

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **BOLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Appleby-in-Westmorland

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112176

Headteacher: Mrs J Cotter

Reporting inspector: L A Furness  
8245

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2002

Inspection number: 244279

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bolton Appleby-in-Westmorland Cumbria
Postcode:	CA16 6AW
Telephone number:	01768 361511
Fax number:	01768 361511
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Fiona Young
Date of previous inspection:	14 <sup>th</sup> October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
8245	L A Furness	Registered inspector
9214	J Garland	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was: Focus Education Services

Focus Education  
113-115 High Street  
Uppermill  
Saddleworth  
OL3 6BD

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bolton Primary School is a small rural primary school situated in the village of Bolton, approximately four miles from Appleby-in-Westmorland. The majority of pupils are from the surrounding villages, which cover a wide range of socio-economic circumstances. All of the pupils are white European and there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Thirty-four pupils, grouped into two classes, attend the school. One class consists of reception-age children and pupils aged 5 to 7. The other class consists of pupils aged 7 to 11. There are far more girls than boys in the school. The percentage of pupils entitled to school meals free of charge is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils having special educational needs is below the national average as also is the percentage of pupils having a statement of special educational need. When children first start school in the reception class (the Foundation Stage of Learning) their academic and personal skills mainly match those expected for their age. However, with so few children in each cohort, it is very difficult to anticipate accurately year upon year the children's attainment on entry. The current headteacher has been in post for approximately six months, following an unsettled period of time when the school was without this key member of staff in post. She teaches the class of pupils in Years 3 to 6 for four days a week and a part-time teacher takes this class for one day to enable her to carry out her leadership and management responsibilities.

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

This is a good school with a very supportive family atmosphere that is valued by parents. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is well supported by the governors and the parents. The staff work very hard as a team and the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with very good teaching in the class of pupils in Years 3 to 6. The small number of pupils makes overall evaluations of attainment difficult, although the current Year 6 pupils are attaining good standards in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils achieve well relative to their abilities across most curricular areas. The school successfully fosters pupils' personal and academic growth and helps them to develop as mature and responsible young learners. When account is taken of all these factors, the school provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership and is well supported by staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well because of the very good teaching they receive.
- The majority of pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is consistently of a high standard.
- A broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum is offered to the pupils.

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

- The existing assessment and record-keeping systems including ways of tracking pupils' progress and involving pupils in their own learning.
- Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Information and communication technology provision throughout the school.
- The standing of the school within its local community and pupils' knowledge of the wider world in which they live.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since it was last inspected in October 1997 the school has addressed well two of the key issues identified. An initial assessment scheme has been introduced to assess reception age children when they first enter school, and the school development plan now has the cost implications clearly evaluated. Although weekly lesson planning has improved, the issue regarding monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is an area that the new headteacher recognises needs further development. Due to illness, the school was without leadership for a period of time and this obviously affected the improvement process. An acting headteacher appointed for approximately one and a half terms instigated some important moves forward and, since the appointment of the new headteacher in January, there has been rapid improvement in many aspects of the school's work. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection with good improvement in the last six months.

## STANDARDS

The school has very small numbers of pupils taking the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and it is therefore not appropriate to make comparisons with national statistics as each pupil accounts for a significant proportion of the overall distribution of levels within the school. In recent years, virtually all pupils aged 7 and 11 have attained the standards expected and many have attained above this. In relation to their attainment on entry, these standards mean that pupils have achieved at least satisfactorily in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Taken overall, reception age children make satisfactory progress and are likely to attain the nationally expected standards at the end of their year in reception. The progress and achievement of reception age children is satisfactory. Pupils currently of Year 2 age are attaining the standards expected for their age. The current Year 6 group of pupils are achieving well and attaining standards that are at least in line with those expected. The school has reached the targets, which it set in English and mathematics for the year 2001, and has set realistic and challenging targets in these subjects for 2002 and 2003. The school is well placed to achieve them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn. They are responsive and show very positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well consistently, both in class and around the school. They are polite and friendly, and very willing to help.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are caring and considerate, and get on very well with each other and with staff.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils arrive promptly, eager to start the school day.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good

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

Although all of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, there is a marked contrast in the quality of teaching between the two classes. Because of the very good teaching that occurs in the class of Years 3 to 6 pupils, all of the pupils make very good gains in learning. The very good relationships within this class create a warm and productive learning atmosphere where pupils are not afraid to be wrong, and are successfully encouraged to help each other. Teaching is mainly satisfactory in the class of younger pupils, and consequently progress and achievement in this class are mainly satisfactory. In English and mathematics, teaching is good overall and the teachers mainly reinforce literacy and numeracy skills well in most lessons. Teachers make appropriate use of resources to support pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. Although teaching overall is satisfactory for children in the reception year, teaching methods do not demonstrate a secure understanding of how young children learn. There is an inappropriate balance between activities that are directed by the teacher, and those that the children select for themselves. Written marking is mainly satisfactory and is often good for the class of pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, it is not used consistently throughout the school to inform pupils of why their work is good and what they need to do next to improve.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school effectively enhances the curriculum with a good range of stimulating projects and educational visits that improve the quality of pupils' learning. Although provision for information and communication technology provision is satisfactory it should be improved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are well supported by all staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and they are kind to one another. Although pupils are well informed about the ways of life of different people in the world, they are less well prepared for life in multi-cultural Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory child protection and health and safety procedures are carried out.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other	Very good. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She is very clear about school improvement and is well supported by all



key staff	the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. Governors work hard on behalf of the school and give of their time and skills willingly. They provide sound support to the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. A secure start has been made in school self-evaluation, although the monitoring of teaching and learning is identified as a priority for further development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school spends wisely and secures good value for its expenditure. The principles of best value are soundly applied.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The teaching is good.</li> <li>▪ Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>▪ The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>▪ The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities the school provides outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

Parents' responses overwhelmingly supported the school and the quality of education provided for their children, and very few parents expressed concerns. The inspection endorses parents' positive views, but disagrees with the viewpoint of a minority of parents. Although there are few after-school activities apart from football and netball, the good quality and range of opportunities beyond normal lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and their personal development. The school also is trying to improve the number of clubs offered to pupils and has plans for more activities to be offered in the very near future.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership and is well supported by staff, governors, parents and pupils.**

1. Although the headteacher has been in post for only a very short time she is already very highly regarded by staff, governors, parents and pupils. All comment upon how effectively she has encouraged everyone to work together towards school improvement following the unsettled period that the school has experienced. One Year 6 pupil remarked that 'she has made everyone a family again!' The headteacher's strong sense of purpose and her commitment to provide a high quality of education for the pupils are important factors in this school's ability to continue to improve. She sets the tone for the school, and has been very successful in developing a positive ethos for learning for the pupils and a strong partnership with parents. All parents who returned the questionnaire thought that the school was well led and managed and many of the parents at the parents' meeting spoke highly of her leadership qualities. The staff are now working together very successfully as a team, which is so very necessary in a small school. Subject co-ordination roles are shared by all staff and all are willing to work together to ensure that this is an effective school.

2. The headteacher provides clear vision and direction for the school's work. Very quickly she has identified what is necessary to move the school forward and has successfully prioritised what needs to be done. A very useful school improvement plan has been produced with the support of the governors, staff and local education authority adviser. This focuses very clearly on improving provision for pupils in this school. The plan clearly indicates the tasks to be done, the resource and financial implications, the checking and evaluation procedures, and the impact that these tasks will have on pupils' attainment and progress.

3. However the headteacher and governors felt that much had to be done immediately following her appointment and an interim improvement plan was put into place during the spring term to address some of the immediate concerns. For example, curricular planning was improved by developing a curriculum map for each year group of pupils and a whole-school planning file was introduced. The nature and purpose of homework were re-established through discussion with parents and pupils, so that both parents and pupils would realise the value of homework and how it would extend pupils' classroom learning. Resources were reorganised so that pupils were able to work more independently in science and mathematics. Introducing rugby into the curriculum broadened the range of activities available in physical education. This resulted in the school coming second out of eleven schools in a rugby competition, something about which pupils are very proud. Communication with parents was improved with the headteacher aiming to meet all parents during the spring term. Links were re-established with the community and visitors were invited into the school. Behaviour also was identified as an improvement area and pupils were encouraged to treat all adults within the school with the same courtesy and respect. Pupils were invited to become involved in discussing what was considered to be appropriate behaviour in the classroom, at lunchtimes and during playtimes. This has resulted in pupils' behaviour being much improved and older pupils developing much more responsible attitudes towards the younger ones. A house system has been established, and pupils are already becoming much more aware of decision-making and the process of democracy. Many of these initiatives are in the early stages of development but already they are beginning to make a positive impact on the work of the school.

4. When considering the length of time that this headteacher has been in post, her heavy teaching commitment and the improvements that she has introduced whilst maintaining the confidence of the

governors, staff, parents and pupils, it is evident that she is valued highly by the school community. Her very good leadership and management skills have enabled her to introduce changes in a positive way and made all feel involved and a part of the school improvement process.

**Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well because of the very good teaching they receive.**

5. During this short inspection, all of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, with one third good and one third very good. Teaching is regularly of a high quality in the class of Years 3 to 6 pupils. In this class, the teacher has very good relationships with the pupils and this results in highly motivated pupils who have a real sense of enjoyment for learning.

6. A particular strength of this teacher is her teaching of English. So that all their needs can be addressed, the pupils work in two groups for literacy; one group of Years 5 and 6 pupils and one of Years 3 and 4 pupils. Texts for literacy lessons are imaginatively selected, and clear explanations and the very good use of questioning enable the pupils to further their understanding of different types of texts. For example, in one Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were very effectively exploring the features of explanatory texts. Very quickly they recognised a variety of features including use of technical language, writing in the third person, use of the present tense and, in this particular text, use of diagram and captions. Pupils were very willing to answer questions because of the very good relationships that exist and the knowing that their answers will be valued and listened to by the teacher. Very good lesson organisation ensured that very good use was made of the time available, with pupils moving from one element of the lesson to another quickly. Whilst the Years 5 and 6 pupils were working with the teacher, the Years 3 and 4 pupils worked well independently supported when necessary by the teaching assistant. As the older pupils moved to independent work, the Years 3 and 4 pupils quickly moved to the carpet so that they could work directly with the teacher.

7. In another very good lesson, Years 3 and 4 pupils sorted into sets statements that were fact and those that were opinion in order to organise their ideas and present a balanced argument about a building project in India. The text was challenging but the teachers' enthusiasm and skilful questioning kept the pupils motivated, on-task and wanting to succeed. The perceptive introduction of new concepts, which become increasingly complex as pupils progressed, enabled pupils to retain confidence as they learned. Planning is thorough and includes specific learning objectives which are usually shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Very good classroom management is a consistent feature in the teaching, which successfully ensures that all pupils are appropriately involved and challenged.

**The majority of pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is consistently of a high standard.**

8. In lessons observed during the inspection, the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were never less than good. In Years 3 to 6 they were very good. The older pupils' very good response to lessons contributes significantly toward their good progress in most subjects. All pupils enjoy coming to school, relate happily to one another in all areas of the school, work hard and show a pride in their achievements.

9. The youngest children settle well into school routines and are able to answer questions without shouting out the answers. They try hard to complete their tasks and are mainly well behaved. Pupils aged 5 to 7 are also interested in their work, but occasionally there are minor slips in concentration when activities are not appropriate to their needs and pupils are unsure of what they are to do. For example, in a numeracy activity pupils were uncertain of what was expected of them, as the teacher's instructions were unclear. This resulted in their wasting time and producing little work.

10. In literacy lessons throughout the school, pupils show at least good attitudes. They listen attentively and with considerable interest during the whole-class introduction to the lessons, and show enthusiasm when responding to their teachers' questions. They value the contributions of other pupils, and show respect for their opinions. The pupils sustain concentration very effectively during independent work and share experiences confidently during the final plenary sessions. In numeracy lessons also, the pupils mainly respond well to their work and show a capacity to persevere when difficulties arise. They take careful note of their teachers' advice and guidance to help them improve their performance. One Year 6 pupil commented that he used to find some aspects of mathematics difficult but the new headteacher had helped him to find new strategies for solving problems, about which he was very pleased.

11. The pupils' consistently positive attitudes contribute significantly towards their progress in other subjects. In science, their ability to share resources and equipment and co-operate sensibly during investigative and experimental work is a strong feature. In design and technology the pupils' ability to plan, design and evaluate carefully enabled the Years 3 to 6 pupils to collaborate to make a dolls' house of the highest quality. The finished product is very good indeed and the pupils are quite rightly very proud of their efforts. In physical education, the youngest pupils responded eagerly to their teacher's instructions and particularly enjoyed their rolling, kicking, throwing and catching activities. In art and design, pupils use their skills and imagination to explore movement. This was particularly evident when Years 3 to 6 pupils investigated body form and shape and then used effectively what they had learnt to produce interesting and imaginative sculptures.

12. In all lessons, the majority of pupils' behaviour is consistently of a very good standard. This is also the case in other areas of the school, including the playground. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions where pupils sit in mixed age groups eating their meals together sensibly. Older pupils show very good consideration for the younger ones and set them good examples. The pupils' high standard of behaviour is particularly noticeable during whole-school assemblies and adds considerably to the strong sense of community apparent on these occasions.

### **A broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum is offered to the pupils.**

13. The school provides a rich and relevant curriculum and uses the local environment very effectively to enhance curricular provision. As well as placing strong emphasis on developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy, the school has been successful in retaining a broad and balanced curriculum that offers a rich variety of learning opportunities. Many visits are made to involve pupils in the curriculum and visitors regularly visit the school. For example, to support their work in literacy the older pupils went to the open-air theatre to see a play written by Shakespeare being performed. Visitors from America came to the school and pupils asked them questions about life in California. A residential visit to York effectively promoted pupils' social skills whilst providing a wonderful stimulus for the design and technology project of making a dolls' house. Attractive displays help to create a stimulating learning environment. They are used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievement, support their learning and promote enquiry. The pupils are very proud of the display in the hall area and all pupils in the school have had the opportunity for some work to be on display to celebrate their achievements. All the requirements of the National Curriculum and the recommendations of the local agreed syllabus for religious education are met fully. An added dimension is the teaching of French to Years 5 and 6 pupils so that they will have familiarity with the language before moving on to secondary education. Also it helps pupils to have a greater understanding of the origins and meanings of words. Pupils greet these sessions with enthusiasm.

14. Throughout the school, strong emphasis is placed on the development of literacy skills. This is achieved through the successful implementation of the National Strategy for Literacy and by the

imaginative use of opportunities to extend these skills through work in other subjects. In subjects such as history and geography, valuable opportunities are created for pupils to produce writing about various topics and issues arising from their studies. For example, in the context of their history work pupils visited Tullie House. They then wrote to the local newspaper describing their visit. The editor wrote back to the pupils giving them advice about how they might improve their report writing, for example, to write in the third person and to try to use paragraphs. In subjects such as art and design and design and technology, pupils extend their vocabulary by learning new words related to the activities in which they engage. Although there are fewer opportunities for pupils to extend their numeracy skills during work in other subjects, some worthwhile experiences are created. In science for example, investigative tasks, which require accurate measurement, help to extend pupils' numeracy skills.

15. The creative arts are not neglected and the school has been actively involved in a project involving stone circles and the standing stones of Eden. Following a visit to the Penrith Museum and Art Gallery, the whole school worked with an artist in residence to produce their own tall standing stone – The Bolton Stone. The youngest pupils explored pattern and texture by making a variety of different types of rubbing which then became the surface for the stone, whilst older pupils considered pattern and symbols first, and made individual stone badges using Neolithic motifs. Then pupils created their own symbols representing the things that they felt were important from the area around Bolton. These symbols were made in relief and added to the Bolton Stone. The Stone is now on display at the museum but it will eventually be returned to the school where it will be on permanent display.

16. This work also stimulated other areas of the curriculum including history, technology and creative writing. One pupil wrote a particularly imaginative piece which was read out over BBC Radio Cumbria. Lines such as these effectively capture the image of the tall standing stone ...

A  
Cracked  
Boulder stands  
On a lonely hill.  
Frozen in time with  
Green moss and algae  
Growing on its wrinkled  
Surface.....  
Cold, withered granite  
Eroded by centuries of  
Cruel rain smearing its once  
Smooth face.....'

17. All pupils in the school are very proud of their work on the standing stone project and are eager to discuss what they have done and what they have learnt.

18. The personal, spiritual and moral development is also successfully promoted. Topics covered during whole-school assemblies and issues arising in work across the curriculum create many opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual and moral questions relevant to their age. Their awareness of the difficulties faced by other people is heightened by the school's involvement in charities, such as that to support a child in Kenya and the Christmas 'shoebox' appeal. They also benefit from the regular contributions of local clergy and other visiting speakers. To develop pupils' understanding of democracy and citizenship, the headteacher has introduced a house system so that pupils can become more involved in the development of the school. The pupils enjoy this system and feel that there is now a forum for their ideas to be considered

19. In order to capture the life of the school, a folder has been established to collect and record the achievements, the links with the community, the visits and visitors. The folder successfully displays how all areas of the curriculum are being enhanced in an exciting way, making learning meaningful for the pupils of the school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Existing assessment and record-keeping systems including ways of tracking pupils' progress and involving pupils in their own learning.**

20. Assessment and record keeping systems were recognised by the acting headteacher in September to be in need of improvement. Although systems were in place, no system was established to enable the school to check that pupils were making sufficient progress in their learning in English and mathematics and science. During her short time at the school, she put into place a useful system that would allow the school to collect assessment data and would eventually enable the school to track progress. Although this was recognised by the new headteacher in January as being extremely useful, it was realised through an audit of existing assessment and record-keeping procedures that all systems needed to be reviewed, analysed and adjusted as necessary. This has resulted in assessment and record-keeping being identified as a key priority of the school improvement plan with appropriate tasks identified. These include: to review assessment and record keeping procedures in all subjects, to review tracking procedures and amend as necessary, and to establish a system of self-assessment and target setting for Years 3 to 6 pupils. The tracking document already has been reviewed and has been amended to ensure that termly assessments are made and recorded so that teachers can clearly check that pupils are making sufficient progress. If this is not happening, then there can be discussions about what is necessary to address the issue and action taken.

21. The issue of self-assessment and involving pupils in their learning is beginning to be addressed throughout the school. In both classes, pupils are informed of the learning of the lesson thereby providing them with a clear understanding of what they should be doing. However, this is not done consistently in either class and it is not always made clear to the pupils what the teacher is looking for when their work is to be marked. Marking quality varies. In some instances pupils are well informed of why their work is good and how they might improve it. However, this is not consistent marking practice and in the younger pupils' books very few helpful comments are made. In the last inspection it was noted that, although the school marking policy was applied satisfactorily sometimes, in English in particular, more thorough written comments could be given. This still remains the case and pupils are not being informed sufficiently about how they might improve the quality of the work and thereby raise their standards of attainment. Pupils do not have key targets for learning given to them and quite rightly the school is beginning to establish a system whereby pupils develop a clear idea of what they can do to further their own improvement. This system, however, must be extended to all pupils in the school, not only the older ones, so that all are much more involved in the learning process.

### **Procedures for the checking and the evaluation of teaching and learning.**

22. At the time of the previous inspection, the checking and evaluation role of the headteacher had recently been instigated. The governing body, although regularly visiting the school had also just begun to evaluate work in the classroom. The inspectors recognised that evaluation of the impact of teaching on learning was at an early stage of development and made it a key issue for development. However, due to illness, this issue had not been satisfactorily remedied and the new headteacher correctly realised that work needed to be done in this area.

23. In a very short time, useful steps have already been taken. The governors have begun to realise more clearly the extent of their role through the informed direction of the headteacher. Training has been provided and extremely useful guidance has been discussed that clarifies the role of the governor within the classroom. Very importantly it has been agreed that governors need to have focus for any observation and a useful proforma helps the governors to record their observations in a systematic way. The code of conduct that has been agreed helps governors and staff feel at ease with classroom visits. One governor has already carried out a formal observation and this resulted in useful dialogue between the staff and the governor concerned. A system of recording governor visits has been established which ensures that the governors can check that they are becoming involved in all aspects of the school's work.

24. A new school improvement plan has been very recently formulated during the spring and summer terms of 2002. Through discussion with staff, governors, parents and pupils, the plan has been very appropriately based on the agreed priorities of all involved in the school's work. It is a very useful document that clearly identifies the checking and evaluation role of the staff and the governors and also the impact the plan will have upon pupils' learning.

25. The headteacher has begun to develop her role and has carried out a series of lesson observations. She also informally checks teaching and learning when she is not teaching herself. The headteacher recognises that her checking role now needs to be more rigorous and more sharply focused in order to support teachers and help them to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Lesson observations at present focus on the strengths of the teaching and do not identify how the teachers could make their teaching, and therefore pupils' learning, even more effective. Also the checking and evaluation systems need to extend into other aspects, including the review of planning documentation, the analysis of assessment data and the scrutiny of pupils' work. It must be realised, however, that the headteacher has had to make staff feel secure and confident in the process and recognise that monitoring and evaluation systems are of benefit to all concerned. The staff perceive that this is now the case and so the headteacher is now in a strong position to develop this aspect of the school's work.

### **Information and communication technology provision throughout the school.**

26. The school improvement plan very appropriately identifies the need to develop provision for information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school. Although the majority of Years 3 to 6 pupils are attaining satisfactory standards in ICT, the school recognises that this is partly due to many pupils having computer facilities available at home. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 have easy access to computers in the classroom and it is evident that these are used appropriately to support learning in many different subjects of the curriculum including English, history and geography. In this class pupils are given sufficient time to overcome difficulties through trial and error, but are not left for too long without support so that motivation and momentum are not lost. A particularly adventurous initiative is the proposed video-conferencing link with local schools to enable pupils to exchange information with other local children. It was hoped that this facility would have been in use during the inspection week but technical problems prevented this. However, in the classroom of reception age children and Years 1 and 2 pupils, there is limited evidence of use of computers and during the period of the inspection computers were not even turned on. This is partly due to lack of teacher confidence and expertise and the quality of hardware and software available for this group of pupils.

27. In an attempt to remedy these problems and improve ICT provision overall throughout the school, the staff have just completed training to improve their own skills and develop more confidence in teaching ICT. As the headteacher says 'It has been a steep learning curve for us all.' National guidance to ensure that learning is continuous throughout the school has been recently introduced, and staff and governors in September are establishing their own programme of work linked to the software

that they have available. They are aware that there are gaps in software provision and an ICT development plan is in the process of being produced to identify hardware, software and training needs for the next three years. A key priority also identified is to ensure direct teaching of ICT as a subject, as well as using ICT as a tool for learning within other National Curriculum subjects. This obviously has implications for planning and, from September, all termly and weekly planning will identify ICT opportunities. The school improvement plan's evaluation criteria state that this should result in use made of ICT equipment for at least fifty per cent of the average day. The school recognises that there is much work to do to ensure that ICT becomes a useful tool for improving pupils' learning.

### **The standing of the school within its local community and pupils' knowledge of the wider world in which they live.**

28. The headteacher, upon starting at the school, realised that during the last year (2001), the school had lost some of its important links with some of the parents and the local community. As a village school, it was felt important to re-establish these links quickly and to raise the standing of the school in the eyes of the local people. This was considered valuable both for the school's growth and for pupils' personal development including citizenship and moral and social development. Many successful actions have already been taken. For example, local nursery children have attended the school book fair; the Mothers' Union visited the school for 'Mothers' Day,' and the Women's Institute have made a story sack for the school's use. The school concert was held in the village hall, which encouraged not only parents to attend but also the wider community. These actions have been well received and people in the local community agree they feel very welcome within the school.

29. However, the school wants to do much more, realising that many of the local people have much to offer. In a small school of only a few staff, it is very difficult to manage all the activities that the school would like to do. Therefore the older pupils, supported by the Chair of Governors, are producing a monthly newsletter. This will be delivered to all the local people so that they know what is happening at the school and become more aware of ways in which they can support school activities. For example, one volunteer has offered to run a chess club for the pupils, whilst another coaches football. The headteacher thinks that the school grounds have the potential to be developed further and hopes that through the newsletter she can encourage the community to help in improving the grounds and that some people might be interested in running a gardening club for the pupils. Lots of interesting ideas and plans to promote the school are evident, including the school having its own web page.

30. To reduce the disadvantages of isolation the school is beginning to work closely with other local small primary schools. Pupils liaise with each other through taking part in sporting competitions and the staff meets regularly with the staff of other local small schools. The school has applied for funding to enable it to work with five schools on a dance project which will not only improve dance skills but also develop pupils' multicultural awareness. Although work is done on developing pupils' awareness of cultures in other countries and there are close links with a charity in Kenya, the school is aware of the need to develop pupils' understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain today. Very little work is carried out in this area of pupil development at the present time.

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

In order to improve further the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. **Improve existing assessment and record-keeping systems and develop ways of tracking pupils' progress and involving pupils in their own learning by:**
  - carrying out all of the tasks identified on the school improvement plan;



- extending the system of self-assessment and target setting to all pupils in the school and not just those in Years 3 to 6;
- improving the quality of written marking by using it consistently to tell pupils why their work is good and what they need to do next to improve.

*(paragraphs: 20 & 21)*

2. **Improve procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by:**
  - developing more rigorous checking and evaluation of teaching procedures so that staff are fairly informed of strengths and areas that could be improved to make their teaching more effective;
  - extending checking and evaluation procedures to other aspects of teaching and learning including planning, scrutiny of work and analysis of data;
  - continuing to involve the governors in the evaluation activities of all aspects of the school's work.

*(paragraphs: 22, 23, 24 & 25)*

3. **Improve provision for information and communication technology throughout the school by.**
  - completing all of the tasks identified on the school improvement plan;
  - checking that all pupils have an appropriate time to work with information and communication technology facilities.

*(paragraphs: 26 & 27 )*

4. **Promote the school within the local community and extending pupils' knowledge of the wider world in which they live by:**
  - implementing all of the tasks identified on the school improvement plan;
  - ensuring that pupils are prepared more satisfactorily for life in multi-cultural Britain today.

*(paragraphs: 28, 29 & 30)*

*The school improvement plan already identifies issues 1, 3 and 4 as key priorities for development.*

## 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	15

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	3	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33.3	33.3	33.3	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 11 percentage points*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	34
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	5

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### *Attendance*

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

**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.*

*The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests is omitted from this section because in the Year 2001 there were only four pupils in Year 2 and four pupils in Year 6.*

***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	32
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)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.8
Average class size	17

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	23

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-20023
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	£
Total income	139296
Total expenditure	134960
Expenditure per pupil	4090
Balance brought forward from previous year	-4995
Balance carried forward to next year	-659

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2
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: 56.7%**

Number of questionnaires sent out

33

Number of questionnaires returned

19

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	37	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	32	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	68	32	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	95	5	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	47	5	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	89	11	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	74	21	0	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	84	16	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	42	5	5	11

