strong relationship with parents.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils do not make enough progress in writing from entry to the school to the end of Year 2. Writing standards are below average in Year 2.

27. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in writing from entry to the school to the end of Year 2. The result is that writing standards are declining in the lower part of the school and, at this point in Year 2, are below average. This is even though children have the attainment expected for their age when they begin in the reception class. Writing standards are lower now in Year 2 than when the school was last inspected. At that time, pupils were found to make good progress from entry to the end of Year 2.

28. The main problem is that, by the end of Year 2, pupils have not sufficiently developed their skills in story writing or in producing longer pieces of writing for different purposes. They do not have enough experience of planning and writing stories with a beginning, middle and end. Their awareness of how to use language imaginatively to describe a character or to set a scene is less well developed than it should be. Pupils do not have enough awareness of the effect their writing might have on the reader. Even higher attaining pupils do not join their handwriting.
29. In the reception class, there are too few opportunities for children to develop writing skills and the range of writing activities is too limited. At the time of the inspection, children's books showed only eight specific writing activities for the term and a half that they had been in school. There is not enough writing practice, for example to improve letter formation. The weaknesses in provision at this early stage mean that children have fallen behind and attainment is already below average.
30. The picture is much the same in Years 1 and 2, although progress is a little better in Year 2 than in Year 1. In some cases pupils increase the amount they write but not the quality of their writing. There are examples in Year 1 of handwriting and presentation deteriorating. Not only do pupils make insufficient progress in story writing, but some lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs barely move forward at all. These pupils are not given adequate help with basics, such as letter formation. Overall, teachers in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2 do not have high enough expectations of the standards pupils are capable of attaining in writing.

Activities in the reception class that children undertake without the teacher do not always have a clear enough purpose.

31. When the teacher works with the class or with a group, the children know what is expected of them and normally understand why the activity is being undertaken. However, this is not always the case when children are expected to participate in activities without the direct support of an adult. While such activities are set up properly, they are not always well enough managed while they are in progress. The teacher is clear about the purpose of the activities but this is not always adequately communicated to the children. On occasions this results in missed opportunities for learning, as was seen when children investigated a large tray of green cooked pasta. The teacher had provided an interesting resource but its potential for language development was not realised.
32. Some activities requiring focused adult input do not receive it because the teacher and nursery nurse are occupied with other groups and are not overseeing the other activities well enough. For example, in one lesson lower attaining children using play dough to form the letters of the week needed the help of an adult, if only briefly, but they did not receive it. There are times when the nursery nurse could make a specific contribution to the work of a group to focus activities but is deployed simply to circulate and to check on all activities. Where this happened in one lesson seen, there were missed opportunities for a group to benefit from intensive adult support.

Throughout the school, work is not always well enough varied to meet pupils' differing needs.

33. Although the school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress, the information gained is not always used well enough to match work to pupils' differing needs. In mathematics and science, there are occasions when this restricts the learning of pupils with potential for higher attainment in particular. These pupils do the same work as the average pupils and are sometimes given more of it, rather than being provided with more challenging tasks.
34. While much work in English in Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing, is sufficiently open-ended to allow pupils to perform at a higher level, that in Years 1 and 2 does not take enough account of pupils' differing needs. This is a significant factor in pupils' underachievement in writing. There are examples of pupils struggling with the work set and also of those who could do better being given insufficiently challenging tasks. In an English lesson in Year 1 in which teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, work was not demanding enough for the pupils with potential for higher attainment and also for many average pupils. The activities were almost identical for all pupils regardless of their prior attainment.

Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how they can improve.

35. There are examples of good and even very good marking that contribute well to pupils' learning. This is evident in English in Years 3 to 6 and, particularly, in Year 6 where marking provides a dialogue between teacher and pupil. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Although work is normally marked, there is not always enough guidance to pupils to support their learning. This is most evident in mathematics.
36. In English in Years 1 and 2 pupils are not given enough help to develop their writing. In Year 1 there is liberal use of praise for work that is not good enough. For instance, one relatively higher attaining pupil produced a piece of writing littered with capital letters. The teacher did not comment on this but simply wrote 'very good effort'. Work of poor quality often receives the response 'lovely'. Mathematics books in Year 3 show marking done by pupils and too little use of marking as a developmental tool.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. In order to raise standards and rectify the weaknesses, while maintaining the strengths of the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- (i) improve pupils' progress in writing from entry to the school so that standards are raised in Year 2. Increase the opportunities for pupils to produce stories and other longer pieces of writing and to use language imaginatively;
(Paragraphs 27-30)
 - (ii) ensure that all activities in the reception class, including those that children undertake without the teacher, have a clear purpose;
(Paragraphs 31-32)
 - (iii) ensure that work is varied well enough to meet pupils' differing needs. Make better use of assessment information to support this; and
(Paragraphs 33-34)
 - (iv) improve marking so that it is consistent in telling pupils how they can develop their work.
(Paragraphs 35-36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	1	6	10	1	0	0
Percentage	0	6	33	55	6	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 five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR - Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	186
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR - Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	35

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (90)	83 (90)	91 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	12
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (90)	83 (90)	91 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	28	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (100)	81 (89)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	26	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (100)	84 (89)	94 (100)
	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	175	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	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	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.25
Average class size	26.57

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	397,297
Total expenditure	388,458
Expenditure per pupil	2,066
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,981
Balance carried forward to next year	32,820

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 43%

Number of questionnaires sent out	186
Number of questionnaires returned	80

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	30	5	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	34	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	54	10	1	0
The teaching is good.	61	26	6	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	40	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	15	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	28	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	31	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	33	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	81	15	3	0	0

Not all responses to questions total 100 owing to rounding.