

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Guildford

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 131112

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Phillips

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Shine  
24254

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 248825

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	155 Aldershot Road Guildford Surrey
Postcode:	GU2 8BP
Telephone number:	(01483) 888401
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Nicky Ruutel
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's is a mixed two-form-entry Roman Catholic voluntary aided school and caters for pupils aged four to 11. There are 410 pupils on roll, which is well above the average size. There is an independent nursery on site which about half of the children who enter the reception classes attend first. All children enter the reception classes in the September of the year in which they will be five, but some of the younger children attend on a part-time basis until they are ready for full-time education. When children enter the reception their attainment is generally in line with expected standards. With the exception of Years 2 and 6, there are more girls in the school than boys. There are 23 pupils from minority ethnic groups with the main groups drawn from Asian-Indian, Black African and Chinese communities, with another group from families of dual heritage. Although the majority of pupils speak English as their first language, a minority - just over 11 per cent - come from homes where the mother tongue is not English, and are in the early stages of learning the language. In these homes the main language spoken is Spanish. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is above the national average, with their main needs arising either from moderate learning, or emotional or social difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN is broadly in line with the national average, with three pupils having Downs Syndrome. There is a small number of pupils from travellers' families. The local authority recognises the area as one of social priority and low achievement educationally. Although the school serves three parishes, the majority of pupils come from an area of relative disadvantage. However, because unemployment in the area is low, the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

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

This is a good school where pupils achieve well in English and science and where pupils with SEN and those beginning to learn English also achieve well. These standards are the result of good teaching and the very good leadership of the headteacher and key staff, supported well by the governing body. The school gives good value for money.

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

- By the time pupils are in Year 6, their standards in English and science are above those expected.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and enables pupils to learn well.
- The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and are supported well by the governing body.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and relationships help them to learn effectively.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good.
- Support for pupils with SEN is very good.

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

- Standards in mathematics in Year 6.
- The consistent use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the curriculum.
- The outside play area for reception children.

*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 last inspected in December 1997, it has made good progress in addressing the issues identified. Teachers manage their pupils' behaviour much better than during the last inspection and teaching overall has improved. Homework is given more consistently and the school has made great strides in raising pupils' awareness of the multicultural diversity of society. Arrangements for assessing risks to health and safety are now good and the quality of relationships with parents has improved considerably. Although standards in mathematics for pupils in Year 6 broadly meet national age-related expectations, they are lower than those reported at the last inspection. However, the good standards last reported in English

and science for pupils in Year 6 have been maintained.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

In 2002 the national test results in English at the end of Year 6 were well above those in schools nationally and were above those in schools in similar circumstances. In mathematics they were well below both those in schools nationally and in similar schools. In science the results were below those nationally and were well below those in similar schools. The school points to the considerable staffing difficulties that this cohort experienced last year that adversely affected the results in all the subjects, including English, but to a lesser extent. For example, the average National Curriculum points in the subject were lower in 2002 than in 2001. However, the 2002 targets were exceeded in English, but fell short by some way in mathematics. Despite these disappointing results, the trend in the school's performance since 1998 is broadly in line with the national trend. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading were above the national average and matched those in similar schools. In writing they were well above the national average and were above those in similar schools. In mathematics the results were in the highest five per cent nationally and were well above the standards in similar schools.

In the reception children make good progress and many are on course to exceed the early learning goals in most areas of learning, although the majority are likely to attain them. Some aspects of physical development are progressing at a slower rate because some of the outdoor provision is inadequate. In Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the nationally age-related expectations. All pupils, including those with SEN and those in the early stages of acquiring English, are achieving well. In science their standards match those normally found. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they are benefiting from stability in staffing. Their standards are above those normally found and are achieving well in English and science. In mathematics standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements in other subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good throughout the school and help pupils learn well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good in and around the school, including lunchtimes and in the playground. There were three fixed term exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and relationships are very good. There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school and pupils feel valued by staff.
Attendance	This is good and was above the national average in 2001/2002.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good throughout the school, including the reception classes. All lessons were at least satisfactory and over eight out of ten were good or better. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching and less that was very good. Teachers have a good grasp of the National Strategy for Literacy and teach these skills well. In the lessons observed, the teaching of numeracy was good, but some aspects are not sufficiently emphasised. The teaching of science is good. Most teachers plan their lessons well and use good questioning to check on whether their pupils are ready to move on to new areas of learning. They have high expectations and ensure that pupils will do their best and will behave well. They have good relationships with their pupils and have very secure knowledge of their needs. Pupils with SEN are supported well and teachers work effectively with the learning support assistants to ensure that these pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Teachers do not encourage their pupils enough to use ICT in lessons to help them learn. The setting of homework has improved since the last inspection.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Although it is broad and balanced there are some areas in mathematics that are not sufficiently emphasised. Equality of opportunity is good. Provision for ICT is good but it is not used enough to help pupils learn in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The co-ordinators, together with class teachers and well trained learning support assistants, provide very effective support. Individual education plans have clear, measurable targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Learning support assistants give additional help to some pupils and the school uses the services of the local education authority team.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good; for moral and social development it is good. Cultural development has blossomed since the last inspection. The governors agreed the publication of a race equality policy last year.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good levels of care. Parents value this and the majority think well of the school. It has good procedures for checking on pupils' academic progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and effective management in improving standards in teaching and learning. The headteacher has a clear vision of where he wants the school to be and strategic planning is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are very supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. The chair of governors is very well informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good, overall. The school monitors and evaluates its performance well, including the monitoring of teaching and tracking of pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its funds well for statemented and other pupils with SEN. It makes sensible spending decisions and reviews the benefits appropriately. Staffing, resources and accommodation are good and include a well-equipped, although cramped, ICT suite and a spacious library. The



computers in classrooms are insufficiently used.
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## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• They make good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• Pupils are expected to do well.</li><li>• It helps their children become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The right amount of homework.</li><li>• The information about pupils' progress.</li><li>• How closely the school works with parents.</li><li>• How well the school is managed and led.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views but do not agree with the minority of parents whose views are less positive. They found homework to be appropriate and the reports on pupils' progress to be of good quality. They found the school works well with parents and the flow of information has improved. Inspection finds the school is very well led and managed and the range of activities outside of lessons is similar to that found in other schools.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**By the time pupils are in Year 6, their standards in English and science are above those expected.**

1. Standards in English of pupils in Year 6 are above national age-related expectations and are slightly below those suggested by the 2002 National Curriculum test results. Standards in science are also above expected standards and are much better than the results in 2002 would suggest. Pupils are benefiting from good teaching and stability in staffing this year. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom a language other than English is their mother tongue, are achieving well and are making good progress. These good standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
2. Throughout the school, teachers give all their pupils frequent opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills. In a music lesson in a class in Year 2, for example, they responded well to the opportunities to listen to, and comment constructively, on music by Zakir Hussein, played on a compact disc by Indian and Pakistani musicians. They listened well to the changes in dynamics and as a result were able to answer their teacher's good questions thoughtfully. When the teacher asked, "What did you notice about the music?" one pupil replied, "The flute gets higher and lower", whilst another said, "It reminds me of tropical rainforests". These pupils speak confidently and in complete sentences, with one pupil describing what it meant to her to change the pace from fast to slow saying, "When you go slow, you go as slow as a turtle." In Year 6, pupils continue to benefit from their teachers' good questioning and the opportunities to answer them in their own words. In an English lesson the pupils were studying cinquains, (a poem with a standard syllable pattern of five lines and a total of 22 syllables in a given sequence). The pupils listened very well and gave thoughtful answers to their teacher's questions. When she asked, "Are the three cinquains about the same subject?" a child replied confidently, "No, but they have the same theme – cold and chilly". Teachers encourage the development of pupils' vocabulary well. For example, when the teacher referred to a line in the poem saying the football kit was shouting and asked why the poet was saying this, most pupils were able to answer that this was an example of the use of 'personification'.
3. In Year 6 pupils read well with most of their skills being above those normally expected and are able to locate books using the Dewey classification system to help them. Most of these pupils show good understanding of their texts, read with appropriate expression and enjoy reading. One pupil said he loved reading, "You get more ideas for writing stories", whilst a girl agreed and said, "They give you more vocabulary". Higher attaining pupils say they read 'every day', whilst some say they read 'most days' and others read 'at least three times a week'. All pupils are able to name their favourite authors such as J K Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl and Lemony Snicket. Most pupils are able to talk about the characters in their stories and one was able to say, "Perdita is a mysterious witch, not bad or evil." Higher attaining pupils are able to skim and scan and can make sensible predictions: "As the girl is blind, she would not notice that Perdita was a witch. They will become good friends." Pupils enjoy using the school library that is a spacious and attractive room, and ensures pupils develop good library skills.
4. An analysis of work in pupils' books reveals that their writing is above expected standards by the time they are in Year 6 and there is evidence of clear progress being made since the beginning of the academic year. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to write extended pieces. Much of their writing is lively and thoughtful and in the Autumn term higher attaining pupils were using both short and complex sentences and were structuring them into paragraphs to create suspense, with one pupil writing, "A strange figure caught my eye. He was tall and thin and wore a black cloak and matching top hat. He saw me spying so I casually walked in and stood in the small queue, hoping to find out about the figure." Spelling is generally correct and words are chosen imaginatively and used with precision, "It was that mysterious night when I was walking silently through the half-lit alleyway when it happened." Pupils whom the school describes as being of 'average' attainment were writing in a structured and imaginative way in the autumn term. Their ideas are extended logically through a sequence of sentences, although in this work the use of capital letters is not consistent. By the spring term, punctuation is used more consistently and speech marks and full stops are used to good

effect. On occasion, the spelling of key words is not given enough attention with mistakes being made such as 'sow' for 'saw' and 'tow' for 'two'. However their writing is generally of a good standard as this example, explaining the reason for being late, illustrates, *"I was late this morning, because my mum's car would not start. We left later than usual, so the traffic was dreadful. Our neighbour ended up taking us to school, but dropped us off at the end of the road."* The presentation of this work is of a good standard.

5. In science, pupils in Year 6 achieve standards that are above those normally expected. Work in pupils' books shows that a wide range of work has been covered. There is appropriate emphasis on scientific enquiry. Pupils have compared various soil samples with their colour, texture and their levels of moistness and warmth and have made predictions. One pupil wrote, *"My prediction was correct. The clay was the least permeable and the soil was the most permeable"*. Other work covers the characteristics of living things, including the study of plants and the concept of photosynthesis, with pupils writing, *"Plants need nutrients like minerals to keep them growing strong and healthy."* In 'materials and their properties' pupils show a good understanding of changes to materials that are reversible and those that are irreversible. Recent work includes 'what happens when solids are mixed with water'. Marking is clear and shows pupils how to improve their work. Further analysis of pupils' work indicates that there is considerable variation in the standard of presentation in the two classes in this year group. It is no coincidence that the handwriting of one of the teachers is very neat and a much better example to her pupils of how to present their work, compared with the other class. In one lesson observed in this year group, pupils studied light and built on their previous knowledge that light travels from a source. In this lesson, they carried out investigations to show that shiny surfaces reflect light better than dull surfaces. The standard of their work was generally above that expected. Pupils were able to make sensible predictions and tested them with empirical observations using the principles of fair testing effectively.

### **Teaching is good throughout the school and enables pupils to learn well.**

6. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching and less that was very good. In this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching is good throughout the school, with over eight out of ten lessons being good or better. Good teaching was seen in at least one class in every year group and very good teaching was observed in both classes in the reception and Year 6, and in one class in each of Years 2, 3 and 4. At the last inspection, although teaching was described as good, in most subjects there were weaknesses. Some teachers set work that did not stretch pupils and this led to difficulties in managing pupils. Homework was also given inconsistently. Inspection finds that these weaknesses have been eradicated. Teachers set work that is challenging for pupils and homework is given appropriately.
7. Teaching is good overall in the reception classes, with a high proportion being very good. The teachers and support staff plan and work well together as a team. The development of children's personal and social skills is a strength in these classes. For example, at the start of the day when the children enter their classrooms, they are encouraged to sit and chat quietly together. One child shows a photograph of her hamster to a small group of children, who excitedly talk about it. When it is time for registration, all children listen quietly and are very courteous to their teachers. In the ensuing language and literacy lesson, after reading the story of 'The Three Little Pigs', the teacher used skilful questioning and her very good subject knowledge to develop their understanding and vocabulary further. Questions such as *"What are the wolf's teeth like?"* elicited responses such as 'sharp' and children are encouraged to use language well, one child responding, "The pigs' teeth are smaller than the wolf's." The teacher's planning is very good and follows closely the structure of the literacy strategy. These characteristics were present in the parallel class when the teacher used very good questioning, used resources very effectively and provided a well-balanced mix of adult led and self-chosen activities. In both of these lessons, all children achieved well and made very good progress.
8. Teachers are very secure teaching the National Strategy for Literacy and teach these skills and other aspects of English well. In the best lessons, teachers share the objectives with their pupils so that they are clear about what they are to learn. These clear learning objectives are the result of the good planning of most teachers. In a good lesson in Year 6 for example, the lesson objectives were to identify rhyming words and letter patterns. Because the pupils were to be asked to write their own

Kennings the teacher took care to ensure that they understood and could recall what a Kenning is by asking good, challenging questions. Pupils were allowed to answer at length and extend their vocabulary and confidence. One pupil replied, *"It's two words that describe something without actually naming it such as 'Rain Catcher' for a bucket"*. In Year 4, the teacher asked, *"If we have a full stop, what do we follow it with?"* and established effectively that the class was aware that the correct answer was 'a Capital letter'. The emphasis on good questioning skills reflects the school's focus in its training on the development of questioning skills. Pupils made good progress in their learning, were fully involved in the lesson and showed very good levels of concentration. Much of the teaching of mathematics and numeracy in the lesson observed was of a similar standard. However, some parts of the mathematics curriculum are not sufficiently emphasised and this is why the standards in mathematics are lower than in English. Science teaching is good. In these lessons, as in others, teachers have good relationships with their pupils and have high expectations that they will do their best and challenge them to do so accordingly. In a well planned lesson in Year 6, the teacher gave her class ambitious but realistic work, as she knows her pupils well. As a result, all pupils made good progress in carrying out their investigations to compare the reflective capabilities of shiny and dull surfaces. In all lessons teachers manage their pupils well and use resources effectively.

9. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and are careful to ensure that all groups have their needs met appropriately. Pupils with SEN are supported well and teachers work effectively with the learning support assistants to ensure that these pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Teachers also ensure that the minority of pupils in the first stages of learning English is supported effectively. Learning support assistants are well trained and those supporting pupils with SEN are fully aware of the targets in their individual education plans and use them effectively to help pupils learn well.

**The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and are supported well by the governing body.**

10. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear vision of what sort of school St Joseph's should be. He points to the school's mission statement as defining its aspirations and inspiration. This states that 'St Joseph's Catholic Primary School strives to promote the education and development of our children in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect'. Inspection finds that this aim is achieved effectively. The headteacher has successfully developed a school with a very positive ethos, a warm learning environment where all staff and pupils have good relationships and mutual respect for each other. He and his senior staff are committed to high standards. Good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' progress are in place. Improvement overall has been good since the last inspection and findings from this inspection indicate that standards for pupils in Year 6 are better than the 2002 results might suggest. Improvements needed to teaching the numeracy strategy have been identified in the school improvement plan, although there is insufficient emphasis placed on checking pupils' work to monitor both its quality and to check that all aspects of the curriculum are being appropriately covered. There is a good induction programme, where new teachers are placed in the same year as more experienced colleagues.
11. The senior management team (SMT), consisting of the deputy head and two assistant heads, support the headteacher very well. In this team there is a blend of experience and skills and the headteacher values its support of his vision and its contribution to strategic planning and day-to-day management. The team plays a significant role in performance management procedures. It meets weekly and decides on an agreed focus, for example the monitoring of teaching, which is viewed as a developmental process, with good practice being shared. The two assistant heads are each responsible for a key stage and the SMT agrees what information should be disseminated to other staff. In the rest of the school, subjects and areas of responsibility are managed through a faculty structure and faculty teams. The school believes that this flat management structure allows genuine delegation and participation in decision making and planning. It was possible to interview a limited number of faculty members during the inspection. On the basis of this evidence, inspection supports the headteacher's assertion that this structure is effective in promoting teamwork and professional dialogue.
12. The chair of governors is relatively inexperienced; for example she is in her second year as chair and is in only her third year as a governor. However, despite this inexperience she has acquired an impressive amount of knowledge in a short space of time and has a good awareness of the school's

strengths and weaknesses. For example she and her colleagues on the governing body were concerned about the disappointing National Curriculum results in Year 6 in 2002. They therefore took steps, in their role as a 'critical friend', to assure themselves that the results were as a result of exceptional staffing difficulties and did not represent the beginning of a downward trend. The chair is very aware of the relatively new faculty structure in the school and believes it will encourage staff to have a greater sense of ownership in decision making. She visits the school regularly and has examined value added data produced by the local education authority in order to be better able to interpret the data or, as she put it, to 'get under the skin' of the results. The chair of the finance committee has a good overview of the school's finances and works well with the school's administrative officer. Funds are managed well and the slightly larger than usual budgetary surplus is being spent sensibly. Many of the governors are new to their roles, but are very supportive, active and well informed.

### **Pupils' very good attitudes and relationships help them to learn effectively.**

13. Two of the aims of the school are to, 'Encourage each person to see themselves as a valued member of a wider community who can act independently and make a positive contribution for the good of all' and to 'impart a joy and value to the treasured gift of learning'. The school is successful in achieving these aims. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. When children enter the school in the reception classes, they are made very welcome and this provides a good foundation for the very good attitudes that they develop as they progress through the school. These attitudes are reinforced by the good quality of teaching in these classes and in others throughout the school. In one of the reception classes for example, the teacher's very good questioning skills and use of materials enabled her children not only to develop their observational and drawing skills well, but also enabled them to enjoy learning and to discover that it could be fun and exciting. Teachers' expectations that their pupils will do their best has a positive impact on learning and contributes effectively to their general level of confidence. Pupils feel valued by all staff, are confident and eager to go to school and generally concentrate well. Pupils' very good attitudes are also built on a respect for the school rules. During the inspection one child was heard to say to another, *"If we didn't have rules this place would be chaos"*. In the questionnaire responses and at the meeting, parents said they were very happy with the attitudes of their children and believed they liked school.
14. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good throughout the school and help pupils learn well. Pupils show all adults appropriate but not subservient respect. In the reception classes, children play well together at appropriate times in lessons and throughout the school all pupils, including those with SEN and the minority in the first stages of acquiring English as a second language, work well together and are happy to share equipment. In most lessons, pupils have very positive attitudes, work quietly and support each other. When discussing their reading habits and the books they like, all pupils listened respectfully as individuals expressed their views and each valued the comments of the others. There is a high degree of racial harmony and on the few occasions when racial comments are made, the school has a policy of 'zero tolerance' to deal with them. At lunchtimes the dining hall is supervised well, but pupils are very sociable and engage sensibly in conversation with each other. The very good standards in pupils' attitudes and relationships, reported at the last inspection, have been maintained.

### **Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good.**

15. At the last inspection provision for pupils' spiritual development was judged to be very good. Assemblies were reported as giving good opportunities for reflection as well as celebrating the achievements of individuals, and the spiritual element was said to permeate the whole of the school's curriculum. This still remains the case. Throughout the school, from entry in the reception classes, to when they leave in Year 6, pupils benefit from the good opportunities teachers give them to listen and to reflect on stories, themes and issues. They are consistently treated with respect and classrooms are thoughtful, learning environments. Assemblies promote pupils' spiritual development well, as pupils enter and leave the hall in complete silence and listen respectfully to the story of Noah in the Old Testament and Jesus in the desert for 40 nights in the New Testament. At the end of the last lesson of the day, the session ends with a quiet prayer, led by the class teacher. These prayerful occasions are reflective moments that end the day in a quiet, peaceful manner and enable the pupils to think their innermost thoughts calmly and reverently. They are a fitting epitaph to the

emphasis given to their spiritual development throughout the curriculum.

16. At the last inspection, although provision for pupils' cultural development was described as satisfactory, weaknesses were identified. For example, in music and art, the emphasis, with some exceptions, was restricted to Western art and composers, and the teaching of world faiths was largely confined to Christianity and Judaism. The report considered that the school could do more to prepare its pupils adequately for life in a diverse society. Since the last inspection the school has done much to broaden pupils' awareness of the nature of a multi-cultural and multi-faith society, to the extent that its provision for pupils' cultural development is now very good. The introduction of a new religious education syllabus – the 'Here I Am' scheme, has helped to broaden pupils' awareness of other world faiths, including Hinduism and Islam. The remainder of the curriculum now tends to be more diversified and inspection evidence suggests that a much broader awareness of other cultures now permeates the curriculum than previously reported. In art and music for example, there is emphasis on the cultures of the Indian sub-continent, Africa and the Caribbean, with the school acquiring a collection of steel drums and evidence of work with Islamic and Rangoli patterns and African fabric patterns. Pupils study the work of Afro-Caribbean artists and poets such as Grace Nichols and John Ayard. There is appropriate reference to other cultures in the history and geography curriculum. Photographic evidence shows pupils and their families having visited the school dressed in Indian saris and another family dressed in traditional African costumes.

### **Support for pupils with SEN is very good.**

17. At the time of the inspection there were 129 pupils on school action and school action plus according to the recently introduced legal requirements for SEN. This represents just over 31 per cent of the school roll and is above the national average for schools of this type. Included in this percentage are eight pupils with statements of SEN, three of whom have Downs Syndrome. All pupils with SEN are given individual education plans that have short-term and specific targets that are reviewed regularly to assess pupils' progress. Parents are informed regularly about the outcomes of the review of pupils' targets. The school has decided to maintain a register of SEN for these pupils. The school monitors their progress carefully and is rightly flexible about those whom it judges should be placed on the register, those who need to remain on it and those who, because of the progress they have made, are ready to be removed. Pupils are generally supported in classes by well trained learning support assistants, but some pupils are withdrawn from lessons when the school believes it to be in the pupils' best interest. However, generally pupils do not like being withdrawn. Pupils on the school action plus stage are given individual support, whilst those at the school action stage are supported in groups. Training has been provided for all teachers and learning support assistants in areas such as Dyslexia, Makaton, support for higher attaining pupils, additional literacy support and early learning support.
18. There are two part-time special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), one responsible for the younger pupils, the other for older pupils. This SENCO teaches the lower set for mathematics in Year 6. The school identifies pupils' needs early and the support provided by the SENCOs, class teachers and learning support assistants is very effective. The joint leadership and management of pupils with SEN are very good and ensure that these pupils make good progress and achieve well. Statements are reviewed annually and, besides the relevant SENCO, the review team includes an educational psychologist, parents, the headteacher and the relevant learning support assistant. The school reports that in the past pupils have been involved in this review, but most of the pupils were overawed and were unable to cope. The very good provision reported at the last inspection has been maintained.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Standards in mathematics in Year 6.**

19. Although the quality of teaching in mathematics observed during the inspection was similar to that in English, with most teaching being good or better, the school concedes that numeracy is the weakest of the school's basic skills. The school identifies the need to develop more problem solving, and investigation and applied mathematical opportunities. Inspection finds that pupils' standards in mathematics in Year 2 are above those normally expected. In this year group an analysis of pupils'

previous work reveals there is good emphasis on using and applying mathematics. A good lesson on problem solving was also observed in Year 2.

20. In Year 6, although pupils' standards are broadly in line with age-related expectations, pupils' past work indicates that there is not enough emphasis in some areas, such as data handling, although this was being taught during the inspection. There is also less emphasis in other aspects than would normally be expected such as weight, capacity, angles and word problems. There is also less work than usual in fractions and percentages. However standards are much better than the 2002 results for pupils this age would suggest, as they were adversely affected by disruption to teaching.
21. The school has identified improvements in mathematics in its improvement plan for the current academic year (2002/2003). Improvements to the teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy have been highlighted with the aim of improving pupils' numeracy skills. Inspection evidence found teaching to be good overall, but the analysis of the work of pupils in Year 6 suggests that all aspects of the curriculum are not given due emphasis leading to weaknesses in some parts of the mathematics' curriculum that are depressing standards. The aims in the 2002/2003 improvement plan are therefore unlikely to be achieved fully in the current academic year. Teachers' planning is monitored by members of the mathematics faculty and revealed some of these weaknesses. However, the lack of emphasis on some parts of the curriculum indicates that there is insufficient regular monitoring of the standards of pupils' work to determine whether these plans are actually being implemented in practice.

#### **The consistent use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the curriculum.**

22. Pupils are developing good skills in ICT and the computer suite is used well. In one lesson observed in Year 6, teaching was good and pupils were achieving well. In the computer suite ICT is linked well to other subjects. For example in the ICT lesson observed, there were good links with geography.
23. Although there are computers in classrooms, they were not observed being used during the period of the inspection. Evidence suggests they are insufficiently and inefficiently used to help pupils as part of their everyday learning in other subjects in their classrooms. The evidence available during the inspection suggests that pupils have sufficient knowledge and skill to use the computers consistently as an everyday tool to help them in their learning. Pupils are quite capable, for example, to use them for research, using CD ROMs and the Internet, although they may not be fully aware of these opportunities. Planning suggests that most teachers are not sufficiently aware of the benefits and potential of the technology in practice in other areas of the curriculum. In the school improvement plan one of the targets is that cross-curricular links in ICT should be evident in planning. However, these links were not evident during the inspection. Despite these shortcomings, the recently appointed co-ordinator, who is aware of what needs to be done, provides good leadership of the subject.

#### **The outside play area for reception children.**

24. The school lacks a dedicated outside play area for the reception classes and children do not have ready access to a range of large toys, such as tricycles. Children's break times in the reception classes are timetabled and are taken with pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are few opportunities for children to take risks appropriate to their age, such as those provided by a sandpit, climbing apparatus or balancing equipment. Some of this equipment is available in one of the halls for which the reception classes are timetabled for physical education lessons. However, children do not have access to this equipment on a daily basis, although they have access to the attractive playground of the independent nursery once a week. As a result they are not given consistently planned activities that offer appropriate physical challenges and learning in this area of physical development is not as good as it might be.
25. The school is aware that provision for outdoor play is inadequate for reception children. One of the aims in the school improvement plan is 'to give the children a learning environment, which enables them to fulfil the Early Learning Goals'. It has identified the action required to achieve this aim that involves developing the south courtyard to create an outdoor classroom. The improvement plan recognises that there is a need to develop a playground space to enhance opportunities for imaginative play and help children to explore and develop their skills that enable them to move

confidently with control and co-ordination.

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

26. The school should now:

I. raise standards in mathematics by the time pupils are in Year 6 by:

- ensuring all aspects of the mathematics' curriculum are given due emphasis in teachers' planning; and

*(paragraphs 19, 20)*

- monitoring the quality and range of pupils' work more regularly.

*(paragraphs 10, 21)*

II. extend the use of ICT in the curriculum to enable pupils to support their work in other subjects on an everyday basis by;

- improving teachers' and pupils' awareness of the benefits and potential of the technology that could be used in classrooms in other areas of the curriculum.

*(paragraph 23)*

III. provide a dedicated play area for reception children by:

- implementing the action plans for 'early years' identified in the school improvement plan.

*(paragraph 25)*



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	8	13	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	32	52	16	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 four percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	410
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	129

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	57

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for 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	29	30	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	25	28
	Girls	28	30	29
	Total	50	55	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (90)	93 (90)	97 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	28	24
	Girls	27	29	29
	Total	50	57	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (92)	97 (95)	90 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	23	28
	Girls	27	19	26
	Total	56	42	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (91)	71 (75)	92 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	26	26
	Girls	23	20	24
	Total	51	46	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (86)	78 (88)	85 (91)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>
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***

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
363	3	0
4	0	0
20	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
2	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.44
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	29.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198.7

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	878,540
Total expenditure	849,800
Expenditure per pupil	2,038
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,583
Balance carried forward to next year	65,323

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.75
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12.74

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	820
Number of questionnaires returned	272

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	39	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	43	14	4	4
The teaching is good.	47	46	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	14	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	33	7	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	38	2	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	44	16	6	1
The school is well led and managed.	41	38	14	4	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	40	4	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	33	24	12	9

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views but do not agree with the minority of parents whose views are less positive. They found the school is very well led and managed and the range of activities outside of lessons is comparable to that found in most schools. Homework is also found to be appropriate and reports on pupils' progress are of good quality. They found the school works well with parents and the school's information to them has improved.