

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Bispham

LEA area: Blackpool

Unique reference number: 119691

Headteacher: Mr Sean O'Hare

Reporting inspector: Mr A J Dobell
10373

Dates of inspection: 10th - 11th February 2003

Inspection number: 248053

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr Luiz Ruscillo
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary aided school is of average size and serves an area in Bispham on the northern outskirts of Blackpool. It has 221 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11, with the numbers of boys and girls being roughly equal. Almost all pupils are of white Western European origin and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Overall, pupils' social backgrounds are about average, but children's levels of attainment and their learning skills are slightly below those normally found when they enter the Reception class. Thirty-one children are in the Reception class and all pupils in the school are in single year classes.

The proportion of the school's pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (6.7 per cent) is below average. There are 39 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and, at 17.6 per cent, this is broadly average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and, at 0.45 per cent, this is below average. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, physical difficulties and other learning difficulties. A number of experienced teachers have left the school during the last two years so that the school is in a period of transition while new staff become involved in the work of the school. The school has been granted 'Beacon School' status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many strengths and few weaknesses. Since the school's previous inspection, standards of attainment in the National Curriculum tests have been erratic at the end of Year 2, but they were above the national average in 2002. At the end of Year 6, attainment in the National Curriculum tests has been above the national average in most years and was in the top five per cent of all schools in 2000. The school successfully includes all its pupils in all its activities.

The school has a secure sense of its identity. This is firmly based in its partnership with the parish and the parent body. The headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and all his colleagues, provides innovative and purposeful leadership which has a clear vision for the school's future. The quality of teaching is good overall and the school is a caring and lively community. Given the pupils' good progress overall, the good level of improvement since its first inspection, the good quality of learning opportunities provided and the very good care that it provides for its pupils, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching results in interesting learning activities overall which motivate most pupils to work with interest and concentration and to give of their best.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to make progress: their good attitudes are a feature of the very good relationships which exist throughout the school.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and is underpinned by the very good systems of care which the school has in place.
- The school has very good links with parents who are seen as key partners in their children's education.
- The school's success results from the headteacher's vision and thoughtful and innovative leadership and the very good support that he receives from his deputy and his colleagues.

What could be improved

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 currently make less progress in their learning than children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 3 to 6.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was first inspected in March 1998, standards of attainment, as measured in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, have improved at a similar rate to attainment in all schools nationally. All the key issues from the first inspection report have been taken seriously and addressed successfully. In particular, systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved significantly and are now very good. The proportion of very good teaching has improved and the professional development of teachers is very effective. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is now excellent. The role of parents as partners in their children's learning has been developed effectively. As a result of the headteacher's careful development of the school, there is a healthy ethos of self-evaluation and a determination to continue to improve. The school has improved well since its first inspection and has the potential to raise attainment further.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 has improved overall since the school's first inspection. At the end of Year 2, attainment in reading and mathematics is above the level being achieved in 1998, but attainment in writing is broadly the same. At the end of Year 6, attainment has risen in English, mathematics and science at broadly the same rate as in all schools nationally.

In 2002, the school's results at the end of Year 2 were above those attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. At the end of Year 6 in 2002, the school's levels of attainment were well above those of similar schools and attainment in English was in the top five per cent of these schools. In 2000, the school's improvement was recognised by a School Achievement Award.

Children in the Reception class make good progress in their learning and are on course to attain the standards expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and, in Years 3 to 6, they make good progress with the rate of progress accelerating markedly in Year 6. Overall, attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average. Attainment in information and communication technology has improved well since the school was inspected previously and is now above the level normally found at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and pupils who are particularly gifted or talented are identified and make good progress. In 2002, the school exceeded its target for the proportion of pupils attaining at least the national expectation of level 4 in English in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. It narrowly missed this target in mathematics although the target was very challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and to learning overall. Most pupils settle quickly in class and enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall both in and out of class, but a few pupils have short concentration spans and the management of their behaviour, while successful, slows the pace of learning in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good. The personal development of most pupils is very good.
Attendance	Attendance is very slightly above the national average.

By Year 6 pupils have impressively mature attitudes to learning and are responsible leaders of the school community. Parents confirm that pupils enjoy school and want to attend. During the last school year, one pupil was excluded for a fixed period and then permanently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school and the small proportion of teaching which was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, has been eliminated. In this inspection, just under one quarter of teaching was satisfactory, just over one half was good and just over one fifth was very good. The highest proportion of very good teaching was in Year 6. Very good teaching is characterised by an impressive level of subject knowledge and understanding, careful planning which creates imaginative learning activities which engage pupils' interest and very high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour. In these lessons, there is an impressive pace of learning so that pupils do not become distracted, but concentrate fully. As a result, teacher and pupils are fully engaged in learning. Classroom support assistants are much more effectively deployed than they were at the time of the previous inspection.

The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and, in Year 6, these skills are practised in other subjects particularly effectively. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in learning and make good progress overall. At its best, learning is of high quality.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum is good overall and is supported by a very good range of activities outside class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. There is excellent provision for their spiritual development, very good provision for their moral and social development and good provision for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils benefit from very good personal and educational support. Teachers know their pupils very well and there are very good systems for promoting their welfare.

The school's curriculum meets legal requirements and has good breadth and balance, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The weaknesses in special educational needs identified in the previous inspection report have been eliminated. Parents appreciate the impressive levels of care offered by the school and the school has very good links with parents who are regarded as key partners in their children's education. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress have improved significantly since the school's previous inspection.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and all staff, provides very good leadership and management. His leadership is thoughtful and imaginative and has clear strategies for the school's further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors support the school's aims and values.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very good systems for monitoring and evaluating its strengths and areas for improvement. It uses this analysis well to identify priorities for its future development.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources, both human and physical, very well. It has very good systems in place to obtain best value from its expenditure.

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and its future development. He is very skilled at identifying sources of finance to improve the school's accommodation and facilities. This has enabled the school to develop well whilst retaining a healthy budget surplus to use to finance future developments. A significant strength is the school's position in the life of the parish which means that it is valued by its local community. The school is well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and the headteacher places a high priority on the professional development of all staff. Accommodation and resources for learning are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good and children make good progress. Behaviour is good and children become more mature and responsible. The school is led and managed well. Parents feel confident to approach the school with concerns. Children like school. 	<p>Of the parents who responded to the questionnaire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 per cent have concerns about homework; 14 per cent do not feel well informed about progress; 11 per cent do not believe that the school works closely with parents; 13 per cent question if the school offers an interesting range of activities outside class.

The school distributed 221 questionnaires and 151 were returned. This rate of return (68 per cent) is unusually high. The meeting held before the inspection was attended by 14 parents. Overall, the meeting was very supportive of the school.

Inspectors support the positive views held by parents. They are particularly pleased that their children are expected to work hard and to do their best, and that they become more mature and responsible. The inspection team believes that the school uses homework well to support learning and that the information to parents and their involvement in learning is very good. There is a very good range of activities outside class.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Good teaching results in interesting learning activities overall which motivate most pupils to work with interest and concentration and to give of their best.

1. The quality of teaching has improved since the school was previously inspected. Then, one lesson had teaching which was unsatisfactory and only seven per cent of teaching was very good. During this inspection, no teaching was unsatisfactory, just under one quarter was satisfactory, just over one half was good and just over one fifth was very good.
2. Very good teaching is based in effective planning. The purpose of the lesson is clear and pupils have a secure understanding of what they are learning and why. Different work is planned for pupils at different stages of learning so that different groups of pupils have appropriate levels of challenge. The school has good systems to support pupils who have special educational needs and, as a result, they make good progress in their learning. Pupils who have particular gifts or talents are identified and arrangements are made for them to be challenged effectively, in some cases, by being taught separately. These pupils make good progress in their learning because they are given work to do which enables them to extend their learning.
3. Teachers have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they are teaching. This is most obvious in Year 6 where very good teaching is concentrated. Lessons in Year 6 have very clear learning objectives so that pupils understand what they are doing and why. Learning proceeds at a brisk pace so that pupils concentrate over long periods because any relaxation means that they have missed the next aspect of learning. Because the subject matter is made interesting, their attention is fully engaged and they join in learning with enthusiasm. Very effective questioning from the teacher ensures that all pupils remain alert because they know that their knowledge and understanding will be tested, reinforced and extended. Highly effective teaching ensures that learning is not only secure, but is also enjoyable, and pupils, support staff and the teacher are all engaged in the joy of new learning and new levels of understanding.
4. There are examples of teaching and learning of similar quality in other classes. In a very good lesson in the Reception class focusing on communication, language and literacy, the children were quite clear as to the purpose of the lesson because of the teacher's initial explanation. Different work was provided for groups at different stages of learning so that all could make effective progress. Carefully prepared resources engaged the children's interest and skilful use of the Nursery nurse ensured that lower attaining children, including those with special educational needs, were fully involved. Very effective class management and careful teaching of basic skills ensured that all children made very good progress in their learning of how to create a list of instructions.
5. Similarly, in a very good information and communication technology lesson in Year 4, learning in mathematics was reinforced by work on computers. Very skilful teaching ensured that all pupils learned what a branching database was, how to construct one and how to pose questions which would enable younger pupils to obtain information from such a database. A very thoughtfully prepared lesson ensured that pupils improved their understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and of the potential of information and communication technology. At the same time, their social awareness was increased, as was the care with which they used language for the benefit of younger pupils. Their interest was fully engaged and they made very good progress.
6. These lessons were characterised by the teachers' high expectations for pupils' efforts and behaviour. Because the work planned was interesting and was taught in a way which engaged the pupils' interest and enthusiasm, these high expectations were realised. Where learning activities are less interesting and pupils are less clear as to what they are learning and why, interest and concentration are reduced and learning is less effective. In these lessons, there is a

tendency for a minority of pupils who have short concentration spans to become disruptive and so to adversely affect the learning of others.

7. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 and satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils have good standards in reading and writing and express themselves confidently and fluently. Work in mathematics is accurate and shows a good level of understanding. Average pupils also have potential to attain above average standards in the National Curriculum tests, while lower attaining pupils are more prone to error and are less secure in expressing themselves. Attainment in science is above the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. The school has been successful in improving the teaching of science since its previous inspection and there is now a better concentration on experimental and investigative work. In Year 2 in English, average and higher attaining pupils are secure at the level expected nationally, but, in some cases, written work is spoiled by poor and untidy handwriting. Lower attaining pupils' writing lacks consistency, for example, in the use of capital letters and full stops, and is below the expected level. In mathematics, higher attaining and average pupils are working at the expected level with occasional examples of above average work, but lower attaining pupils are prone to inaccuracy, for example, by adding when being asked to subtract.
8. Information and communication technology is an area of strength in the school. The subject is impressively resourced and is used effectively to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 use information and communication technology to research information in subjects such as history and geography. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have regular access to the computer suite and make rapid progress in developing their skills. They are independent in their use of computers and eager to help and advise each other. By the time that they leave the school, pupils enter data and use information well to produce charts and graphs and to analyse evidence to produce the findings that they need. They confidently insert text and graphics to create cartoons and newspaper articles. All pupils use the Internet to down-load information to support learning in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils have above average skills in multi-media work and are adept at combining together information and data from different sources. They have levels of attainment which are above those normally found.
9. Teaching and learning are most successful when lessons have interesting subject matter. For example, in a good English lesson in Year 1, pupils were creating their own rhymes based on 'I know a man called Mr.....'. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, understood the meaning of rhyme and successfully created their own rhyming couplets such as 'I know a man called Mr Red, he had a pancake on his head'. The potential for amusement ensured a good level of application and interest. In a history lesson in Year 3, the teacher took the trouble to dress as King Alfred to illustrate what was being taught. This ensured that pupils maintained their interest and concentration and the experience enhanced their learning. Learning in English in Year 6 has been reinforced by a range of interesting learning experiences over the year. These have included work on Dickens (Oliver Twist and Nicholas Nickleby) and Shakespeare, as well as the Bermuda triangle and the 'Marie-Celeste', the Pied Piper of Hamelin, lives of children in Victorian times, a time machine and a range of book reviews. This carefully planned work has not only systematically improved pupils' literacy skills, but has increased their awareness of a range of literature. In this way, the school has been very successful in improving work in literacy as recommended in the report from the previous inspection. In Year 4, physical education lessons based on the musical 'Grease' encouraged most pupils to work with a good level of effort and interest while broadening their awareness of contemporary culture.
10. High expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour and interesting learning activities supported by good quality resources and effective teaching promote learning of good quality. There are examples of this throughout the school, but it is most prevalent in the Reception class and Years 3, 4 and 6. It is in these lessons that the school's aim of achieving good progress through good quality learning is most effectively realised.

The very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development encourages

strong relationships in the school and pupils' good attitudes towards learning.

11. Good teaching and interesting lessons mean that most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to make progress and give of their best. Parents confirm that pupils enjoy school and levels of attendance which match the national average coupled with relatively little lateness reinforce this impression. Parents also believe that pupils' positive attitudes are skilfully developed by the school so that their self-confidence and self-image improve. Their work for charities and awareness of issues in the world such as the environment help to develop maturity of outlook.
12. Positive attitudes are promoted by the school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development will be considered fully in the diocesan report, but pupils develop a very high level of personal awareness and a mature view of the needs and feelings of others. Opportunities for reflection are taken frequently throughout the school day so that pupils develop an impressive awareness of themselves and others. Assemblies and acts of collective worship are impressively spiritual, and, throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of prayer. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and bring moral values to their consideration of issues in school, in their community and in the wider world. Their social skills develop very well and they are instinctively polite and courteous, for example, holding doors open for visitors. They have a good awareness of their own culture and of the basic principles of some major religions but are less secure in appreciating the multicultural nature of contemporary British society.
13. Very good moral and social development reinforced by a good programme of personal, social and health education, mean that most pupils behave sensibly and with increasing maturity. This is most evident in the behaviour of Year 6 in their lessons. In most lessons, their response is impressively mature and they work with sustained concentration and interest. They realise that good progress in learning is the result of effort and application and they co-operate very well in order to help their teacher to help them. Elsewhere in the school, there are occasions in most classes where the short concentration spans of a few pupils adversely affect learning for others. While these pupils are managed well in almost all cases, the fact that their behaviour needs to be managed at all inevitably slows the pace of learning for the rest of the class. The school is aware of this and has a behaviour strategy in place. This strategy is most successful in the Reception Class and in Years 3 to 6. Parents are aware of this strategy and believe that their children understand its purpose and are motivated by rewards for good behaviour. Bullying is unusual and none was seen during the inspection. Parents confirm that, when it occurs, it is quickly and effectively dealt with.
14. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are underpinned by very good relationships throughout the school. The headteacher is a constant and reassuring presence around the school and he and all adults promote a spirit of tolerance and consideration for others. There are good opportunities for initiative and taking responsibility and these develop pupils' awareness of the needs of others. Pupils are well known to all adults in the school and their very good level of appreciation of pupils' needs and potential creates a security in which pupils can develop. Very good relationships and increasing maturity promote learning and ensure that pupils develop a respect for the values and beliefs of others.

The pupils' very good personal development is underpinned by the very good systems of care which the school has in place.

15. Parents appreciate the very good levels of care which the school provides for their children. Their children are very happy in the school overall and parents appreciate that the school manages the learning of pupils with different levels of ability carefully. They understand that pupils with special educational needs are supported well, but also that pupils with higher levels of ability are appropriately challenged.
16. Arrangements for pupils' welfare and security are very good. The school is clean and welcoming as a result of the work of the caretaker and his team. Attractive displays help to create a

stimulating learning environment. This is enhanced by the quiet music which plays continuously in the hall and in some lessons when pupils are working in groups. The school is safe. Procedures for child protection are clear and are well known to all adults in the school. The school sees equality of access and opportunity as a key entitlement for all pupils and this is evident throughout the school's work.

17. Pupils are given very good personal and educational support. Support for their personal development is based in the fact that all pupils are known to the headteacher and all staff. Any problems being experienced by any pupil will be identified quickly and sensitive support will be provided. Pupils are encouraged to express themselves openly and honestly and the school's ethos, expressed through assemblies and in lessons, encourages them to trust in the power of prayer.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are given sensitive and systematic support. Their individual education plans are written carefully so that the targets set for them enable them to make good progress. Their learning is carefully tracked so that progress towards their targets can be evaluated and new targets set. The pupil with a statement of special educational needs is very carefully supported in line with requirements of the statement. In managing the learning of this pupil, the school is sensitively supported by an advisory teacher from the local education authority. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The school has a good record in supporting pupils with particular types of special educational needs.
19. The school has established very good systems for monitoring and promoting pupils' progress. These are a strength of the school and a significant improvement on those in place when the school was inspected previously. Throughout the school, work is marked carefully and the information from this and other assessments such as the National Curriculum tests and nationally recognised tests in reading and mathematics, is used to assess the progress of individual pupils. Targets for further progress are then set with individual pupils and parents, and progress towards them is monitored so that further targets can be set. These targets are set twice per year. In this way, attainment and progress are managed very effectively.
20. This is a very caring school and pupils acknowledge this. Year 6 pupils, in conversation with an inspector, confirmed that they enjoyed school and had lots of friends. They work hard but do not mind this and recognise that teachers and classroom support assistants work hard on their behalf. They appreciate that they know their own targets and so know what they need to do to improve further. They know that homework will be regular and will be marked and discussed. They are grateful that very occasional instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. They enjoy taking part in lessons, assemblies and activities. As older pupils, they help younger ones and value the 'lots of jobs' that they can do. They think that the school council is well organised and serves a useful purpose.
21. They, and their parents, believe that this is a good school. They are pleased to have had the opportunity to come to this school. In discussion, they were mature and expressed balanced and thoughtful views. They are good ambassadors for the school.

The school has very good links with parents who are seen as key partners in their children's education.

22. Parents feel well informed about activities in the school and appreciate that staff are very approachable. They feel that their concerns are taken seriously and are confident and comfortable if they need to approach the school. A minority of those responding to the questionnaire expressed concerns about the frequency of information on their children's progress and the way in which the school works with parents. Inspectors found the school to be effective in these areas and this is reflected in the very positive views that most parents have of the school.
23. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is good. Reports on children's progress are detailed, informative and personal to the individual child. Parents also appreciate the progress

sheets in October and January which give interim information about progress. The home-school diary provides a regular opportunity for an exchange of information between parents and teachers and newsletters are a further source of information. The headteacher accepts that the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents lack detail and that there is scope for them to be improved. Further, relatively few parents help in the school, although a good proportion of parents support their children's learning at home.

24. The headteacher believes that, if parents are to play a valuable role as partners in their children's education, they need to be given good quality information. He holds an annual meeting for parents each September in which he shares with parents the school's current thinking and priorities for improvement. This meeting is very well attended. Parents respond well to the Home-School Agreement. They receive information each half term on the topics to be studied in each class. They know that they can approach the headteacher and other teachers at any time with any difficulties or problems. Before children join the Reception class, their parents have the opportunity for a presentation and to meet the headteacher and Reception teacher individually.
25. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the setting of targets for their children and kept well informed – in some cases on a daily basis – about their children's responses and progress. The parents of the pupil with a statement of special educational needs are involved in reviews of his progress and are given support as appropriate.
26. The headteacher places a high priority on involving parents in their children's education. To this end, the school has developed a system of 'Parent-Teacher Conferences' at which targets for future progress are set. These conferences provide an opportunity for parents to look at and comment on their children's workbooks. They are structured to be parent-friendly and to enable parents and carers to focus on exactly what their children need to do to improve further. Guidance is provided by useful comments; for example, 'she is capable of better presented work and I have discussed this with her', and 'maths shape and space – nice, neat work'. Targets agreed at these conferences are clear and are specific to individual pupils. This full involvement of pupils, parents and teachers is a clear improvement in practice since the school's previous inspection.
27. The headteacher has a current focus on 'life-long learning'. He recognises that the very rapid development of information and communication technology is providing new opportunities and that it will create new needs. The school is successfully preparing pupils for these challenges, but the headteacher also sees an obligation to involve parents. To this end, the school has offered a range of Parents' Workshops and also offered a course 'Parents as Educators'.
28. The Home-School Association has an important role in developing parental links. It engages in fund raising and is well supported. The school is grateful for the extra resources provided and uses them carefully. In addition, the association provides a means whereby parents can express their views to the school. The headteacher is keen to build up this aspect of the association's work.
29. Parents hold the school in high regard. They value the care that it offers to their children and the high expectations that it sets for effort and attainment. They appreciate the way in which their children develop and become more mature. They also appreciate that their children's spiritual development is carefully nurtured by the school. For them, the school's central role in the parish community is an important source of its strength and significance.

The school's success results from the headteacher's vision and thoughtful and innovative leadership and the very good support that he receives from his deputy and his colleagues.

30. The report from the school's previous inspection acknowledges the headteacher's creative and innovative leadership. These qualities continue to be strengths of the school. A very high proportion of parents regard the school as being well led and managed.
31. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school with the pupils firmly at the centre. He is not

willing to accept anything less than the best for his pupils. To this end, he has in place a planned programme of improvements to the school's accommodation and facilities. In recent years, this has included improvements to the school's library and information and communication technology provision. As a result, pupils have unusually good facilities in information and communication technology to support their learning. These include access to the Internet, an interactive whiteboard, a multi-media projector and radio links to lap-top computers for display purposes in teaching. The headteacher now plans to upgrade the information and communication technology facility to provide further opportunities. As a result of the headteacher's foresight and determination, the school is now well resourced and pupils are able to learn in attractive accommodation. The headteacher has ambitions to develop a Nursery facility in the school.

32. The headteacher and his deputy work well together and have complementary strengths. Together with the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, they constitute the senior management team. This team meets weekly and there is an effective system for communicating the results of its discussions to other staff. The senior management team is a key element in the school's leadership and management of the school and in determining priorities for its development.
33. An important element in the headteacher's success is his ability to delegate. Subject leaders are given time to manage their subjects and are able to observe teaching and learning and to give feedback to colleagues. In this way, their particular subject expertise is made available to colleagues so that teaching and learning can be improved.
34. The headteacher realises that teachers are his most important resource and he places considerable emphasis on their professional development. A recent innovation has been to introduce the Best Practice Research Audit into the school. This programme offers the possibility of scholarships to individual teachers to enable them to undertake classroom based and clearly focused small-scale studies in teaching and learning. Five teachers are taking advantage of these opportunities and the intention is to use their findings to improve teaching and learning in the school. This is part of the school's general aim of equipping pupils with the skills to manage their own learning so that they can become life-long learners.
35. The school has strategies in place to help pupils to learn. The playing of quiet music to create a calm and peaceful atmosphere is one. Elements of accelerated learning and 'brain gym' are also used. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, the class stood up and did a few exercises after 40 minutes of sustained concentration in preparation for group work. Classes are encouraged to think about what constitutes a successful environment for learning. They are encouraged to practise good work habits. For example, one pupil, in a discussion about reading with an inspector, said that she read for at least 20 minutes per night because 'that is the class rule'. As an aid to concentration, water is available in each classroom for pupils to drink. In these different ways, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
36. The headteacher's vision for the systematic development of the school and continuing innovation and improvement is summarised in different development plans. These include a five-year building programme and the school improvement plan. This plan is prefaced with a school improvement analysis paper which evaluates improvements which have been introduced previously and, in the light of these, identifies priorities for the coming year. Priorities for this year include developing further the school's commitment to continuous innovation and learning and to develop the governing body's role in monitoring this. Other areas include the development of the creative arts, the better use of information and communication technology to promote learning and the better use of support assistants to develop basic skills. The school aims to develop pupils' learning and thinking skills, to make better provision for gifted and talented pupils, and to improve the involvement of parents and links with the parish. The report from the school's first inspection required the school to establish a longer term vision for its work and the headteacher has achieved this.
37. This ambitious programme reflects the school's particular circumstances. For example, there has been a significant change in teaching staff in the last year. A number of experienced staff

have left the school, usually for promotion to senior posts in other schools. This is one result of the school's successful programmes of professional development. The result is that the school is in a period of transition and the headteacher is alert to the need to manage this successfully.

38. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and its routines are straightforward and readily understood. Pupils move from one activity to the next with little fuss overall so that little time is wasted. The headteacher acknowledges that there are classes in which the management of behaviour needs to be improved. The school secretary has a clear understanding of the wide range of services that she provides. These include the daily management of the school's finances. There are secure procedures for setting the budget annually by the headteacher and the governing body. The finance committee of the governing body monitors the budget over the year. Governors share the headteacher's vision for the school and support its aims and objectives.
39. One of the headteacher's particular skills is in identifying sources of finance to support the school's developments. As a result of his considerable efforts, the school's building and learning resources have been developed impressively while the budget has retained a healthy surplus. This is earmarked for future developments.
40. One result of the headteacher's imaginative and innovative leadership is that the school has achieved 'Investors in People' status. This reflects its commitment to the professional development of its staff. In 2002, the school's very impressive success rates in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 was recognised by a School Achievement Award. The school also gained 'Beacon School' status. This means that other schools can look to this school as an example of good practice and the school can be called upon to support other schools. For example, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been involved in supporting two schools with significant weaknesses.
41. The quality of the leadership provided by the headteacher and his deputy is central to the good improvement that the school has made since its first inspection. This has resulted in an impressive unity of purpose among all adults in the school. They work hard for the benefit of all pupils and are keen for the school to develop further. As a result, pupils receive an education of good quality overall with some very good features. They learn in a secure and stimulating learning environment. Overall, they make good progress in their learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Progress in learning in Years 1 and 2.

42. This is an effective school with many strengths and few weaknesses. However, in this period of transition, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not making progress at the same rate as children in the Reception Year and pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is partly because a minority of pupils in these classes have short concentration spans and are prone to distraction. Whilst their behaviour is managed satisfactorily, the time taken to manage it inevitably disrupts the flow of the lesson. As a result, learning and progress for other pupils are adversely affected. The school's systems for behaviour management are not as successful in these classes as they are in the rest of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve attainment and the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- I. arrange to manage the behaviour of the few pupils in Years 1 and 2 whose short levels of concentration result in disruption so that the learning of other pupils is adversely affected.

(Paragraphs: 6, 13, 38, 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	6	16	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	21	55	24	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.

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)	221
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	39

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	12	16	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (79)	93 (74)	93 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	26	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (79)	93 (94)	96 (71)
	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	23	14	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	23
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	33	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (91)	86 (91)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	21	23
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	33	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (91)	92 (91)	97 (97)
	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
166	1	1
1	0	0
14	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	32

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	135

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	523,694
Total expenditure	549,034
Expenditure per pupil	2,387
Balance brought forward from previous year	63,245
Balance carried forward to next year	37,905

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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	221
Number of questionnaires returned	151

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	36	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	42	5	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	41	16	3	1
The teaching is good.	63	33	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	42	13	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	13	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	40	9	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	25	3	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	3	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	40	11	2	9