

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HOLTON St PETER COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Holton

Halesworth

Suffolk

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124590

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Nickerson

Reporting inspector: Stuart Russell  
21292

Dates of inspection: 13 and 14 June, 2001

Inspection number: 199217

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 9

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bungay Road  
Holton  
Halesworth  
Suffolk

Postcode: IP19 8PL

Telephone number: 01986 872297

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Ann Buck

Date of previous inspection: 24 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
21292	Stuart Russell	Registered inspector
19694	Moira Kerr	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was: **CHASE RUSSELL LIMITED**

CHASE RUSSELL LIMITED

85 Shores Green Drive  
Wincham  
Northwich  
Cheshire  
CW9 6EJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holton St Peter Community Primary School is a small, country First School. It serves four to nine-year-olds. Since the last inspection, the school has grown from 63 to 73 pupils. Most of the children come from the school's designated catchment area of Holton and the surrounding villages. However the school is very popular, and 40 per cent of its pupils come from out-of-area. They come mainly from the nearby town of Halesworth. More parents want to send their children to Holton St Peter, than there are places for them. The boys vastly outnumber the girls; 44 boys and 29 girls. The reception year is all boys. All the pupils are white and speak English as their first language. The school has about the same percentage of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals, as most other schools. Similarly, its percentage of pupils with special educational needs, is in line with the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. When the children come into the school at four, testing shows them to be below the Local Education Authority's average. The pupils score lower in mathematics than English, though English too, is below average. There are many pupils in the school who were born in the summer months, making them young in the school year. In April, 2001, the school received an Achievement Award for Excellence from the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE).

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

This is a very effective school because it overcomes the challenges that are common to small schools and uses them to its advantage. Standards are well above average. Provision for the pupils' personal development is very effective. Achievement is very good. Teaching is consistently very good. The head teacher and governors lead and manage the school excellently. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The school achieves very good personal and academic standards.
- The school is excellent at monitoring the effectiveness of what it does.
- The quality of education that the school provides, is very good; especially the teaching.
- The school has a positive ethos with a family atmosphere, close links between staff and parents and an important place in the local community.

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

Standards at seven and nine, are already well above average. Yet within the spirit that exists in the school for ever higher standards, the inspectors and the school agree that:

- The school could achieve even higher standards in writing and some aspects of science,
- The pupils could listen more attentively.

The school has already identified these in its School Improvement Plan.

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

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

This is a school that firmly believes that there is always room for improvement. It was last inspected in November 1997, and, although it was highly praised at that time, it has gone on to raise standards even higher, especially in science. The school has done this excellently by

- refining the way it monitors the effectiveness of what it does on how well its pupils learn;
- improving the quality of teaching and learning – best practice seen at the time of the last inspection now permeates the whole school;
- altering what it teaches to keep up-to-date with national initiatives, for example, the new foundation curriculum for Reception Class pupils;

- modernising its equipment - the provision for information and communications technology (ICT) has improved across the school; and
- keeping ahead of the game when it comes to managing the school. The school has fully delegated banking procedures and was one of a pilot of small schools in the Local Education Authority, to be allowed its own bank account.

The school has fully addressed the areas for improvement that the previous inspectors left with it in 1997. At that time, it provided 'good' value for money. It now provides 'very good' value for money.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	B	B	A	A
Writing	B	A	A*	A*
Mathematics	D	A	B	B

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Standards are even higher than at the time of the last inspection. Since 1997, standards have been rising faster at this school than at most other schools. All the seven-year-olds in 2000, reached at least national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. About a third of them exceeded national expectations, and achieved the standards expected of nine-year-olds (level 3). The school's results in mathematics were above average when compared to the results of all other schools, including schools similar to Holton St Peter. Results in reading were well above average and the school's results in writing were among the top five per cent in the country. This is a very good achievement when we bear in mind, that the children's standards at four were below the LEA's average. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. As do the able, in most areas. With regard to the able, their weakest area in mathematics at level 3, in 2000, was using their mathematical skills to solve problems. The school recognised this. It has successfully targeted this area of mathematics, to raise standards even higher.

Inspection findings show that the pupils make very good progress as soon as they start at the school. Most have reached the expected goals in each area of learning by the end of the foundation stage, and are already working at level 1 of the National Curriculum. The present seven-year-olds are achieving standards in English, mathematics and science, that, like last year, are well above average. Because the pupils start to read and write so very well from an early age, young children have the tools to learn about many different things. This fires their desire to learn. For instance, Year 1 pupils turned automatically to reference books to find out about the Pre-War household items that had been brought in for their 'museum'. Currently, most nine-year-olds who are leaving the school this year to go to the middle school, have already achieved what is expected of nine-year-olds and are working towards the standards expected of 11-year-olds. This is especially so in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education (RE).

The school is doing better than other schools in writing, but within the school itself, its standards of reading outstrip standards of writing. At the time of the last inspection, no pupils were reaching level 3 in science. In 2000, 25 per cent reached level 3. The able are still, however, doing better in English and mathematics, than they are in some aspects of science. The school sees this and has set itself the task of raising the achievement of the able across all subjects, including science and writing. The pupils' listening skills as individuals and in small groups, is very good. When it is less good, is when the pupils are in large groups; for instance, in assemblies or taking part in whole-class

discussions. The school has pinpointed this in its School Improvement Plan. The inspectors believe that the school has done well to identify these issues, and that by addressing them, it will move on to achieving even higher standards.

Although there are so many more boys in the school than girls, neither the boys nor the girls are held back by this. Both boys and girls outstrip other boys and girls across the country. This equality of success comes from the school's attitude of caring personally for each child.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The school sees itself as a three-way partnership of pupils, parents and school. The pupils respond enthusiastically to being able to have a say in school-life, are enthusiastic about everything that is going on and consequently, are very enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils like working and playing together. No parents referred to bullying in their responses to the inspectors' questionnaire and 96 per cent complimented the school on standards of behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils are happy, confident and independent. There is among them a very strong sense of mutual purpose.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. 95.7 per cent of sessions were attended. This is an improvement on the rate of attendance at the time of the last inspection. As at that time, there were no unauthorised absences.

The pupils take a part in the School Council and Class Councils. They chair meetings and contribute to the agenda. Consequently they feel that what they think, matters. This gives them simple but real experience of the democratic process. It is an effective introduction to citizenship. An ECO committee was established in 2000 with children being elected as representatives. In April 2001, the school was awarded an 'ECO School Award'; the first school to achieve this in Suffolk.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very 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.*

One hundred per cent of parents said that they think that their children are taught well and that the school expects them to work hard and achieve their best. The inspectors agree with this. All the lessons seen were either good or very good. Twenty per cent were good and 80 per cent were very good. The quality of teaching is even higher than at the time of the last inspection. Literacy and numeracy are taught very well and all groups of pupils are very well catered for. Learning throughout the school is very good. The very good teaching that the inspectors saw, is made all the more effective because the teachers and teaching-assistants work together flexibly. This is possible because of careful budgetary planning that finances:

- flexible organisation of the teaching timetable,
- monitoring of what is working and what is not,
- non-contact time for teachers,
- teachers to work together on planning and assessment,

- colleagues to work along side each other, and
- increased teaching assistance

Occasionally, teaching is interrupted when a few pupils are inattentive and the teacher has to stop to catch their attention. This occurs, for example, when a whole class is involved in a discussion.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school is very good at taking the National Curriculum and RE, and personalising them. This means that the school's curriculum appeals to its pupils' interests. It is imaginatively delivered with excellent use of the environment, educational visits and experts who visit the school
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively through action that is planned by the teachers in collaboration with the pupils, their parents, and, if appropriate, outside agencies.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school is creative and caring. The pupils are inspired by the imaginative curriculum and by the scope that the school gives them to take part in managing appropriate aspects of school-life. Opportunities to learn about faiths and cultures different to their own, are cleverly integrated into the curriculum to make them relevant to the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The staff and governors take excellent care of its pupils, including arrangements for child protection.

The school supplements its own expertise by bringing other experts, such as artists, into school. Co-operation with other schools, avoids isolation and prepares the pupils well for transfer to a bigger school. Procedures to assess the pupils' personal and social development, were introduced in 2001 to help the teachers to track personal and social development, and to identify areas for improvement.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The head teacher is outstanding both as a manager and a teacher. She is therefore well placed, from first-hand experience, both to monitor the work of the school and to take the lead when introducing change. The high quality of the work of her senior teacher, teachers and teaching-support colleagues, helps her to make the school the success that it is.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governors play a key role in the school's success, by contributing in a constructive but objective way, to the school's monitoring of the effectiveness of its decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school is serious in its commitment to evaluating its effectiveness, refining provision and raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The school is adept at identifying what needs to be done to raise standards and targeting its resources there.

The school benefits from the services of an excellent bursar who jointly manages the finances of the school with the head teacher. She relieves the head teacher of much day-to-day administration, so that the head teacher can concentrate on strategic issues. Support for the newly qualified teacher is exemplary; excellently prepared for, monitored and resourced. The school is kept outstandingly

clean and attractive. It gets best value for its money by knowing exactly what it needs to do next, in order to improve, and then setting about finding the most economic way of doing this. The budget-surplus includes monies appropriately put aside for the School Field Development Project.

## 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 teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The children like coming to school.</li> </ul>	<p>There was some criticism of homework; that the school provides too much. There was also an element of disappointment that the school did not provide more activities outside lessons.</p>

The inspectors agree with parents' complimentary remarks about the school. As far as homework is concerned, the school's practice is in line with the DfEE's advice to schools about homework. The school runs a few worthwhile after-school activities, such as a cycling proficiency club and an ICT/Homework club. Although the school does not run as many as some schools do, lack of many such after-school activities does not detract from the very good progress that the pupils make.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

#### The school achieves very good personal and academic standards.

- 1 The pupils' attainments on entry to the school at four, fall below the Local Education Authority's (LEA's) average. They attain significantly lower scores in mathematics than in English, although the English scores are still below those of the LEA. The pupils' scores for personal and social development are also below those of the LEA. Overall, 41 per cent of the pupils are summer-born. Consequently they are young in the school-year. In Years 1, 2 and 4, nearly 50 per cent of the pupils are summer-born. The very good standards that the pupils achieve, should be viewed in the light of their attainment on entry, so that the effectiveness of the school might be fully appreciated.
- 2 As soon as the pupils start in the Reception Class, they make very good progress. Most have reached the expected goals in each area of learning by the end of the foundation stage, and are already working at level 1 of the National Curriculum. The Reception Class, and indeed the whole school, is a linguistically rich place. There is emphasis upon giving the pupils reading and writing independence right from the start. This was well illustrated during a numeracy lesson with Reception Class pupils who were using computers. Because they could read the instructions on a program, the five-year-olds were able to move on independently to the next level of difficulty without reference to an adult and as a result, make maximum progress. An example of how the school develops this literary independence across all subjects is through its strategy for teaching spelling. A spelling programme is used to track pupils' progress throughout their time at the school. The programme is linked to the National Literacy Strategy and covers key words, word families, phonic groupings and subject specific vocabulary. This last, is effective in enabling the pupils to read and write confidently across all subjects.
- 3 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests and tasks, all seven-year-olds reached level 2 or above in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and science. This was the school's target for level 2 and above. It is very high in comparison with the national average. The school's results were better than the LEA average. They were the results of a mixed-ability group that included pupils with special educational needs. Standards at level 2 or above in reading and science, are higher than at the time of the last inspection. At the higher level 3, the school's results were better than the LEA average and better than the national average, except in mathematics where they matched the national average. The school hit its targets for level 3 in all but writing and mathematics. Here it missed by one pupil. Because the school has effective monitoring procedures, it understands why this was so. In writing, 25 per cent of the pupils reached level 3 compared to nine per cent nationally and in the LEA.
- 4 Inspection findings show that by the time the pupils leave the school at nine, almost all have reached at least national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. School records show that 100 per cent of nine-year-olds in 2000 achieved level 3 or above in writing before they left the school. This included pupils with special educational needs. Eighteen per cent had already achieved the higher level 4, which is the standard expected of 11-year-olds, in writing. Sixty-five per cent reached level 4 in reading. Forty-one per cent reached level 4 in spelling and 30 per cent reached level 4 in mathematics. Nearly all the pupils reached level 4 in the *life and living processes* and *materials and their properties*, aspects of science. Records show that when the pupils

move to the Middle School, they are very successful. The school makes reading and writing high priorities.

- 5 By the time that the pupils leave the school at nine, all have reached level 3 or above in information and communications technology (ICT). Information and communications technology is used across all appropriate subjects. Teachers set a good example to the pupils by using ICT in lessons. For example, during a shared writing session, a group of lower attaining Year 3 and 4 pupils composed a passage with their teacher who recorded their suggestions on her lap-top. She was able to print off a copy for each pupil to re-draft independently. More than half of the Year 4 pupils, are working at level 4 in ICT. Very good use is made of the Internet throughout the school. When foundation stage and Key Stage 1 pupils, were studying islands, they linked to the Internet to correspond with inhabitants of Skye. In religious education (RE) all the pupils are reaching the standard expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus and more than half are working at standards expected of 11-year-olds. Religious education is very well taught at the school with high standards being reached in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. This contributes very well to the pupils' appreciation of ways-of-life in Britain to-day that are different from their own. In a RE lesson, the pupils acted out the Seder Meal that commemorates the Passover. This was a good example of one of the strengths of the teaching at this school, pupil participation in their own learning. The expertise of the teacher, thorough preparation, enthusiasm and good use of voluntary help, made the high level of pupil participation possible.
- 6 Standards are rising at this school faster than in most other schools. Both boys' and girls' standards have risen equally fast. This is because the carefully planned curriculum takes into account the needs of individuals. It is irrelevant to the quality of care that the school gives to each of its pupils, whether they are boys or girls, or whether they have a special educational need. The school cares for all its pupils. Where the school particularly succeeds is in providing a curriculum that appeals to all tastes and aptitudes. It does this well by using the environment and the pupils' interests, as a stimulus to learning. It is able to do this successfully because it knows its pupils so well and through thorough assessment of all subjects and personal and social education, it is able to challenge every pupil; thus maintaining their keenness to learn.
- 7 The pupils achieve very well in their personal and social development as well as in their academic development. Art, music, drama and physical education (PE), feature appropriately in the curriculum. All the pupils leave the school able to swim at least ten metres and at least 23 per cent can swim over 200 metres, as well as being competent in water safety. Ninety per cent of the pupils leave having achieved their Cycling Safety Certificate. The pupils regard the school as their own and contribute enthusiastically to school-life. They are independent and take responsibility from an early age; contributing, for instance, to plans for the development of the school grounds, the School Council and the ECO committee. The pupils help to organise events in school, such as fund-raising events for charity. The Year 3 and 4 pupils are particularly responsible for the planning and success of these. Charities that the pupils have supported include UNICEF, Christian Aid and Blue Peter appeals.

**The school is excellent at monitoring the effectiveness of what it does.**

- 8 The school is very effective because it is very efficient. Its efficiency arises from its ability to monitor its work and evaluate the quality of its provision, especially teaching

and learning. As a result it is aware of its needs and addresses them effectively. The outcome of which, is;

- A very good match of work to pupils' needs so that all groups are challenged and provided with the appropriate resources to succeed, and therefore make very good progress.
  - Lessons that
    - are planned over two years to avoid unintentional curricular repetition,
    - promote smooth progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding,
    - deliver the National Curriculum and RE in ways appropriate to the pupils' aptitudes and interests, and
    - provide an enrichment programme, notably in social skills and a knowledge and love of the natural world and the pupils' heritage.
  - A school that is part of a wider educational community. As a result of which, transition to a much larger school at nine is smooth. The school is part of the 'Bungay Pyramid' of primary schools, middle schools and high school. Staff and pupils from all the schools often collaborate. The outcome being, that the pupils have a broader social experience than they would if the school were isolated, and the teachers can share their expertise. Where appropriate, they plan together to give a degree of curricular conformity across the feeder schools to the Middle Schools and the High School.
- 9 The school goes about monitoring and evaluating its provision, both formally and informally. There is a virtuous circle of planning, monitoring, evaluating and revision, which is constantly going on in the school. The school monitors the progress of individuals and its overall achievements. To augment its monitoring programme, the school recently introduced assessment of the pupils' personal and social development. It now systematically tracks personal and social development and can identify areas for improvement. Personal and social development, are reported to parents. The school assesses the pupils' progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. From this data it is able to make generalisations about standards in the school, identify pupils who have special needs, subjects where pupils or the school are especially succeeding or need to improve, and the effectiveness of teaching, curricular planning and resources upon learning. As well as day-to-day evaluation of progress through, for instance, the marking of work, the school analyses test results. The head teacher is well skilled in this. Different types of tests are used to cover the age range of the school and to ensure a complete picture. They include assessments when the pupils start school in the Reception Class, National Curriculum tests, and LEA and other commercial standardised-tests. The head teacher clearly presents the information that these tests generate, so that the conclusions are clear.
- 10 The quality of teaching and learning are also monitored through
- scrutiny of the pupils' standard of work during lessons,
  - the observation of the effectiveness of teaching on learning during lessons,
  - pupil interviews
  - staff discussions, and
  - parental feedback.
- The timetable for monitoring is agreed at the start of each term and is undertaken by the head teacher, subject leaders and governors, in co-operation with the teachers. This enables the governors to see the outcomes of the decisions that

they make. The collaborative monitoring of standards, teaching and learning, creates a corporate understanding which is in keeping with the management style of the school.

- 11 The appreciation of the effectiveness of the teaching, curriculum and resources, that analysis of data and other monitoring tools gives, is used by the school to amend what it does to make it more effective. This is a confident school. It does not make ill-considered change but it is sharp in spotting where things are working and where they are not, and able in knowing what to do to improve.

**The quality of education that the school provides, is very good; especially the teaching.**

- 12 In small schools, classes may be made up of pupils of different year-groups. At this school, the four- to nine-year-olds are taught in three classes of Reception and Year 1 pupils, Year 1 and 2 pupils and Year 3 and 4 pupils. This raises questions about the match of work to pupils' needs and about providing appropriate challenges and resources for all groups of pupils. As well as being taught in mixed-age classes, pupils in small schools may be with the same class-teacher for more than one year. There are questions to be answered about whether the curriculum is planned to avoid unintentional repetition, to promote appropriate progress for all and to remain fresh. Does a small school make arrangements to compensate for potential social and intellectual isolation and how does it ensure that its staff has the necessary range of skills and curricular knowledge, to meet the needs of all its pupils? These are other pertinent questions that need answers.
- 13 Holton St Peter is a very effective school because it overcomes these challenges that are common to small schools and uses them to its advantage. The school has a clear understanding of how pupils learn. This directs the education that it provides. At the heart of this philosophy, is the involvement of the pupils in their learning. The teachers achieve this through very good planning and management of the pupils.
- The teachers have high expectations of personal and academic achievement;
  - they set clear learning objectives that are differentiated appropriately because their assessment of each pupil's needs is accurate;
  - they support pupils with special educational needs very well and extend the able, often in groups effectively taught by teaching-assistants or volunteers who have been thoroughly prepared;
  - they are flexible in the teaching methods that they choose to use and the way that they group their pupils; and
  - they catch their pupils' imaginations through lessons that appeal to their interests and creativity. The flexible way in which the school uses its teaching and support staff, is an example of how it gets best value for money.
- 14 The teachers realise that however good their planning and management might be, unless the pupils are inspired, learning will be mechanical. The teachers motivate their pupils with lessons that appeal to their interests and make very good use of the locality in which the pupils live. The school has a rich natural and historical environment. The teachers latch onto the pupils' curiosity about the world around them, and use it as a stimulus to learning. When teaching the pupils about places or ideas outside their experience, the teachers skilfully capture their pupils' interests. They do this by stimulating the pupils' imaginations. A good example of this occurred when the pupils were learning about India. The project involved religions

and cultural traditions that were outside the pupils' experience. The teachers used art, music, dance, design and technology and ICT to introduce the pupils to India. Then they led them into new learning, once their interests had been fired. This new learning included religious education, history, geography and research skills.

- 15 Literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Reading and writing are a priority in the school and because the pupils can read and write very well from an early age, they are freed to get the most out of all their lessons. The pupils' progress in reading is tracked using the school's own reading scheme and through the use of standardised tests. The school's reading books are grouped into colour bands to allow the pupils to choose books from within a bank. The bands provide choice for the pupils in order to meet individual taste and at the same time, guidance from the teacher, in order to structure the pupils' learning. Regular formal assessment of the pupils' standards of reading, are used to ensure that the pupils are being appropriately challenged and using the right bank of books. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced into the school. They have led to a widening of teaching strategies used in Years 3 and 4, for the teaching of English and mathematics. This was seen as a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The school has been successful in making the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies fit their own needs. This is especially so in the Reception Class where the Literacy and Numeracy sessions are very well tailored to the age and aptitudes of the five-year-olds. ICT is used very well in literacy and numeracy lessons. The teachers are confident with ICT and have planned training to make themselves even more so. ICT is used across the curriculum, but, here again, the school is intending to extend this. Homework makes a very good contribution to the pupils' progress because it is very well planned from the Reception Class onwards.
- 16 A few families felt that the school provided too much homework. They tempered this criticism with remarks to the effect that any differences of opinion on the subject could be easily and amicably settled by talking about it with the teachers. Even fewer families thought that there were not enough after-school clubs. The school has a homework and ICT club and teaches cycling proficiency after school. It has plans in place to teach recorder playing next year. In the past, the school has had art and PE clubs, but they have closed because of lack of support. There are clubs for children in the village that the school encourages its pupils to take part in. It does not see this as a priority and in the light of its success as a school, the lack of after-school activities, does not seem to be adversely affecting the pupils' achievements. One parent who raised this subject, said that it was a minor point and that this was an 'A 1' school.
- 17 The school provides a range of experiences beyond the statutory curriculum. This enrichment includes worthwhile outings that root learning into experience. For example, the pupils have visited fish markets, art galleries and country houses and they have been to concerts. The school also brings into school, clergy, artists, poets, authors and the like, many of whom are local people. Self-evaluation is a strength of the school. Aware of the gender imbalance on the staff, the school addresses this by welcoming fathers, grandfathers, uncles and other men, to help in school and to support school events. The School Council and ECO Committee, provide the pupils with practical experience of the democratic process. Pupils are elected onto committees for limited periods. They take part in debates and report back to their constituents. They generate the agenda and they chair meetings. The ECO Committee encourages very effectively, a commitment to the wellbeing of the environment.

- 18 The school is an attractive, stimulating environment. The original 1859 buildings have been extended and the premises are very well managed to make best use of them. This is another example of how the school gets best value for money. There is an extensive School Field Development Project being undertaken by the school, with plans to increase its educational potential with features like a dell, a maze and a grove of trees. These will supplement the existing wild-life areas, adventure playground and quiet areas. The school has an outdoor swimming pool that enables all its pupils to learn to swim in shallow water before moving on to deeper water at the local swimming baths.

**The school has a positive ethos with a family atmosphere, close links between staff and parents and an important place in the local community.**

- 19 Parents value the positive ethos of the school with its family atmosphere. Some parents chose the school because of its very good reputation for involving all its pupils in what it does. Because the pupils' points of view are taken into account, they are committed to the school's projects. This fosters very good learning. Talking to former pupils who had returned to the school for work experience, the inspectors were given the impression that they still regarded the school as their own.
- 20 High levels of mutual trust and respect exist between the staff, pupils, parents and the community. This is reflected in the parents' positive response to the inspectors' questionnaire. There are good, confident relationships between the school and parents. This extends into the community. The school plans subject-days when parents, other relations and friends are welcomed into school to join in its activities. A recent 'Maths Day' attracted 80 per cent of families. Governors play an important role in fostering links between the school, parents and the community. They circulate at meetings, testing parental impressions of the work of the school. Out of this canvassing has come, for example, the desire of parents for more subject-days when parents can learn about changes in the curriculum and teaching styles. The school's Christmas plays, summer concerts, sports days and fetes, are well supported by the community. The plays and concerts are held in the village hall to allow all the pupils to take part and to allow all who wish, to attend. Through such efforts, the school makes itself an integral part of the local community. The benefits of this range from vandal free premises to financial support.
- 21 Through its distinctive ethos where pupils, parents, staff and the community, all feel valued and all work together, the school provides very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The able could achieve even higher standards in writing and some aspects of science.**

- 22 In 2000, all seven-year-olds reached level 2 or above in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and science. In writing, 25 per cent of the pupils reached the higher level 3, compared to nine per cent nationally. Although this was well above the national average, the results were not as high as the school's reading results. Thirty-three per cent of pupils reached level 3 in reading. Although this difference only represents one pupil because the number of pupils taking the test was not

great, it confirms the correctness of the school's decision to target writing for improvement. The school's monitoring of its standards through its thorough assessment procedures, revealed the need to raise standards in writing across the curriculum. In its School Improvement Plan, the school has correctly targeted writing, aiming to raise standards even higher, especially in the writing of non-fiction across all subjects.

- 23 In 2000, 100 per cent of nine-year-olds reached at least national expectations (level 3) in writing but only 18 per cent achieved level 4. This compares with 65 per cent reaching level 4 in reading. This further confirms the correctness of the school to target writing. Forty-one per cent of nine-year-olds reached level 4 in spelling and 30 per cent reached level 4 in mathematics. The school has outstanding reading standards and although for this school, writing might be a correct target for improvement, this must not detract from the fact that standards of writing at this school, are impressive,
- 24 In 2000, in the National Curriculum assessments, 100 per cent of seven-year-olds, reached level 2 or above in all aspects of science. This was very high in comparison with the national average. Twenty-five per cent reached the higher level 3 in *experimental and investigative science*. No pupils, however, reached level 3 in *life and living processes, materials and their properties and in physical processes*. The school's records of the attainment of the nine-year-olds in science in 2000, show a similarly marked difference between the percentages of pupils reaching level 4 in different aspects of science. About half of the pupils reached level 4 in *experimental and investigative science*, nearly all the pupils reached level 4 in *life and living processes and materials and their properties*, but no pupils reached level 4 in *physical processes*. The school saw this. It monitored its science curriculum, and concluded that it was not challenging enough for the able. In this year's National Curriculum assessments for seven-year-olds, 36 per cent reached level 3 in *scientific enquiry*. In *life processes and living things* one pupil out of 11 reached level 3 and in *materials and their properties*, four pupils did; 36 per cent. Nearly all the pupils reached level 3 in *physical processes*. Assessments of the nine-year-olds have yet to be completed. The school is rightly pleased with this improvement but is not complacent. It is setting out to identify able and talented pupils early in their time at the school and to challenge them across all aspects of science, in all year groups.

### **The pupils could listen more attentively.**

- 25 The pupils listen attentively to adults and to one another when they are in small groups or talking one-to-one. In larger groups such as class-discussion or assemblies, they listen less well. Sometimes this is because they are keen to participate and to put forward a point of view. On other occasions it is because they want to make a remark to a friend; often on the subject under discussion. The effect is to hinder the quality of learning and teaching. Other pupils are distracted and the teacher may have to stop the teaching, to bring pupils back into the group-discussion. The school has included improvement in listening as a target in its School Improvement Plan. Success will improve the quality of learning and the effectiveness of the teaching.

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

- (1) Target the able to achieve even higher standards in writing and some aspects of science,\*  
(Paragraphs 22 to 24)
- (2) Raise levels of attainment in listening in large discussion groups.\*  
(Paragraph 25)

\*Already identified in the School Improvement Plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	10
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	80	20	0	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		73
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	5	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (92 )	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Where the number of pupils in the year group has a total of 11 or more, but either or both of the boys' or girls' totals is ten or fewer, only the data and percentages are entered in the totals column.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	61
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3:1
Average class size	24.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	204914
Total expenditure	196062
Expenditure per pupil	2514
Balance brought forward from previous year	4850
Balance carried forward to next year	13702

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	53

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66.0	30.0	4.0		
My child is making good progress in school.	62.0	36.0	2.0		
Behaviour in the school is good.	60.0	36.0	4.0		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25.0	55.0	21.0		
The teaching is good.	87.0	13.0			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70.0	28.0	2.0		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77.0	21.0	2.0		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	89.0	11.0			
The school works closely with parents.	66.0	34.0			
The school is well led and managed.	77.0	19.0	2.0		2.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	77.0	23.0	2.0		6.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32.0	45.0	11.0	4.0	8.0