

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119672

Headteacher: Mrs S J McCluskey

Reporting inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis
2711

Dates of inspection: 7 – 8 July 2003

Inspection number: 248049

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
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hornchurch Drive Chorley
Postcode:	PR7 2RJ
Telephone number:	01257 262811
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Very Reverend Canon K Mullen
Date of previous inspection:	27 th November 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Catholic Primary is an average-sized school. It draws its pupils from the local area, which comprises owner-occupied and rented accommodation. At the time of the inspection there were 199 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and eleven. Numbers are slightly lower than the last inspection. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low compared with the national average. Sixteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN), which is well below average. Pupils receive support for their emotional, behavioural, speech and communication, physical, autistic and concentration skills. Three pupils had Statements of Special Educational Needs, which is also below average. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin, although there are a small number of white Irish, white and Asian and mixed ethnic pupils. One pupil speaks English as an additional language (EAL). The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are below average. Few parents claim a free school meal for their children. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with many very effective features. The teachers know what makes the pupils tick and get the very best out of them. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average and much higher than on entry. Achievement is thus very good. This is because teaching and learning are very good, standards are closely tracked and challenging work constantly set across the ability range. The school is very well led at all levels and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good leadership and management are embedded at all levels and provide a very strong drive for further improvement.
- Very good teaching helps all groups of pupils work to their limits and achieve very well. Achievement is particularly high in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' personal needs and academic needs are carefully identified and, as a result teachers are very proactive in including all pupils and meeting their individual needs.
- Very good care and provision for pupils' social and moral development promote very good attitudes to learning, excellent behaviour and relationships and very strong personal development.

What could be improved

- Achievement could be raised in writing through the school, so as to ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6.

This area for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997, when standards were average in English, mathematics and science. There has been very good improvement since then. The school has constantly striven to improve provision and standards in all areas despite no key issues being identified in the last report. Standards have risen significantly and are now above average overall. Achievement has improved from satisfactory to very good. Standards and achievement have improved as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have become embedded. Very high standards of behaviour and first-rate relationships have been sustained. High attendance has been established. Teaching has improved from good to very good because of systematic staff training and the support given by subject co-ordinators to other teachers. Standards are higher in information and communication technology (ICT) as a result of the development of an ICT suite, very good subject co-ordination and staff training. Although standards were not inspected in depth in other subjects, samples of work and observation of some lessons indicate that standards have risen in these as well. The work of subject co-ordinators is now very good. It has been strengthened through more focused work on continuously monitoring provision and standards. The strategic work of the governors has improved. Their key strength in financial management has been

sustained. Cost effectiveness has improved because the school thoroughly evaluates its spending to meet the needs of all pupils. Tighter funding has necessitated some recent cutbacks in staff training, the replacement of resources and the reduction in time of non-teaching staff. Despite this, the school has a very good capacity for 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	C	B	B	C
mathematics	C	B	A*	A
science	B	B	B	C

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

Overall, results last year were well above average. Standards were particularly high in mathematics where they have risen rapidly in the last three years. The proportion of pupils reaching level 4 and the higher level 5 were both in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards in English and science in 2002 were above average with fewer pupils reaching the higher level than in mathematics. In the 2002 tests at the end of Year 2 standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments showed that standards in science were also well above average.

Work seen during the inspection shows that nearly all children are achieving well and are reaching or exceeding the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. This is because the teaching is consistently good. They do very well in advancing their standards in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils continue to do well by the end of Year 2 where the very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have been sustained again because of consistently good teaching. Standards show further improvement by the end of Year 6, with a cohort of pupils, who are not as able as last year. The school has just exceeded its challenging targets for the National Curriculum tests in 2003. Standards in English are above average and similar to last year. Pupils do well in English but make better progress in reading than in writing. Pupils do very well in mathematics and science, and this is reflected in the current test results. Standards are well above average in mathematics, with slightly fewer pupils reaching level 5 than last year. Standards in science are also well above average and much improved. Nearly two-thirds of pupils reached level 5 in the recent National Curriculum tests, because of more focus on scientific enquiry. Standards in ICT are above average and rising rapidly.

Many pupils are learning at the limits of their capabilities. Overall, achievement remains very good and has been consolidated. Girls and boys achieve equally highly. SEN and EAL pupils achieve very well, as do higher-attaining pupils. Average-attaining pupils also achieve very well overall because of their very strong performance in mathematics and science, but their achievement in writing could be higher.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school because they are given challenging and varied work to do. They are very eager to learn and do well.
Behaviour, in and out of	Excellent. Pupils have a strong empathy with the school's very high

classrooms	expectations of behaviour which they follow both in and out of lessons.
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Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' have plenty of opportunities to use initiative and independence in their learning which helps them show maturity for their age. Relationships are excellent at all levels.
Attendance	Very good. Improved, and now well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good overall because of the very high proportion of teaching that is either good or very good. Some very good teaching was seen in all years. The quality of teaching is highest in Year 6 where teaching is never less than very good and occasionally outstanding. This very high quality of teaching was also seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson taken by the Year 6 class teacher. English is taught well across the school and no lessons seen were less than good. However, the evidence from the Year 6 test results show that over time the teaching of reading is more effective than the teaching of writing. Literacy is used very well across the curriculum. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is very good across all years because the National Numeracy Strategy has been particularly well adapted to the needs of the pupils. The arrangement in which the English and mathematics specialists teach the Year 5 and 6 classes is working very effectively and making a major contribution to standards. Plenty of investigative work is undertaken in science but pupils could have more opportunity to test their own ideas.

Strengths in the quality of teaching include very high expectations, the very good behaviour management in all classes, the use of a wide variety of teaching and learning approaches that keep pupils interested and motivated and a very good knowledge of the subjects that teachers teach. Lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace and pupils are kept learning up to the very last minute. Pupils learn through a rich diet of structured and independent activities and increasing use is being made of ICT across subjects. The school meets the needs of all groups of pupils very well. Target and mainstream groups are identified in each class. Challenging work is set for these and other individuals. SEN pupils are very carefully identified and supported as is the occasional pupil who lacks fluency in English. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive the necessary specialist support.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. An imaginative, rich and varied curriculum includes and meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Carefully managed innovations are precisely directed to meet pupils' changing needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. These pupils are carefully identified. A challenging curriculum is provided which is very well matched to their needs. Very strong care and ethos ensure these pupils are supported very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. When the opportunity arises very effective steps are taken to provide the necessary support.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Excellent spiritual and moral provision ensures pupils blossom in a climate of trust and take care of each other. Very good social development ensures pupils develop very good attitudes to learning. Pupils have a very strong sense of their own culture and an effective awareness of a range of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. All teachers know their pupils very well. Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is a key strength of the school. Teachers' use assessment extremely carefully to inform planning.

The curriculum is enhanced by a varied range of extra-curricular activities, an after-school club, visits and workshops. Lessons which specifically focus on pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) are a strong feature of the timetable and help pupils understand themselves and others. Parents have very good views of the school. The school would like more parents to be involved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher leads and manages the pace of change extremely well. The senior management team lead their areas of responsibility very well. Subject co-ordinators are very effective in leading and managing their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Improved. Governors are very supportive and play an influential role in strategic developments, financial planning and in ensuring the school is developing as well as it can.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. All staff and governors are constantly engaged in reviewing all they do and set a very clear agenda for change.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. All money is carefully accounted for and wisely spent. The costs of the development plan are very carefully thought through. Classrooms and other areas for learning are imaginatively laid out. Learning resources are readily available and used very well. Provision for ICT is good and rapidly improving. The accommodation is very well used.

A particular strength is the excellent leadership of the headteacher. She has ensured very good improvement since the last inspection, through careful analysis of performance and prioritising the areas for development. Principles of best value are effectively applied.

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 coming to school, work very hard and behave well. • The school is very well led and managed. • Their children make very good progress because they are expected to work hard. • Parents are very comfortable about approaching the school with problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents would like the school to work more closely with them. • The amount of homework. • A few parents would like to be more informed about how their child is getting on.

The inspection team fully agree with parents' views of the strengths of the school. The concerns of parents were fully investigated. The inspectors agree with the minor concerns of parents which the school are keen to remedy. The school already has some parents who come into school to help and they are keen to have more and will provide the necessary training and support. Pupils regularly receive homework. However, homework could be more structured and parents made more aware of what to expect so that they could better support the school and their children. Some parents of pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not get the opportunity to see their children's English and mathematics teachers in person, because of the use of specialist subject teachers in these years, although a written report is available. Otherwise reports, and arrangements to discuss them, are very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Very good leadership and management are embedded at all levels and provide a very strong drive for further improvement.

1. The headteacher is an excellent leader and brings the best out of her staff. She has built a very strong senior management team and group of subject co-ordinators who are focused on driving up standards. Everyone knows where they are going and what they have to do to get there. She has established a school in which all pupils are valued, supported and learn towards the limits of their capabilities. Staff are very well trained and are keen to learn about and apply best practice from elsewhere. As a result teamwork is of a very high order. Energies are channelled to bring about the biggest impact on pupils' achievements. Subject co-ordinators show initiative in bringing innovation to their subjects and help other staff implement new ideas. Other teachers and non-teaching staff are fully involved in decision making. It is the constant process of self review by all staff that provides the very strong drive forward.
2. There are several factors contributing to the very effective way in which the school is managed. The headteacher gauges and manages the pace of change very well. Staff know all pupils extremely well, and structured discussion helps to ensure that their needs are discussed and met. The curriculum is very well managed so that due emphasis is given to English, mathematics and science. Appropriate time is given to other subjects. Strong links are made between subjects and the effectiveness of the curriculum is constantly reviewed. Staff are deployed very well so that their subject expertise and skills are utilised to best effect. For example, some teachers teach English, mathematics, ICT, music or physical education to classes other than their own. This helps to make learning as challenging and varied as possible. The assessment of teachers' performance is especially well managed. Teaching is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Consequently teachers all have clear personal and class targets and a target related to raising standards in reading and writing. The very carefully thought out management of new initiatives is fundamental to the schools continued success.
3. Governance has improved and is now very effective. The governing body, which is very well chaired, has demonstrated a long-term commitment to providing the best possible education for all pupils. Current analysis of their own training needs is an example of how they develop their skills to further improve their work. Governors are very supportive to staff and help oversee pupils' spiritual development. They are fully involved in reviewing and formulating policies. Consequently, they have ensured that all statutory requirements are met. New policies, such as those introduced to promote inclusivity in relation to race, disability and sex education, have been introduced very well. Their committee structure works especially well. This is because the pattern of work over the course of the year is enmeshed and harmonised with the annual cycles of financial and development planning. Regular planned visits, and detailed reports from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, help keep them very well informed. Consequently, they are able to make a full contribution to the very well-prioritised and costed development plan. Governors deal with any issues openly and frankly. Difficult decisions, that have occasionally risen, have not been shirked. Very good financial oversight is a further strength of their work, aided by well-presented information. This is well illustrated in the way in which money has been targeted in recent years to improve the accommodation, computer facilities, the level of teaching assistants and high quality learning resources across the curriculum. Governors have an effective understanding of the principles of best value but rightly have identified that they need to develop a better understanding of assessment data. Discussions with staff show that the governors act as critical friends and fully hold the school to account for its work. All these factors illustrate the very strong influence and very strong impact they have.

Very good teaching helps all groups of pupils work to their limits and achieve very well. Achievement is particularly high in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.

4. The very high quality of the teaching and learning is another key reason why the school is so successful. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Almost nine out of ten lessons seen in the inspection were judged to be at least good. Just under half were judged to be very good or excellent. Some very good teaching was seen in all years. This is a much stronger picture than at the last inspection where there was less very good and excellent teaching. Improvement is due to systematic training, the continual help and support that subject co-ordinators give to other colleagues and the very good use of national planning guidance.
5. There are some consistent and very well-developed features of teaching. As one parent said at the parents' meeting "the teachers know how the children tick and how to get the best out of them". Classrooms are friendly and happy places to be in and a work ethic pervades the school. Teachers have a very well developed knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and of how the National Curriculum can be best delivered. Time is used very well in lessons. Pupils learn right up to the very last minute and are equally productive in the afternoon as in the morning. All teachers manage their pupils very well and the school's behaviour policy is applied at all times. This ensures that pupils are kept on task and time is used to the full. Teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly. They identify precise learning objectives, for different groups of pupils, which are shared with them. Often they are displayed on the board and this helps pupils to be clear about what they are expected to learn. Teachers use a very wide variety of approaches and methods in teaching and learning. This, and good humour, does much to develop pupils' enthusiasm for learning and keeps them interested and motivated. Teaching assistants and other adults who support in classrooms are very carefully briefed and consequently direct their support very effectively to the pupils they help.
6. Teaching in the reception class is very good across all areas of learning. Staff create a warm and friendly atmosphere with clear routines which enables the children to feel assured in their learning. For example, when listening to a big book story *The Train Ride*, the children put their hands up rather than calling out, thus co-operating very well with their teacher and other children. The curriculum is very well planned to make all areas of learning interesting during play, active learning and more formal activities. The classroom is very attractively laid out and provides a stimulating learning environment. Children look forward enthusiastically to using ICT. They enjoy working independently and in pairs or groups. Learning objectives are made crystal clear to the children and challenging tasks are well matched to children's individual learning needs. For example, the children followed up *The Train Ride* story through related practical activities such as building a train track, role play in the ticket office which encouraged the development of phonics and a variety of writing activities to help encourage new ideas. The very good teaching results in children working very productively. The strong start made in the reception class is an important factor in setting the tone of future learning.
7. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics because teaching is very good. A similar arrangement to English occurs in mathematics where Years 5 and Year 6 classes are taught by the Year 6 teacher, who has expert knowledge of the subject. The efficacy of this arrangement was evident in an outstanding lesson seen where the Year 6 teacher taught the Year 5 class. In this, a very brisk start was made. A mental warm-up helped pupils get their minds on task and become familiar with the idea of a number square. Pupils then had to calculate the sum of three consecutive numbers such as $15 + 16 + 17 = 48$, or $25 + 26 + 27 = 78$ or $49 + 50 + 51 = 150$. All the time the teacher carefully directed pupils to calculate number patterns which were within their individual capabilities. Incisive questioning, which brought in and recognised the answers of pupils of differing abilities, enabled some pupils to come up with the idea that the total of the three numbers is equal to the middle number multiplied by 3. So the pupils tested their answer and found this to be the case. Step by step the idea was extended to more sequences of numbers. By the end of the lesson the higher-attaining pupils could correctly work out similar rules that would apply to numbers in the shape of a Z or a cross. Lower-attaining pupils confidently applied their rules to higher combinations of numbers. So much enthusiasm was generated that it was hard to stop the pupils from working and many stayed behind to discuss the problem more. This is a very telling example of how pupils are kept on their toes and working to the edges of their capabilities. Very high levels of interest and motivation were seen in other mathematics lessons as a result of very well chosen activities that stimulated all groups of pupils in the classes in Years 1 and 6. There are two

important reasons why mathematics is a key strength. All areas of the mathematics curriculum are taught rigorously and the National Numeracy Strategy has been very well adapted to suit the needs of the pupils.

8. Pupils also achieve very well in science because teaching is very good. Teachers introduce as much experimental and investigative science as possible and enable pupils to learn the right facts and ideas at the right time. Work in pupils' books is very well presented across the ability range and a vocabulary is highlighted. Teachers have a very well-developed knowledge of the subject. Pupils show increasingly high levels of confidence in planning and carrying out investigations as they move up the school. However, the very high standards of enquiry would be even better if pupils tested their own ideas more often and used ICT on occasions to gather experimental data. By Year 6, pupils have an in-depth knowledge of scientific facts and an understanding of a broad range of ideas, across the ability range. They are comfortable in applying these to unfamiliar situations. These factors are helping them do very well in the National Curriculum tests. However, there is scope for the older, average and lower attaining pupils to be more precise about the significance, validity and reliability of experimental data.
9. Although the teaching in English is good and pupils achieve well, they do not attain the same high standards as in mathematics and science in Year 6. The school has recognised some factors that act as barriers to more pupils reaching the higher levels, particularly in writing and is taking appropriate steps to overcome these. Teachers have effectively adapted the National Literacy Strategy to suit the needs of the pupils in the school. A wide range of teaching methods and learning activities are employed which helps sustain pupils' interest and enjoyment of the subject. Marking, and the targets that teachers set for pupils, enable them to have a very clear idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6 because the English specialist in Year 5 teaches both classes. Work is very well presented. Literacy is used well across the curriculum.
10. Other aspects of teaching and learning are also developing very well. The school now has a very good computer suite and has increased its numbers of computers. Much effort has gone into improving teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. The subject is very well led and is increasingly becoming embedded across the curriculum. Standards are above average and rapidly rising. They are not yet even across all areas of work and are higher when pupils use multi-media resources or the Internet for research than when they use spreadsheets, e-mail or computers for control. Opportunities for independent work strongly feature in pupils' learning across the curriculum which also contributes to the very high achievement.

Pupils' personal needs and academic needs are carefully identified and, as a result, teachers are very proactive in including all pupils and meeting their individual needs.

11. The make-up of the school is more complex than it would appear at first sight. Twenty pupils have been identified as being more able whilst others have much lower abilities. Pupils receive widely different support at home. Some pupils have experienced disruption to family life. Around one in twelve pupils has special educational needs and three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. One pupil joined the school three years ago with no fluency in English. A very small number of pupils come from an ethnic minority background.
12. A variety of actions are taken to include all pupils at all stages. Pupils' personal needs are identified very early on, through evidence gained in class and discussion with parents and carers. New pupils quickly settle into school. Any domestic problems are spotted quickly, sensitively discussed with parents or carers, and appropriate action identified. Teachers act promptly if a pupil is unhappy or under pressure. The very close knowledge that class teachers have of their pupils and the very good relationships they have with them enable them to care for their pupils very well.
13. The school has first-rate, but manageable, systems for identifying and tracking pupils' academic needs, especially in English and mathematics. It uses a variety of assessments to enable this to happen. Tests are used in all years to help assess performance. A termly sample of representative work of pupils of differing abilities in each year group is moderated by all staff. This is a powerful

example of the ways in which the whole staff informs itself of and discusses standards and progress. Pupils who make better or worse progress than expected are identified and targets are set of which the pupils are aware. In addition, pupils who would benefit are allocated to more specialised teaching in small groups. In Year 1, early literacy support (ELS) groups are provided for those pupils who need a boost to their literacy development. Later on, a boost to literacy is given in additional literacy support (ALS) groups in Years 3 and 4 and a further literacy support (FLS) group in Year 5. Booster classes also help raise standards in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 5 and 6. This focused pattern of support is a key factor in addressing the core standards of pupils. Pupils' performance is also systematically assessed in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. The information further informs staff of the standards being attained. This again characterises the detailed attention given to identifying strengths and weaknesses in standards.

14. Pupils' needs are also carefully addressed when teachers plan their lessons. All groups of pupils are included and given challenging work. Weekly planning for literacy and numeracy is carefully set out and monitored. This ensures that challenging work is set for a target group of higher-attaining pupils, mainstream groups of average-attaining pupils and other pupils many of whom have special educational needs. This system is working very well, especially as class teachers carefully note and monitor pupils' progress.
15. The needs and support given to SEN pupils is also very good, although the number involved is well below the national average. At the parents' meeting, one parent pointed out that her child had a special need that the teachers had not encountered before. As a result teachers decided to undergo further training so that they could offer the correct support. She thought that "this was normal but now realises that this is not always the case in other schools". Pupils' needs are carefully identified and provided for by class teachers and the support offered by teaching assistants. Three pupils currently have a Statement of Special Educational needs. These pupils' are exceptionally well supported. For example, one such pupil with autistic needs has full-time support and uses a laptop computer. The whole range of support that he receives is of an extremely high order. The very close support SEN pupils receive allows them to play a full part in all activities and to achieve very well. Many SEN pupils attain the nationally expected standard by the end of Year 6 or improve two levels between Year 2 and Year 6, both of which demonstrate much better achievement than that expected for their capabilities.
16. Occasionally, a pupil comes to the school with little fluency in English and speaks another language at home. When this arises, prompt steps are taken to provide the necessary support. The last such pupil entered the school three years ago. He is now fully fluent in English and fully integrated into lessons. The school has identified around 20 more able pupils whose needs and progress are carefully tracked and challenging work keeps these fully stretched.
17. A broad, balanced, varied and very rich curriculum also helps to keep the pupils learning at a very brisk rate and helps to raise their aspirations. The National Curriculum has been very well adapted to meet the needs of the pupils the school serves. Emphasis is given to the English and mathematics curriculum. However, this is not at the expense of other subjects, which are taught in an innovative and creative manner. The curriculum is enriched by a varied range of extra-curricular activities, an after-school club, visits and workshops. The take up by pupils is very high.

Very good care and provision for pupils' social and moral development promote very good attitudes to learning, excellent behaviour and relationships and very strong personal development.

18. Pupils feel very secure and cared for. This is because very effective policies and procedures have been established for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare at all times. As one member of staff said "if we see a distressed child in any part of the school, a member of staff will pick this up immediately. Problems are nipped in the bud!" The health and safety policy is also very clear and applied consistently. Unusually for a primary school, all staff are trained in first aid. Pupils' personal development is discussed and any issues are carefully acted upon. The school takes a proactive approach in contacting parents to follow up points which are identified. Matters are

carefully discussed with parents, and, as one said, "My child was coasting. This was spotted by the school. We discussed it and a plan of action was initiated".

19. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and bring industry to their work. They look forward to coming to school. Their attendance record is very good. This is supported by parents who see the importance of regular attendance. They do their best to support this and fewer take holidays in June and July than at the last inspection. In lessons pupils are very keen to tackle new tasks and keep focused and concentrate on the activities they undertake. Lessons start promptly and pupils work up to the very last second. In Years 3 to 6, nearly all pupils are involved in one or more extra-curricular activities, of which there is a fulsome programme. An after-school club caters for pupils who cannot immediately go home. This provides interesting activities, helps with homework, and promotes a spirit of active learning.
20. Behaviour is excellent in classrooms, when pupils are moving around the school and at lunchtime and playtime. Relationships at all levels are also excellent. Pupils themselves say that the other children in the school are very well behaved. No pupil has been excluded since the last inspection and well before this. There are several reasons for this. There is a very strong emphasis on pupils' moral and social development and this permeates the school. Staff act as very clear role models. They expect and insist on high standards of behaviour at all times. Pupils have drawn up their own class rules, which they obey because they have ownership and have discussed what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour. There is an active school council. Representatives from each class take their role very seriously and follow up issues that are later raised at staff meetings.
21. Pupils' personal development is very good and encouraged in a number of ways. Pupils show a maturity for their age, and by Year 6 they are confident and assured. The school encourages high self-esteem in its pupils and a positive can-do approach. There is a much improved programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). For example, in a lesson seen in Year 6 pupils showed a highly developed understanding of the laws relating to alcohol and possible effects on their bodies and later lives of alcohol abuse. They have a very well developed sense of "what is right" for their age. Increased emphasis has been given to pupils' cultural development and pupils have a very well developed sense of their own culture.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Achievement could be raised in writing through the school, so as to ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6.

22. Although standards are continuing to rise in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6, and a very high proportion of pupils reach the higher level (level 5) in mathematics and science, the proportion reaching the higher level in English is not as high. This is particularly the case in writing, although more pupils could also reach the higher levels in reading. The current Year 6 pupils achieved well in reading, but satisfactorily in writing, in this year's National Curriculum tests, compared with their prior attainment. The school is aware of this issue and has been working on it for some time.
23. A number of barriers to progress have been identified and are being tackled more vigorously. For example, in reading some pupils lack the necessary books at home or receive too little parental help in developing their literacy skills. Consequently, the school is trying to elicit better parental help and support. The school library has not been used as effectively as it should and so more comics and magazines have been provided. The timetabled reading of a class novel is an initiative that is working particularly well and is helping to raise standards and achievement.
24. Initiatives in writing have been instigated more recently, and so have not yet had time to make a positive impact on standards. Guided writing has been emphasised more in the literacy hour. Teachers have observed each other's lessons in order to see how to improve their practice. The English co-ordinator and other teachers have visited a "Beacon" school and have observed leading literacy teachers in order to learn from best practice elsewhere. The co-ordinator is also checking teachers' weekly planning and developing a guided writing plan for all pupils. Pupils also have very clear writing targets. Opportunities for writing in other subjects of the National Curriculum are also

being explored. This is a very useful strategy, as, for example, there is scope to do more extended writing in science, history and geography. Standards are also being more carefully targeted in booster lessons. There are some signs that these steps are starting to take root and are having a positive effect on raising achievement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To further improve standards, the governors, headteacher and staff need to:

- Improve standards and achievement in writing by the end of Year 6 by implementing the current development plan devised for this. [This is indicated in paragraphs 24 to 26]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	7	2	0	0	0
Percentage	5	47	37	11	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 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)	199
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
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	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	24	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (96)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	12	13	14
	Total	23	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	92 (100)	96 (93)
	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	18	19	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	18
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	33	34	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (94)	92 (88)	100 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	33	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (85)	92 (91)	95 (91)
	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	191	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	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	24.5
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	452360
Total expenditure	402714
Expenditure per pupil	2024
Balance brought forward from previous year	43671
Balance carried forward to next year	51716

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	55	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	63	35	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	11	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	34	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	28	0	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	48	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	40	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	45	6	2	2