

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST CHRISTOPHER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Romiley

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106117

Headteacher: Colette Garner

Reporting inspector: George Derby
25349

Dates of inspection: 17th – 18th March 2003

Inspection number: 246560

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr K M Burton
Date of previous inspection:	December 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Christopher's Catholic Primary School is situated in Romiley, Stockport. Pupils come from a wide area surrounding Romiley which includes Bredbury and Woodley. The school is of an average size compared to other primary schools. It has 207 pupils in total, including 22 full-time children in the Reception class. The school's roll has fallen over the last few years, in line with the trend locally. The proportion of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals, at 17 per cent, is in line with the national average. There are 24 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and there are no pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school has no pupils who are learning English as an additional language, but there are a few from minority ethnic groups; two are from mixed white and Asian backgrounds, while three are from other mixed backgrounds. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to Reception. Overall, it is similar to what is expected for the children's age, although mathematical understanding on entry is often weaker than reading. At times attainment is below average, as for the group who entered in 1999. In the last two years there have been three new teachers, one of these being the headteacher. Although only about 10 per cent of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than at the start of the school year, many of these arrive or leave after Year 2. Parents of children with additional needs are often attracted to the school because of its strong reputation, especially after they have tried other schools, which they perceive to have been less successful with their children. In 2002 the school received a School Achievement Award and recently it received the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Christopher's is a very effective catholic primary school. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked extremely hard to provide a very good quality of education and pupils often reach high standards. They achieve very well by the time they reach Year 6 and their progress over their time in school is very good. This is because the quality of teaching is very good overall. Pupils' personal development is also very good; by the time they are due to leave the school they are very well adjusted individuals, highly prepared for the next stage of their education. The school meets its mission statement and its aims very well. Overall, it provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are very good; their attainment is currently well above average by the end of Year 2 and above average by Year 6.
- The school very strongly promotes pupils' personal development, especially their spirituality and their moral and social development; as a result, they are very mature and well-adjusted individuals.
- The quality of the teaching is very good; the exceptionally high expectations and excellent management of pupils by most staff support their learning and self-knowledge.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very effective; the work of governors in supporting the school and holding it to account for standards is very good.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, and the use of assessment information and the tracking of pupils' progress, are very good.

What could be improved

- The further development of the provision for information and communication technology (ICT).
- The formal recording of risk assessments made by the school.

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 good progress since its last inspection in 1998. It has built upon its strengths and improved where there were weaknesses. Both standards and the quality of teaching have improved. The issues from the last inspection have mostly been very effectively addressed. Teachers use the information from their assessments very well and there is a strong link between this and subsequent

planning. Marking has improved and helpful, supportive and constructive comments are frequently seen in pupils' books. Pupils' speaking skills are very well promoted and assessed. Standards in these skills are very high. A senior management team has strengthened the leadership and management of the school and provides very good support for the headteacher. The school has provided wider opportunities to extend pupils' multicultural awareness, but there is still room for improvement. The school is very well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	C	A	A*
mathematics	A	B	B	B
science	C	B	B	B

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

The pupils' **performance in the national tests** at the end of Year 6 in 2002 was well above average overall. The grades above show the performance in the individual subjects. The test results between 1998 and 2002 improved at a higher rate than in schools nationally. The progress of the pupils who took the Year 6 tests in 2002, over their time in the school from Year 2, was very good overall. It was very good in English and exceptionally so when compared with progress made in similar schools. It was good in mathematics and science. The pupils' attainment in the 2002 Year 2 national tests for reading, writing and mathematics was well above average overall. The assessments of pupils' attainment in speaking, listening and science made by teachers at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were inaccurate. The pupils achieve very well from their starting points and, from the **evidence of the inspection**, their attainment is currently well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, and above average in those subjects for pupils in Year 6. This group of pupils' performance in the 1999 national tests was below average, which represents a very good achievement for them. In addition, across Years 3 to 6, historically a number of pupils enter and leave the school. Many who have entered recently have had special educational needs (SEN) or have needed extra help with learning. Speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed, especially among the youngest pupils. Pupils' attainment in ICT is approaching what is expected for their ages and their progress is sound. The school monitors and analyses pupils' progress very well and has set realistic and challenging targets to be achieved at the end of Year 6, reflecting the staff's clear understanding of their pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Inspection evidence suggests that targets for 2003 are likely to be exceeded, representing very good achievement by pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and work. They are keen to come to school and hungry to learn. They settle quickly and concentrate very well throughout lessons. They work very hard, taking a great pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. The school is a very harmonious family where pupils support each other and are polite and respectful. Some pupils with SEN have behavioural difficulties, but these are very well managed. There was one temporary exclusion last year for a pupil who has since received additional support for behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with their teachers are excellent. Pupils work very well with one another, with high levels of collaboration. Pupils' personal development is very good. They willingly take on responsibility in classrooms, around the school and for other pupils. Those on the school council take their roles very seriously and actively support the development of the school, informing governors of their work.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good overall and it strongly promotes the progress and attainment of all pupils. It is particularly strong in Reception, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and learn very well. The school has a number of initiatives to support pupils who need extra help. Groups are taught well by teaching assistants who are well trained and who make the programmes interesting and the work challenging. Teachers' expectations and their management of pupils are mostly exceptional; as a result, pupils rise to these and try their hardest - they are eager to please and will always try to get things right. Lessons are planned very well and take account of pupils' differing needs and abilities, with work well matched to these. Teachers' questioning is very strong and checks and extends pupils' knowledge. Pupils respond and learn very well. English and mathematics (including literacy and numeracy) are very well taught. The opportunities to support pupils' speaking and listening are very strong and very well promoted in lessons. The quick-fire starts to numeracy lessons are very successful and help to support pupils' mental computational skills. The teaching of ICT is sound, but the ways of presenting activities during lessons are fairly narrow and pupils are dependent on teachers for completion of the next step in their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is richness in the very good range of interesting and relevant activities in school and outside lessons, including residential experiences. Literacy, numeracy and science are very well planned, and activities are well matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils. All subjects are taught as required and have sufficient time. In addition, the school has a tradition of teaching a modern foreign language, which is currently Italian, which adds much to pupils' understanding of culture. The support for pupils' personal development and skills is very good and pervades the work of the school. Specific teaching for higher attaining/gifted and talented pupils has begun. At present, a short series of lessons on problem solving and thinking skills are taught; this could usefully extend into a fully coherent programme.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are particularly well supported and, as a result, make very good progress, along with their peers. Work is well matched to their needs. Although individual education plans are generally well written and detailed, on occasion the things that are distinct and different about a particular pupils' needs are not always fully represented or supported through targets or actions.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The school fulfils the personal development aspects of its vision for pupils extremely well and especially through the very good provision for their spiritual development. Assembly, prayer, lessons and the daily life of the school add a great deal to pupils' understanding of their faith, the world around them and their moral responsibilities. Central to the school's work is that pupils reflect on their experiences and what they are learning, that they help and care for others. Staff provide very good role models for pupils to respect and learn from. Cultural opportunities are good, although not enough is done to extend their understanding of today's multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child-protection procedures are sound. Staff know pupils and their strengths and weaknesses very well. Pupils are well supervised at all times and staff demonstrate really personal care for them. The headteacher is particularly successful here. As a result, pupils feel secure and confident to come to school and play a full part in lessons and school life. However, information about assessed risks is not formalised. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and academic progress are all monitored very well and the use of assessment to help them improve further is very good.

The school works hard to forge its very positive links with parents and partnership is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, ably assisted by the senior management team (SMT), provides very good leadership and has established a very positive climate for learning in the school. She is insistent on high standards, on ensuring that the needs of all pupils are well known and that effective provision is made accordingly. The school is very well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very effective. The high-calibre governing body is extremely supportive. Governors take a very active interest in the life of the school and take their roles as 'critical friends' very seriously. They have an impressive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how to aid its development and further improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very well organised and very effective. Assessment results are thoroughly analysed and challenging whole-school targets set. The school improvement plan is regularly reviewed and all elements critically analysed by governors. Formal monitoring of teaching has been undertaken by the headteacher and the SMT, although subject co-ordinators do have an opportunity to do this annually. They review subject provision and produce action plans for their subjects. The headteacher has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a result of all this work.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Effective use is made of the school budget and additional grants are sought to benefit pupils' learning. Spending is thoroughly analysed to ensure effective use. Financial planning is very good and resources used well to support educational priorities.

The school makes very good use of best-value principles, especially to challenge itself to improve further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The meeting with parents was overwhelmingly positive; they had high praise for the school. They feel that the following are significant strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the good teaching; how the school helps their children become mature and responsible; the school expects children to work very hard. 	<p>A very small number of parents has concerns about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the amount of homework; how well their children like school; the children's behaviour; the range of activities outside lessons; the relationships with parents.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. They do not agree with the concerns that a small number of parents had. Homework is well thought out, is challenging and helps pupils build on what they have learned in school. Behaviour is very good. A few pupils have special educational needs where their behaviour needs supporting; however, this is done very effectively. Activities outside lessons are very good and add much to the richness of the curriculum, although they are mainly for older pupils. There are very strong relationships with parents and the school extends a welcoming hand to all parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils' achievements are very good; their attainment is currently well above average by the end of Year 2 and above average by Year 6.

1. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national tests, taking English, mathematics and science together, was well above the national average and has been above average for many years. It was above average for mathematics and science and well above average for English. The picture is similar for the attainment of pupils reaching the higher levels (Level 5) in the tests. Particularly large numbers of pupils achieved Levels 4 and 5 in English and increased the school's overall test performance in 2002. Compared to those in schools with similar intakes, the pupils attained exceptional results in English (in the top five per cent of schools).
2. The pupils' results in the tests at the end of Year 2 have been above or well above average for many years. In 2002 pupils' levels were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Teachers' assessments for science in 2002 indicated that pupils' attainment was below average. However, these assessments were considerably inaccurate due to teachers' over-cautiousness and lack of clarity about what represents high attainment in Year 2. The school has recognised this and put in place measures to improve teacher assessment in science. The scientific knowledge of current Year 3 pupils (those who took the Year 2 tests last year) is above average.
3. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are very strongly promoted throughout the school and this helps them to convey ideas fluently from a very early age in the Reception class. Very strong support for pupils' mental and oral skills in mathematics helps them to think quickly and use techniques, so they compute rapidly in their heads. Work on sounds in reading (phonics) and reading for meaning are also very strongly promoted and pupils' reading is very strong throughout the school because of this. In science, much practical work, demonstrations and simulations help pupils develop ideas. Pupils are supported very well overall and many are given additional help when weaknesses are identified.
4. Staff know their pupils very well and use a wide range of assessments to inform them of their pupils' progress. From entry to school and throughout each year, progress is carefully tracked against predicted levels, which are adjusted as new information on pupils' progress is available. Current evidence from pupils' records and their work indicates that they make very good progress overall. This is strongly linked to the quality of teaching, which is very good in Reception, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6, and also to the quality of the curriculum, which provides a very rich range of opportunities for pupils. Standards are currently well above average for pupils in Year 2 and just above average for those in Year 6.
5. Although standards are currently lower than usual for the Year 6 pupils, their above-average attainment represents very good achievement. They entered the school with below average levels and careful tracking has enabled them to have additional support and improve their level of attainment very well. (In the 1999 Year 2 national tests this group of pupils' attainment was below average). In addition, because of the school's strongly supportive and Christian ethos, some pupils who struggle to learn or have defined special educational needs have entered the school at the junior stage. In English, lower-attaining pupils in Year 6 are beginning to understand spelling rules such as '-ed' and '-ing' being added to words such as 'fill'. Other pupils who have further literacy support identify the key characteristics of personnel in the school and have copy written ideas about their characteristics, which are demonstrated by the teaching assistant. Higher attainers write detailed and highly descriptive, imaginative accounts related to characters in *Professor Branestawm*. Gifted and talented pupils in Year 6 work on solving a murder mystery, make detailed notes and use written 'mind mapping' ideas to help them link the clues. A programme of work specifically to support them has just begun. Other pupils with particular talents

are 'accelerated' through work, such as a Year 4 pupil who works with a Year 5/6 group for mathematics.

6. In mathematics, Year 6 pupils competently convert millilitres to pints, have a very good grasp of 'word problems' and the correct operations to use. Quick methods of computation are readily used and pupils have a really good understanding of place value. They understand how to group data they are displaying and can critically analyse variations, explaining possible reasons.
7. Standards in literacy and numeracy are good overall and strongest in the infant department and towards the end of the junior department. A focus on writing as part of whole-school development is raising standards further and has resulted in very positive attitudes to writing throughout the school. The school has successfully introduced and developed the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies; it is very adept at ensuring that these skills are not taught in isolation. Teachers regularly reinforce aspects of literacy and numeracy in most lessons, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that pupils understand the ideas behind the vocabulary introduced and that the correct use of grammar and punctuation is promoted in their speaking and writing. In English and mathematics there is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys.

The school very strongly promotes pupils' personal development, especially their spirituality and their moral and social development; as a result, they are very mature and well-adjusted individuals.

8. The very clear aims of the school, its mission statement and its vision strongly recognise the uniqueness of the individual and the importance of the school's work in fostering the personal development of each pupil. The school affirms happiness, care, personal achievement, meaningful relationships, respect, honesty and truth as some its most important values. It very successfully fulfils its aims for pupils' personal development through the wealth of support and opportunity provided. As a result, pupils leave the school as very well adjusted and confident individuals.
9. Relationships between pupils themselves, and with staff, are excellent. Pupils feel cared for and valued. They say they are respected by staff and that teachers help them grow in 'self-knowledge'. Older pupils know they have time to discuss any worries they might have; for instance, about school transfer, and know they are strongly supported. They have contributed to the school / class rules and staff are very good role models for them, showing kindness, respect and honesty. Staff show how they value pupils' efforts through the 'honest' marking of their work and the support they get to improve.
10. In lessons, pupils frequently have opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, in Reception pupils used all their senses to develop a knowledge and understanding of mystery objects in *Mrs Wobble's* café. Pupils said 'Wow' when the Victorian exhibits they were exploring were revealed. In a Year 2 history lesson on important characters such as Florence Nightingale, the teacher set the atmosphere excellently and enabled pupils to explore the features of her character. The teacher used the pupils' ideas and feelings and fostered their personal viewpoints very well. As a result of this work, pupils had a very good understanding of the social conditions people lived under in the nineteenth century and the contribution they made to society. This work and the preparation of spoken presentations for the rest of the class have significantly strengthened pupils' speaking and listening skills and their understanding of people's viewpoints. They carefully consider the needs of the audience when talking and presenting their visual aids.
11. Personal development is also fostered through the school council, although this only relates to a group of Year 6 pupils and could usefully be extended to involve other year groups. A number of Year 6 pupils form the well-organised school council and meet fortnightly to discuss issues placed on the agenda. They visit the class they are responsible for, report back on business and consider ideas from the suggestion box.

12. Assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' lives. The very strong emphasis on personal reflection, thoughts and feelings about others, and the celebration of achievement, result in pupils feeling uplifted, praised and cherished. They take an active part in assemblies, often reciting prayers for peace, reading confidently, leading singing as members of the school choir and reporting to the school on events they have been involved in, such as a football match. The very good opportunities for pupils outside lessons, such as a mathematics club, choir, basketball (with a professional coach) and the Lent prayer group provide a wealth of opportunity for pupils' personal development.
13. The curriculum and pupils' personal development are also enriched by the school's commitment to language learning. Italian is very well taught to all pupils in the junior department. It significantly enhances their understanding of another non-English speaking culture as well as their language skills both in English and Italian. Pupils watch and listen very carefully and have an excellent attitude to the subject. During the inspection Year 6 pupils sang about *Le parti del corpo*, confidently performing (eventually unaccompanied) to the Italian version of "Heads and Shoulders, Knees and Toes" (*Teste, spalle, gambe e piedi*). The school has a tradition of teaching languages and pupils have learned French and German previously.

The quality of the teaching is very good; the exceptionally high expectations and excellent management of pupils by most staff support their learning and self-knowledge.

14. The quality of the teaching throughout the school has improved considerably since the last inspection. The proportion of very good teaching has improved three-fold. The quest by the headteacher for high standards through enhanced teaching quality has been successful. Except in the lower part of the junior department (where it is still generally good), the quality of teaching is very good overall. The training and subsequent work carried out by the school on the three-part lesson format (used for all lessons) have resulted in very strong introductions which have a fast pace and which keep pupils on their toes. Mental work in mathematics is particularly strong because of this. There is very well arranged group and practical work with a high level of challenge. Work is usually precisely matched to pupils' needs and there are very good plenary sessions, when what pupils have learned is thoroughly reinforced and assessed.
15. Pupils are given very good guidance. Every lesson extends their knowledge well and builds effectively on what they have learned before. The promotion of pupils' speaking and listening skills and the opportunities provided for collaboration and discussion are very strong. Key vocabulary (very important words and ideas) is promoted exceptionally well. This occurs in most lessons and significantly aids pupils' understanding. For example, the focus on *digraphs* in Year 6 for pupils who needed extra support with their literacy helped them to learn a new spelling rule, the teaching of *fractions* in Year 3 led to pupils understanding these as ways of *partitioning, dividing and sharing* and *hyperlinks* in a Year 6 ICT lesson were taught as a way of linking to an information page on the Internet. In these examples the key vocabulary was stressed very well.
16. Effective teamwork, especially planning, between staff and teaching assistants results in staff being used efficiently. Teaching assistants perform a vital function in supporting small groups for additional help in literacy and numeracy and do this well. They are well prepared and go beyond their prepared 'script' to ensure that pupils are challenged and extended. Only occasionally, in whole parts of lessons, are they underused. Teachers use resources creatively and often lessons are entertaining, capturing the pupils' imagination and interests. Ideas were put to good effect in a science lesson for Years 5 and 6, where demonstrations using a range of props enabled pupils to effectively gain knowledge of the different ways seeds are dispersed. In a lesson to support logical deduction and inference among gifted and talented pupils in Year 6, a 'murder scene' was examined and the plot analysed. In Reception, children waited with baited breath to hear Ed the Puppet's mistakes in a number sequence, in order to correct him. Lessons are very thoroughly prepared and the very knowledgeable teachers always ensure that pupils are clear about what they are to do and to learn. Pupils know what is expected of them; they rise to the high level of challenge set for them and work exceptionally hard. Teachers tend to emphasise what pupils will

learn over the week (objectives are always clearly displayed on the board or wall), although many do refer to the actual outcomes aimed for in the lesson. Activities are specifically planned for different groups, with work very well matched to their needs. All pupils have personal targets which they clearly understand.

17. The management of pupils is mostly exceptional and, although a few have behavioural difficulties, they are clear about how they should respond. Occasionally, in Years 3 and 4, pupils' enthusiasm leads to silliness by a few and some long introductions mean that the lesson pace wanes and some pupils begin to lose interest.

The leadership and management of the headteacher are very effective; the work of governors in supporting the school and holding it to account for standards is very good.

18. The leadership provided by the headteacher at the time of the previous inspection was good and the close links with the church had a clear influence on pupils' personal development. Two years ago a new headteacher was appointed who has significantly strengthened the provision and who has a very clear vision for the future of the school. She balances development and improvement effectively, despite having to manage these within a climate of falling roles, a local problem. Standards and the quality of teaching have both improved as a result of the measures she has put in place. Academic and personal development are still at the heart of the school's planning, but the emphasis is clearly on the 'whole child' and preparation for their spiritual development, as well as for the next stage in their education.
19. There is a very strong emphasis on the school doing its very best for the pupils. For instance, the headteacher recognised that the formal assessment and monitoring systems needed strengthening both to support pupil progress even more and to enable staff and governors to be very aware of pupils' progress and how improved and accurate information could support the school's target setting. Systems have now been successfully implemented and have led to the school being able to appropriately assign resources to where they are most needed to help pupils. Leadership and management are now very good.
20. The headteacher and senior management team meet regularly and have clear responsibilities which they undertake very effectively. As a result there is a very strong and highly committed staff team who work together very effectively to raise standards and do their very best for the pupils. Teamwork and support for each other is very good. There is a collegiate and consultative style of management which ensures that all staff are involved and their views sought. However, decisive action is quickly taken by the headteacher when needed.
21. Because of the very good communication throughout the school, staff are fully informed of issues and there is constant discussion of the best approaches for certain pupils, usually those with special educational needs or the more able. This helps staff, especially the teachers and teaching assistants in the pupils' class, to provide collaborative teamwork to support them. The complementary skills of the headteacher / senior management team mean that they have an exceptionally good understanding of the needs of the school and measures to be taken to meet them. Clear delegation of responsibilities to senior staff and subject co-ordinators ensures that they feel confident to carry out their tasks and to develop their subjects.
22. The work of governors is very good. They are a highly informed group of people who are very supportive and who have an extremely well developed role in critically appraising the school's work and holding it to account for standards. They have clearly-designated responsibilities, such as for health and safety, information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy, as well as being members of well established committees which can act quickly within their well defined terms of reference. They are very concerned with ensuring that the school is effective and does its best for the pupils, the parents and the church community. They take their roles very seriously and the minutes of their meetings show that they have a great depth of understanding of the issues which face the school. For instance, the curriculum committee analyses and compares the

school's national test results with others, using national and local data. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school and she and other governors frequently visit classes and are fully informed about standards in the school and the 'value' the school adds to pupils' academic and personal progress. Governors are fully involved in development planning and costing and always act to support improvement. There is a need, however, for them to ensure that all risks identified in the school are formally assessed.

23. The school development plan is a comprehensive document which very effectively guides improvement. It identifies in outline form long-term developments and has a detailed one-year plan with clear criteria for measuring the success of the planned actions. However, it does not always specify how standards could improve in terms of pupil outcomes. For instance, in relation to the spending on ICT and the new development of the computer suite there is little in the plan on raising pupils' attainment as a result of this new provision.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, the use of assessment information and the tracking of pupils' progress are very good.

24. The headteacher has instigated a comprehensive range of ways of assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and the work of the school in general. Monitoring and evaluating performance are at the heart of the school's work and are seen as central to school improvement. This feature was a weakness in the last inspection (and a key issue for the school to address). The school did not monitor and evaluate the curriculum, an area which has significantly improved since then. There are now very strong links between monitoring and tracking pupils' performance, monitoring, self-evaluation and school review, development planning and performance-management processes. The school thoroughly analyses pupils' test results and other assessments. As a result of the wide disparity regarding teachers' assessments in science in the Year 2 national tests last year and pupils' results in other areas, work was undertaken in identifying the criteria for assessing the different levels of attainment, especially regarding the higher level. This has enabled teachers to now make more accurate assessments.
25. A wide range of formal and informal assessments guide planning, and records of pupils' progress in relation to these are kept on a central database. These are accessible to all staff and teachers record information about pupils on the computer network. Clear targets in English, mathematics and science are set for individuals (including targets in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs) and the pupils who do not make the expected progress are chosen for additional support. As a result, the school knows its pupils very well and can make sensitive adjustments to their provision according to the results of its tracking.
26. The targets in the school development plan are constantly reviewed by the governors and perceptive termly reports are made. Subject co-ordinators make strong contributions through their action plans and monitor the work carried out very carefully. For instance, the way the ICT co-ordinator has presented the tracking of the action plan, as a display chart, helps all to see progress easily. Adjustments to the development plan are made accordingly and the governors' annual review of performance in relation to school targets is very thorough. Performance-management targets set for staff and the headteacher link very closely with areas where the school has identified that it needs to improve (such as writing last year) and supports the whole process of continued development.
27. Teaching and the curriculum are very well monitored and evaluated, both formally and informally, so that there is a thorough overview of the strengths and weaknesses and what needs to happen next. The headteacher and senior staff visit classrooms regularly to evaluate teaching, the quality of the programmes pupils undertake and teachers' planning. Criteria for evaluation are shared with class teachers and the feedback from lessons results in guidance for further improvement both in the short-term and for the year ahead. The standard and quality of work produced by pupils are monitored at regular intervals by the headteacher and co-ordinators. As a result, there is a very detailed and relevant school-improvement plan. It strongly reflects school priorities by focusing on developing better provision.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The further development of the provision for information and communication technology (ICT).

28. The senior management team and governors have worked hard to improve ICT provision and to provide systematic teaching of ICT to large groups (usually half a class at a time for half an hour per week). This takes place in a well-designed computer suite which is relatively new. Before this, pupils used a small number of computers in each class and access was inevitably limited. Some of these have been moved to the computer area and have been supplemented with newly-purchased PCs. Technical problems have slowed pupils' access, but now that these have been resolved pupils have ICT lessons regularly each week. Their skills are approaching what they should be for their ages and the youngest pupils are gaining a wider knowledge more quickly than the older pupils. Year 6 pupils are beginning to consider how to construct 'pages' for a multimedia presentation and use the Internet to search for pictures. Some are not particularly confident in using a search engine. Most can save their work, but do not always transfer this knowledge from one application to another. Computers are used to support learning in other subjects, although for those classes now without computers teachers have to book the suite and plan the timing of the opportunities carefully. Pupils in a class for Years 5 and 6 produced some high-quality images in art based on Mondrian, Klee and Kandinsky, when they were using drawing/painting software which they are very familiar with. Teachers are beginning to develop and use ways of teaching which most effectively help pupils. Teachers are confident and have gained good ICT knowledge from the national training programme that most have now completed. However, they are new to teaching pupils in the computer suite and have yet to use fully the most effective methods. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory, but was characterised by ensuring that pupils follow what the teacher has asked, step-by-step. Pupils who finish quickly, therefore, had to wait for others and there was little in place to enable them to work as independently as possible (such as guidance sheets or copies of menu sequences). The quality of demonstrations is variable and they sometimes do not occur until it is noticed that pupils are having difficulties.
29. The school is planning to expand its resources to extend the number of computers in the classrooms and increase access outside the half-hour computer lesson. This will enable a more varied use of ICT in other subjects. The provision is managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has done much to raise the profile of the subject. However, provision, standards and the quality of teaching are not yet at the level of other 'key' subjects in the school.

The formal recording of risk assessments made by the school.

30. This is a school that puts much value on the personal care of pupils and fosters excellent relationships where pupils feel valued and safe. Health-and-safety procedures are clearly documented and regular checks are carried out by the deputy headteacher and governor responsible for this area. A termly written report is produced which specifically outlines issues. Half-termly fire drills are undertaken and recorded and annual checks of fire extinguishers, physical-education equipment and electrical equipment are carried out by contractors. Although much discussion occurs about possible risks, such as daily guidance given to staff and pupils when builders were working recently on the school site, no formal written risk assessments are made, apart from those for educational visits.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. In order to improve the educational standards and rectify the weaknesses the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:
- improve the provision for ICT by ensuring that:

- i) teachers use a wide variety of ways of teaching the subject and become more knowledgeable and experienced in its use so that pupils become more independent users;
- ii) the numbers of computers continues to increase so that all pupils have equal access to them in their classrooms.

(Paragraphs 28 and 29)

- ensure that assessments made of the risks identified in the school are formally recorded.

(Paragraph 30)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	16	11	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	52	35	13	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	207
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	20	17	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	20
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	35	34	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	92 (96)	100 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	14	17	18
	Total	29	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (91)	89 (96)	92 (100)
	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	21	22	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	20
	Girls	21	19	21
	Total	39	36	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (79)	84 (79)	95 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	20
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	39	37	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (79)	86 (79)	95 (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	176	1	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	91

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	433,647
Total expenditure	430,568
Expenditure per pupil	2,080
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,605
Balance carried forward to next year	3,079

Recruitment of teachers

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

Number of questionnaires sent out

207

Number of questionnaires returned

108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	30	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	38	7	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	47	8	0	1
The teaching is good.	63	33	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	45	2	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	28	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	52	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	3	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	38	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	50	8	1	5