

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLLY MOUNT RC (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bury

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105344

Headteacher: Mr D Golding

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 18th - 19th June 2001

Inspection number: 192082

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Holly Mount Lane Greenmount Bury
Postcode:	BL8 4HS
Telephone number:	(01204) 882770
Fax number:	(01204) 886842
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr G O'Donoghue
Date of previous inspection:	25 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	8 - 9
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	9 - 10
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	10
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	11 - 14

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holly Mount RC Primary School is a school for girls and boys, situated in Tottington, Bury. There are 326 pupils on roll. The ethnic background of the pupils is nearly all white with United Kingdom heritage, together with smaller numbers of Pakistani, white European and other white backgrounds. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. No pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is below average, but the percentage of pupils with statements of special needs is broadly average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes specific learning difficulties, speech and communication problems, hearing impairment and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is very good; pupils aged eleven have left the school over the last three years more than two terms ahead of pupils nationally in English, mathematics and science; the overall quality of teaching is very good, and leadership and management are excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards for pupils aged eleven in English, mathematics and science are well above average.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and senior management team are excellent.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school.
- Pupils' attitudes are excellent, as are relationships; behaviour is very good.
- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good.

What could be improved

- Overall standards in information and communication technology do not yet meet national expectations.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November, 1996. The quality of teaching has greatly improved, with a far higher proportion of teaching now being very good or better. The key issue to raise standards in art in Key Stage 2 and design and technology in both key stages has been appropriately addressed. The issue to promote and implement schemes of work for foundation subjects has been addressed. The curriculum coordinators now manage their subjects satisfactorily, with the headteacher monitoring teaching appropriately. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A*	A	A	A
mathematics	A*	C	A	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

 D

science	A*	B	A	B	below average	D
					well below average	E

In the national tests for pupils aged eleven in the year 2000, results were well above national averages in English, mathematics and science. Compared with schools of a similar type, having a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, results in 2000 were well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Over the three years from 1998 to 2000 taken together, pupils have left the school nearly a year ahead of pupils nationally in English, two and a half terms ahead in science and just over two terms ahead in mathematics.

Standards for pupils aged seven in the national tests in 2000 were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Over the three years from 1998 to 2000 taken together, pupils have left Key Stage 1 over two terms ahead in reading and six months ahead in writing and mathematics.

The school's results for pupils aged eleven are improving at a slower rate than results nationally; this is largely because they are already so high.

The school's targets for 2001 are suitably ambitious.

The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards for pupils currently aged eleven are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils aged seven attain above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in art are above national expectations throughout the school. In history, geography, physical education, music and design and technology, standards meet national expectations. Standards in information and communication technology, whilst improving, do not yet meet national expectations.

Pupils achieve well overall; the school meets the needs of all its pupils appropriately.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are excellent. They enjoy school and show initiative well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. The absence of bullying and oppressive behaviour is excellent. If pupils have a worry, they sit on a "friendship bench" in the playground and other pupils come to talk to them.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below average.

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.

The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. In the lessons seen during the inspection, 34 per cent were excellent, 52 per cent were very good and 14 per cent were good. The

quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good; the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Particular strengths in teaching include teachers' expectations, which are very high, and class management. Teachers are adept at explaining the learning objectives for lessons, so that pupils understand the purpose of a particular lesson; this significantly improves pupils' learning. Particular strengths in pupils' learning include their perseverance and concentration. The school meets the needs of all its pupils well. All pupils are fully included.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are very good in the foundation stage and good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils' individual education plans are well constructed and contain tightly focused targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for their spiritual and moral development is very good, for their social development, it is excellent and for their cultural development, it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Child protection procedures are good.

The school works very well in partnership with parents; parents raise considerable sums of money for the school. A particular strength in the curriculum is the provision in the foundation stage. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. There are examples of good assessment procedures in the school. Homework is used well in Key Stage 2 to support pupils' learning. A particular strength in homework for the older pupils is the way in which it is adapted to suit pupils who are working at different levels.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff are excellent. The school has a very clear educational direction. The needs of the pupils are paramount.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is excellent. The Chair of Governors is a frequent visitor to school; he regularly takes class Masses. Finances are handled prudently.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is very good.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is very good and supports pupils' learning effectively.

A particular strength in leadership and management is the dedication and care of the senior management team and the governing body.

The school applies the principles of best value well.

The accommodation is very well maintained by caretaking and cleaning staff. The school secretary is both competent and efficient. Classroom assistants work well with teachers and support pupils' learning effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The school has high expectations.• The school is well led and managed.• Teaching is good.• They are comfortable approaching the school with questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would like to see a greater range of extra-curricular activities.• Some parents would like more homework to be set.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views; it finds the range of extra-curricular activities to be good and homework levels to be satisfactory for the younger pupils and good for the older ones.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards at the school for pupils aged eleven in English, mathematics and science are well above average.

1. Over the three years from 1998 to 2000 taken together, pupils have left Key Stage 2 nearly three terms ahead of pupils nationally in English, two and a half terms ahead in science and over two terms ahead in mathematics. In the work seen during the inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science were all well above average for pupils aged eleven; a significant number of pupils in the current Year 6 have been entered for Level 6. (Note: Level 4 is the nationally expected level). Setting of Year 5 and 6 pupils in mathematics is having a positive effect on standards for all pupils.
2. In English, standards for pupils currently aged eleven are well above average; standards for pupils aged seven are above average in reading and writing. Pupils in Year 6 can write a synopsis of a text competently. They improve writing such as, 'Mr Fry had been trying to sell his vandalised building for two years' by adding, 'The tall building, showered with graffiti, stood sad and alone'. Pupils aged seven have very good reading strategies; they use phonic skills appropriately to help them read "unknown" words. Year 2 pupils showed very good knowledge of Shakespeare; they described the types of play that he wrote and showed understanding of why ladies did not act. In their written work, they showed good knowledge of alliteration, using phrases such as "the winding weeds".
3. Standards in mathematics are well above average for pupils currently aged eleven; they are above average for seven year olds. Pupils aged seven competently worked out the halves and doubles of numbers. They could follow a sequence of halves, such as, 80,40,20,10,5,2 ½ and were then keen to find the next number in the sequence. Year 6 pupils, in a top set, could use a variety of function machines to try out difficult patterns. In a lower set for pupils aged eleven, pupils ably ordered negative and positive numbers in descending or ascending order.
4. In science, attainment is well above average by the end of Key Stage 2 and above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Year 6 pupils experiment on the solubility of materials using correct scientific terminology. They know the importance of burning as a chemical change and that burning can produce heat energy, light, electricity and also drive machines.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The provision for special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Individual education plans have tightly focused targets. Both this group of pupils and those higher attaining pupils who find aspects of English difficult are benefiting from the school's provision of 15 minutes per day working on an ICT (information and communication technology) package tailored to their requirements.

Leadership and management by the headteacher and senior management team are excellent.

6. This school is extremely well led on both the academic and pastoral sides. The school has a superb learning atmosphere and an air of great friendliness. The headteacher and senior management team are excellent leaders. They are all most competent teachers and lead by example.
7. The school has a very clear educational direction; there is no complacency. The school's aims, which are re-visited annually, are clearly manifested in the life of the school. The school development plan is a useful working document, to which all staff contribute. Financial planning is excellent and appropriately supports the school's priorities. Specific grants are well used for their appropriate purposes.
8. The governing body is very effective in giving firm direction to the school. It has an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body has a wide range of expertise, including governors who have had a long association with the school. The

Chair of Governors is a regular visitor to school, taking assemblies and conducting class Masses. The governing body fulfils its role appropriately and all statutory requirements are met.

9. The headteacher has carried out effective monitoring of all classes, for both literacy and numeracy. Teachers have all been provided with written and verbal feedback. Currently, only the literacy coordinator has monitored teaching; all coordinators monitor planning appropriately.

The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school.

10. The overall quality of teaching is outstanding in all areas of the school. In the lessons seen during the inspection, 34 per cent were excellent, 52 per cent were very good and 14 per cent were good. The features that made the best lessons excellent were the teachers' very high expectations, a brisk and appropriate pace and an enthusiasm for the subject that was communicated effectively to pupils. In such lessons, the teachers made the learning objectives crystal clear so that pupils were left in no doubt as to why they were in the lesson.
11. In an excellent lesson for pupils in the class for Reception and Year 1 pupils, the teacher inspired pupils' thinking skills. She had high expectations and encouraged pupils to devise their own questions after they had read the text of a "Caterpillar Diary", one of which was, "How does the caterpillar change in the cocoon?" In an excellent history lesson for Year 5 pupils, the teacher demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding, inspiring pupils to learn about the superstitions associated with sea monsters. There is real warmth between the teachers and their pupils; this enhances pupils' learning throughout the school. For example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher had such an encouraging manner that her pupils really wanted to do their very best.
12. Excellent lessons were seen in the foundation stage and in both key stages during the inspection. Every teacher in the school delivered at least one very good lesson.

Pupils' attitudes are excellent, as are relationships; behaviour is very good.

13. Pupils really enjoy coming to school. They have a real thirst for learning. In class, they pay rapt attention to their teachers. In a Year 3 / 4 science lesson, they showed thorough enjoyment of science. They wanted to learn as much as they possibly could about the different types of teeth and their properties.
14. When pupils in Year 6 were interviewed, they said, "Nobody is a pain at this school". In their lessons, often the only disturbance they had was "listening to the birds singing in the trees." Relationships both between pupils and with adults are excellent. Teachers and other adults treat pupils with respect. Pupils throughout the school mirror this respect in their high regard for adults. In an assembly for pupils in the Upper Junior classes on the theme of "Temptation" pupils felt very comfortable expressing their views on smoking to the headteacher.

Provision for pupils in the foundation stage is very good.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught either in a Reception class, or a class for Reception and Year 1 pupils. There is no nursery. In both these classes, children are very well provided for. The teachers are most capable and meet the needs of all the children well. Gifted and talented children are appropriately provided for. The classroom assistants work well with the teachers. The only factor preventing this area from being excellent is the lack of a dedicated outdoor play area. The school has identified this as an area for future development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Overall standards in information and communication technology (ICT) do not yet meet national expectations.

16. Standards in this subject are improving. The appointment of the deputy headteacher, who is also the ICT coordinator, at the beginning of 2001, is having a considerable impact on standards. He is most knowledgeable and gives unstinting help to his colleagues to further their expertise. The opening of a new ICT suite in September this year should have a further positive effect on standards. Nonetheless, pupils at the end of both key stages are not yet meeting national expectations. In particular, their skills in control, monitoring and modelling are not yet up to standard.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the school further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- improve overall standards in information and communication technology (paragraph 16).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
34	52	14	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	326
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	54

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8
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	17	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	27	27	26
	Total	44	44	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98(98)	98(96)	96(94)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	27	26	27
	Total	44	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98(96)	96(98)	98(96)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	29	28	28
	Total	45	45	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92(85)	92(71)	94(93)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	25	29	29
	Total	40	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82(85)	92(80)	92(93)
	National	70(66)	72(69)	80(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	323
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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.6
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	114

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	498,696
Total expenditure	506,212
Expenditure per pupil	1,476
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,399
Balance carried forward to next year	18,883

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	175

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	41	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	47	11	2	1
The teaching is good.	62	35	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	47	8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	30	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	27	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	45	7	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	25	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	39	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	48	17	2	3