

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. PATRICK'S RC PRIMARY AND NURSERY  
SCHOOL**

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105726

Headteacher: Mr B McKeown

Reporting inspector: Katharine Halifax  
25439

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2002

Inspection number: 252431

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 to 11 years        |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                |
| School address:              | Lee Street<br>Oldham |
| Postcode:                    | OL8 1EF              |
| Telephone number:            | 0161 633 0527        |
| Fax number:                  | 0161 628 3199        |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body       |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Rev Fr P Sumner      |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1998            |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                   |                      |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 25439        | Katharine Halifax | Registered inspector |
| 13796        | Gillian Marsland  | Lay inspector        |
| 17685        | Linda Spooner     | Team inspector       |

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services  
Strathblane House  
Ashfield Road  
Cheadle  
Stockport  
SK8 1BB

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school serves the Parish of St Patrick in Oldham. Though the majority of pupils are baptised Catholics, a recent change in the admissions policy has resulted in school now taking up to 20% non-Catholic pupils. This has resulted in a changing population. The school is situated in a deprived urban area. Many families live in rented accommodation. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is above average. Assessment on entry to the school shows, though there is a wide ability range, overall, attainment to be below that expected of children of this age, especially in language and communication, mathematics and social development. With 209 pupils on roll, the school is average in size. There are more girls than boys. Numbers have fallen from 226 since the last inspection. The rate of pupil mobility is high, 18 pupils joined the school at other than at normal time and 20 pupils left during the school year. Of the pupils who sat the national tests for Year 6, only two thirds had spent the whole of their junior school career at the school. The majority of pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. Of the 17 percent from other backgrounds, most are Asian or British Asian with a small number of African-Caribbean. Almost all Asian pupils are second generation. The percentage of pupils who do not speak English as their main language is high. Eleven are at the early stages of language acquisition, speaking Urdu, Punjabi and Gujarati as their first language. In addition, there are two refugees from Burundi, both of whom speak the local French dialect. There has recently been an influx of Catholic Filipino pupils who are children of hospital workers. Four children are in public care. All are fostered long-term. The number of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Most needs are associated with moderate learning difficulties. On leaving the school, the majority of pupils transfer to Our Lady's Catholic High School.

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

This is a good school. The quality of teaching is good so pupils make good gains in their learning. Staff ensure pupils from all backgrounds and all abilities are given equal opportunities. Pupils' performance is higher than that of those from similar backgrounds by the time they leave the school. Leadership is effective. Though the cost of educating pupils is above average, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Teaching is good and is reflected in pupils' achievements.
- Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities are valued.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development is reflected in their positive attitude to school and very good behaviour.
- Pupils' achievements in the performing arts are very good.
- Overall, links with parents are very good and contribute to pupils' progress.

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

- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.
- More needs to be done to identify and provide for pupils who may have a particular gift or talent.
- Insufficient monitoring of classroom practice is taking place.

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

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

The school has been affected by the long term absence of a key member of staff for almost a year. Nevertheless, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection in July 1998. The key issues to improve outdoor play facilities for children in the nursery and the reception class and to make teaching more challenging have been met. The role of the co-ordinator has improved with far more monitoring taking place, particularly of pupils' learning. However, subject managers and senior teachers have not monitored the effect of classroom practice on standards. Standards have fluctuated since the last inspection but much of this is attributable to the high turnover of pupils and the

difference in ability between year groups. Attendance rates have dropped. However, the quality of teaching has been maintained and there has been improvement in pupils' behaviour and in links with parents. The school has the capacity to continue to improve.

## 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         | B             | D    | C    | A               |
| mathematics     | B             | B    | C    | B               |
| science         | C             | C    | D    | C               |

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

The 2002 data is taken from the Ofsted performance and data report, which as yet is unvalidated.

Attainment on entry to the school is below that expected of children of this age. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve the Early Learning Goals in physical development, personal, social and emotional development, creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Just over half the pupils reach the expected level in language, literacy, communication and mathematics. The number of pupils reaching the expected levels in tests for reading, writing, mathematics and in science tasks in 2002 for those in Year 2, is above the national average. Though not as many pupils in Year 2 achieve the higher level 3 in all subjects and the higher level 5 for Year 6 pupils in mathematics and science, overall, as the above table shows, their performance compares favourably to that of schools for pupils from similar backgrounds. An analysis of pupils' performance in formal tests during their time in school indicates they make good progress and achieve well in both age groups. Achievement in other subjects is never less than satisfactory. Pupils' achievements in the performing arts are very good.

Results in national tests have fluctuated over the past three years. However, much of this is attributable to pupil mobility and the composition of different year groups. School targets agreed with the Local Education Authority for the next two years are realistic and, whilst lower than the current year, take account of pupil mobility and special educational needs.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils enjoy attending school and take full advantage of all the activities on offer.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons, at break and lunchtimes and when on visits out of school. This creates a good climate for learning.                   |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships with staff and between pupils are very good. Racial harmony pervades. Pupils respect each other and readily work with pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. |
| Attendance                             | Unsatisfactory. Pupils' attendance was poor last school year. However,  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | procedures introduced by the school and the reallocation of an education welfare officer have resulted in a significant improvement this term. |
|--|--|



## 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.*

English and literacy are taught well in all age groups. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory as is the teaching of numeracy. However, there are missed opportunities, for example in science, geography and history, for pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge. Teachers are now more confident when teaching information and communication technology because of suitable training. This has resulted in improved standards. Whilst some staff use new technology very effectively in their planning and other lessons, others are at an early stage. Though the format of teachers' planning is variable, different tasks are provided for different ability groups. In addition, any additional support that may be needed is identified. As a result pupils improve their knowledge and skills at a good rate. However, staff recognise they have no policy or procedures to identify, and limited knowledge to provide for pupils who may have a particular gift or talent. Particular strengths in teaching are well-planned lessons, good classroom management and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the work they produce.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment   |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Satisfactory overall. The school continues to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Opportunities improve as pupils get older, with French being taught towards the end of Year 6. The school has identified design and technology as the subject needing most attention. Particular strengths are in the performing arts.   |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Good. Pupils are identified early and receive good support. There is a clear commitment to include all pupils in all activities regardless of attainment.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | Good. Staff make sure new vocabulary and instructions are carefully explained, so pupils understand what is expected of them. The headteacher monitors test results to make sure they are challenged and are achieving as well as others in their class.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good provision enables pupils to make very good improvement in their social skills. Staff promote racial equality. Pupils are encouraged to have respect for the beliefs of others and are well prepared to take their place in a multi-racial society.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Good. The school continues to provide a caring environment with good procedures to ensure pupils' welfare. Staff know pupils and their families well. Systems to monitor pupils' academic performance and personal development have improved significantly since the last inspection. Links with parents are a strength of the school and contribute to pupils' learning. |

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher is a competent leader who has successfully created an effective learning environment. He is well supported by an able and enthusiastic deputy and a hard working team of staff. Overall, management by senior teachers and subject co-ordinators is satisfactory, but some aspects need more rigour.   |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Good. All legal requirements are in place. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but need to take a more active role in monitoring the school's effectiveness.  |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Satisfactory. Whilst a good start has been made to monitoring pupils' learning, there has been little monitoring of classroom practice. A detailed analysis of individual progress in formal tests confirms pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs achieve as well as others in their class. A good start has been made to applying the principles of best value through challenge to improve and comparisons with other schools. |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. Careful consideration has been given to the deployment of staff and resources. Very good use is made of the areas outside classrooms and classroom support staff for small group work.   |

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most   | What parents would like to see improved  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christian ethos and family atmosphere.</li> <li>• School is approachable and staff listen.</li> <li>• The leadership of the headteacher.</li> <li>• Pupils understand and value the reward system.</li> <li>• The quality of education provided</li> <li>• Staff care for 'whole child' not just academic progress.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most meetings and concerts are held during the school day.</li> <li>• The amount of homework pupils receive.</li> <li>• The number of interesting activities held outside lesson time.</li> </ul> |

The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by the parents. In response to their concerns, clubs, meetings and concerts are held during the school day because the area around the school is perceived not to be safe at night. The amount of homework pupils receive is appropriate for their age and is contributing to progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **Teaching is good and is reflected in pupils' achievements.**

1. Lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work show the good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good, being good overall. Pupils' achievement is good because lessons are well planned with work matched to pupils' differing needs and levels of attainment. Classroom organisation is good and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the work they produce. Learning support staff are used effectively for individual and small group work, striking a suitable balance between support and independence. The additional attention improves pupils' confidence and so their rate of learning increases. This was particularly evident in a mathematics lesson in the reception class.
2. Lessons have a good structure. Pupils know what they are expected to learn because teachers make this clear at the start of each lesson. Activities are well organised with equipment close to hand to cause minimum disruption. The teaching of skills is good. For example, in physical education pupils improved their balance and movement on the apparatus because the teacher used demonstration well and provided a commentary on the teaching points. Pupils with those for whom English is an additional language extend their vocabulary well because new words are carefully explained and staff check pupils know the meaning of specialist vocabulary such as difference between 'condensation' and 'evaporation' in Year 6 science lesson. Similarly, staff check pupils with special educational needs know what is expected of them. At the end of each lesson pupils are asked "What have you learned?" or "What are you taking away from this lesson?" So they identify what learning that has taken place. For example, at the end of a Year 2 science lesson investigating mini-beasts, in addition to having an increased knowledge the creatures, one pupil had used the Internet and reported he now knows "A slug is related to a snail".
3. In the lessons where teaching was very good, the activities provided fired the imagination of pupils and made learning enjoyable. Such lessons sparked, they had a sense of urgency and the use of 'time targets' ensured pupils maintained concentration and produced a very good volume of work. This was seen in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils had ten minutes to write an eye-witness account of what had happened at a royal ball. The classroom fell silent as pupils concentrated to complete the activity. A little later in the lesson pupils were given two minutes to come up with a list of alternatives for the word 'said'. Competition was fierce as pupils endeavoured to compile the longest list. At the end of the allotted time very good suggestions such as 'complained', 'murmured' and 'proclaimed' were offered. These were then to make their newspaper reports more interesting to the reader.
4. Though parents expressed concern about the amount of homework pupils receive, inspection findings show the amount of homework set is suitable for this age of pupils and is contributing to learning. Homework is set regularly to complete or reinforce work undertaken in class. On occasions, teachers set homework so pupils are prepared for their next lesson. This was the case in Year 6 when pupils had collected different examples of types of non-literary material such as leaflets, advertisements and posters in preparation for a lesson examining the use of powerful adjectives. Other teachers successfully motivate pupils and inspire them to achieve especially well in extended topics. Pupils of all levels of attainment have produced some very high quality work in their individual research into some facet of Roman life in Year 4

and Tudor life in Year 5. They have achieved high standards, producing neatly presented, attractively illustrated work, in some cases word-processed. Following their own interest, they have extended their knowledge and understanding, for example, in Roman fashions, jewellery and make up or Tudor music and art work.

5. Pupils want to learn because of the interesting and varied activities provided for them. As a result they make good gains in the knowledge and skills they acquire. An analysis of pupils' performance in tests on entry to the school compared to results in national tests for the same pupils in Year 2 shows achievement to be good in reading, writing and in mathematics. Year-on-year records of the performance of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 in formal tests show a similar picture. When comparing the results gained in national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 1998 to those of the same pupils in national tests for those in Year 6 in 2002; evidence shows progress to be at least good and, in the case of almost one third of pupils, very good in English, mathematics and science. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, of pupils with special educational needs, or those from different backgrounds.
6. Following a significant decline in the results of national tests in English, staff recognised much of this was attributable to low standards and underachievement in writing. Standards and achievement in writing have improved significantly over the past year because teachers have applied themselves to the school target 'To improve standards in writing'. Staff are now providing opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects, for example in history when writing accounts and in science when recording investigations and instructions for planting bulbs. As a result there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving the expected standard or above by the end of Year 6. In addition, there has been good improvement in pupils' imaginative writing with eleven pupils of different ages having their poems published in an anthology produced by the Local Education Authority.

**The very good provision for pupils' personal development is reflected in their positive attitude to school and very good behaviour.**

7. The school continues to provide very well for pupils' personal development. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered very successfully. Worship in class and in the main hall encourages pupils to develop a reverence for prayer and gives them time to consider their own feelings and emotions and how they might help others. Pupils close their eyes and bow their heads as they offer their prayers. Though worship is based on the Catholic faith, pupils are encouraged to respect the beliefs of others. Additional voluntary assemblies held to celebrate Lent and Advent are well attended by all age groups and by different faiths. Candles, music and subdued lighting are used very effectively on these occasions to provide a time for quiet contemplation in the middle of the hectic preparations for Christmas. Displays around the school celebrate the Catholic foundation emphasising all are members of God's family, with pupils in Year 6 highlighting that 'We are all different with our own special talents and skills'. Work in textiles symbolising 'God's Eyes' remind pupils that God is watching when they need help. Staff give pupils time to consider feelings and emotions and how this might help others. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning. A good example of this was work undertaken to observe Remembrance Day. Pupils related this to members of own family who served in war and considered the enormous sacrifice involved. Consideration of the feelings of others is not confined to the present day but addressed in history. For example, thinking how Anne Boleyn might have felt about her 'marriage problems'.

8. Pupils' moral development is promoted very successfully. Relationships with adults and between pupils are very good. There is mutual respect. Adults provide very good examples of how to behave appropriately and pupils are made very aware of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are helped to recognise the need for rules in the classroom and in physical education and games, learning to play fair and to be gracious in victory or defeat. Though pupils have won a number of trophies for sport and music, without doubt, the most coveted award is the Giuseppe Bucema Trophy which is in memory of a Down's Syndrome pupil who died four years ago and is awarded for kindness and consideration. Provision for pupils' social development is equally good. Staff are successful in fostering a sense of community. Pupils are encouraged think of the needs of others. As a result they recognise and respect differences in others. Substantial sums of money are raised for those less fortunate than themselves through contributions, for example, to Catholic Aid For Overseas Development (CAFOD), St. Joseph's Penny and the Royal British Legion.
9. Parents report their children enjoy school. This is evident in pupils' approach to their work. Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment have produced a good volume of neatly presented and well-illustrated work. In lessons, they are eager to demonstrate their knowledge by answering questions and contributing to discussions. They take their turn, listening politely to others in the group and showing respect for the opinions of others. Pupils are happy and lively, wearing their uniform with dignity and taking pride in belonging to the school community. Pupils of all ages and abilities respond particularly well to the numerous opportunities to work in pairs or small groups. They work collaboratively making suggestions, supporting and showing regard for others as when discussing and writing, for example, opening sentences to interest the reader in their writing in Year 3.
10. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and on the playground is very good. There have been no exclusions in the twelve years the headteacher has been post. Parents who volunteer to help on school visits report behaviour out of school is very good and often commented on by members of the public. Pupils care for each other. Pupils of different ages and ethnic backgrounds play readily together, racial harmony pervades. All ages enjoy taking responsibility, looking after equipment and making choices. This is especially so at lunchtime when, under the watchful eye of adults, all pupils use the cafeteria, collecting their meal on a tray and carrying it cautiously along the corridor, up the steps into the dining area. After eating, they conscientiously return their plates, cutlery and tumbler to the serving area. Older pupils helping in the nursery take their responsibilities seriously and are proud to be active in the Parish preparing hymns, readings and dance for worship in Church. Those in Year 6 augment their contribution by preparing Liturgy for the sick and housebound.

**Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are valued.**

11. The work of the school reflects its Mission Statement. All members of the community are recognised as individuals and valued in their own right. Parents attending the meeting reported they chose the school because, whilst allowing pupils to deepen their Catholic faith, it gave their child an opportunity to mix with other faiths such as Hindu and Muslim in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Parents responding to the questionnaire feel the school is helping their child to become mature. The charismatic chair of governors, the parish priest, is very well placed to ensure racial harmony continues to be maintained and the cultural heritage of all to be built upon. Using previous experience, and conscious of racial problems within the town, he has planned a training day to consider the way forward as part of the community. He is

encouraging all connected with the school to consider the history of how each group came to be in town and to celebrate their heritage. He, alongside the headteacher, has ensured governors have met their legal requirement in response to Council for Race Equality Code of Practice. Alongside pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, children who are in public care or who are looked after by the local authority are monitored carefully to make sure they progress at the same rate as others in their group.

12. A map, prominently sited in the school, locates the country of origin of the families represented in school. Seating at tables in classrooms and membership of house teams reflect the rich cultural mix of the school population. Cultural dietary needs are catered for. A respect for the customs and beliefs of others is fostered. For example, when a Muslim pupil was fasting as part of his observation of Ramadan, others in the class were impressed by his strength of character and restrained from tempting their friend with food. Older pupils have visited a Hindu temple and listened to the story of Rama and Sita, increasing their understanding of why and how Hindus celebrate Diwali. African and Chinese songs are sung in Mass and used in Church as an inspiration for dance.
13. Pupils who do not speak English as their main language are well catered for. They receive good support from skilled staff. The deputy headteacher, who has a knowledge of Urdu, endeavours to find books dual language books which contain text in their own language as well as in English. By the time pupils have been at the school for a few months, they have acquired a wide vocabulary because of the work of staff and, other than the odd technical word, for example in mathematics or science, need little additional help in lessons. Very good support is provided for pupils who are newly arrived in this country and at an early stage of learning English. In addition to lessons in English, staff ensure pupils quickly become acquainted with school routines and British customs by, for example, preparing them for their first Christmas in England.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are overseen by an enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator. Pupils are identified early and intervention is effective. Assessments are focused and, where necessary, an interpreter is used for pupils who do not speak English as their main language. Each term a staff meeting is dedicated to pupils with special educational needs. Whilst staff may express concern and identify pupils at any time, the allocated meeting time gives them the opportunity to focus and comment on pupils who may not be in their class. Staff training is linked to the needs of pupils, for example working with pupils who have Down's Syndrome. Good links have been established with other professionals. This is demonstrated in the close liaison between support staff and the speech and language therapist who, together, have devised programmes which the classroom assistants can implement daily thus increasing progress.
15. Where appropriate, pupils are withdrawn for individual work to boost their performance, to give confidence and, on occasions, to speak confidentially with an adult about problems in their personal life that may be affecting their learning. As a result of individual support, classroom support and special programmes, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as others in their class. Managers and governors have ensured the building is accessible to wheelchair users, and in response to the Disability Act are preparing a feasibility study to allow any future disabled pupils, parents or staff access to all levels of the building.

**Pupils' achievements in the performing arts are very good.**

16. Pupils have gained a formidable reputation within the town for their performance in choral speaking, on occasions being awarded the coveted Rose Bowl at the town festival. Pupils are proud to represent their school in public. A video of a recent performance shows they dress smartly, stand erect and look their audience in the eye. Renditions such as 'The Smugglers' Song' by Rudyard Kipling are of a particularly high standard. In their performance, pupils gave their all as they adopted a very good rhythm and used punctuation very effectively in their interpretation to accentuate the meaning of the poem, stopping in appropriate places for maximum effect to very successfully capture the mood of the poem. Pupils skilfully moved the dialogue between three groups, speeding up or speaking more softly as the content demanded. The use of clipped speech in the delivery of the line "Five and twenty ponies trotting through the dark" echoed the sound of horses hooves. Then, turning slowly to one side as they quietly whispered, "Watch the wall my darling as the gentlemen go by" successfully capturing the sinister feel of the poem.
17. Teachers who teach singing have good levels of expertise and deliver well-planned, well resourced lessons. This has resulted in pupils singing tunefully with expression and clear diction. Pupils are helped to improve further by skilled teaching of how to breathe and in being aware of the dynamics, and the duration of notes. Pupils quickly improve their listening by having to distinguish, for example, between different rhythms and then repeating the rhythm using a range of percussion instruments. Improved listening contributes to two part singing and 'echoing', as was particularly evident in a moving rendition of Away In a Manger. The music co-ordinator provides very good support for non-specialist staff and uses his talents well. This was demonstrated in his setting of a lunchtime prayer which his class sung with reverence. Pupils benefit from very good specialist tuition in the violin, cello and voice. A school orchestra has been formed which performs at celebrations, with the choir representing the school at the Oldham Schools' Music Festival. Though the school needs parents to make financial contributions to specialist music lessons, no child is prevented from receiving tuition because their parents are unable to pay.
18. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve high standards in liturgical dance. In this lesson, teachers plan for pupils to interpret music from different cultures to be used in Church, for example, at Advent and other special occasions. Recently, pupils have performed to Chinese and African music. In the lesson observed, pupils worked extremely well together making decisions about their performance. Through their movements, they very successfully engendered a feeling of anticipation and excitement as the Birth of Christ approaches. Pupils made very good improvement in the quality of their dance because, following demonstrations, they analysed and discussed their performance with each other and their teacher. During the discussion, pupils showed great maturity in their observations and responses to each other. By the end of the lesson, they confidently produced a high quality performance.

**Overall, links with parents are very good and contribute to pupils' progress.**

19. The school has managed to improve the effective links with parents reported in the last inspection report. Links are now very effective and are contributing to learning. Though not the local neighbourhood school, some parents choose to travel considerable distances to have their child at the school. Many parents are past pupils of the school and choose for their child to have the same quality of education. The majority hold the school in high esteem. Information for parents is very good. In addition to a range of letters, newsletters and other items of interest are posted on the school website.

20. Most parents contribute to their child's learning at home. Almost all have signed the home and school agreement. Parents appreciate the programme they receive of what their child will be studying each year. Those attending the meeting described how this provided a basis for them to chat to their child about what they had learned and to guide their research. In addition, parents help the staff by providing interesting objects, for example, for studies of the Victorians or World War Two in history. The majority of parents hear their child read each evening. This accelerates pupils' learning.
21. Parents receive good information about how their child is progressing. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their child's progress with reviews being conducted at the appropriate time. Parents of refugees and those newly arrived in the country are given practical support and guidance. Nursery staff hold regular coffee mornings for parents so they can discuss how their child has settled, how they are progressing and what can be done to help at home. The twice yearly parent consultation meetings are very well attended and reported by parents to be helpful in highlighting pupils' strengths as well as areas which can be improved. School reports are of a good quality. Where reports are very good, teachers and parents agree targets for further improvement.
22. Several parents help in school as volunteers hearing pupils read, assisting with artwork and accompanying pupils on educational visits out of school. Parents are a useful resource in the classrooms. Hindu and Muslim parents have visited classrooms to talk about their beliefs and customs, often accompanied by delicious foods to taste such as samosas and bhajis. Parents organise social events for themselves, staff and pupils. In addition to providing pleasant occasions, the events raise generous sums for the school and the Parish. Parents are grateful and report staff are always willing to discuss their child whether at formal consultation evenings, at social events or following Mass, assemblies and concerts in school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.**

23. The attendance rate of 92 per cent for the last school year was well below the national average. Though this includes an unusually high level of illness, families continue to take holidays in term time and the absence of a few pupils is condoned by their parents. For example, during the inspection, a 'truancy swoop' in the town centre, organised by education welfare officers, found eleven pupils Christmas shopping with parents. These same pupils had been reported to the school as 'too ill to attend'. Having identified this as an area for improvement, the headteacher and governing body have set targets for the next two years. An education welfare officer has now been attached to the school. Though no members of staff check up on the first day of absence, other useful procedures have been put into place including home visits. As a result, attendance rates for the autumn term have shown good improvement.

### **More needs to be done to identify and provide for pupils who may have a particular gift or talent.**

24. Teachers plan work that challenges pupils who are higher attainers with the result that their rate of progress is similar to others in their class. They have begun to provide for pupils showing a particular talent. For example, two pupils who excel in mathematics



attend occasional Saturday workshops at a nearby Beacon School. However, there is no formalised system to identify pupils who are gifted and talented and staff feel limited in their ability to provide. Managers recognise this is an area for training and have identified it in the school improvement plan.

**Insufficient monitoring of classroom practice is taking place.**

25. In response to the key issue identified by the previous inspection, the role of the co-ordinator has improved. All now provide good support for their colleagues and monitor teachers' plans to check what is being taught. Pupils' learning is examined through 'Golden Books', a system whereby pupils use a particular exercise book for one week every term in order to monitor standards and progress. In addition, senior teachers analyse national test results in order to identify areas of weakness which require further attention. Work sampling has been taking place for over a year and co-ordinators are now ready to move forward and monitor the effect of classroom practice on learning and standards.
26. Whilst the headteacher observes teachers at work for their professional performance management, no monitoring has taken place of, for example the effectiveness of national literacy and numeracy strategies. None of the co-ordinators have had opportunity to see how their subject is taught. Had this happened, it may well have highlighted, for example, that there is insufficient emphasis on prediction and 'fair test' in science, and on pupils using and applying their mathematical knowledge in other subjects.

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

27. Whilst maintaining the many strengths of the school, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- Further improve pupils' rate of attendance;
- Devise procedures to identify and support pupils who are gifted and talented;
- Formalise and extend the programme of classroom observation to share good practice and further improve standards.

Issues 1 and 2 have been identified by senior teachers and governors in the school improvement plan.

## 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 | 16 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 0         | 4         | 8    | 7            | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 0         | 21        | 42   | 37           | 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)      | 29      | 180     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A     | 64      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

|   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 1       | 1       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 2       | 35      |

#### English as an additional language

|   | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 36           |

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

|  | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 18           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 20           |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 7.9 |
| 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 | 10   | 12    | 22    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Girls    | 11      | 11      | 11          |
|   | Total    | 20      | 20      | 20          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 91 (95) | 91 (90) | 91 (95)     |
|   | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Girls    | 11      | 11          | 11      |
|   | Total    | 20      | 20          | 20      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 91 (95) | 91 (90)     | 91 (95) |
|   | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89)     | 89 (89) |

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

**NB the number of boys is not included because less than 10 boys sat the tests so the small number affects the reliability of the data.**

### 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 | 16   | 14    | 30    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 12      | 12          | 14      |
|   | Girls    | 12      | 13          | 14      |
|   | Total    | 24      | 25          | 28      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 80 (71) | 83 (89)     | 93 (97) |
|   | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71)     | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 8       | 10          | 11      |
|   | Girls    | 8       | 8           | 7       |
|   | Total    | 16      | 18          | 18      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 53 (54) | 60 (69)     | 60 (69) |
|   | National | 73 (73) | 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                                     | 143                  | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – Irish                                       | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – any other White background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian                     | 8                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani                  | 12                   | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 5                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Chinese   | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 22.5 |
| Average class size                       | 25.7 |

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 12    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 206.5 |

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 29   |
| Total number of education support staff  | 1    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | 32.5 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult           | 14.5 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

\* Large reserves have been accrued because of the long-term absence of a senior teacher and a grant towards a graduate-training programme. Budget plans forecast a contingency of 5% by the end of the financial year.

## Financial information

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Financial year                             | 2001/02  |
|  | £        |
| Total income                               | 513,507  |
| Total expenditure                          | 542,333  |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,558    |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 61,109   |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 48,022 * |

## Recruitment of teachers

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 209 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 91  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 79             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 70             | 28            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 65             | 34            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 48             | 35            | 9                | 2                 | 6          |
| The teaching is good.  | 79             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 67             | 26            | 5                | 0                 | 2          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 80             | 20            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 77             | 19            | 0                | 0                 | 4          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 60             | 37            | 2                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 82             | 16            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 75             | 24            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 45             | 33            | 1                | 0                 | 21         |