

INSPECTION REPORT

ROCKLAND ST MARY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120846

Headteacher: Mr Ken Holbeck

Reporting inspector: Mr David Cann
20009

Dates of inspection: 12th-13th June 2001

Inspection number: 196676

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
Rockland St Mary
Norwich

Postcode: NR14 7EU

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Passingham

Date of previous inspection: 29th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rockland St Mary Primary School is a school for pupils aged 4 – 11 years with 61 pupils (34 boys and 27 girls). Most pupils live in the village of Rockland St Mary. They are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Their attainment on entry is generally above average. Currently 8 pupils (13 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is in line with the national average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is in line with the national average at 18 per cent, but there are no pupils with statements. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities nor pupils who speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Rockland St Mary Primary School is a good school with many strengths. Under the sensitive leadership of the headteacher, the staff create a secure and friendly community which parents value highly. The small staff team works very well together to provide a supportive and stimulating environment in which pupils develop an enthusiasm for learning and achieve very high standards. By the age of 11, pupils achieve results in English, mathematics and science that are well above those expected nationally. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of 11, pupils achieve very good standards in English, mathematics and science and they make good progress as they advance through the school.
- The headteacher gives the school clear leadership and works closely with staff to promote pupils' attainment and maintain a high quality of education.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and successfully extends pupils' knowledge and skills as well as developing their very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers are very effective at giving pupils an appreciation of spiritual, moral and social values.
- Pupils participate enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. They behave very well and relationships are exceptionally good.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents, who support it well.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, which is not at the same high level as in other subjects;
- Accommodation to provide outdoor play experiences for Foundation Stage children and more classroom space for older pupils.

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 April 1997 when there were several areas recommended for improvement. The school has addressed these with a high degree of success. The school has improved the overall quality of teaching and planning and makes good use of the nationally developed schemes of work. Assessment procedures are well established and teachers use the information to help them promote pupils' learning very effectively. While pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved their progress is not as fast as in other subjects. The school plans to raise pupils' skills further with the introduction of new equipment and teaching materials. Pupils' attainment in geography has been improved and all aspects of the subject are taught in the school. All the financial controls required at the last inspection have been instituted. The school is in a strong position to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

Since there were fewer than 10 pupils sitting national tests at age 11 in 2000, no table is published of the results.

Overall, pupils achieve very impressive standards in their work. In tests and assessments at Key Stage 2 in 2000, pupils attained standards that were well above those expected from pupils of their age in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with pupils in similar school, these results were well above average in English and mathematics and in the top 5 per cent in science. Children make good progress at the Foundation Stage and by the age of 5 they attain levels that are above expectations in all areas of development. By the age of 7, pupils attain levels in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above

both the levels achieved nationally and above those attained in similar schools. In 2000, pupils' results in reading and writing were in the top 5 per cent nationally and against the results achieved in similar schools. In information and communication technology, pupils attain levels which are in line with those expected at age 11 and at age 7 they often exceed them. However, they do not achieve the same high levels that they achieve in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils take a pride in the school and are very keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	At break-times children play together happily and in class they know what is expected of them and conduct themselves thoughtfully.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good. Pupils develop a mature approach to their studies, are supportive of one another and help to contribute to the running of the school.
Attendance	Very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
9 lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good, with seven of the lessons observed judged to be good and two judged to be very good. Throughout the school, lessons are carefully planned and teachers' relationships with pupils are exceptionally good. Teachers know their pupils well and monitor their progress closely to ensure that they are fully challenged. They expect pupils to achieve well and give them clear guidance on what work is required of them and how they can improve. The teaching of literacy lays good foundations for those under seven and is often exciting for older pupils. Teachers effectively extend pupils' writing skills by asking them to create poems, report on their studies of the local environment and describe the places of interest that they have visited. In numeracy lessons, teachers group pupils well to sustain their interest and develop their confidence and thinking. They also ensure pupils apply their mathematical knowledge in geography, science and design and technology. Teaching also places due importance on developing pupils' skills and interest in art, drama and music.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is stimulating and has good links between subjects, which makes learning relevant to pupils' lives and interests.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are identified swiftly and given a good level of support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, with particularly good guidance on spiritual, moral and social issues. Pupils' understanding of multi-cultural issues is not well extended, but in other aspects their cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' welfare and their personal and academic development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides effective leadership and gives the school clear direction. He and the staff work closely as a team. They share the many responsibilities of subject management and are successful in improving standards in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors keep themselves well informed about school developments and provide active support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and staff are good at analysing the school's performance. They draw up appropriate development programmes and implement them well.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the staff and resources, but the limited accommodation puts extra demands on staff time and ingenuity.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Views were mainly expressed through 35 returned questionnaires (57 per cent of those distributed) and 16 parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress and the school has high expectations. • The standards of behaviour are very good. • Teaching is good. • The school helps the children mature and take responsibility. • There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quantity of homework. • More information about their children's progress. • A closer link between the school and parents.

The inspection evidence confirms the positive views of the school, particularly on the very good teaching and good standards of behaviour. Inspectors consider the amount of homework is appropriate in quality and quantity. The school has taken steps to improve information on pupils' progress and the links with parents, but is aware of the concerns expressed and is preparing to address them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the age of eleven, pupils achieve very good standards in English, mathematics and science and they make good progress as they advance through the school.

1. In tests and assessments in 2000, pupils aged 11 attained standards in English, mathematics and science that were well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils attained levels that were well above average in English, mathematics and science. With small numbers in each year group, test results often vary widely and statistical comparisons are unreliable. However, the levels of attainment over the last three years have been consistently high and indicate a significant improvement since the last inspection. The improving trend in school results is above the national trend in all core subjects. Current pupils in Year 6 are attaining levels that are well above those expected from pupils of their age nationally.
2. In 2000, pupils aged 7 attained standards in tests that were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results were also well above those achieved in similar schools and in reading and writing, they were in the top 5 per cent. Again, with small numbers of pupils in each year, statistical comparisons are unreliable, but these attainments are significantly stronger than at the time of the last inspection and pupils' progress is good. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are attaining levels that are well above those expected from pupils of their age.
3. As required, the school has set targets for pupils to achieve in tests at the age of 11 for 2000 and 2001. These targets are realistic and based on a careful analysis of pupils' progress. In English, the school easily exceeded the targets it set for itself in 2000 and is in line to exceed them for the current year. In mathematics, all pupils achieved Level 4 or higher in 2000 and similar results are expected in 2001.
4. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children exceed the Early Learning Goals¹ in all areas of development and make good progress. On entry to the school, pupils generally have above average skills in language and number and their personal and social development is good. By the age of five they achieve levels that are well above expectations in communication, language and literacy. They are confident about speaking to adults and express themselves fluently. Adults have an encouraging and patient approach at all times and this helps children to contribute to class discussions. Children are keen to explain details of the stories that the class read together. In using a tape recorder, they remind the teacher of the correct sequence for pressing the start buttons and respond with delight on hearing recordings of one another. Children handle books correctly and read stories to one another, making good use of the pictures to guide them. They sound out words with increasing accuracy and are learning to copy a range of letters and simple sentences. In number work, children add and take away numbers up to 10 and they count up to 20 and back. They use a good range of terms correctly like 'bigger' and 'more and less', and many know that biggest does not mean heaviest. Children work together well in groups and take an interest in what each other have made when creating models of the Gingerbread man. They play well together, take turns and respond well to others' ideas. They use large equipment safely when playing outside and also develop their co-ordination in dance and physical education. However, opportunities for outdoor learning are restricted by the lack of a specific area for them and sand and water activities have to take place in the entrance hall. They develop a good knowledge

¹ Early Learning Goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is based on six areas of learning, which mainly refer to communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

and understanding of the world and examine the potential risks of traffic and pedestrians using the narrow lanes near the school. They also explore aspects such as the properties of materials and develop their creative awareness through painting and modelling. They express their ideas confidently in their work and enjoy describing verbally what they are doing and explaining why.

5. Pupils of all abilities make good progress across the school. Teachers are good at stimulating the learning of more-able pupils, who achieve very good results in standardised tests at the ages of 7 and 11 years. In 2000, the number who achieved the higher Level 3 at the age of 7 was very high in reading, writing and mathematics. The number who achieved the higher Level 5 at age 11 was above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Amongst current pupils, those with higher abilities in Years 4, 5 and 6 respond well to more challenging tasks. In mathematics, more-able pupils tackled complicated problems involving percentages and explained the formulae they could use to calculate them on a spreadsheet. In English, more-able pupils used a wider vocabulary and strove to achieve the desired effect in writing haikus. In science, some tasks for higher ability pupils did not extend their thinking and pupils complete what is asked of them without trying to enquire into the underlying patterns in what they have studied. More-able pupils identified the effects of inertia in their investigation of friction, but were unable to pursue these astute observations in their work. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and progress well. They are given clear targets to help them improve their work and benefit from a good level of individual attention in class. They achieve these targets and most achieve levels in line with the nationally expected standards.
6. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well above expectations throughout the school. They are very keen to discuss their work with adults and express themselves well. Teachers are good at asking questions and eliciting pupils' ideas and comments. They encourage pupils to read out their work or explain what they have been doing at the end of lessons. At the end of English lessons, pupils read out their poems with expression while others listened intently and made helpful observations. In a science lesson, pupils explained clearly how they collated information and prepared a graph to display their results. Teachers lead discussions in a lively fashion and use mature expressions when talking to pupils. They help pupils to develop their understanding of new words and prompt them to use accurate technical language in subjects like science and geography. Pupils' confidence is extended through drama both in class and in regular productions mounted in the village hall. Performances to parents and the local community are of high quality. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are very self-assured in speaking to the rest of the class. They make thoughtful and well considered contributions to class discussions on a variety of subjects. They identify words and phrases which they like in poems, describe their methods of mathematical working and explain in detail how to create a computer entry on a spreadsheet.
7. Pupils' reading skills are well above expectations and they achieve good levels in tests at 7 and 11 years. Pupils aged 7 discuss books with interest and indicate the sort of stories which they prefer. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can find information books in the library. By the age of 11, pupils read with feeling and insight. They explain the type of language and characters they have met in their study of legends. They understand the scansion of Shakespeare's verse and recite from memory lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, delivering them with quite moving expression and sensitivity. In all classes, teachers allocate time for reading each day and monitor pupils' reading carefully. They encourage pupils to use the library and ensure that they have a good range of fiction and non-fiction books to choose from. Pupils are also beginning to use the Internet as a valuable resource for information.

8. Pupils attain levels in writing that are well above expectations at both 7 and 11. Test results at age 7 have varied widely over the last four years, but were significantly better in 2000 than in 1997. Current pupils write well-constructed descriptions of the local church in which sentencing and punctuation are very good. They use a good range of vocabulary in their prayers and reflections for Remembrance Day. Pupils write very good descriptive pieces in connection with their study of the history and geography of the village. They use language imaginatively in creating poems about butterflies, nonsense rhymes and haikus. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 consider the case for and against smacking children and learn to summarise arguments and present their own views. They study different genres in writing, looking at examples from different authors. Pupils produce some good suspense stories in which sentencing and paragraphing is of a high order.
9. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain levels in mathematics, which are well above average. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and this stimulates their achievements, especially in sessions of mental arithmetic. Pupils respond well to the many challenges given to them and enjoy discussing and comparing their methods of working. They are good at explaining their reasoning and use mathematical vocabulary well. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of place in number and understand fractions well. Higher attainers are competent at working out addition and subtraction with three-digit numbers and most are accurate in rounding numbers up and down to the nearest 10. In Years 5 and 6, pupils achieve very high standards in number work. The percentage of pupils achieving advanced grades in 2000 tests was more than double the national average. They are good at estimating and rounding up figures to check on the accuracy of their work. They use calculators accurately and are quick to identify their mistakes. They are experienced in using information and communication technology to handle data. They explain how they have created a spreadsheet with a very good command of technical terms.
10. In assessments at age 7, pupils' attainment in science was below expectations in 2000. However, the school has increased pupils' experience of investigative work and current pupils in Year 2 are achieving levels that are above expectations. Pupils in Year 1 explain that blood circulates round the body and know the effects of exercise on increasing the heart-rate. They have a good basic understanding of how muscles work in pushing and pulling objects. In Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils have a good knowledge of what constitutes a fair test and construct an experiment to observe the effects of forces and friction. By the age of 11, pupils achieve levels that are above average in standardised tests. They have a good knowledge of materials and life and physical processes as well as a genuine interest and understanding of investigative work. They benefit from studying the habitats of wild life close at hand and older pupils are active in cultivating plants in their own garden. The percentage of pupils achieving advanced grades in 2000 tests was nearly double the national average.

The headteacher gives the school clear leadership and works closely with staff to maintain a high quality of education.

11. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has a clear vision of what he wants the school to achieve and works closely with teaching and non-teaching staff to promote the school's aims and values. He values the contribution of all staff members and there are good formal and informal communications between them all. They share a common determination to promote high standards of work and behaviour. All play their part in creating the special caring and lively ethos which pupils and parents value in the school. Subject responsibilities for the main subjects are appropriately distributed among the teachers and all participate in monitoring and developing the foundation subjects. They attend a range of courses to extend their skills and knowledge of current developments in education. Under the leadership of the headteacher, staff observe one another's lessons

and review what is effective. They also visit and observe teachers in other local schools in order to identify good practice. The school makes good use of help from the local authority advisory staff, who visit the school and observe lessons. The effectiveness of these reviews is reflected in the good quality of teaching that pupils enjoy.

12. The school carries out a very clear analysis of its strengths and weaknesses and is good at identifying and planning areas for improvement. Teachers carry out regular assessments of pupils' progress and maintain consistently good records, according to an agreed system. Pupils' work is often reviewed and discussed at staff meetings, which helps teachers to share and confirm their judgements on attainment. They analyse test results closely and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. Using this data, the headteacher and staff create an appropriate programme for school improvements, which sets priorities and deadlines for the academic year. This is presented and discussed by governors and, once agreed, is linked to the school's budget setting.
13. Governors take a close interest in the life of the school and play an active part in shaping the school's direction. They fully meet their statutory requirements and effectively monitor the curriculum, finances and the premises. They visit the school regularly to observe specific areas linked to the school development plan. They maintain close links with staff to keep themselves well informed about aspects such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Governors have effective systems for measuring the school's performance and regularly review the school's development programme. Budgets are properly prepared and agreed and the school follows good value principles in its use of resources. It is in a strong position to plan future developments.

Good teaching develops pupils' knowledge and skills and promotes their very positive attitudes to learning.

14. Teaching is good. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, 20 per cent were very good and the remainder were good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The quality of teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection, when only 3 per cent of lessons were very good and 3 per cent unsatisfactory. Teachers take a very professional attitude to their work. They evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons and have established a consistent level of good practice. They observe one another's lessons as well as teachers in other schools and identify what is successful and aspects which need development. In consultation with the headteacher, teachers set annual targets for their own professional development, which they review on a termly basis.
15. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, although skills in information and communication technology are still being developed. Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' literacy skills. They use a wide variety of interesting texts and encourage pupils to look at and develop an appreciation of language. They promote pupils' writing skills in a number of subjects, such as geography, history, science and religious education. They describe their visits to Holt Hall and the Church and write about their investigations in science in a well-structured way. This has a significant impact on extending pupils' knowledge of different vocabulary and different styles of writing. Teachers understand and implement the National Numeracy Strategy well and also develop pupils' learning through activities in geography and science. They use number skills in measuring and recording in science and design and technology. In geography, younger pupils carry out traffic surveys and older pupils compare temperatures and rainfall in different parts of the world. Teachers carefully assess pupils' understanding of new work and take this into account as they plan lessons. They set out clearly what they want to achieve in lessons and share this with pupils in a way which promotes their application and achievement. They make good use of these

objectives in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and to help pupils become aware of their progress.

16. Teachers are generally very good at setting tasks that meet the individual needs of pupils of different abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully identified and given good support. The school consults parents at every stage and calls on outside advice where necessary. Teachers agree appropriate targets with pupils and share these with parents. They give pupils individual support in class and adapt work for them to match the targets set in their individual education plans. Support staff are very effective in helping pupils in class and in withdrawal sessions. They generally have a clear idea of pupils' learning objectives and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers know pupils well as individuals and in most lessons they successfully challenge the thinking of higher ability pupils. This is particularly successful in English lessons, where pupils are given a range of tasks like poetry writing to extend their use and understanding of vocabulary. In Years 3 and 4, some pupils were highly stimulated by the chance to complete extended verse using onomatopoeia. In Years 5 and 6, pupils explained why they had chosen the word 'glinting' to describe light on a frozen lake and defined and used the word 'unique', accurately. In science, teachers question pupils well and set them demanding tasks. However, they do not always prompt the thinking of more-able pupils to make them look into the underlying causes of their observations.
17. Teachers have well-ordered routines in which pupils settle to work sensibly and quickly. No time is lost at the beginning of the day or in moving from one activity to another. Teachers create a purposeful environment by stating clearly what they want pupils to do and how they should behave. In nearly all lessons, pupils work hard and have high levels of concentration and commitment to their work. In plenary sessions, pupils are good at listening to what others have produced and celebrate each other's achievements in a supportive and appreciative way. They organise resources and methods of working for themselves and they take a mature and sensible approach to their studies
18. The school provides pupils with a very effective curriculum, which covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It fulfils the school's aims of extending pupils' academic, creative and social skills and prepares them very well for the next stage of education. Pupils' creative skills are developed very effectively through work in drama, art and music. In art, the levels that pupils achieve are often above expectations by the age of 11 and pupils enjoy observational drawing on visits to Holt Hall and the local church. All pupils participate in musical and dramatic performances, which the school mounts for the local community and which are much appreciated.

Teachers are very effective at giving pupils an appreciation of spiritual, moral and social values.

19. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural development is good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Adults are very good role models and value the contribution of each individual within the school community. The school operates with a high degree of mutual respect, evident between adults and children.
20. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is very good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The youngest children in the school experience a range of activities that give them opportunities to reflect and wonder. They consider how their bodies work and think about people who help them. Pupils often visit the local church and the vicar regularly takes school assemblies. This helps pupils learn about the importance of Christian beliefs and rituals. Teaching also gives pupils a number of opportunities to learn about and appreciate the forces of Nature in the world

about them. They observe the wild life around them and take these as starting points for a number of creative activities, such as painting, modelling and poetry. Teachers are sensitive about letting children appreciate the significance of what they see and discover, and encourage this sense of awe through the use of music and periods of reflection. Taped music was played to create a stimulating atmosphere where pupils were carrying out creative tasks. In both assemblies and lessons, pupils are given valuable moments to sit and think about what they have heard and read before moving on to other activities.

21. The provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. The school is very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This begins on entry to the reception class and develops as the pupils progress through the school. Pupils are well aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The very good attitudes and relationships in the school reflect how successfully adults establish a strong code of good behaviour, which pupils respect and accept.
22. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning develop independent attitudes to learning. Teachers build on this as pupils become older and encourage them to work co-operatively and collaboratively in lessons. In English, science and mathematics pupils worked closely together and responded well to each other's suggestions and ideas. This encourages a very effective development of social skills. Adults value pupils' work, displaying it and sharing it in classes and in assemblies. In personal and social education lessons, pupils reflect on feelings and emotions. This gives them a valuable insight into why they have said and done things as well as raising their awareness of the thoughts and needs of others. The school gives pupils the opportunity to play an active part in its life through the school council. It helps pupils to develop a sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour through an annual residential visit. Staff involve pupils in a variety of tasks around the school. For example, pupils assist younger pupils at meal-times and break-times and tidy away equipment in the hall. The school is a very orderly and well-run community.
23. The school makes good provision for the cultural development of pupils. It is maintaining standards similar to those at the previous inspection. Pupils develop an appreciation of their own culture by visiting local places of interest as part of their work in history and geography. For example, pupils visit the local church, houses in the village, Rockland Broad, Holt Hall and Norwich. They visit museums and art galleries and are well aware of their own cultural heritage. Their work in religious education makes a positive contribution to developing awareness of beliefs other than those of Christianity. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding that Britain is a diverse cultural society.
24. Provision for child protection and health and safety is good. There is a trained and designated adult for child protection, but training for other staff has not taken place recently. With the aid of a governor, the school regularly monitors the buildings and staff practices to identify any potential risks.

Pupils participate enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. They behave very well and relationships are exceptionally good.

25. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and relate well with staff. They arrive promptly in the morning and have a purposeful approach to learning. Behaviour in and around school is consistently of a high standard. Pupils are smartly dressed and clearly take a pride in themselves and their school. The very good standards of behaviour and relationships observed at the last inspection have been well maintained.

26. In lessons, pupils listen carefully and are eager to answer questions. They are respectful of each other. They are equally capable of working alone or in small groups with the minimum of supervision. They respond well to the tasks set for them and where they are asked to work in groups pupils show initiative and imagination. In an English lesson, pupils practised with concentration to perfect their reading of poems and develop a dramatic scene to illustrate the story. In numeracy, younger pupils worked well together in groups to create sums with different numbers. In a lesson for older pupils to compose haikus, pupils worked in pairs in a very mature way. They had an impressive grasp of vocabulary and discussed and selected appropriate words to produce simple but well constructed verses. Pupils' concentration levels are good.
27. At break-times, pupils play happily together. They mix easily across the age groups and take turns when asked. Pupils fulfil responsibilities such as collecting registers, setting up assemblies and sorting the library. They also play an active part in the school council where developments and issues are discussed. The many extra-curricular activities are well supported.
28. Children are confident with adults and are pleased to show or demonstrate their work. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff give time and attention to each child and support them well. Teachers' knowledge of the pupils and the interest that they show in their work and ideas is a powerful aid to motivating pupils' progress. These easy and natural relationships are based on mutual respect and have a significant impact on pupils' willingness to learn.

The school has established a very good partnership with parents, who support it well.

29. The school has built on the good links with parents, noted at the last inspection. The governors, headteacher and staff have worked hard to improve relationships and provide parents with a good level of information and access to staff. Parents are kept informed of school events and routines through newsletters, posters and the induction process for new parents. Staff make themselves available for informal contacts with parents at the start and end of the school day. Governors and staff make good use of the Church newsletter to announce school events and publicise pupils' achievements. The governors' annual report to parents requires some minor additions to its content to fulfil all statutory requirements.
30. Parents contribute towards raising the quality of education in a number of ways. Some help in class, such as hearing pupils reading. Others help with running extra-curricular activities, such as the astronomy club. The more formal Friends of Rockland St Mary School raise money that provides much needed resources, such as computers. This involvement has a significant input into raising standards.
31. Homework is set frequently and parents can easily monitor their children's work, either through the reading/homework diary or by appointment. A number of parents complimented the staff on the early identification and support for children with special educational needs.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, which is not at the same high level as in other subjects.

32. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations by the age 11, but is not at the same high level as that achieved in other subjects. Since the last inspection the school has improved resources and teaching in the subject, but national developments have raised expectations even higher. The school will shortly have new equipment installed to provide similar systems throughout the school and provide access to the Internet in all classes. Staff training is planned for the autumn of 2001 and this will help teachers to extend pupils' learning across a wider range of skills and their application.
33. Many pupils have computers at home and have good keyboard and mouse skills. They are familiar with the basic processes of opening programs, printing and saving work completed. By the age of 7, pupils achieve levels that are often above national expectations and progress well. However at Key Stage 2, the variety of different equipment limits pupils' learning and teaching does not fully extend the skills and knowledge that so many pupils bring from home. By the age of 11, pupils' skills in data handling and control technology are sound. However, they have only limited opportunities to apply this knowledge in subjects like mathematics and design and technology. While pupils' skills in graphic modelling and word-processing are sound they do not often combine text and graphics nor write and redraft stories. While computers are used for story writing, there have not been the resources available for pupils to have a wide experience of word-processing on their own. In research activities, pupils are aware of the material available from CDs and the Internet and bring material from home. While teachers give pupils satisfactory instruction in the use of computers, pupils do not have enough time to practise their skills. The school has not yet addressed the problem of how to make the best use of the new equipment that is due to be installed shortly.

Accommodation to provide outdoor play experiences for Foundation Stage children and improved facilities for older pupils.

34. Currently the school has no designated area in which children at the Foundation Stage can enjoy outdoor learning and play. Children use large play equipment in outdoor play activities and they experience dance and physical education in the village hall. However, the lack of an outdoor learning space adjacent to the classroom limits opportunities for pupils to learn from play and investigations. Outdoor space for teaching games skills to older pupils is satisfactory, but the village hall is barely adequate for indoor physical education. It is too narrow, its ceiling too low and the floor is uneven. In addition, space in the Years 2, 3 and 4 classroom is insufficient for the number of pupils present and storage facilities are limited in this room and elsewhere in the school. With the installation of new computers, space will be even more restricted and pupils may not have the opportunity to use them easily. The current arrangement in which lunch tables are permanently sited in front of library shelves limits pupils' access to books.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

35. In order to improve the good standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

raise pupils' attainment in information and communication technology by:

- giving pupils regular learning experiences using computers;
- extending the framework for assessing pupils' progress, which involves them in becoming aware of how their skills are developing;
- implementing the programme of staff training to help raise teachers' confidence and to assist them in identifying activities where they can complement pupils' learning in other subjects;

examine all ways of increasing the space available to pupils in the classrooms, the use of the main building and outside accommodation, and create a designated outdoor learning space for children at the Foundation Stage.

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

6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	22	78	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)	61
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	8
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12
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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

No table of SATs results is published where fewer than 10 pupils sit the national tests at ages 7 and 11, as was the case in 2000.

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.9
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	159,124
Total expenditure	162,785
Expenditure per pupil	2,714
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,698
Balance carried forward to next year	10,037

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 57.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	61
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	29	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	49	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	44	21	0	0
The teaching is good.	66	31	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	15	62	23	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	14	9	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	41	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	26	51	20	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	31	55	14	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	53	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	35	9	0	0