

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ST BEDE'S RC (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Clayton Green, Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119674

Headteacher: Mrs J Kennedy

Reporting inspector: Mrs P A Simpson  
1515

Dates of inspection: 5 – 6 November 2002

Inspection number: 248050

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 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Preston Road  
Clayton Green  
Nr. Chorley  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR6 7EB

Telephone number: 01772 335861

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Anthony Colgan

Date of previous inspection: 9 February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Bede's Roman Catholic (VA) Primary School serves the parish of St Bede's in Clayton Green, near Chorley, Lancashire. There are 217 pupils (115 girls and 102 boys) on roll, ranging from four to 11 years of age. At the time of the inspection 55 children were under the age of six. There are eight classes and the school roll is stable. There are no children who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils (11.5 per cent) eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs (7.8 per cent) due to moderate or other learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. On intake most of the children have experienced pre-school provision through attendance at nurseries, playgroups and toddler groups. The results of tests conducted when children enter the school show that attainment is broadly average for children of this age in basic numeracy and literacy skills.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

St Bede's is an effective school. Pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics when compared with their attainment on entry because the teaching is good. The headteacher and senior staff provide a clear direction for the work of the school. The school's aims and values are reflected in all its work. There is a shared commitment to improvement by the staff and governing body. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils attained well above average standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher and key staff, in partnership with the governing body, lead and manage the school effectively.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good overall.
- The school's links with parents are very good; they are very supportive of the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- Day-to-day lesson planning for all of the subjects (except for English and mathematics).
- The procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress and better use made of assessment information when planning future work.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in February 1998. The overall improvement since then is good. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. Changes in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have led to several developments including compliance with the statutory requirements for ICT. A discrete ICT and library resource area is planned for 2003. Systematic procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's performance and cost effectiveness. The school makes good use of its performance data as a means of raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen since 1998 in the core subjects. Over the last four years standards have been consistently well above average at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of 11 standards achieved are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards have risen in ICT, but there is more to be done in regard to controlling and monitoring devices and modelling activities in Years 5 and 6. Assessment and recording are still not consistently applied across the subjects of the curriculum. This is recognised in the school development plan as an area needing further development.

## 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	D	C	A	A*
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
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 information above shows that the school's national test results at age 11 in 2002 for English and mathematics were well above the national average, and in science above average. Comparison with schools of similar type (those that have more than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent free school meals) shows that standards in 2002 were above average in science, well above average in mathematics and in English they were very high, placing them within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. The percentage of pupils who exceeded the higher than expected level (the expected attainment of pupils at age seven is Level 2 and, at the age of 11, Level 4) was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and in science it was broadly average. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, both boys and girls have exceeded the national averages in all three core subjects. The targets set by the governing body for English and mathematics in 2002 were exceeded. This was due to several factors, which include the introduction of a 'booster' class in Year 6, a homework club and changes due to migration rates in this group of pupils. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence show a consistency with this pattern of achievement.

The school's national test results at the age of seven in 2002 show that the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Comparison with schools of a similar type shows that standards were well above average in reading and mathematics, and in writing they were very high, placing them within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. The percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments placed pupils as average in science for this same year. Children in the Foundation Stage of the curriculum achieve, by the time they reach the end of the reception year, the Early Learning Goals. Their personal, social and emotional development is better than expected. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT are broadly average in Years 1 to 4. There is more to be done with regard to controlling devices, and exploring models using computers in Years 5 and 6. This is planned for as part of the ICT and school development plan.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are proud of their school and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. This is the view of almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection parental questionnaire.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and they carry out their duties enthusiastically.

Attendance	Good. There was no unauthorised absence in 2001/2.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils make good progress particularly in literacy and numeracy. Basic skills are taught well and teachers have a secure subject knowledge of English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The good teaching and support provided by teaching assistants has a positive impact on pupils' learning and their attitudes to school. Teachers and support staff are very aware of the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are an established part of the school curriculum with about one half of the teaching time devoted to this work. The management of pupils is very good. Day-to-day lesson planning in English and mathematics is structured according to the two national strategies, but for the other subjects there is no whole-school approach. The lesson plan proforma, which the school decided to use during the inspection days, was unfamiliar to the teachers and as they are not used to planning in this way, some lessons ran out of time. The quality of assessment is good in English and mathematics, but assessment opportunities do not feature as a rule in the planning of the other subjects of the National Curriculum.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad ranging and takes very good account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. There is no whole-school approach to day-to-day planning for the curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics and the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's values embrace inclusion for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive focused support to meet their needs. They are integrated well into all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well. The learning environment and resources do not sufficiently represent the cultural diversity of society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils.

The school has not adopted a whole-school approach to day-to-day subject planning with the exceptions of English and mathematics and the Foundation Stage. Subject co-ordinators do, however, provide a yearly curriculum overview and medium-term plans list each half term's work. As yet there is no whole-school approach for assessing pupils' attainment and progress or for using assessment to inform future planning in science and the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils from Year 1. The school has well-established links with parents, St Bede's Church and the wider community, including the adjacent 'Chill Out Kids Club' and the 'Magical Moments' providers of pre-school care. Following the 1998 post-inspection action plan, the National Curriculum for ICT now meets the statutory requirements.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff bring a clear direction to the work of the school. The staff work together as a team. There is a shared commitment to school improvement. The upward trend in achievements in English by the age of 11 and increased resourcing for ICT so as to raise standards are both examples of this commitment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The supportive governing body have defined their roles and statutory responsibilities following the 1998 inspection and they meet their responsibilities. Recent information has been added to the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents 2002.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Senior staff systematically monitor and evaluate the outcomes of attainment on entry information, national tests, additional tests conducted by the school and of the social and economic data made available to them. Subject linked governors make visits to classes.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body and headteacher give considered attention to the best use of resources by linking decisions on spending to the priorities identified in the school development plan.

The school has a strategic development plan for the period 2001-2003. The main aim of the governing body is contained in the school mission statement, 'Happiness - Learning - Achievement'. The school's performance management policy is embedded in the work of the school. The performance management arrangements are closely aligned with the school development plan. Teaching and non-teaching staff are all included in the yearly review of performance management. The headteacher monitors the weekly planning against the medium-term planning. Observations have formally taken place of literacy and numeracy lessons and on occasions visits have been made to see science, music and art lessons. The outcomes of these visits are shared with staff as a means of identifying strengths and areas for further improvement. Samples of pupils' work have also been scrutinised by key staff. A rota has been put into place for the allocation of specific non-teaching time for those with management roles to carry out their monitoring responsibilities. English, mathematics and ICT are led well. These subject co-ordinators have a very good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the provision and standards in these subjects. Each has compiled, in association with staff, subject action plans that are closely linked to the priorities of the school development plan. Effective use is made of ICT as an administrative tool and the established internal systems and procedures provide a very good level of financial control.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>The quality of teaching is good and their children make good progress as a result.</li> <li>Standards of behaviour are good.</li> <li>The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>The school provides the right amount of homework.</li> <li>The school works closely with them.</li> <li>The school provides a range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	

The inspection team agrees with the parents' views of the school. There were no overall issues raised by parents. A very small number of parents felt that they would like more information about the school and pupil progress. In 1998, the inspection reported that the school's prospectus provided insufficient information on items such as curriculum, teaching methods and attendance and that the last (1997) governors' annual report to parents did not comply fully with the requirements. The pre-inspection analysis conducted in October 2002 prior to the recent school inspection revealed that there were still some statutory omissions in the 2001 versions of these documents. As a result of this, the governing body acted immediately to rectify the matter.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Pupils attained well above average standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics.**

1. The school's national test results at age 11 in 2002, for English and mathematics, were well above the average in comparison with all schools nationally. Information based on the prior attainment of this group at the end of Year 2 in 1998, shows that they made very good progress in English and good progress in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are given focused support and, as a result, they make the same rates of progress as their peers. Standards in mathematics have been consistently higher than the national average at the end of Year 6 since 1998.
2. Comparison with schools of similar type (those that have more than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) shows that standards in 2002 were well above average in mathematics and in English they were very high, placing them within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. The percentage of pupils who exceeded the higher than expected level (the expected attainment of pupils at age seven is Level 2 and, at the age of 11, Level 4) was well above the national average in English and mathematics. There are no significant differences in the attainments of boys and girls. Taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, boys and girls exceeded the national averages for their age group in both subjects.
3. The school's national test results at the age of seven in 2002, show that the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Comparison with schools of a similar type shows that standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and in writing they were very high, placing them within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. The percentage of pupils exceeding the expected Level 2 was well above average in English and mathematics. Over the last five years, 1998-2002, both boys and girls have exceeded the national averages by gender in the respective years in their reading, writing and mathematics. Taking the five years from 1998 to 2002, standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2, have been consistently well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence show a consistency with this pattern of higher than average achievements in English and mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6. The different groupings in the school are achieving to the best of their capabilities. In the reception class good attention is given to developing children's basic literacy and numeracy skills. The children can combine letters to represent discrete words and higher attaining children are beginning to use phonic knowledge to build words. Good opportunities are provided for all children to write independently. Children are developing their mathematical ideas to solve practical problems; for example, when finding out how many children fit into a 'large sleeping bag' - ten! They can present their work pictorially, order numbers and are beginning to develop an awareness of time.
5. In English, by the end of Year 2, pupils can read and write for a range of purposes. Their work is presented well. Higher attaining pupils are developing a poetic style of writing, show an understanding of imperative mood or command and demonstrate the use of exclamation marks correctly. The spelling of common words are generally accurate and most pupils demonstrate a

very good knowledge of language structure. Literacy skills are developed and promoted well across the curriculum. In science, Year 2 carefully wrote out instructions for planting a bean accompanied by colourful illustrations. Years 1 and 2 used their literacy skills well in design and technology, when planning and designing 'Joseph's Coat of Many Colours'. By the end of Year 6 standards are now higher than average in English. Pupils use drafting books to good purpose throughout the year. Handwriting is generally fluent and legible. Pupils have a good use of vocabulary. In a Year 6 lesson they used the Internet independently to research facts about Pakistan, to translate this into a piece of non-chronological writing. Pupils are developing very good skills in locating information from text. Careful attention is given by pupils to the presentation of their work and the accuracy of spelling. Improvements in English in 2002 are due to several factors, including the introduction of a 'booster' class in Year 6, a newly introduced homework club and changes due to migration rates in this group of pupils. The target set by the governing body for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2002 in English (78 per cent Level 4 or above) was exceeded by 14 per cent (92 per cent Level 4 or above).

6. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are higher than average for pupils of this age. Pupils can sequence numbers up to 100, name common two and three-dimensional shapes and solve number money problems accurately using mental calculations. Mathematical vocabulary is developing well and pupils are gaining confidence in their basic numeracy skills. They tackle mathematical problems well, together and independently. Numeracy skills are further developed and consolidated in the other subjects of the curriculum including science, ICT and design and technology. By the end of Year 6 standards are higher than average in mathematics. Year 6 pupils are confident in their mental calculation strategies, the use of numbers and their understanding of multiplication facts. They have covered a significant amount of work over time based on the National Numeracy Strategy programme of work as well as extended activities and the completion of homework on a regular basis. The targets set by the governing body for mathematics in 2002 were exceeded by 16 per cent with all pupils in the Year 6, 2002 group gaining Level 4 or above. Contributory factors were the introduction of a 'booster class' in Year 6 and the homework club.
7. Both literacy and numeracy are identified as high priorities for whole-school development over the period 2001-2003. Additional resources have been allocated to help to raise standards in literacy and library skills. Refurbishment of the library and the introduction of an ICT suite are planned for 2003. A range of new books has been purchased to extend the choice of books for pupils and to meet better the interests of boys.

**Teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils make good progress.**

8. Overall the quality of teaching is good. The teaching makes a positive impact on all pupils' learning particularly in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy. Work is organised and matched to the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The additional adult support that is provided for pupils with SEN means that they progress at the same good rate as their peers. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. The 'booster classes' in Year 6, additional teaching support and improved resourcing for literacy are key factors in the raising of standards in English. In the 15 lessons observed, which were mainly English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Stage, as well as visits to ICT, physical education and design and technology, all the teaching was satisfactory or better. The teaching in 53 per cent of lessons was good and in 27 per cent it was very good or excellent. This is an improvement on that reported in 1998.
9. Throughout the school very good attention is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which are taught well. Literacy and numeracy lessons are structured on the national strategies from reception onwards with regard to time and class management. Teachers have good subject

knowledge in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage of the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects; for example, design and technology, ICT and science, where pupils present their ideas in a range of ways including word-processing, drawings, measurements and graphs. Strong features of the teaching are the very good management of pupils and the high expectation that teachers have of their pupils. Support staff are informed well and good use is made of available resources. Lesson planning is good in English and mathematics and reflects the structure of the teaching objectives given in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Effective use is made of homework as a means of extending what is learned in school or to consolidate earlier work.

10. In a reception lesson following the assembly celebrating Diwali, the story was retold using puppets to capture the children's imagination. The children enjoyed dressing up as characters in the story and talked readily about what needed to go into a written invitation to a Diwali party. The good planning, organisation, use of resources and effective deployment of the teaching assistant enabled a productive pace of working with all children remaining on task. They made good gains in developing an awareness of other cultures. A mathematics lesson in Year 1 provided well-matched and interesting activities that reinforced what was learned in the first part of the lesson. The motivating strategy for developing a rapid recall of mental number facts worked very well in a Year 2 lesson. This led to very good consolidation of earlier learning about money, as pupils were attentive and eager to participate in the mathematical game. In a joint Years 1 and 2 science lesson, the use of artefacts to introduce the lesson led to much humour and excitement. Praise was used well when pupils showed that they had thought through their responses and were beginning to use the specialist vocabulary associated with electricity. In a Year 3 physical education lesson, the objectives were shared at the outset with the class and reinforced during the skills-based activities of throwing and catching a ball. During the activities the teacher provided a skills commentary to remind the class of its purposes and challenged the pupils to succeed. As a result, they made very good gains in learning and achieved very well in their skills development. Good use of demonstration in a Year 4 English lesson clearly illustrated the purposes of the planned tasks involving imperative verbs and adverbs. The pupils concentrated well and the teacher ensured that all the class were involved in answering the questions posed. Good subject knowledge led to the acquisition of new knowledge and understanding about 'branching databases' using ICT in Year 5. Clear explanations in Year 6 mathematics and English lessons and clear boundaries for pupil response resulted in very attentive and well-behaved pupils.
11. With the exceptions of literacy and numeracy there was little evidence as to how assessment is used to measure whether the learning objectives set had been met and how this information is used to identify what pupils need to learn next. The learning objectives were not always defined for pupils of different abilities. The quality and use of assessment are still areas that require further improvement as they did in 1998. Day-to-day lesson planning in English and mathematics is structured according to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, but for the other subjects there is no whole-school approach. The lesson plan proforma that the school decided to use during the inspection days was unfamiliar to the teachers and as they are not used to planning in such a structured way in science and the non-core subjects, some lessons ran out of time and the planned tasks were, therefore, incomplete. Very good attention is given to reinforcing the school's values through display that is colourful, presented well and celebrates the work of pupils as well as being a valuable teaching and learning resource.

**The headteacher and key staff, in partnership with the governing body, lead and manage the school effectively.**

12. The headteacher and senior staff effectively lead and manage the school by promoting high standards and effective teaching and learning in partnership with the governing body. Since the inspection in 1998, a clear sense of purpose and a positive climate for teaching and learning has been established. During her time at St Bede's, the headteacher has actively encouraged a collegiate approach to policy and decision-making. Teamwork is now well established. Staff share a common purpose and take steps to make their work more effective. The school has explicit aims and Christian values that are documented in the school prospectus, which has been recently updated (November 2002). The school is successful in realising its philosophy of providing 'a happy, secure, Christian environment' where all pupils are able to achieve their full potential. It provides a caring, disciplined and respectful community and cultivates pupils' personal development very well.
13. The school development plan 2001-2003 that identifies key priorities as literacy, numeracy, ICT, behaviour, assessment, staff development and finance. The plan is monitored in July and December each year by senior staff and a report on its progress and developments made are reported to the governing body on a termly basis. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and the requirements of the National Curriculum are in place for ICT, which was not the case in 1998. Subject co-ordinators have a clear framework for curricular planning in the long and medium-term. A range of written aspect policies are also in place, but it is not clear when they were formulated or ratified by the governing body as many are undated.
14. The membership of the governing body has changed since 1998 with more than three-quarters of the governors being new to the school. The roles and responsibilities of the governing body are now documented. There is a schedule and agenda of meetings and formal minutes are taken. This was not the position in 1998. The supportive governing body avails itself of local education authority and the Liverpool diocese governor training and advice, both on an individual and group basis. The performance management policy is embedded into the work of the school and arrangements for performance management are linked appropriately to the school development plan. Teaching and non-teaching staff are all included in the yearly review of performance management. All governors are able to contribute towards shaping the direction of the school and to understanding its strengths and weaknesses. Subject nominated governors visit classes and the SEN governor, and others, work in a voluntary support capacity in classrooms. The headteacher has a good working relationship with the governing body and ensures that they are kept informed about national and local initiatives.
15. There is systematic monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and senior staff of the outcomes of entry assessments, national tests, additional tests conducted by the school and social and economic data made available to the school by the local education authority. All this data is analysed as a means of informing school improvement and target setting in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The headteacher monitors the weekly planning against the medium-term planning, and observations have formally taken place of literacy and numeracy lessons. On occasions, visits have been made to see science, music and art lessons. The outcomes of these visits are shared with staff as a means of identifying strengths and areas for further improvement. Samples of pupils' work have also been scrutinised by key staff. A rota has been put into place for the allocation of specific non-teaching time for those with management roles to carry out their monitoring responsibilities. English, mathematics and ICT are led well. These subject co-ordinators have a very good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the provision and standards in these subjects. Each has compiled, in association with staff, subject action plans that are closely linked to the priorities of the school development plan.

16. Effective use is made of ICT as an administrative tool and the established internal systems and procedures provide a very good level of financial control. The governing body and headteacher give considered attention to the best use of resources by linking decisions on spending to the priorities identified in the school development plan. The school carried a large balance forward from last year as a means of retaining its current staffing levels in the current year 2002-3, for the refurbishment of the library and the provision of a discrete ICT suite in the same year. Teaching assistants, administrative and other staff are deployed very well.

**The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.**

17. The provision for spiritual development is very good. Every endeavour is made to demonstrate the Catholic faith through the actions of those involved in the work of the school. The school assemblies are a key focus of spiritual development, with themes such as 'Hope', 'Taking Steps' and 'Baptism'. Pupils are given opportunities in class and assemblies to sit silently and reflect about their immediate environment and the wider multifaith and multicultural world. Teachers show pupils how they value the intellectual, physical or creative effort they put into their work by displaying this work to full advantage; for example, in art and literacy, also in discussing school successes in assemblies and during the 'early bird' morning sessions. Pupils enjoy the very good relationships they have with each other and staff and other adults who visit the school. Staff value pupils' questions and generally give them enough time to think about their responses to questions asked of them by the teacher.
18. Provision for moral development is very good and is fostered through the catholicity of the school. The school provides and promotes a clear moral code that is consistently applied. Posters around the school reinforce the school's values. Staff manage pupils very well and insist on high standards of behaviour. Most pupils are very clear about school and class rules. Pupils are encouraged from the reception class to take care of themselves and others and the environment inside and outside the school. The school awards merits, class rewards and 'Certificates of Achievement' are presented in assemblies. Pupils are proud to receive these awards as a recognition of their efforts and achievements. Parents are invited to attend celebration assemblies and many do. The school curriculum is inclusive in that it provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. When pupils with individual education plans (IEPs) and a statement of Special Educational Need are withdrawn to work in smaller groups with teaching assistants they follow the same lesson content as the rest of the class. They are always returned to the mainstream class for the 'plenary' session where the lesson is drawn together by the teacher and whole-class feedback is given on the main teaching and learning points. In some classes individuals or groups willingly give presentations about their completed work.
19. The provision for social development is also very good. The school's aims and rules clearly identify its social and moral stance. Relationships are based on mutual respect. Teachers provide good role models. Older pupils in Year 6 take care of the younger reception children through the 'Big Friend, Little Friend' scheme. The prefect system is well established; older pupils exercise this responsibility very effectively. The school seeks to provide as many opportunities as possible for pupils to enjoy experiences outside the classroom. Sporting, music, drama and gardening clubs are provided for pupils from Year 2. Coaching sessions for boys and girls football, rugby and tennis take place too. Social development is enriched through visits to the theatre, cinema and community workshops. Musical productions, traditional Christmas carol concerts and annual nativity plays give the pupils a range of opportunities to use their musical and dramatic skills. Pupils are aware of those in need and there are regular events to raise funds for charities such as CAFOD, the NSPCC and St Catherine's Hospice. The school takes Year

6 pupils away on a residential visit to Hothersall Lodge, an outdoor education centre, each year. This helps them to mature socially, become quite independent and take care of themselves.

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good overall.**

20. St Bede's main aim is to provide every child with the opportunity to achieve their full potential in an inclusive, secure, happy and challenging environment. This process begins in the term before the children start school. School staff visit nursery schools and invite children to sample afternoon sessions. Discussions are held with nursery staff and parents about the academic and social needs of individuals prior to them entering compulsory schooling.
21. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very positive. Standards of behaviour are good overall. Pupils are eager to come to school and are willing to learn. Almost all parents stated in the pre-inspection questionnaire that their children like school. Children in the reception class have settled well into school life. Routines are well established and the children are secure in their knowledge of the teacher's expectations of them and, as a result, they are very well behaved, attentive and responsive. At the end of a session that focused on Diwali celebrations, a higher attaining group of children, with the help of the class teacher, told the class what they had been doing. Following this feedback the children applauded their peers. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are well behaved and very attentive and they are pleased to share their ideas with each other. Year 3 pupils followed instructions carefully and they were keen to talk about what they remembered; for example, in English they displayed good levels of recollection when discussing animals that live under the sea. Years 4 and 5 pupils generally worked collaboratively in pairs when discussing the task in hand during literacy and ICT sessions. Occasionally, immature behaviour was displayed by individual boys, but this was acted upon promptly by the teacher and/or teaching assistants. In Year 6, the clear authority of the teacher holds the attention well of all pupils and, as a result, they are very well behaved. Overall relationships between pupils and adults and each other are very good.
22. The discipline and procedures policy document (undated) is undergoing major review supported by appropriate training for all staff on the local education authority's 'Behaviour Management Policy'. There have been no exclusions over the last 15 years. Pupils in Year 6 are given the opportunity to become prefects. There is also a range of duties made available to them on a rota basis, such as telephone duty at lunchtime, which is a particularly popular task. By giving pupils such responsibilities this contributes to improving behaviour where needed in school. Bullying, sexism and racism are not apparent in school, but there are policies for dealing with such issues and they are a feature of the personal, social and health education policy. Such opportunities help pupils to prepare to play an active role as citizens, develop relationships and respect the differences between people. Visits, events and visitors to St Bede's make a valuable contribution to the attitudes, values and personal and social development of pupils. The good range of extra-curricular activities that is provided enriches the personal and social development of pupils. Recently, the school has introduced a short course of football coaching and skills development for Years 1 and 2.

**The school's links with parents are very good; they are very supportive of the school.**

23. The school states in its prospectus that the partnership between home and school is very important. A parent partnership policy is in place and made available to all parents. Almost all the parents have signed up to the 'Home and School Agreement'. The school operates an 'open door' policy and parents are free to see their child's teacher either before or after school sessions, always providing this is convenient. The headteacher also sees parents as soon as possible after they request an appointment with her.



24. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection parental questionnaire reported that the school works closely with them and that they are comfortable in raising concerns or suggestions with the school. The school benefits from a large number of parent helpers who assist on educational visits and sporting events and make costumes for school productions. The 'Pupil, Teacher, Friends Association' is very active and makes a significant contribution to the school both socially and financially. Through the dedication of a parent who counted tokens and administered the application process, the school was successful in winning £10,000 of sports equipment. Staff and the governing body value the contributions that parents make to the life and work of the school.
25. Before the children start compulsory schooling, discussions are held with parents about the academic and social needs of their children. An induction meeting for new parents takes place in the summer term of each year. This is very well attended. A 'Starting School' booklet welcomes children and parents to St Bede's. They are encouraged to contact the school with any queries or problems so that they can quickly be resolved. Formal consultation meeting and information evenings are provided for parents. These include English and mathematics workshops, the Foundation Stage curriculum and 'Meet the Teacher' evenings. Parents are encouraged to use homework and reading diaries as a channel of communication, and they do. The school seeks the views of parents and informs them of resulting decisions; for example, about the format and times of parents' evenings. In summer 2002 a questionnaire was sent out to parents; it covered general questions and those about home and school communication. One hundred and twenty-six parents responded and from this analysis the school has acted upon areas for improvement as suggested by the respondents. These include the 'Big Friend, Little Friend' system and the provision of half-termly curriculum and events information letters.
26. The needs and progress of children with learning difficulties are carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Parents are always notified and kept informed of any decisions that need to be taken involving their children.
27. All publications issued by the school aim to be concise and as informative as possible including the governors' annual report to parents. The 1998 inspection reported that the 1997 governors' annual report to parents and school prospectus did not comply fully with the requirements. Analysis of the last (2001) governors' annual report to parents revealed that it did not meet the full information requirements and there were omissions in the recently reviewed (autumn 2002) school prospectus. The governing body acted immediately to rectify this position.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Day-to-day lesson planning for all the subjects (except for English and mathematics).**

28. The school has a common format for long and medium-term curriculum planning that in the long term gives an overview of the National Curriculum subjects and the six Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage (reception class) over the three terms in the academic year. The format of the medium-term plan is designed to achieve balance and curricular coverage over each half term. The school, however, does not have an established whole-school approach to daily lesson planning for those subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers normally use their own individualised workbooks for this purpose.
29. Following the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and Strategies, the school adopted a weekly plan for each subject, which is structured on the respective national strategies. These two individual plans give day-to-day details of whole-class activities and independent or group tasks and what the ‘plenary’ sessions comprise when the whole class is brought together at the end of the lesson. In the Foundation Stage of the curriculum the planning for children’s language, literacy and mathematical development is similar in its structure to that of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
30. A single weekly planning sheet is used for all the other subjects of the National Curriculum, including science, which lists the subject area and weekly learning objective. It does not provide information about what different groups of pupils are to learn. Teachers maintain additional planning information in their own notebooks as they choose. The weekly plan is used by the headteacher to monitor curricular coverage against the medium-term plan, which is mainly based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work that the school has adopted for these subjects.
31. Because there is no whole-school approach in place for the daily planning of lessons in science and the other subjects of the National Curriculum, it was decided by the school that a temporary proforma be used for the days of the inspection. The lesson plan sheet that the school used during the two inspection days was unfamiliar to the teachers and as they are not used to planning in such a structured way, some of the lessons ran out of time. It was not clear, with the exceptions of literacy and numeracy, how the lessons built upon what pupils already know, understand and can do, or how the activities were being adapted to suit different groups within the class who learn at different rates. Planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs is more structured as they have individual education plans in place as a means of reviewing their progress against individual targets for improvement.
32. The use and quality of ongoing assessment is good in English and mathematics, but assessment opportunities did not feature in the daily planning for the science and the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum.

### **The procedures for assessing and recording pupils’ attainment and progress and better use made of assessment information when planning future work.**

33. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils’ attainment and progress are not systematic enough across the subjects of the National Curriculum. Although the procedures for assessing pupils are detailed in the undated assessment, the recording and reporting policy is inconsistently applied. Although pupils’ work is marked, targets for improvement are not usually given.

34. In 1998, the inspection report identified assessment and recording as a key issue. The governing body action plan following the last inspection recognised the need to provide a manageable, consistent way of assessing and recording attainment in all subjects. An assessment, recording and reporting policy was formulated, which aims to have a system in place that is clear, consistent and manageable. It outlines the different types of assessment and points out that the crucial question is ‘do the evaluations based on teacher assessments really inform the next planning stage?’. The policy is intended to be reviewed annually.
35. The use of assessment and performance data is now an integral part of teaching and learning activities in the Foundation Stage of the curriculum, English and mathematics and, to a lesser extent, in science. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning and ensure that learning opportunities are matched more closely to the needs of individuals or groups of pupils in science and the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum is still not sufficiently developed.
36. Each term a pupil self-assessment book is completed over a week’s duration. It is used by subject co-ordinators as a tool to monitor and evaluate standards and progress throughout the school. In ICT, where a development plan has been documented in association with the nominated governor for this subject, good attention is given to improve the levelling and assessments of work using ICT. Samples of work have been assembled in design and technology, ICT and art. The artwork is annotated well against the attainment targets and level descriptors to show the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to demonstrate by the end of Years 2 and 6. This provides a reliable source of information for staff, governors and, where appropriate, in discussions with parents, pupils and visitors to the school. School development planning indicates that all subject co-ordinators will provide assessed pieces of work as a part of the school’s monitoring arrangements.
37. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is conducted in accordance with the school policy, which is based on the principles that underpin the 2002 revised Code of Practice for SEN. Individual education plans are in place for those identified with SEN. Targets and skills are documented with focused activities to meet individual learning needs. The individual education plans are reviewed termly against the targets set, and learning outcomes are evaluated.
38. The analysis of samples of assessment files shows that there is as yet no consistent format or approach by teachers to recording and using assessment information as expected in the school policy. The school has recognised within its current development plan that there is more work to be done in systematically implementing the assessment, recording and reporting policy in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Four criteria are listed to measure the success of this ongoing priority. They include providing a consistent system of assessment and recording and ensuring that planning is linked to assessment, to raise standards throughout the school. A computerised system for tracking pupil progress has recently been introduced using school and comparative national and local performance data. Senior staff systematically monitor and evaluate the outcomes of attainment on entry information, national tests and additional tests conducted in English, mathematics and science and of the social and economic data made available to them as a means of determining the progress made by pupils during the time that they are at this school.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

39. In order to sustain the many notable qualities that are a part of the school, to develop further its commitment to raising standards, to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential in all subjects and to be an improving school, the headteacher, governors and staff should focus on:
- (1) establishing a whole-school approach to short-term curriculum planning and day-to-day lesson planning, to provide a consistent format that meets the needs and circumstances of the school and is clear about what the different groups of pupils are expected to learn in each lesson and what they actually learn;
  - (2) providing training for subject co-ordinators to actively involve them in monitoring and evaluating planning and progression in science and the non-core subjects as a means of informing school and subject development planning;
  - (3) fully implementing and monitoring the assessment, recording and reporting policy in order to achieve a whole-school approach to the use of assessment information to guide and inform curricular planning;
  - (4) involving all subject co-ordinators in the planned school development for assessment as a means of ensuring that all subject planning is clearly linked to assessment and that there is a clear rationale for using assessment and recording what pupils have learned.

(paragraphs: 11, 28-38)

The school has targeted assessment as a priority for development in the 2001-2003 development plan. The personnel identified and responsible for this are key staff including the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	3	8	3	0	0	0
Percentage	7	20	53	20	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 six 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)	217
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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	14

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### *Attendance*

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for 2001/02.*

### ***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	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	16
	Girls	12	12	11
	Total	28	29	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	97 (97)	90 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	13	11	12
	Total	29	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	90 (97)	93 (97)
	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	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	33	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (76)	100 (86)	100 (86)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	19	18
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	33	36	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (76)	100 (86)	94 (81)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
210	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
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)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.58
Average class size	27.10

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160

***FTE means full-time equivalent.***

***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	486,670
Total expenditure	445,923
Expenditure per pupil	1,991
Balance brought forward from previous year	48,885
Balance carried forward to next year	89,632



***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	1

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	124

*Please note that, because of rounding, the total percentage of responses may not equal 100.*

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	41	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	50	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	32	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	40	7	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	59	35	4	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	28	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	34	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	42	5	0	5