

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PETER-IN-EASTGATE CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL**

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120560

Headteacher: Mrs A Massey

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Crane  
21227

Dates of inspection: 21 – 22 November 2000

Inspection number: 225119

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greetwell Gate Lincoln
Postcode:	LN2 4AW
Telephone number:	01522 526280
Fax number:	01522 549726
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Thurgur
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mrs Barbara Crane	Registered inspector
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is smaller than most, with 88 pupils on roll aged 4 – 7 years. Eight per cent of the pupils come from ethnic groups other than white and six per cent of the pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools. None of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is very low in comparison to other schools. Sixteen per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is broadly average but none of the pupils has a statement of special educational need. When the children enter the school, a wide range of attainment is evident but, overall, their attainment is average. The headteacher has been in post for eighteen months and teaches a class for half of the week.

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

This is a good school. The pupils achieve high standards and the teaching is good. The management of the school is committed to raising standards and creating a positive learning environment for the pupils. There are weaknesses, however, in the communication between the staff and governors and with the parents. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve high standards in reading and writing because the basic skills are taught very well.
- The pupils are quick with numbers and they enjoy mathematics because the lessons are interesting and the teaching is good.
- The pupils are given very good opportunities to explore and test their ideas in science and so their work reaches a very good standard.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well because the teachers plan work to meet their needs. The pupils use the learning gained in one subject very effectively in other work because of the teachers' good planning.
- The Year 2 pupils are set very specific targets and the teaching is of high quality, consequently the pupils make very rapid progress in their learning.

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

- The communication between the staff, parents and governors could be better.
- The roles and responsibilities of the governors could be more clearly defined so that they play a more effective part in supporting the school's planning for improvement.

*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 made satisfactory improvement, since the new headteacher's appointment, in addressing most of the issues from its last inspection in 1996. The responsibility for the management of subjects is now taken by individual teachers and one teacher is designated to take charge when the headteacher is away from the school. The procedures for assessment and the setting of targets for individual pupils are very effective. The quality of teaching has improved and the high standards achieved by the pupils have been maintained. The headteacher has introduced planning for the school's development and although the staff are involved there is still more to do. The governors' role in supporting this planning is still very limited. Their roles and responsibilities in supporting the school's work are not clearly defined and this limits their effectiveness. Financial planning is not yet adequately linked to the school's priorities for development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A*	B	C
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A*	A*	A

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

These results relate to the pupils who took the tests in 2000. They show that the pupils' performance in writing was well above average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The results in mathematics were in the top 5% of schools nationally and well above those in similar schools. In reading the pupils' results were above average when compared to all schools and average when compared to similar schools. The teachers' assessments in science show that the pupils' performance was well above the national average. The standards achieved by the pupils have remained higher than the national average over recent years.

The inspection evidence indicates that, on the basis of their current work, the pupils are attaining well above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The improvement in the pupils' performance in reading is largely due to the school's analysis of previous performance and better teaching to improve standards. Pupils of all abilities achieve well because the work is carefully planned to meet their needs. By the time they leave the school, the pupils are very competent readers and enjoy reading for pleasure. They quickly gather information from books and have a very good understanding of what they read. They write with flair and accuracy, adapting the style of their writing confidently to suit different purposes. The pupils have a very good understanding of numbers and calculate mentally both quickly and accurately. They are very good at explaining how they have arrived at answers and find alternative methods. They have a very good breadth and depth of scientific knowledge and a firm understanding of how to devise investigations and experiments.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils enjoy their work and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most of the pupils behave very well in lessons and follow instructions. They are friendly and polite. On the playground, their play is boisterous but not aggressive.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils get on well together. The oldest pupils show initiative and confidence.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The level of authorised absence is similar to that seen in most schools and there is no unauthorised absence.

The majority of the pupils settle quickly to work. They are enthusiastic and persevere. The pupils enjoy talking about their work and understand what they are doing. A few of the younger pupils become a little restless during the introduction to the lesson but most settle quickly to listen. The pupils use their initiative well in their work and are keen to explore their ideas, in science, for example. The pupils play well together and move from one building to another sensibly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

All of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better and 88% of the lessons were good or better. In 33% of the lessons, the teaching was very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The basic skills are taught thoroughly and so the pupils have a firm foundation on which to build. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils and plan work to meet the needs of all abilities, consequently the pupils learn at a rapid rate. This is particularly evident in Year 2, where the teaching is very good. The pupils have very specific targets that are based on the teacher's careful assessment of their learning. The classroom assistants provide a good level of support for groups and individuals and are clear about how they can deepen and extend the pupils' learning. The pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, explore their ideas and use their initiative to solve problems. The teachers use a rich vocabulary and this is reflected in the pupils' answers and explanations.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The teachers' planning ensures that the pupils use their previous knowledge effectively when they face new work.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils make good progress because their needs are well supported by the teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The pupils' needs are quickly assessed and appropriate provision is made to enable them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The pupils develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong and are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions. They express their feelings freely. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to develop their social and cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school gives thoughtful attention to caring for the pupils. The assessment of the pupils' progress is thorough and very effectively pinpoints what they need to do to improve.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school but this is not always communicated effectively to the staff, parents or governors. There is a strong commitment to raising standards and the role of the subject managers in checking on the pupils' performance has been successfully extended.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. Several of the governors are new and all are committed to making an effective contribution but, as yet, the governors' roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined and they rely too heavily on the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher has completed a detailed review of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The school's financial planning is linked more to maintaining the current provision rather than planning to support agreed areas for development. Although the school seeks value for money, the lack of good financial

planning does not allow it to achieve best value.
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The headteacher has had a great deal to do since her appointment in addressing the issues from the previous report. The pace of change has been demanding, involving the shift to developing whole school policies, individual management roles for the teachers, better target setting for the pupils, more comprehensive planning for the curriculum and greater involvement by the parents. The staff have embraced change with varying degrees of enthusiasm and commitment. While much of this work has been achieved successfully, there are weaknesses in the communication between staff that create some frustration and confusion. Decisions that are made are not always shared or acted upon effectively.

The governing body has undergone many changes in the past eighteen months and several of the governors are new, including the chair of governors. The more long standing governors have very little experience of supporting the school's planning for development or monitoring its work. Committees are now in place, but the roles and responsibilities of the governors are not clearly defined and this limits the effectiveness of their work in supporting the school. The headteacher's reports to the governors do not give sufficient information to allow them to play a fuller role in monitoring the standards achieved or the school's planning for the future.

The sweeping changes in the school's management and priorities has led to concern by some parents. The way in which the school communicates its aims, values and daily work to the parents is not always effective. An example of this is the school's efforts to address issues of behaviour management, where appropriate training and help have been sought from outside agencies but the reasons for this have not been successfully communicated to the parents.

## 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>• Standards are good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable to approach the school with problems or concerns.</li> <li>• The school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children don't like school.</li> <li>• Behaviour, particularly in the playground.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their child's progress and events in school.</li> <li>• The school could work more closely with them.</li> <li>• The school's management.</li> <li>• The extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The parents hold widely differing views of the school and what is perceived as a strength by some is seen as a weakness by others. At the meeting with inspectors, the parents generally felt that the lack of communication leaves them unsure about their relationship with the school, although most felt that the school was now more welcoming to parents. The responses to the questionnaire show strong support for the standards achieved but concern about several areas. The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views and some of their concerns. During the inspection, all of the pupils appeared to enjoy their work and play. Although the pupils were boisterous on the playground, their behaviour was good. The annual reports that the parents receive on their child's progress are of good quality. The headteacher has sought the parents' views through a questionnaire and acted on most of their suggestions and concerns, but clearer information about the school's policies, events and initiatives is needed to help the parents better understand its work and how they can contribute. The school is planning to introduce some extra-curricular activities, in addition to recorders, in the near future.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**The pupils achieve high standards in reading and writing because the basic skills are taught very well.**

- 1 The pupils make a quick start with reading and writing in the Reception class. The teacher's planning is based on the national guidelines for young children but includes elements of the Key Stage 1 curriculum for the more able children. The children learn to use a joined style of handwriting from the start and they approach writing confidently because of the teacher's good support. The teacher's handwriting provides an excellent model for the children to follow. The children understand that some books give information and know that the contents page gives an idea of where they will find particular aspects of the subject it covers. Through the teacher's good guidance and questioning, the pupils learn to look at the title on each page and the pictures to see if these indicate the information they are seeking. They know the term 'author' and guess what the book is about by looking at the cover. When they read in groups, the children are taught to keep the book flat on the table and follow each line carefully. They quickly learn the sounds of letters and recognise familiar words.
- 2 By the time they leave the school, the pupils are very competent readers. The thorough teaching of phonics is reflected in the very good strategies that the pupils use to build words. The teachers remind the pupils of the options available when they face unknown words and so the pupils use the context of the sentence, the pictures and the sounds of letters as a matter of habit and often successfully come up with the answer. The pupils enjoy finding spelling patterns and rhyming words. In one Year 2 lesson, the pupils remembered the sounds they had learned last week very well and used these in their new work. The Year 2 pupils can explain why an exclamation mark is used in a sentence and use this to vary the expression they use appropriately when they read aloud. When the teachers read with groups of pupils, they assess the individual's performance and give good feedback on how to improve. The oldest pupils use different styles in their writing very competently, when writing instructions, for example. Their handwriting is neat and joined and spelling is good. The oldest pupils are very keen to express their ideas in writing and take delight in using words for effect in their stories and poems. Because the teachers plan plenty of opportunities for the pupils to read and write in other subjects, they use and extend their skills and learn at a rapid rate.

**The pupils are quick with numbers and they enjoy mathematics because the lessons are interesting and the teaching is good.**

- 3 The teachers' good subject knowledge and planning ensures that mathematics lessons are challenging and lively. As a result, the pupils achieve well and enjoy mathematics. They are interested and highly motivated in lessons and develop a very good facility with numbers. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the pupils were learning to order numbers. The teacher asked a more able group to work out problems mentally. The pupils quickly worked out where a child moving up four places from 12<sup>th</sup> place would be and another who moved three places back from being ninth. The pupils learn to measure accurately and can tell the time using a digital and analogue clock. The teachers use mathematical language precisely and the pupils quickly pick up the terms and use them when they explain how they arrived at their answers. The older pupils are eager to be challenged and find shortcuts when they work out halves and doubles of numbers and enjoy discussing mathematical issues. When a group was asked whether a triangle had to have equal sides, they entered into a lively debate and decided that as long as the shape had three sides of any length, it qualified, but that most triangles were often drawn with at least two equal sides. They confidently discuss their ideas because the teachers encourage them to think and explain their answers.

**The pupils are given very good opportunities to explore and test their ideas in science and so their work reaches a very good standard.**

- 4 The teachers encourage the pupils to test out their ideas and find out why things happen in science. The teachers plan lively, practical work and the pupils enjoy it. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the pupils were asked to find examples of a range of materials in the school. The teacher then prompted them to think about why particular materials were more suited to some purposes than others. The pupils described how some materials were more pliable than others and so could be easily bent into different shapes. The group who were finding examples of the uses of rubber, suggested that washing up gloves were made of this because the material was strong, stretchy and waterproof. In a Year 2 lesson, a mixed ability group was making electrical circuits with a bulb, a motor and a switch. They noticed that the bulb did not glow as brightly when the motor was connected and deduced that the motor must be taking more electricity. They removed the motor and reconnected the circuit to test their idea. This ability to think through an idea is a notable strength of the pupils' learning. Another group was working with magnets and deduced that the same poles repel and different poles attract each other. They used their knowledge of materials to classify objects and test which were good conductors; they found that plastic was not. They were then surprised to find that the plastic handle of scissors attracted the magnet. One pupil suggested that the plastic covering was thin and so the magnetic force 'could get through to where it wanted to go.'

**Pupils of all abilities achieve well because the teachers plan work to meet their needs. The pupils use the learning gained in one subject very effectively in other areas because of the teachers' good planning.**

- 5 The teachers take good account of the pupils' different abilities and needs when they plan and organise lessons. The classroom assistants have a clear idea of how to extend the pupils' learning and work effectively with those who need extra help. The teachers often group the pupils by ability, but move pupils between groups when their assessment of the pupil's progress shows this to be appropriate. The work is pitched at a suitably challenging level and so pupils of all abilities make good progress.
- 6 When the teachers plan lessons, they make good use of what the pupils already know and understand. In a design and technology lesson, with Year 1 pupils who were making a card with moving parts, for example, the teacher asked the class to think of how they could quickly make a fair test to see which was the longest and shortest piece of card. One pupil replied that they needed to 'stand the strips on the same base so that you are measuring from the same place.' When asked what type of force would be needed to make the strips that were joined with split pins move, most of the pupils knew that 'pushing and pulling' was the answer. In a literacy lesson, with Year 2 pupils, the teacher used the pupils' knowledge about forces effectively so that they were able to write instructions for playing a 'forces game'. In a lesson using a big book, the Reception teacher established with the class how many pages the book had and asked whether page ten would be near the beginning or end of the book.

**The Year 2 pupils are set very specific targets and the teaching is of high quality, consequently the pupils make very rapid progress in their learning.**

- 7 The pupils in the Year 2 class are set specific targets that result from the teacher's careful assessment of what they need to do to improve in English and mathematics and their personal development. The teacher predicts, on the basis of the assessments made early in the term, what level each pupil is capable of achieving in English and mathematics and plans work that directly addresses the needs of individuals and groups and so they make very rapid progress.

The strengths and weaknesses in each pupil's work are recorded and shared with the parents at parents' meetings.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The communication between the staff, parents and governors could be better.**

- 8 The headteacher teaches a class for half of the week and is often engaged in administrative work before and after school. The staff have managed to overcome many of the communication difficulties this presents by agreeing to use a 'day book' but this leads to some misunderstandings and misinterpretations. There are too few opportunities for the teachers to meet together with the headteacher face-to-face, so that all are clear about what is happening during the week. This leads to some frustration and confusion. For example, the teachers are sometimes surprised by visitors to the school and are not aware of their role. The layout of the school does not help the situation, as there are two separate buildings. The headteacher's heavy workload has resulted in some decisions about day-to-day issues being taken too slowly or not communicated effectively. The school could do more to ensure that all those who need information receive it in a way that is more effective and inclusive.
- 9 The headteacher's reports to the governors do not provide them with the information that they need to have a fuller picture of the standards achieved by the pupils and the school's progress towards the targets set in its planning for development. This restricts the governors' effectiveness in making decisions and supporting the school's work. While the headteacher has worked hard to create an atmosphere in the school that is more open to parents, some parents still feel that communication could be better. The parents are often not sure of the part they are invited to play in supporting the school and becoming more involved. The school could do more to ensure that the parents have a clearer idea of what is happening in the school and why. An example of this happened at the start of the school year, when the arrangements for afternoon playtime were altered, but the parents were not informed. The information provided for parents is often not easily understood, as in the governors' annual report to parents where tables and charts of data are included without explanation or commentary.

**The roles and responsibilities of the governors could be more clearly defined so that they play a more effective part in supporting the school's planning for improvement.**

- 10 The governing body has had many changes recently. In the past, they relied very heavily on the headteacher and the previous report identified weaknesses in the part they played in supporting the school's planning for development and in financial planning. To a great extent, this is still the case. While the new headteacher has guided them in setting up committees and extended the part they play in monitoring the school's work, their understanding of their roles and responsibilities is limited. Some good work has been done on linking expenditure on the premises to the school's priorities for improvement, but the governors do not have a firm grasp of how financial planning will support other priorities, such as the curriculum or staffing. The governors are willing and committed to the school, but do not have a clear understanding of how their work should support the school's planning for improvement or help to promote a better partnership with parents.

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

The school now needs to:

### **Improve the quality of communication within the school and with the parents by:**

- ensuring that the staff are aware of what is happening in the school on a day-to-day basis;
  - ensuring that there are more opportunities for the teachers to meet and share information and make decisions about the school's practice and policies;
  - ensuring that the parents have a better understanding of the school's work by improving the information they receive and how they can be more involved in the school.
- (paragraph 8)

### **Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:**

- clearly establishing their roles and responsibilities and providing training for these;
  - ensuring that they receive better information through the headteacher's reports;
  - extending their understanding and involvement in the school's planning for development;
  - helping the school to promote a more effective partnership with parents.
- (paragraphs 9, 10)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

9

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

12

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	33%	45%	22%	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**

YR – Y2

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

88

Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals

0

#### **Special educational needs**

YR – Y2

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

0

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

14

#### **English as an additional language**

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

5

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

0

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

0

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	28	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	97 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	13	19
	Girls	12	18	12
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	97 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	80
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*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 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.1
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	189066
Total expenditure	186420
Expenditure per pupil	2004
Balance brought forward from previous year	22760
Balance carried forward to next year	25406

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	176 *
Number of questionnaires returned	51

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47%	35%	6%	12%	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38%	48%	6%	6%	2%
Behaviour in the school is good.	33%	41%	10%	14%	2%
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21%	59%	14%	0	6%
The teaching is good.	45%	43%	2%	8%	2%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32%	44%	14%	10%	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55%	27%	4%	12%	2%
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57%	27%	6%	0	10%
The school works closely with parents.	39%	35%	10%	12%	4%
The school is well led and managed.	28%	40%	10%	20%	2%
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35%	42%	12%	0	11%
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	2%	38%	26%	15%	19%

\* The school decided to send out one questionnaire to each parent of each child.