

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTHOLMES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Horsham

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125836

Headteacher: Mr C J Silk

Reporting inspector: Helena McVeigh
Rgl's OIN 32056

Dates of inspection: 1 - 3 July 2002

Inspection number: 196693

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Leith View Road Horsham West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Reed
Date of previous inspection:	7 July 1997

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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	11
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Northolmes Junior School is located in the Roffey district of Horsham and most pupils have transferred from the neighbouring Littlehaven Infant School. There are currently 219 pupils on roll, with almost equal numbers of girls and boys. The school roll has fluctuated slightly over the past few years and there are significantly more pupils in Year 4 than in other years. As a result of this imbalance there are two mixed age classes with Year 4 and 5 pupils.

The school's population has changed in the last five years, with decreasing numbers of pupils having special educational needs and fewer eligible for free school meals. This year, 5.9 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. This figure may not be a true reflection of need in the school, as the drop coincided with the removal of the County's school meals service. Just over 30 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is higher than the national average, and 1.8 per cent have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The pupils' special needs include dyslexia, learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems, and speech and communication and visual impairment. The overwhelming majority of pupils (95 per cent) are of White UK heritage, with the remaining five per cent being mainly of Black African origin. There are three pupils who speak English as an additional language, but only one is at an early stage of learning English. There is a broad spread of attainment on entry to the school, but overall it is about average. There are, though, yearly variations.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Northolmes Junior is an effective school where pupils make good progress both in their academic achievements and in their personal development. The school provides a purposeful, happy and secure learning environment. Pupils attain standards that are above the national averages in English, mathematics and science as a result of the good teaching and thorough assessment. The school is well managed and staff work together as a strong coherent team. Staff, governors and parents share a commitment to the success of the school and to the achievements and welfare of the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress and achieve above-average standards because of the high quality of the teaching.
- The school helps pupils develop good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are helped to make good progress.
- The systems used to assess and monitor pupils' achievements are effective.
- The subject co-ordinators play a key role in pupils' progress and achievements.

What could be improved

- The way that the school prepares pupils for life in today's diverse multicultural society.
- The way that information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support and extend pupils' learning in all subject areas.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall. Five key issues were identified in the 1997 report. The first concerned the school development plan, which is now a more useful document, although its duration is still only for one year. The quality of teaching (second key issue) has improved significantly, with much higher proportions of good and very good lessons seen. Teachers' planning is now good and assessment is used well. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects (key issue 3) and provision for spiritual development is good (key issue 4). The last key issue concerned religious education (RE), which is now taught appropriately and according to the locally agreed syllabus. In addition, the school has maintained the strengths identified last time, such as the analysis of National Curriculum tests and strong subject leadership. Standards have improved and the school now provides good, rather than satisfactory, value for money.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	D	A	A
mathematics	C	D	B	B
science	C	B	A	A

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

Results in the National Curriculum tests taken by Year 6 pupils have improved over the past five years, at roughly the same rate as the average for schools nationally. There was a dip in results in 2000 (as shown in the table), but they picked up last year and the signs are that results for this year will be above average. The dip in 2000 was expected by the school and accounted for by significant numbers of lower-attaining pupils, especially girls. In the last two years increasing numbers of pupils have achieved the higher levels (Level 5 - which is above the expected level) in English, mathematics and science. No pupils were below Level 3 in any subject, which is an indication that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Boys did especially well in English in 2001 compared with boys nationally.

The school's targets for the proportion reaching at least Level 4 in this year's National Curriculum tests were challenging for English (90 per cent), but not for mathematics (78 per cent). Early unconfirmed results for the 2002 tests suggest that the target was reached for English and exceeded by 10 per cent in mathematics. Three pupils achieved Level 6 in mathematics (level expected for the end of Year 9).

Evidence from the work seen and lessons during the inspection shows that pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, make good progress and by the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Boys and girls are doing equally well. Most pupils make great strides in their reading and writing. Their speaking and listening skills are a strength. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing well and they are learning to apply them appropriately to 'real-life' problems and in other subjects. Pupils have a good knowledge of science facts and concepts and are developing good investigational skills. Pupils' skills within ICT are improving as they move through the school but they are not given enough opportunities to apply and extend them in their learning across the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have very positive attitudes towards school. They are cheerful and enthusiastic. They concentrate hard in lessons and play together well during breaks. They enjoy coming to school and take pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good throughout the school and contributes to the calm purposeful atmosphere and to children's learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good in many respects. They are developing respect for themselves and others. They are polite and friendly and relationships are very good. They take delight in artistic endeavours, such as music and singing. They co-operate extremely well in pairs and

	small groups in lessons and willingly help others with their work.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance for 2001/2 was in line with the national average, with fewer unauthorised absences. The school is concerned about the increasing number of children who are taken on holiday during term time—more could be done to discourage parents.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

Teaching is generally of a high quality, which contributes to pupils' achievements and learning. Lessons are well planned with clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils. Teachers assess pupils' work well and modify their teaching when necessary. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and set work appropriate to their learning needs. Their questioning is often very good: it encourages pupils to think and to give extended answers. Teaching assistants (TAs) play a key and effective role in helping pupils with SEN make good progress. As a result of the good, and often very good teaching, pupils learn well and make good progress in most subjects. Pupils are inquisitive and readily carry out research and investigation work, for example in science. They listen carefully and speak clearly, articulating their reasoning and understanding. They respond to high expectations by working at a good pace. They work very well when given the opportunity to take the initiative or act independently. Weaknesses in a few of the lessons include: the pace being too slow and not enough use being made of the concluding session to share and consolidate what has been learned in the lesson.

The teaching of all subjects is at least satisfactory. Mathematics, science and English are taught well. The discrete ICT lessons are good in enabling pupils to learn basic information and communication skills but not enough opportunities are found to rehearse and extend these in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils experience a good range of learning opportunities, with an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. The school's focus on improving pupils' investigative and independence skills has been effective.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. It is well organised, with very good leadership by the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) and good training of TAs, whose time is used well. The support for pupils with SEN is good and they are helped to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The one pupil at an early stage of learning English has made very good progress since she started at the school. She has been supported well in class, by teachers, TAs and fellow pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall. The school's ethos and curriculum, particularly the personal, social and health education programme, contribute well to pupils' social, moral and spiritual development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. There is good provision for pupils to learn and enjoy playing musical instruments and singing. Pupils have visited places of cultural interest. Pupils are given some opportunities to learn about the diversity of cultures in this country and across the world,

	but these are not yet embedded securely enough in subjects or as part of the school's ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall. The procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective. Children and their parents appreciate the recognition that is given through the Golden Mentions and stickers. Very good care is given to the welfare and academic progress of pupils with SEN. There are good procedures for child protection, with regular training. Assessment of academic progress is used well to monitor pupils' progress and modify what is taught.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has promoted a strong and coherent teamwork approach among staff, with a clear focus on improving teaching and learning for the benefit of pupils. Co-ordinators take a very significant and effective role in leading in their subject areas, which has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and on standards achieved by pupils. The staff thinks of itself as a 'learning school' and the evidence supports this view.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive and committed to the school and its aims. Most governors have been associated with the school for some time and know it well. They have great confidence in the headteacher. The governing body is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. It monitors the work of the school appropriately through visits and progress checks on the school improvement plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems for monitoring the work of the school and for keeping the governors involved. Co-ordinators monitor teaching, planning and pupils' work in their subjects extremely rigorously and prepare thorough annual reports and action plans.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is carefully planned and managed. It is linked well to the school's priorities and future needs. The Parents and Teachers Association has helped raise considerable sums of money for the school.

The school applies the principles of best value appropriately. Careful consideration is given to spending decisions. The way in which parents and pupils are consulted about their views is a strength. Their comments are listened to carefully and responded to where possible.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children like school. • The school expects children to work hard and they are making good progress. • Behaviour is good and children are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework given. • The close working between parents and school. • The information they receive about how their children are getting on.

The parents' support for the school is very positive, as measured by the response to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting. The team agrees with all of the positive views of parents. The issue about homework came up at the parents' meeting, where there were clear differences of opinion as to how much homework should be given, if any, and whether pupils were given feedback. The inspection team judged that homework is given appropriately and that it provides good reinforcement and extension of classwork. It did appear to be marked regularly so that children had feedback on how well it had been done. The team did not agree with the views expressed about not being kept informed or not working closely with the school. The reports to parents, the consultation evenings and opportunities to meet staff during the school week provide good opportunities for keeping parents informed. The school encourages parents to get involved, and recognises this through, for example, the coffee mornings. Parents are invited to the special assemblies and other events. Information about the curriculum is sent out, though this could be written in a much more parent-friendly way. During the parents' meeting there was also some discussion about the issues surrounding the mixed-age classes. The team did not find that pupils were being disadvantaged by being in these classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils make good progress and achieve above-average standards because of the high quality of the teaching

1. Pupils enter the school with a broad range of attainment, but overall it is in line with the national average, though there are variations from year to year. Value-added data provided by the local education authority (LEA) show that the progress made by last year's Year 6 pupils was above the LEA average in English, mathematics and science. Evidence from the inspection confirms that pupils make good progress during their time in Northolmes, as a result of the generally good and often very good teaching. The inspection team judged that standards were above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The nature of the short inspection meant that there was less evidence for other subjects, but what was seen indicated that standards were at least in line with what would be expected for pupils' ages.
2. English is taught well. The school has adapted the National Literacy Strategy effectively so that themes are taught in coherent blocks and more emphasis is given to writing. Each unit of work culminates in a writing task that goes into the pupils' 'orange books'. This approach has clearly been successful, as pupils' writing has improved. Teachers also consider that boys have benefited especially from this approach, which may help to explain their good test results last year. Year 6 pupils of all abilities organise their writing well and make a good attempt at being imaginative. They punctuate appropriately using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas and spell polysyllabic words correctly. They write in a variety of different styles, - for example, play scripts and letters. Year 6 pupils quickly understood how to write Tanka poems after an effective introduction by the teacher, who questioned them well on what they had learned in a previous lesson.
3. The school measures pupils' reading ages at the beginning and end of each year and most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. In Year 6, all but seven pupils (out of 52) have reading ages of at least ten years and ten pupils have reading ages of 14 years or over. Pupils enjoy reading and select challenging texts, such as *Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman, being read by a Year 5 girl. The unconfirmed results for 2002 indicate that 51 per cent of Year 6 reached Level 5 in reading.
4. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. They are given many opportunities to give long, extended and thoughtful answers in all subjects. They are encouraged to speak aloud in front of the class or in assembly, for example during the special year group assemblies when they talk about what they have learned or take part in a role-play. Year 6 pupils presented their case for or against the development of a coastal resort, in small groups and then in front of the whole class, in a geography lesson. They spoke clearly and confidently and demonstrated their good understanding of the issues. The rest of the class listened attentively and politely.
5. Target setting has been introduced in the last two years in English, which has helped pupils to know more clearly how they can improve their writing. Pupils are involved in setting the targets, sometimes writing their own; for example, one wrote, 'Use more adjectives in my writing to describe objects, people and places'. Target setting could now usefully be extended to other subjects.
6. Mathematics is taught well and often in an interesting way. Introductory activities are varied and stimulating. They are sometimes in the form of games, which encourage pupils to apply their recall of multiplication tables and to carry out the four operations in their heads, in contexts that the pupils enjoy. For example, in a Year 4 class, pupils were learning about factorisation when they worked in pairs to tick off a list of numbers for which the dice throw was a factor - the higher-attaining pupils were given more difficult numbers. Year 6 pupils played fox/rabbit/ farmer, a round robin game that tested their quick recall of multiples of three, four and five. Year 5 pupils took part with enthusiasm when playing 'bingo' in which they had to subtract two-digit from four-digit

numbers and check the answer against their 'bingo card'. Year 6 'bingo' involved pupils working out percentages of numbers and quantities, such as money or mass.

7. All aspects of the mathematics National Curriculum are taught appropriately and pupils of similar attainment are grouped together so that they can be given work that meets their needs. Teachers encourage pupils to articulate their working out of solutions, through skilful questioning. Pupils present their answers well on paper and can explain what they are doing. Their numeracy skills are developing well and they use them in other subjects, for example calculations and graphs in science and geography. Pupils are given ample opportunities to apply their skills to solve problems in mathematics and other contexts. They know when and how to use calculators. The work of some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is of a very high standard. The highest-attaining pupils are taught separately for one lesson per week and given work from the secondary school programme of study. These Year 6 pupils understand ratios, can calculate percentages in their heads, and know their equivalent fractions and decimals. They formulate and solve simple algebraic equations. They know how to use an 'Excel' spreadsheet to carry out repetitive calculations. They enjoy being set challenging problems.
8. The school's helpful analysis of pupils' performance in tests has identified weaknesses such as solving word problems, calculating and measuring angles, and mental multiplication. There has been a clear plan to overcome the weaknesses and good help was seen during the inspection in enabling pupils to tackle word problems. In one lesson, Year 4 pupils identified how many steps were needed to solve increasingly complex word problems and which operations they would need to use. By Year 6 pupils were solving word problems in their heads, such as how much they would have to pay for a product with a 33 per cent discount. In this lesson, the teacher also skilfully provoked an interesting discussion as to why advertisers put phrases like 'up to' (40 per cent discount) in smaller print.
9. Science has a high profile in the school, as is evident from the lively displays in most classrooms. The school's increased emphasis on investigational work has been effective. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to decide on their own investigations, to plan and carry them out, to draw conclusions and suggest how their approach could be improved. Year 3 pupils have a clear idea of the need for a test to be 'fair' and that measurements should be accurate. By Year 6, pupils are checking their measurements and recording these well in tables. For example, in one lesson groups of pupils investigated questions such as: which type of ball bounced for the longest; how the angle of a slope affects how far a toy car will travel; whether the time for a pendulum swing is affected by the length of string or mass of the pendulum bob. The pupils co-operated extremely well. They used measuring instruments such as clinometers (to measure angles), rulers and stopwatches appropriately and checked their results. They could talk confidently about what they were doing and what they expected to find out. They double checked anomalous findings and drew appropriate conclusions, such as, 'the shorter the string the quicker the pendulum moves'.
10. The inspection team found that teaching was particularly good in Year 6, where, of the five lessons seen, three were very good, one was good and another excellent. Elsewhere in the school teaching varied between satisfactory and very good. Overall, two-thirds of the teaching was good or better and over a third was very good or excellent. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection.
11. The school has focused a great deal of time and energy on trying to improve teaching and learning and its efforts are effective. Much of the focus has been managed by subject co-ordinators, who play a key role in monitoring the work and lessons in their areas (see paragraphs below). There has been a good amount of training for teachers. For example, most have attended five days' training on teaching numeracy. Co-ordinators keep up to date with regular training and feed this into staff meetings. There are regular sessions where staff meet to moderate their assessments of pupils' work. Teachers are used to being observed in class and having feedback to help them improve. The outcome of this good input is a high degree of consistency among teachers in their approach to lessons. Much of the teaching in the school has the following features:
 - Lessons are well planned with clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils.
 - Teachers assess pupils' work well, by writing comments in their books, but also by observing carefully during lessons and modifying their teaching when necessary.

- Teachers relate well to pupils and manage behaviour very unobtrusively and effectively.
- Teachers set work appropriate to children's learning needs, so that higher attainers are challenged and pupils with SEN can achieve well at their own level.
- Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and work.
- Questioning is often very good. It is open-ended and encourages pupils to think and give extended answers.
- Teachers work well with support staff, who play a key and effective role in helping pupils with SEN make good progress.
- Homework is set regularly and appropriately to reinforce and extend pupils' learning in English and mathematics.

The school helps pupils develop good attitudes, behaviour and relationships

12. Pupils generally have a very positive attitude to school and to their lessons. They are friendly, courteous and polite. They are eager to talk about their work and what they like and dislike. In over 50 per cent of lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged to be very good or excellent. They were nearly always good and never less than satisfactory. These characteristics of the pupils at Northolmes Junior School make a significant contribution to the good progress and high standards.
13. The school promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes in a number of ways. The general ethos of the school is one in which individuals are respected and their achievements acknowledged. There are public declarations of success for work attitudes and behaviour in assemblies, for example when the Golden Mentions are distributed. Pupils seem genuinely pleased when their peers' achievements are recognised. Parents at the meeting before the inspection commented very favourably on the way that the school helps children develop a sense of 'fair play' and good relationships.
14. Teachers manage behaviour well in lessons. They have constructive, purposeful relationships with pupils, for whom they show, and from whom they receive, respect. As pupils get older, teachers' expectations of them get higher in terms of taking responsibility for their learning. Teachers trust pupils to behave sensibly. For example, a small group of Year 6 pupils worked unsupervised, though within sight of a teacher, in the hall when they carried out their investigations into which ball bounces for the longest when dropped from a given height. Pupils play a key role in the organisation of assemblies and get out and put away playground and classroom equipment. There is not yet a school council, though there are plans to introduce one, which will help to increase further the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in the school. The headteacher has recently undertaken a survey of pupils' views about all aspects of school life: their views are taken seriously.
15. Pupils generally co-operate well. They are given a lot of opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and they usually do this successfully. For example, Year 4 pupils competed with each other in a dice game involving multiplication and subtraction of numbers. They did this fairly and respectfully. Children help their less able peers. They know which ability group they are in and that some children get easier work than others, or as one child put it, 'It's not really easier for them', though with no sense of feeling superior.
16. The school's aims firmly promote an atmosphere in which good attitudes, behaviour and relationships are paramount. Teachers make very clear what they expect from pupils in each lesson. They have high expectations and pupils nearly always live up to them.

Pupils with special educational needs are helped to make good progress

17. Pupils with SEN make good progress. In this year's Year 6 class, 22.5 per cent of pupils are on the school's register for SEN, with learning difficulties, and all of them achieved at least Level 3 in the English, mathematics and science National Curriculum tests. Parents spoke very positively

about the way that the school supports pupils who have special educational needs, whether due to a physical disability or a learning difficulty.

18. The support for pupils with SEN is organised and managed very well. Good account has been taken of the revised code of practice for SEN. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to work with individuals or small groups of pupils in lessons. They use their time well and constructively. The SENCO manages the work of the TAs extremely effectively. TAs have received appropriate training in numeracy and literacy and are involved in performance management. There is good and regular liaison with class teachers. The pupils' Individual Education Plans are good, with short-term achievable targets and action and support clearly identified.
19. The TAs and SENCO are aware of the lessons' objectives and help to modify work to suit the needs of the SEN pupils. In a Year 6 geography lesson a TA provided excellent support to a group of pupils who were role-playing a discussion about the possible development of a coastal site. She kept them well focused by intervening appropriately and by asking pertinent questions.
20. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs receive very good individual support that enables them to participate in lessons and learn at their own pace. The pupils are given modified or simplified work so that they can learn effectively. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, two pupils with statements were given simpler versions of tasks that the rest of the class were undertaking, to solve word problems. They were helped by their individual TAs to work out answers to the problems and as a result made good progress.

The systems used to assess and monitor pupils' achievements are effective

21. Assessment is organised and managed very well in the school. Teachers undertake end-of-unit assessments in all subjects. There is regular testing in English (reading, spelling and comprehension) and a test in mathematics in Year 3. Reading tests are given twice a year so that progress can be monitored. Pupils undertake the voluntary National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Results of these non-statutory tests are also reported to parents. The school records and analyses assessment data effectively using the computer software 'Assessment Manager'. Teachers' assessment files are monitored and helpful feedback is given. Teachers moderate their judgements on National Curriculum levels effectively by jointly scrutinising samples of pupils' work. This has been carried out in English, mathematics, science, history, geography and art.
22. The school makes good use of assessment data to inform and improve its teaching. The assessment co-ordinator undertakes very useful analyses of pupils' responses to National Curriculum test questions, both for the statutory and non-statutory tests. A comprehensive report is then presented to the governing body. Common weaknesses are identified from the analyses and these are used to inform planning and to set curricular targets. For example, targets have been set for individuals in writing and for classes in mental mathematics. The school has followed up these identified weaknesses well and with some positive impact, for example improvements in writing.
23. Teachers' ongoing assessment is good. They evaluate what pupils are finding difficult in class and adjust their lessons accordingly. They mark work well, particularly in English. Marking includes suggestions as to how the work can improve and pupils often respond well to this. For example, a pupil started to use more connectives instead of short separate sentences, after prompting by the teacher. Teachers indicate what is good as well as what could improve.

The subject co-ordinators play a key role in pupils' progress and achievements

24. The headteacher has been very successful in creating a climate in which staff accept monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of the school's work. He has encouraged and enabled subject co-ordinators to play a key part in this process. Co-ordinators are given time to carry out the monitoring, which includes regular observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work and

teachers' plans. Lesson observations are followed up with oral and written feedback. As a result of the monitoring, co-ordinators prepare rigorous annual reports that identify strengths and areas for improvement and feed into the subject action plans. The school has approached the monitoring in a systematic and thorough manner. Training has been provided and joint observations with LEA advisers have been carried out in order to fine tune judgements.

25. The effect of the monitoring and feedback has been that teachers approach the teaching of subjects in a systematic and consistent way. Helpful schemes of work have been prepared for each subject, based on modified versions of those provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The curriculum and teaching strategies have been modified in response to co-ordinators' analyses of strengths and weaknesses. For example, the literacy co-ordinator identified writing as a weakness in her annual report for 2001 and noted this year that progress had been made, as confirmed by the inspection. Several areas are noted for further development, including the need for more emphasis on word level work, an indication of when guided reading occurs and the need to identify ICT and cross-curricular opportunities in teachers' termly and weekly plans. (See paragraph 30 below)
26. Overall, co-ordinators have taken responsibility for ensuring that their subjects are taught well. They provide good support to colleagues and detailed and rigorous evaluations of how children are being taught. They make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved by pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The way that the school prepares pupils for life in today's diverse multicultural society

27. The school serves a predominantly White population and is aware of the need to help pupils learn about other lives and cultures. Staff have taken some steps to raise pupils' awareness of multicultural issues. For example, reading books have been selected to represent different cultures. Pupils learn about other religions in religious education and different countries in geography. The teachers have taken advantage of the cultures that the few minority ethnic children bring with them, for example, by inviting in their parents to talk about events and customs. These are useful starting points, but as yet there is no agreed whole-school approach to the issue. Teachers are not systematically looking for examples that they can include in their plans. Opportunities are missed in lessons to explore ways in which people from a variety of cultural backgrounds would respond or how they would utilise their natural resources. More examples should be found, such as in the English lesson where a group of Year 4 pupils discussed 'Life of a Young Asian (British) girl'.
28. There are few visitors to the school who represent the wide diversity of ethnic backgrounds of people in this country. Pupils need more opportunities to engage in empathetic discussions or role-play about other cultures within this country as well as overseas. Consideration of multi-ethnic and multicultural issues is not yet part of the schemes of work or plans or even explicitly in the school's aims.
29. The school has an appropriate action plan for implementing its race equality policy and practice. The statement of intent on race equality makes explicit reference to the need to look at and broaden the school's multicultural education.

The way that ICT is used to support and extend pupils' learning in all subject areas

30. There are strengths in the way that ICT is provided for at Northolmes. Teachers have all had their New Opportunities Fund ICT training. The school is well equipped with computers and there is a computer suite where pupils experience one taught session on ICT each week. These lessons are helping pupils develop some good ICT skills by the time they reach Year 6. They are confident at retrieving and storing information. They use word processors, though more often for homework than at school. They use sensing and datalogging devices and know how to control simple output devices and to use programs to draw graphs. They obtain information from the Internet. They have school email addresses, although they rarely make use of them.

31. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the available software and resources, as well as monitoring the teaching of ICT and encouraging teachers to use it more in other subjects. Teachers are expected to include ICT opportunities in their planning. An after-school club has been run by the co-ordinator for parents and children to learn and improve their ICT skills and confidence. These are very positive initiatives, but there is still, as identified by the school, the need for pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects. While this happens to a certain extent, particularly in some classes, it is not very frequent. Most subject co-ordinators have identified the need to increase the amount of ICT used in their areas. In science, for example, this has had a positive result and pupils make use of programs to plot graphs of their experimental results. On the whole, however, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers and other ICT devices such as tape recorders, cameras and CD-ROMs in subject lessons.
32. Computers are used infrequently in most subjects and rarely in English. However, good use is made of computers for pupils with SEN. The school is aware of the need to increase opportunities to use ICT and this aim is featured in the action plans of most subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. In order to build on the school's many strengths and to improve pupils' achievements and personal development even further, the headteacher, staff and governing body need to continue to improve:
- (1) **The way that the school prepares pupils for life in today's diverse, multicultural society by:**
- providing clear leadership for this area;
 - planning provision in a systematic way;
 - providing training for staff;
 - ensuring that visitors represent a wider range of cultural and ethnic groups.
- (2) **The way that ICT is used to support and extend pupils' learning in all subject areas by continuing the good work of the co-ordinator in**
- ensuring that teachers' plans include a wide range of opportunities to use ICT to support each subject as well as help extend pupils' ICT skills;
 - ensuring that there is enough software and hardware to support ICT in all subjects;
 - monitoring the use of computers in classrooms and in the ICT suite.

Both key issues are areas that have been identified by the school for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils (excluding talking to children in lessons and teachers after lessons)	at least 12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	7	7	0	0	0
Percentage*	4.5	31.8	31.8	31.8	0	0	0

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

* Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	71

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.01
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 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	6	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	20	26
	Girls	27	24	29
	Total	49	44	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (63)	79 (61)	98 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	22	23
	Girls	26	24	28
	Total	46	46	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (65)	82 (65)	91 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	3
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	208
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: Y3– Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.61
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.79
Average class size	27.38

Education support staff: Y3 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	508,340
Total expenditure	470,446
Expenditure per pupil	2177.99
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,661
Balance carried forward to next year	44,555*

* Includes earmarked funds- eg standards fund that can be carried over into August 2002 and capital fund recently delegated.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	219
Number of questionnaires returned	81

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	49	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	46	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	70	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	52	19	1	1
The teaching is good.	38	57	0	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	62	10	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	40	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	46	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	22	59	16	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	52	44	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	58	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	51	2	2	0