

ERRATUM

19 FEBRUARY 2003

ST GEORGE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

1 WINTERSCALE STREET

FISHERGATE

YORK

YO10 4BT

URN: 121647

INSPECTION NUMBER: 248280

Please read the paragraph below in conjunction with the published inspection report for the above school. This paragraph now includes a reference to the teaching of poetry in Year 4.

9. "For example, pupils in Year 6 were inspired to write a play script having read *Macbeth* and, in Year 4, a poem after studying *The Highwayman*. In both lessons the teachers' infectious enthusiasm and strong focus on the descriptive language used enabled pupils to write with confidence".

Issued by Schoolhaus Limited on behalf of

Rachael Andrew, Rgl

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GEORGE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Fishergate, York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121647

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Glendinning

Reporting inspector: Mrs Rachael Andrew
21460

Dates of inspection: 9th – 10th December 2002

Inspection number: 248280

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:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	1 Winterscale Street Fishergate YORK
Postcode:	YO10 4BT
Telephone number:	01904 636427
Fax number:	01904 610994
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Thorpe
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St George's is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic primary school in the city of York. It is about the same size as most primary schools. The school is located in a mainly residential area on the south side of the city. It serves the Parish of St George. The pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some are drawn from outside the parish because parents, although not Catholics, are attracted by the school's ethos. Included in this group are 13 pupils of ethnic minority background, most of whom are Nepalese-speaking Hindus. These are children of Gurkhas stationed at the nearby barracks. There are also a few Indian, Pakistani, Korean and white European pupils in school. About seven per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is below average. The proportion of pupils whose mother tongue is not English (around 5 per cent) is higher than in most schools. These pupils speak Nepalese, Punjabi, Korean or Finnish at home. There are currently 187 boys and girls, aged three to eleven, in the school, including 38 at the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes) , with 17 attending the nursery on a part-time basis and 21 in the reception class. The children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school has identified 16 pupils with special educational needs. Most of these pupils have moderate or specific learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a clear sense of purpose evident in its aims, policies and teaching. It is led and managed well by the headteacher. Governors and teachers alike have a clear idea of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. There is a strong sense of teamwork. From the start, emphasis is given to children's personal development, resulting in pupils having positive attitudes to work and respect for others both in school and further afield. Good teaching and a rich curriculum inspire pupils and ensure that they do well. Standards are high and have risen faster than in most schools over several years. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher leads the school well. She and other key staff have good systems for identifying what works well and take effective action where there are shortcomings.
- Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good and often very good and this leads to good progress and high standards by the time pupils leave.
- Mathematics is a particular strength because of the high quality of teaching, expert leadership by the co-ordinator and other benefits that have accrued through the school's participation in a major project.
- Children at the Foundation Stage get a good start to their education.
- The school's provision for pupils' personal development and teachers' high expectations lead to very good relationships and behaviour and a developing sense of maturity.
- The school succeeds in providing the pupils with many varied learning opportunities that interest and inspire them, enrich their lives and broaden their horizons.
- The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their gender, background, ability, race or creed, are given the opportunity and support they need to succeed.

What could be improved

- Standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation do not keep pace with the fluency and lively nature of pupils' writing.

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 October 1997. Since that time, there have been very good improvements both in overall performance and in response to the last inspection report. The quality of teaching has improved substantially. Standards are rising faster than in most schools. The curriculum is now planned more effectively so that work builds systematically on earlier learning. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology has improved so that standards have risen to match what is

expected nationally. The management of the school and the contribution of the governing body have improved significantly especially in keeping a check on how things are working and taking action to sustain continuous improvement. There is much better delegation of responsibility to key staff and stronger teamwork. Further improvements to the school's provision for personal development has led to even better behaviour and attitudes to work. The information provided for parents has also improved but there is further work to be done to the school brochure so that what the school offers for the children in Foundation Stage is explained.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	C	A	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	A	A	B	
Science	B	D	A	B	

The table shows that standards have risen over the last three years and are now well above the national average. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, standards are above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. At the end of Year 2 standards in the 2002 national tests were above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. The children in the Foundation Stage are on course to achieve the early learning goals identified for their age by the end of the reception year. Standards in mathematics are particularly high throughout the school because of the effective teaching, including the attention given to developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve above average standards at the end of the year. Pupils of all abilities achieve well because the work set for them provides the right level of challenge. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate targets and good levels of support. These help them to overcome difficulties and make good progress towards the targets set for them. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 calculate efficiently using a variety of methods, solve word problems and collect and present information in graphs. They have a good understanding of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. In science, pupils in Year 6 use technical vocabulary well and have a good working knowledge of recent work on materials and physical processes. Their investigative work is of a good standard. Pupils are able to explain their findings and make generalisations. Pupils in Year 6 read well. They have a good understanding of what they have read and talk about setting and character development with confidence. Writing is the weaker element of English in both infant and junior classes. Pupils write with imagination and flair. This is because they read and enjoy many different stories, plays and poems and also because of the use of drama as a preparation for writing. However, there is insufficient attention to accuracy in spelling and punctuation and the development of fluent handwriting. Standards in ICT and design and technology have improved substantially since the last inspection and are now in line with the standards expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. The achievements of those pupils whose mother tongue is not English are good. They make good progress in developing English language skills because of the quality of the support they receive and the care with which teachers and assistants explain words that are new to them and check their understanding. The school has set challenging targets for the end of Year 6 that take into account the full range of ability represented in the class. Pupils are on target to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils approach their work with enthusiasm, work hard and do their best. They enjoy a wide range of learning activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils settle to work quickly, respond promptly to teachers and move about the school sensibly. Playtimes and lunch times are orderly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are co-operative and helpful. They get on well with each other and form very good relationships with their teachers. They grow in maturity and confidence.
Attendance	Good. It is above the national average.

The effort that teachers invest in developing pupils' performing skills both in lessons and in clubs contributes strongly to pupils' confidence. The school's personal and social education programme is influential in helping pupils to recognise qualities in others and to respect and value diversity.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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 quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have a very good understanding of the work they teach and the different needs of their pupils. They pitch questions and tasks at an appropriate level of difficulty to ensure all can succeed. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because teachers modify work and make sure they get the support they need in lessons to tackle it successfully. Numeracy skills are taught particularly well in mathematics lessons and contribute to the high standards achieved. They are also used and developed well in other subjects, for example design and technology. There is good attention to all aspects of mathematics including problem solving and practical work. Reading skills are taught effectively so that pupils use letter sounds well when they attempt to read unfamiliar words. They also use this knowledge well to write confidently from an early age. Teachers use a wide range of books and texts to develop a love of reading. The effective use of drama and other approaches works well as a preparation for writing so that pupils have lots of ideas and are keen to write, not only in English lessons but also in other subjects, for example history. Literacy skills are used well to support other subjects and pupils improve their skills of reading and writing further in many areas of the curriculum. Teachers extend pupils' vocabulary particularly well so that writing is vivid. Particularly good attention is given to developing the vocabulary and checking the understanding of those pupils whose mother tongue is not English so that they can do as well as possible in all subjects. Handwriting skills have not been taught systematically enough in the past to make sure that pupils develop a fluent joined style and use it as a matter of course. Teachers are now putting this right but pupils' old habits persist. Pupils have regular spelling tests and learn about word families and spelling rules but this not systematic enough to ensure that they spell well. Not enough attention is given to helping individual pupils to overcome persistent spelling and punctuation errors. Teachers in the Foundation Stage ensure that pupils have a good start to school. Classrooms are lively and interesting and a strong emphasis is placed on the children's personal, emotional and social skills so that they develop independence and good attitudes to work that persist throughout the school. All teachers establish and maintain a calm working atmosphere in their classroom so that pupils can get on and work productively. They have high expectations of behaviour and work rate and pupils respond by doing their best. There is a significant amount of very good teaching that interests and inspires pupils to achieve high standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The pupils follow a broad curriculum, which is enriched by many visits, visitors, special events and projects. Pupils in Year 6 are taught French by a specialist so that they have a flying start in secondary school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are catered for well and their progress is reviewed regularly. The school draws on the experience of outside specialists when necessary.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school uses the expertise of the local education authority's support teacher well to ensure these pupils are able to benefit from all the school has to offer. Class teachers and assistants provide good support for vocabulary extension and get to know about the pupils' culture and a little of their language to help them settle in.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. All these aspects are given good emphasis. There is a strong moral code and clear guidelines for behaviour. There are good opportunities for pupils to consider important issues that affect people's lives and their responsibilities. Teachers engender a sense of wonder and of belonging to the school family. There are many effective ways in which pupils learn about their cultural heritage and the wider world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school has efficient procedures for child protection, health safety and pupils' welfare. It tracks attendance and personal development systematically. It takes effective action to prevent bullying and racist behaviour.

Teachers draw on the range of backgrounds and experiences that pupils bring to school to add diversity to the curriculum and to broaden pupils' horizons.

Children in the Foundation Stage, particularly in the reception class, do not get the best possible opportunities to develop their physical skills because of the small classroom size and restricted access to outdoor play activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is calm and purposeful and leads the school well. Considerable responsibilities have been devolved to the deputy head and other key staff and they make a strong contribution. There are effective systems to make sure things get done.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. There is a good level and range of expertise amongst the governors. They take an active part in moving the school forwards and in checking how well it is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are good systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning, for developing teachers' skills and for raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses the principles of best value well to ensure that it gets the most from the available funds. Very good use is made of specific grants, for example for developing mathematics in the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school.• The teaching is good: children are expected to work hard and they make good progress.• Children behave well: the school helps them to become mature and responsible.• The school is well led and managed.• Parents feel happy about approaching the school with questions and problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents feel that primary aged children should not have homework. A few others would like more. Information about homework is not always consistent.• A few parents felt that they would like more information about the school before and during their children's time in the reception class so that they could work more closely with the school.

The inspection team endorses parents' positive views. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory. Homework contributes well to pupils' progress.

Information about the reception class is not provided in the prospectus and this is an important omission especially when the school is trying to increase its numbers on roll. The arrangements for ensuring the smooth transition of children into the school and for giving the parents the opportunity to visit with their children before admission are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher leads the school well. She and other key staff have good systems for identifying what works well and take effective action where there are shortcomings.

1. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. This information is gained from effective systems for checking what works well and what does not. The headteacher, subject co-ordinators and local education authority staff monitor teaching and learning. Where weaknesses are found, action is taken promptly to put things right. This is usually effective. Some areas for improvement are specific to individual teachers and training and support are given. Where more widespread weaknesses are found these become part of the school improvement plan. Priorities are kept to a minimum so that teachers are not overwhelmed. The whole process of school development is geared towards raising standards. Test results and the school's own tracking of academic and personal development show that this is successful.
2. An example of effective action taken by the school to improve specific areas is the response to the judgements in the last inspection report that standards in ICT and design and technology were below average and provision was found to be unsatisfactory. Both staff and governors have been involved in a thorough overhaul of each subject. A training plan for teachers was put into action, resources were improved and a computer suite established. The curriculum for both subjects was revised and effective planning introduced so that the work builds systematically on earlier learning and each area of both subjects is taught in sufficient depth. As a result, both subjects are now taught well and standards have risen to match those expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6.
3. Substantial responsibilities are devolved to the deputy head teacher and key staff. They have been given the encouragement and authority to fulfil these duties and they carry them out effectively. They have responsibility for child protection, special educational needs and subject leadership, and these aspects are in safe hands. A bursar employed by the local educational authority gives expert financial support and advice. This allows the headteacher to get on with running the school and broadens the base of expertise within the school. As a result a strong sense of teamwork has developed and teachers are better informed about areas of management.
4. The school's aims are clearly set out and they are evident in its work. There is a good balance between striving for academic success and giving emphasis to pupils' personal and spiritual needs. As a result, the school succeeds in developing mature pupils who are confident and competent, and are well prepared for their next schools.
5. Governors are well informed so that they can take a lead in aspects of forward planning and financial matters. They give good support to the headteacher and help her to get the best out of the resources available to the school.
6. The school's performance management is effective in ensuring that individual teachers have the opportunity for well-focused professional development and the school benefits from their growing expertise. The governors make good use of the services of an external advisor to set appropriate targets for the headteacher and monitor progress towards them.

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good and often very good and this leads to good progress and high standards by the time pupils leave.

7. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good and often very good. There is little difference in any part of the school. Evidence from the work sample reflects these judgements and confirms that there is particularly good teaching in mathematics.
8. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of the age group they teach and thorough subject knowledge. This enables them to develop pupils' understanding well and impart new knowledge in a way that pupils find interesting.
9. In the best lessons, teachers inspire pupils to achieve high standards. For example, pupils in Year 6 were inspired to write a play script having read *Macbeth* and a poem after studying *The Highwayman*. In both lessons the teacher's infectious enthusiasm and strong focus on the descriptive language used enabled pupils to write with confidence. Encouraged to use a Thesaurus to explore a range of words, the pupils used powerful language. They wrote, for example, "Where the cliff hangs hollow and the gloom falls chill...", and in attempting to use the archaic language of Shakespeare "Macbeth draws near on his noble steed" saying "witches I beseech you, I have been caught in an evil spell...". There were many other examples in pupils' books of this developing, lively style. In classes throughout the school the responses of different characters in literature are explored effectively through drama to ensure that pupils have plenty of ideas before beginning to write.
10. Similarly in a mathematics lesson in Year 3, the teacher's enthusiasm and skill enabled pupils to make good gains in understanding time. The teacher made sure that work was set at the right level for each ability group so that pupils needed to work hard to succeed but could get on with little support. Pupils are expected to explain their thinking and this helps them to develop understanding of different strategies for solving problems. In a science lesson in Year 4, the teacher's enthusiasm and skill helped to develop investigative skills when they worked with conductors and insulators. There was great excitement in the science lesson and pupils worked hard to justify and check their predictions and to form conclusions. At the end of the session, many were able to generalise that metal makes a good conductor and plastic a good insulator.
11. Teachers' marking helps pupils to understand how they can improve and what they need to learn next. For example, it helps pupils to structure paragraphs, to set out speech and to build suspense in their stories. Homework is used effectively to enable pupils to practise skills and to prepare for the next lesson.
12. Teachers manage pupils and resources well so that little time is wasted on organisation. They use a variety of methods and organisation suited to different subject matter. This adds interest to the lessons and keeps pupils on their toes. In Year 5, for example, a lesson in the computer suite was well organised to use the resources of the suite for groups of pupils working on control technology while the rest of the class worked purposefully in the classroom. Both the teacher and teaching assistant contributed well to developing pupils' skills so that they worked to capacity. In Year 1, the teacher used pictures from her 'story bag' to capture pupils' interest in planning a story so that they had plenty of ideas before they started to write. She used the whiteboard well to record their ideas and to show them how to build a story from their ideas about the setting, the characters and their actions. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support individuals and groups of pupils as they work.

Mathematics is a particular strength because of the high quality of teaching, expert leadership by the co-ordinator and other benefits that have accrued through the school's participation in a major project.

13. Mathematics lessons often begin with a lively mental arithmetic session, which sharpens calculating skills and engages pupils' interest, preparing them well for what is to follow. Teachers expect pupils to explain how they arrived at an answer and whether there are other ways of tackling the same question. Pupils learn to compare methods and decide which is the most efficient.
14. When teachers gather pupils together at the end of the session, they use the time well to check pupils' understanding and to deal with problems and misconceptions. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher noticed that some pupils were holding the smaller of two numbers in their heads and then adding on the larger. Other pupils pointed out that it was easier to do it the other way round and the teacher agreed, adding that mistakes were less likely. She then went on to remind pupils of how to split up two-digit numbers in different ways to make addition easier.
15. The co-ordinator leads the subject with considerable expertise and teachers' skills have been developed purposefully over several years. For example, all teachers have been trained in observation skills so that they can monitor the work of a colleague. This has helped them to be more critical of their own teaching so that they constantly think of ways to do things better. The school has been participating in the Gatsby Foundation funded 'Mathematics Enhancement Project' for some time and this has brought many benefits in terms of funding, training and external monitoring of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has ensured that the school has gained the best possible advantages from being part of the project and as a result it is one that the project leaders consider to have improved the most.
16. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and so it is that many are working at a higher level than expected for their age. New learning is explained well but higher attaining pupils do not spend any longer than necessary consolidating what they already know so they are able to move on quickly. They get through a lot of work. Other pupils are given time to consolidate more thoroughly and where necessary to move on at slower pace suited to their needs.
17. Special events are organised to develop pupils' understanding further. Master classes have been organised for pupils in Year 6. A 'mathematics week' helped to raise the profile of the subject across the school and to interest pupils in a wide range of topics. The co-ordinator has established a mathematics 'library'. Each class has a selection of mathematical games that pupils can borrow. This is an enjoyable and effective way for pupils to extend their thinking and practise skills.
18. The co-ordinator evaluates teaching, learning, pupils' completed work and test answers thoroughly and identifies common weaknesses. This has led to improvements, for example in the way resources are used. Currently there is a strong focus on solving word problems. This is helping pupils to consider what information they need and the best strategies to use.
19. The school's strength in mathematics is evident in the consistently high standards achieved over recent years, pupils' achievements and their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject.

Children at the Foundation Stage get a good start to their education.

20. Teachers and teaching assistant in the nursery and reception classes place great emphasis on the personal, social and emotional development of the children in their care. They get to know the children quickly, build excellent relationships and seek to encourage, motivate and nurture their skills in every aspect of the work in the Foundation Stage. The effective

deployment of classroom assistants and their complementary role in teaching contributes strongly to the quality of the provision. Planning for the children's personal, emotional and social development is treated both as an area of learning in itself and also as an integral part of everyday learning.

21. Above all, teachers encourage independence and build confidence so that children take the initiative, are not afraid to 'have a go' and persevere with tasks. At the beginning of each day, children self-register by selecting their own names from the table and putting them in a box. In whole-class sessions, teachers draw in less confident children by asking them questions they know they can answer. They praise children's efforts and draw attention to acts of kindness and helpfulness, so constantly reminding children in a subtle way of their expectations. Their interactions with the children are peppered with comments of this kind, such as "How sensible," "You are so polite", "Please will someone close the door?" "What a good idea to put on an apron" and "Thank you for remembering to feed the birds. Would someone like to help?"
22. Very young children in the nursery are encouraged to try each activity but not persuaded if they are reticent. Teachers find more subtle ways to make sure they feel secure. For example, when the children were icing the biscuits they had made, one child was allowed to remain on the sidelines, near enough to keep a careful eye on proceedings but not made to feel uncomfortable. Eventually, another child initiated a conversation with her about what they were doing and she began to take more interest.
23. Teachers use drama and dance activities to build confidence. The two classes use the hall together for this and well-known action songs give children the opportunity to greet each other, to anticipate each other's actions and to synchronise movements. This builds physical confidence in an enjoyable way. For example, children were encouraged to take a solo part in the centre of a circle game, responding to "R is standing in the middle of the circle. What's he going to do?" by singing "I'm going to jump up and down and you can do it too". Teachers and teaching assistants join in with enthusiasm, instilling a sense of enjoyment and a love of learning which is evident in many activities in the classrooms.
24. Although there are many occasions when children are free to choose what to do, there is little wandering between activities even in the nursery. The activities that teachers plan are sufficiently challenging and purposeful to hold children's attention. By the time they are established in the reception class, children work independently for part of each day and know that they should not interrupt the teacher when she is giving her attention to another group. They respect this and turn to each other for help if they get stuck. Positive attitudes established at this stage form strong foundations for future development and contribute strongly to children's achievements in all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The children are well prepared for work in Year 1.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development and teachers' high expectations lead to very good relationships and behaviour and a developing sense of maturity.

25. The firm foundations established in the nursery and reception classes are built on effectively as pupils move through the school. Teachers keep a record of pupils' personal development and this developing profile is passed from class to class as the pupils move on. This helps teachers to get to know pupils quickly and to be aware from the start of individual needs, for example those who find it difficult to collaborate or concentrate. For some pupils with special educational needs this becomes part of their individual education plans, which teachers monitor regularly.
26. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort in lessons. Through their own enthusiasm for teaching they develop pupils' enquiring minds and a love of learning. As a result pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and work hard.

27. Very good relationships are forged in each class. Teachers value pupils' contributions and answers to questions, and respect their ideas. Thus, pupils learn to respect each other and to value diversity. The personal and social education programme adds structure to this incidental learning. Pupils cover a wide range of topics. Current work in Year 3, for example, leads pupils into discussions about external appearances and personal qualities. The question is posed "Do I judge a book by its cover?" The lesson led to pupils discussing what they value in each other, especially in terms of friendship. Pupils responded perceptively and the lesson developed their understanding well and built up their self-esteem.
28. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues that are topical both those arising in school and further afield. This is well established. Pupils' completed work and displays show that they have talked about recent world events, such as oil spills, famine and the threat of war. This contributes to a growing sense of morality and responsibility. This shows itself in the work that pupils do, for example, through the Society of St Vincent de Paul to sponsor a buffalo for a village in India, and, closer to home, the choir entertains senior citizens.
29. Rules are few, discussed by pupils and clear to all. They are established firmly by the teachers' consistent approach. The emphasis is on a positive approach to behaviour management, where good behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded. This works well and contributes to a happy atmosphere. Pupils say that intimidation of any kind is rare and dealt with quickly. They give examples of when they have been involved and how problems were resolved. They are confident that they can turn to their teachers knowing that their concerns about such behaviour will be taken seriously. Pupils grow to understand how their actions affect others. One pupil confided, for example that he remembered an occasion when he felt that he had "let the school down" and realised that in future this is something he would need to consider.
30. The aims of the school make clear its commitment to pupils' personal development. Governors and teachers alike say that whilst academic achievements are important the development of good citizens should carry equal weight. They are pleased that receiving secondary schools acknowledge that St George's pupils are mature and responsible and visitors comment on their good behaviour.

The school succeeds in providing the pupils with many varied learning opportunities that interest and inspire them, enrich their lives and broaden their horizons.

31. In addition to the broad curriculum that the school is legally bound to offer the pupils, personal, social, health education and citizenship are also part of the programme of study. The school has a 'Healthy Schools Scheme' award. A modern language specialist teaches French, on a weekly basis, to pupils in Year 6. About 16 pupils benefit from music tuition from a brass specialist.
32. The school takes part in many special events, festivals and competitions. Pupils have the opportunity to represent their school in sporting events, choir and dance festivals, to sing for the benefit of the local community and to entertain parents and friends with performances of music and drama. Occasional weekend workshops provide further opportunities for them to extend their skills in the arts. The school is well known for its provision for the performing arts. It has been awarded a bronze level 'Artsmark' and is currently working towards a higher level.
33. Other projects that the school has undertaken have been of significant value to teachers' professional development and pupils' achievements. Earlier in the year pupils in last year's Year 6 class were involved with a joint business and university project to promote science. Pupils extended their understanding of materials through participation in classes in the university laboratories. The 'Mathematics Enhancement Project' financed by the Gatsby Foundation has brought considerable benefits to the school in terms of resources, teacher training and ultimately further improvements to standards.

34. A range of after-school activities and clubs extend pupils' skills further and enable different ages to mix and learn together. Pupils show enthusiasm for these and many take advantage of them. For example, more than 20 pupils aged five to seven are involved in an after-school drama club. School netball and football teams have regular coaching sessions and occasional matches, which hone their skills and develop team spirit and sportsmanship.
35. Teachers plan many outside visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning in various subjects. Pupils are fortunate to have such a rich resource as the ancient city of York 'on the doorstep'. Teachers take advantage of it and venues further afield. Pupils have dressed up as Romans, toured the Roman remains and followed the Tudor Trail. They have visited Jorvik and archaeological digs. Benningborough Hall provided the context for younger pupils to explore life in Victorian times.
36. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential experience where they learn more advanced computer skills, try adventurous outdoor sports not available to them in school and benefit from learning to be independent of their parents.
37. Teachers enrich everyday learning with glimpses of the mystical and spiritual wherever possible. A display of work shows that pupils have wondered at the miracle of birth and parents' written contributions share with them their delights, hopes and dreams for the future of their new-born infants. Pupils consider their own gifts and talents and those they receive from others. They enjoy teachers' stimulating visual displays, for example of the natural beauty of autumn, and contribute their own poems.

The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their gender, background, ability, race or creed, are given the opportunity and support they need to succeed.

38. Teachers plan well for pupils of different ability so that higher attaining pupils are challenged and lower attaining pupils have time to consolidate new learning and do not struggle with work that is too hard. They track pupils' progress and identify any who could do better or who need extra help. The school provides effective intervention and booster programmes for groups identified in this way. Recently, with the guidance of the local education authority, gifted and talented pupils have also been identified. In academic subjects, for example mathematics, extension activities have already been organised. Further work of this type is planned for the future, including activities in the arts.
39. The school takes account of pupils' backgrounds and experiences when it plans the curriculum. For example, when pupils are taught about Islam in their religious education lessons, the school invites a Muslim mid-day supervisor to share her knowledge and to bring pupils' learning alive. Posters and displays show words of greeting in pupils' own languages and teachers and pupils use these during registration. The pupils learn about festivals other than Christian festivals and teachers are careful to give pupils of different backgrounds the opportunity to share their experiences. For example, a teacher encouraged a Muslim pupil to talk about Eid and the presents he had received. Parents of all pupils are sufficiently comfortable with the school's arrangements for religious education and the daily act of worship that no pupils are withdrawn. In geography, the study of mountains includes the Himalayas. This provides opportunities for the Nepalese pupils to contribute some first-hand knowledge. In dance lessons, Nepalese pupils have shown other pupils some of their traditional dances. A photographic display in the entrance hall celebrates the diverse backgrounds of the pupils and helps to make them all to feel part of the school family.
40. The school is aware of national information that indicates that boys are more difficult to motivate and often do less well than girls in writing. In response, it is careful to monitor the books and texts that are chosen to teach pupils about different forms of writing. When studying Shakespeare, teachers have made conscious decisions to include *Macbeth*, as well as *Romeo and Juliet*, and, when studying narrative poetry, *The Highwayman*, because boys

find these stories appealing. The quality of the boys' responses in lessons and their completed work are evidence of the success of this initiative. On the other hand, the school gives appropriate emphasis to the rights and changing role of women and to their contribution to society. For example, when pupils study the Victorian period, they learn about Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and the Suffragettes. After-school club activities, for example street dance, are designed to appeal to both boys and girls and to include activities for younger as well as older pupils.

41. The school monitors patterns of attendance and the progress of pupils in many ways including by gender, ethnicity and mother tongue. It can therefore be sure that pupils from minority groups make the best possible progress. It is closing the gap between the achievement of boys and girls so that by the time pupils leave the school both groups do equally well.
42. Teachers promote tolerance and an understanding of diversity. Teachers and support staff show through their dealings with pupils that everybody matters and go out of their way to help those in difficulties. Pupils are praised for acts of kindness, manners, effort and improvement as well as academic achievements. The school tries to include amongst its staff, visitors and volunteers, people from a range of different backgrounds and with different experiences. University student volunteers, from a range of different racial backgrounds, contribute to school life. A profoundly deaf student is a regular volunteer in Years 2 and 3 and has helped pupils to understand the needs of deaf people in the community and how deaf people can make a valuable contribution to the lives of others. The school makes it clear to pupils that it will not tolerate intimidating or racist behaviour or anything that gets in the way of pupils' happiness in school. Pupils know that this sort of behaviour can be subtle and difficult to detect as well as being overt. They know from first-hand experience that teachers take reports of such behaviour seriously and take prompt action to intervene. They are confident to report their own experiences and to intervene on behalf of others. They have been made aware of racism in society through the 'Give racism the red card' campaign. The school has systems for recording all types of intimidating behaviour including racism.
43. The support given to pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress in overcoming their difficulties. Individual education plans are written for those requiring something different from the majority of pupils. These plans have clear targets and pupils work in small steps. The progress pupils make towards these targets is monitored carefully. Parents are informed about how they can help and the progress that is made. Good use is made of the local education authority's ethnic minority support teacher. She makes sure that pupils who enter the school with little or no English make rapid progress in acquiring the vocabulary they need to function socially and make their needs known. Following this, she helps them to acquire an increasing everyday and technical vocabulary so that they can benefit from lessons in all subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants are conscientious in the continuity of this support in between her visits. When the need arises, or when additional help is required because of health and social problems, home visits are organised to support families new to the country. School and external assessments indicate that boys, pupils from ethnic minorities and those who have entered the school in the early stages of English language acquisition are represented amongst the highest achievers.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation do not keep pace with the fluency and lively nature of pupils' writing.

44. Children are taught the correct letter formation from the time they start school. The teaching of joined handwriting takes place later and some pupils in Year 2, particularly higher attaining pupils, begin to show that they are attempting to use joined writing for general work as well as in their handwriting books. From the beginning of this year the school has placed a strong focus on writing and there are already significant and sustained improvements in the work of

some pupils in all classes. After beginning their writing with an un-joined style in September many pupils made a good start with joined writing, but not all have been able to sustain the improvement. By Year 4, only about one third of pupils are routinely using a cursive style. The best handwriting in Year 6 is of a high standard with a fluent, distinctive style but not enough pupils are achieving this.

45. Teachers use letter sounds to teach pupils how to sound out words they are unsure of when they read and write. They also use the high frequency word lists from the National Literacy Strategy as spelling exercises for homework and these are tested systematically. This means that pupils soon have the tools they need to attempt to communicate their ideas. They do this confidently because teachers encourage them to 'have a go' and make sure that they have something interesting to say. However, a significant number of pupils show that they routinely spell inaccurately words they should know. Teachers do not give enough attention to eradicating these spelling errors and they persist. This is preventing some pupils, including higher attaining pupils, from achieving the overall standards in written English of which they are capable.
46. This situation is also true to a lesser extent with punctuation. A few pupils in Year 6, for example, still attach an apostrophe randomly to the letter 's' throughout their work.
47. Pupils' writing is lively, often well structured and incorporates an adventurous vocabulary. Older pupils are developing a distinctive style. A significant minority, however, do not follow conventional spelling rules, they make unnecessary punctuation errors and some have not yet developed a fluent handwriting style. This means that they do not do justice to the quality of what they have to say when they write. It causes problems for the reader and loses them vital marks in tests.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to raise the already high standards even further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve the quality of pupils' writing by:

- paying more attention to letter size, spacing, orientation and formation
- aiming to ensure that all pupils are able to write in a reasonably fluent joined style by the end of Year 2 and use it in all their work
- teaching spelling and punctuation more systematically, especially helping individual pupils to avoid repeating the same mistakes.

(see paragraphs 44 – 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	11	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	42	58	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	9	178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (91)	90 (96)	93 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	12
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	24	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (96)	93 (96)	93 (96)
	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	12	20	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	28	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (86)	84 (79)	97 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	28	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (86)	88 (79)	91 (89)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	162	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	9	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	25.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	9
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	462499
Total expenditure	454387
Expenditure per pupil	2260
Balance brought forward from previous year	25071
Balance carried forward to next year	33183

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	153
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	39	0	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	38	12	1	6
The teaching is good.	72	23	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	52	12	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	20	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	30	3	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	41	45	7	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	35	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	42	1	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	41	3	3	4