

INSPECTION REPORT

DRAYTON PARSLOW VILLAGE SCHOOL

Drayton Parslow

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110222

Headteacher: Mrs D Barnes

Lead inspector: Jennie Willcock-Bates

Dates of inspection: 25-27 April 2005

Inspection number: 266754

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant School
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4-7 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 43

School address: Drayton Parslow Village School
Main Road
Drayton Parslow
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
Postcode: MK17 0JR

Telephone number: 01296 720306
Fax number: 01296 720306

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr M Williams
governors:

Date of previous 4 May 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Drayton Parslow Village School is a very small rural school that serves the village of Drayton Parslow and the surrounding area. Just under half of the pupils travel some distance from other villages and from Milton Keynes. The school caters for 43 pupils aged 4 to 7 years old. Overall, pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are advantaged, although there is a mix of large and small privately owned houses and a small amount of housing association housing. The cost of housing is very high. Fewer children move in and out of the school than in other infant schools in similar circumstances. Almost all pupils are of white British or mixed heritage, and all the children speak English as their main language. The attainment of children who enter the reception group is generally above average, although there are wide variations, with children of both very high and low attainments. When children currently enter school they attend mornings only, joining a small group of four-year-olds. Older four-year-olds work in a mixed age class with pupils in Year 1. The number of pupils who have special educational needs is below average. Very few are receiving support from the school plus outside agencies or have statements of special educational needs. The school is now an infant school, having been a first school at the previous inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1967	Jennie Willcock-Bates	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology, personal, social and health education and citizenship, and religious education.
14756	John Lovell	Lay inspector	
14997	Val Emery	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, mathematics, science, history, geography and special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Drayton Parslow Village School is **very effective** and provides good value for money. Standards are very high in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is very good. Very effective teaching ensures that the pupils get the best out of the very good quality of education. The school is highly inclusive. Leadership and management are very good and the headteacher and staff are continually looking for ways of raising standards further.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is very good and pupils of all abilities achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly numeracy across the curriculum.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher promote very effective teamwork and an innovative organisation that ensures that all pupils get the very best out of what the school offers.
- Pupils are very happy in school; their behaviour is excellent and they thoroughly enjoy their work because relationships are excellent and teachers have very high expectations of them.
- The very effective teaching helps pupils to work hard with the support of very successful classroom assistants.
- Parents support their children's learning very well through the very effective partnership with the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to contribute their ideas about the organisation and development of the school.

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection. New teaching staff and more classroom assistants provides a generous pupil to teacher ratio, which has a significant impact on achievement. Standards have improved significantly. Teaching is now very good and the curriculum has improved. Children in the reception year have more opportunities for outdoor play on wheeled toys but the sloping playground means they have to be carefully supervised.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	C	C	A*	A*
Writing	B	B	A*	A
Mathematics	A	C	A*	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Care should be taken when analysing the results of this very small year group.*

Achievement is very good and standards are very high in Year 2. Results in the national tests have risen above the national trend in the last three years and are very high in reading and high in mathematics and writing. However, the results of the teachers' assessment in science in 2004 were well below the average of similar schools. Standards in the current reception year are well above average and pupils are on course to reach well above the goals expected for children at the end of the reception year. They achieve very well in response to the very good teaching. In the current Year 2, pupils are achieving very well in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics, and achievement in science is

good. In the work seen, standards in Year 2 are very high in English and mathematics and above average in science. The differences between the 2004 test results and teachers' assessment and the current work seen are mainly due to the differing ability of the pupils in successive year groups and the result of the school's improvements to the curriculum and teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal qualities are excellent, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Rates of attendance are very high. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in the playground and the school and pupils are very happy within the school community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good and teaching is very effective. Pupils enjoy lessons and learn very successfully because teachers plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. Pupils put a great deal of effort into working very hard because teachers have very high expectations of their behaviour and learning. Very effective use is made of the information gained from a rigorous assessment system to plan work for the different ages and abilities in each class. Teachers and classroom assistants work as very effective teams to provide a good range of curricular opportunities. A range of expertise is used to enrich pupils' learning in lessons and after school. Effective procedures ensure that pupils are cared for and safe. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to contribute their ideas on how to improve the school community. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and able pupils is very good. Links with the local community and other schools are good and contribute well to the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and provides a clear vision and purpose to the school's work. Management is very good and uses many ways to continue to improve teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. Very strong teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants ensures that all the different groups of pupils, whatever their particular needs, are fully included in all the school's work. The work of governors is good. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Financial management is good. The very good commitment to inclusion promotes good race relations in this small rural community through helping pupils to understand Britain as a multicultural society. The school meets all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel their children like school and that teaching is good. They feel their children make good progress and behave well. Parents appreciate the good management and leadership. No significant concerns were raised. Inspectors support the strengths identified by the parents.

Pupils are pleased with the school. They enjoy lessons and finding out new things. They feel that teachers are fair. However, they would like to be consulted more about the school's work. Pupils feel other children are friendly and most behave well. Pupils feel teachers help them with their work if they get stuck. Inspectors support the strengths identified by the pupils but found that opportunities to involve pupils in contributing ideas are missed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- develop opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas on how to improve the routines and facilities for the whole school community.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is very good and standards are very high in Year 2. Achievement is very good throughout the school for all the different groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and very high attaining pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 2, standards are very high in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, pupils' achievement in number and the application of literacy and numeracy skills is rapid.
- All pupils, especially those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, achieve very well because work and support are skilfully targeted to meet their needs.
- Information from the very thorough procedures for tracking pupils' progress and potential levels of attainment is used very effectively to raise standards and increase achievement.

Commentary

1. The results of the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2004 were very high overall when compared to similar schools and in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. They were very high in reading and high in writing and mathematics. In the teachers' assessment in science all pupils attained the average Level 2 but none of the pupils reached the above average Level 3, and overall this was well below the average of similar schools. The school analysed the teachers' assessment in science and significant improvements have been made to the curriculum and teaching and learning. Science is now taught as a separate subject to each year group, and standards have risen to above average. Results have risen over the last three years in each subject and the trend in results is above the national trend. However, the small numbers in each year group mean that one pupil's results count as over 12 per cent and, therefore, comparisons year on year are not reliable. The table for average point scores for pupils is not included in the report to respect the privacy of the pupils because fewer than 10 took the tests.
2. The reception year currently comprises seven children, who attend part-time. Their current standards are well above average overall. They are achieving well in response to good teaching. They are already reaching well above the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. It was not possible to judge standards and achievement in the children's physical and creative development because of the timetable and the focus of the inspection.
3. Standards in the pupils' current work in Year 2 are very high in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above average in science. The differences between the 2004 test results and the current work seen are due to improvements to the curriculum, particularly in mathematics and science, and the differences in the pupils' prior attainment. Achievement is very good in mathematics and English and pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are very well developed as they progress through the school. This is because teaching is very good. Innovative

activities enable pupils to apply their skills in a wide range of interesting ways such as through problem solving and investigations. It was not possible to make a secure judgement about standards or achievement in other subjects.

4. There are several reasons for the very good achievement in the school:
 - a. Very effective analysis of results and assessments that identifies strengths and weaknesses in the provision and pupils' achievement.
 - b. Very good teaching that uses information from analysis and assessment to plan exciting tasks set at a slightly higher level than pupils' competence to broaden their skills and understanding.
 - c. Very good procedures for tracking pupils' progress from when they start school and making predictions about potential levels of attainment and target setting in writing, mathematics and, in the last year, science.
5. All pupils, whatever their levels of attainment or social background, achieve equally well. This is one of the school's major strengths. The pupils with special, and at times complex, educational needs follow the same curriculum as all other pupils, and their achievement is very good. The provision is highly successful because work is sensitively adapted to ensure that all pupils get the most out of the activities planned for them. Very effective support ensures that they make the same very good progress in lessons as other pupils. It is a similar picture for able and gifted pupils, who achieve equally as well because work is also planned to extend their skills and knowledge.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are excellent and promote very good social development.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively; as a result they are very enthusiastic about their work, and their behaviour is excellent.
- Pupils are very keen to come to school, and they respond very well to the school's very high expectations.
- Pupils' respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others is excellent.

Commentary

6. One of the major strengths of the school is the excellent relationships between pupils and staff, which significantly enhance pupils' social development and achievement. The children in the reception year, including the young four-year-olds who attend part time, have fitted into the routines of the school very confidently and enjoy assembly and playing with the older children. They are achieving well. Children are on course to reach above the national goals in their personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are confident, and they feel that their views and ideas are listened to. However, older pupils would like to be more involved in decisions about the school. They have a great deal of respect for the staff who work with them and work very hard for the teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and are helpful and kind. They respond very well to the very high expectations staff have of them. Adults act as very good role models for pupils, listening to them and respecting what they have to say. Social development is very good because pupils are

becoming socially aware and exercise responsibility when required. In lessons pupils work very well together, sharing ideas and supporting each other.

- Attendance rates are very high in comparison with other schools. This marks an improvement on the previous inspection. This is a reflection of the excellent support given by parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and the school's actions to promote high levels of attendance and to monitor individual pupils' attendance regularly to identify and address any concerns. The rate of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national median. Pupils are very punctual at the start of school and lessons start promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/4

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.5	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

- There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils' excellent behaviour marks a significant improvement from the previous inspection. The school expects the pupils will behave very well and pupils respond positively. Children and their parents feel that pupils behave very well in and out of school. One of the reasons for the excellent behaviour is the responsibility given to pupils to care for and think about others. School rules are clear and fully understood by all. Teachers consistently manage pupils very well in lessons. Consequently, pupils are interested in their work and very enthusiastic about school. It is a very orderly and calm community. Parents and pupils appreciate the strong family atmosphere which promotes respect, very high standards of behaviour and a very good quality of learning.
- Pupils' spiritual development is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. Good opportunities are provided through lessons and assemblies for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness, self-awareness and awareness of others. Pupils demonstrate excellent respect for others and good respect for themselves; they are developing a strong set of values and beliefs. Their understanding of right and wrong is very good. Cultural development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils appreciate cultural diversity through a range of opportunities to explore their own and other cultures. Teachers promote racial harmony and help pupils develop a greater understanding of other cultures and the multicultural society we live in through religious education, geography, daily assemblies, art and visitors. The ethos is excellent and pupils are very happy within the school community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching is a particular strength, and assessment is very good. The curriculum is good. The support and guidance provided for pupils are very effective and links with parents are very good. Links with other schools and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good throughout the school and pupils learn very effectively. Assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use their very good subject knowledge and understanding of pupils’ needs to plan challenging activities that motivate and excite pupils and broaden their experiences.
- Very effective use is made of information from a range of assessments to plan work that meets the needs of the different ages and abilities in each class.
- Very high expectations of pupils’ achievement and behaviour promote good concentration and hard work both independently and collaboratively.
- The teachers and classroom assistants work as very effective teaching teams, extending pupils’ thinking through very effective organisation of groups and skilful questioning.

Commentary

10. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. This has a significant impact on pupils’ achievement and helps them learn very effectively. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They feel they learn many new things and have to work very hard. Lessons are motivating and challenging because teachers consider ways of capturing the pupils’ interest. They use their very good subject knowledge to make successful links between subjects. High quality examples of this were found in a history and geography lesson in the Years 1 and 2 class, which was based on the roads in the village. The photographs clearly excited the pupils and they were entranced when they compared the road with photographs of the village in the past. The teacher very skilfully helped the pupils to examine aspects of safety on the road, making a clever link between history, geography and the personal, social and health curriculum. In the reception and Year 1 class, pupils in Year 1 were examining data they had collected in mathematics in an information and communication technology lesson. They extended their understanding of how to represent the data from the pictograph to a block graph, marvelling at what the computer could do for them.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	7	0	0	0	0

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

11. Pupils respond very well to the wide range of teaching methods, which enable them to make very good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. A very good balance of whole class, independent and collaborative work significantly enhances the pupils’ learning. Each class is very effectively organised to ensure that the needs of different ages and abilities are fully met. Teachers and classroom assistants have very high expectations of pupils’ learning and behaviour. Pupils respond by working hard and applying their energies to the tasks planned for them. They concentrate for a long period of time, trying hard to overcome tricky problems. A good example of this was in the Year 1 and 2 class when pupils were supporting their learning in mathematics using a computer program to help them order ascending and descending numbers up to 200. Pupils in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 were determined to beat the computer, working very hard to reduce the number of mistakes they made.

12. Very good leadership and management promote a strong sense of teamwork. This is reflected in the excellent relationships with pupils, and the very good relationships with classroom assistants. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers in all subjects, and particularly literacy and numeracy, to form very effective teaching teams, enabling the different ages and abilities to get the most out of the work that is very carefully planned for them. As a result, high attaining pupils in the reception year work closely with Year 2 for part of their week at just the right level to challenge them. In addition, pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in smaller groups. This flexible approach to teaching and learning and very good support means that pupils' learning is extended at just the right level to help them succeed. Very skilful questioning from all staff reinforces pupils' understanding and inspires confidence. As a result, pupils of all levels of attainment meet challenges enthusiastically and work very hard. A very good example of this was in a history and geography lesson in the reception and Year 1 class. The classroom assistant very skilfully supported the pupils in Year 1 to make maps and talk about the houses in the village, leaving the teacher to concentrate on the children in the reception year who made models of houses to place accurately on a large scale map of the main street.
13. Assessment is very good. Marking in English, mathematics and science is of very good quality and shows pupils what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve. Pupils find this helpful.
14. One of the significant strengths of assessment is the way teachers use their analysis of results and assessments to plan work. The school recognises that most pupils have high attainment. Teachers very skilfully plan work at a higher level, which is adapted to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils. This means that all pupils are appropriately and realistically challenged and motivated. Regular assessments in all subjects track pupils' achievement from when they start school in the part-time reception class against what they have achieved in a lesson or at the end of a series of lessons. Target setting in writing and mathematics and science has led to a rise in standards. Teachers share lesson objectives with the pupils. This helps pupils know what they are expected to learn. However, sometimes opportunities are missed at the end of lessons for pupils to reflect on whether or not they have achieved the objectives effectively.

The curriculum

There is a very good range of curriculum opportunities for children in reception and Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is effectively enriched through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Resources support pupils' learning well, and accommodation is adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subjects are very skilfully linked, and pupils have very good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and able children is very good, and their inclusion in lessons is very effective.
- The generous numbers of teachers and classroom assistants support the curriculum very well and contribute well to the pupils' very good achievement.
- The building is well maintained but the sloping playground means that reception children have to be carefully supervised when playing with wheeled toys.

Commentary

15. A challenging and interesting range of learning opportunities is a factor in promoting the pupils' very good achievement, personal development and enjoyment of school. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Issues related to the balance between subjects, schemes of work and outdoor play provision for reception children have been successfully addressed. Curriculum leadership is very good and the two-year rolling curriculum programme is regularly reviewed and skilfully adapted for the different abilities of the pupils. It is securely based on the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
16. A major strength of the curriculum is the way pupils' learning is enhanced by very successful links between subjects, which provide connected experiences without losing important aspects of the nature of each subject. They provide an interesting and relevant curriculum for children in reception and Years 1 and 2. National and local initiatives have extended and adapted the curriculum, particularly the national strategies for English and mathematics. Pupils have many and varied opportunities to apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. This is a particularly strong feature of mathematics, where excellent links with other subjects are made. This has a significant impact on standards and pupils' achievement in all subjects.
17. One of the reasons the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and able children is very good is the very skilful way pupils of different ages are grouped to ensure that their wide ranging needs are met. The way different groups of pupils are included in lessons is very good. The small number of pupils identified with special educational needs achieve very well. They are on course to reach close to average standards in the national tests because of high expectations of their achievement through individual work and very effective support. Provision is very well planned with a sensitive balance of mainly in-class support and a small amount of withdrawal from the classroom for targeted support. The highest attaining pupils of different ages work in a range of groupings that enable their talents to be extended and their learning challenged. A key strength of this organisation is the way their personal as well as academic development is enhanced in relation to their age and stage of development. They also follow a broad and well-balanced curriculum and are fully involved in lessons at their own level.
18. The range of opportunities for enrichment through clubs includes a popular French club, and is good for the size of the school and the ages of the pupils. For example, pupils, staff and parents enjoyed dressing up as characters from books for National Book Day. A good range of visits to places of interest and visitors are used to further enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils talked at length about their trip to the theatre and a local schools' concert. They were thrilled by the trip to London, where the underground and a ride on a double-decker bus were considered to be particular highlights of the visit. A visiting drumming group, puppet theatre, a violinist and local people with skills and interests have proved very popular with the pupils and enhanced their experiences.
19. The school is in a good state of repair and subject to constant improvements. The outside area provides a pleasant grassed space and gardens. A wall now safely surrounds the playground and a new covered sandpit provides an additional facility for play. The school now provides a good range of wheeled toys for the reception children and outdoor play provision has improved, but the nature of the sloping playground means that the use of these has to be carefully supervised.

Care, guidance and support

The school has effective procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Its monitoring of pupils' achievement and personal development is very good, and very effective guidance is provided. Arrangements for involving pupils in the community of their school have not been developed enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring environment and excellent relationships mean that pupils feel safe, well cared for and happy in school.
- Staff know the pupils very well because they monitor personal and academic development very carefully.
- Pupils are very well supported in their learning and personal development.
- Opportunities to involve pupils in contributing their ideas on how to improve the routines and facilities for the whole school community are missed.

Commentary

20. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with staff, which benefit the development of their self-esteem and confidence in seeking support. The very happy, industrious atmosphere in the school is conducive to learning and achievement. The caring environment encourages pupils to learn and grow into mature members of the community right from when they start school. Arrangements for induction of the youngest children to school for the first time are well planned. This enables them to settle happily into school routines. All pupils are happy in school and well cared for.
21. Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and providing first aid are good. Pupils' safety is promoted very well. Child protection procedures meet requirements. Equipment is checked regularly, evacuation procedures practised and regular safety audits are completed. The school has a portfolio of formal risk assessments which cover visits and activities such as bonfire night. These are supported by a comprehensive set of procedures developed to address identified concerns such as road safety and the admission of visitors. The provision for first aid is good and a large number of staff have had training. They understand individual pupils' needs very well. Accidents are informally monitored to ensure that any potential risks are identified and addressed, and parents are informed appropriately.
22. The very good relationships between staff and pupils begin when pupils first start school and underpin the good guidance that pupils and parents feel staff provide. Staff provide very good role models. Pupils turn readily to their teachers or support staff if they have any problems and the very trusting relationships that pupils enjoy give them confidence to share their news or concerns and help them cope with any problems that they encounter.
23. The staff know the pupils and their families very well and monitor their personal and academic development very carefully. They have a very good understanding of factors that might affect pupils' progress at school. The very good arrangements for tracking pupils' achievements using assessment and performance data mean that teachers and classroom assistants know pupils' learning needs very well. This is a particularly strong feature of the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and able pupils. Improvements to the science curriculum and assessment of

science have led to more pupils attaining higher than average levels in their work. Information is used to help teachers carefully monitor how pupils are getting on. Teachers use a broad range of information to plan work for the next stages of learning, with particular emphasis given to higher and lower attaining pupils.

24. Teachers listen to pupils and value their comments. In personal, health and social development lessons pupils are involved in discussing issues such as using the play house or the sand tray, or a particular event or incident. However, there are insufficient structured opportunities for pupils to show their initiative and put forward their ideas to benefit the whole school community. For example, pupils are not yet involved in creating and discussing the classroom or school rules, which was identified as a minor issue in the previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents. Links with other schools and the community are good and enrich the curriculum and pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with parents enable a partnership that supports children in their learning and personal development very well.
- Parents are very well informed about how well their children are doing.
- Consultation with parents is good and is used effectively to inform school improvement.

Commentary

25. The school has established a very successful partnership with parents. Parents are very supportive and the majority are very satisfied with what it provides for their children. They have great confidence in the school and the headteacher. The parents are regularly consulted. Parents are welcome in school, helping in classrooms and on trips; sharing skills and taking part in fund raising activities organised by the Friends of Drayton Parslow. They like the family atmosphere. Parents are very supportive of pupils' learning at home, share books regularly with their children and help them well with projects and 'finding out' activities.
26. The headteacher canvasses the views of parents via questionnaires and responds to their suggestions and opinions via newsletters. For example, parents requested a change to the system for homework. As a result, the parents are happy with the new format for homework. The results of the surveys of parents' opinions are used to inform school development. Parents are very well informed about their child's progress. Information is used very effectively to develop the partnership between school and home to support children's learning. Teachers are accessible to parents. In addition to very frequent informal interaction between parents and staff, two consultation evenings are held each year. Annual reports on pupils' progress are well written. Reports are supported by a note each term about individual pupils' progress towards their targets. Very good information is provided to parents termly about what children will be learning. This enables parents to provide very good support for their children's learning at home.
27. The school plays an active role in the local primary and secondary schools liaison group. Good links with the local primary school support the transfer of pupils at the age of seven. The headteachers continue to explore ways of strengthening the existing

curricular links, and ways of involving opportunities for contact by pupils. Links with the village playgroup are good and benefit from the many shared activities in which pupils participate. Links with the community are good. Local residents bring their personal experiences to enrich areas of the curriculum such as history and geography. The local area is very well used as a resource to support learning. The support of the Friends of Drayton Parslow association is very much appreciated. They raise funds through activities which involve parents, pupils and the wider community. For example, they organise the annual village bonfire and are involved in the village show.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the head is very effective and leadership of key staff is good. Management is very good and the governance of the school is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher provides the unremitting drive for raising standards and clarity of vision for the school.
- Very good management is informed by very effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- Very effective teamwork ensures that inclusion is very good and that all groups of pupils are fully included in lessons, work and play.
- The relatively new governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plays a good part in the procedures for self-evaluation.
- The school evaluates spending carefully but the cost of improvement in the school development plan is not clear enough.

Commentary

28. The management and leadership of the school are very good and have significantly improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher plays a key role in the success of this school because of her clear strategic vision, which is focussed on improvement. She is very committed to continued high standards within an enriched curriculum. She has high aspirations for the school and, through consistently very effective teaching, provides a very good role model for other staff. The headteacher manages the complex roles of headteacher, class teacher and coordinator for English and mathematics very well.
29. The headteacher is well supported by all staff in this very small school. The strong sense of teamwork within this relatively new team means that all teaching and non-teaching staff work for the good of all pupils. The team is dedicated to improvement and has successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection. As a result, the pupils' needs are fully met. Inclusion is very good. The school promotes good race relations and helps pupils understand Britain as a multicultural society. The very good commitment to inclusion contributes strongly to the excellent ethos and makes a significant contribution to the school's very good reputation.
30. Management is very good. A major strength of management is the procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, standards and pupils' achievement. External evaluation from the local education authority makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of these procedures. As a result, a comprehensive range of information is carefully analysed. Subsequent actions are very effective and ensure

continued improvement. The school has an effective school improvement plan that is fully understood by all governors, teachers and classroom assistants. The plan is flexible to respond to local and national initiatives and the fluctuations in numbers as pupils move in and out of the school. The school recognises the need to give pupils more responsibility and the benefits of consulting pupils.

31. The headteacher provides very good curriculum leadership and is very effective in co-ordinating English and mathematics. This has a significant impact on the quality of teaching and very high standards pupils achieve. The curriculum management of the provision for children in reception is effective, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed and organised. Other co-ordinators monitor performance well. Their workload as co-ordinators and class teachers is skilfully managed through successful teamwork and co-operation. Priorities linked to the school development plan provide the focus for their work. Consequently, the curriculum is being developed at an appropriate and realistic pace, based on the clear priorities set by the school. Realistic targets are set for teachers through successful performance management systems.
32. New teachers and support staff are given good support. Induction procedures are effective, and ensure they quickly become familiar with the routines and high expectations of the school. Staff development is closely linked to both personal development and the school development plan. Morale is high because teaching and non-teaching staff feel valued.
33. Governance is good. The relatively new governing body are knowledgeable are committed to the school and give very good support. They are effective in ensuring the school's commitment to raising standards. The governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well thorough regular visits to observe teachers working with pupils, examining work and holding discussions with the headteacher and staff. This makes them able to make a valuable contribution to self-evaluation and to the everyday life and work of the school. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and improvement continues, which they check regularly. This means they are well informed and play a strong part in dealing openly and frankly in discussions about school development.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	164,217	Balance from previous year	46,445
Total expenditure	162,247	Balance carried forward to the next	48,415
Expenditure per pupil	4,214		

34. Financial management is effective overall. The budget is used well and spending decisions focus on raising standards and improving the quality of education. The expenditure per pupil is well above average because of the very small size of the school. The headteacher and governors are continually seeking ways of getting best value out of the resources available to them. A good example of this was the decision to appoint additional part-time teachers and classroom assistants to provide an innovative organisation that is flexible to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. In addition, it provides time for the headteacher to undertake her broader management and leadership roles. The current high under-spend will be significantly reduced in the next academic year. The remainder will be used to maintain the very

good levels and quality of staffing. The very good provision will also be further enhanced in the near future by improvements to the buildings, the re-instatement of an office for the new headteacher, and improvements to the provision for information and communication technology, for example.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well in their personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
- Teaching is very good, and assessment systems are very effective.
- The children are well supported by experienced learning support assistants who work very well with the teachers.

Commentary

35. At the time of the inspection, there were seven part-time children who were attending mornings only, taught by a part-time teacher and a classroom assistant. Almost all of the remaining children in the reception year work in a class with children in Year 1. Two very high attaining children work with the class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils for a significant part of the day, particularly for English and mathematics. Activities for reception children throughout the school are carefully planned to suit their age and level of attainment. Children's attainment when they start school is above average overall. By the end of the reception year, the children are confidently well above the expected level in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Almost all children are working well within the early stages of the National Curriculum for pupils in Year 1. Consequently, achievement is very good. Due to the timetable and the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to make a secure judgement about the provision, teaching and learning in the pupils' physical and creative development.
36. The quality of teaching is very good. Assessment systems are very successful, and children's achievement is very effectively tracked. Information from assessment, together with teachers' very good knowledge of the children, is used very well to plan suitable and challenging work and to place children in the most appropriate classes and working groups to suit their personal and academic development. All teachers plan very good quality practical activities and adapt class work to the particular needs of reception children. The children are often taught separately from older pupils. A good example of this was in a reception and Year 1 geography lesson. After the first part of the lesson, a teacher worked with a group of reception children to make buildings for a map of the main road through the village, using a collection of photos they had taken on a previous walk. This developed their knowledge and understanding of the local environment very well.
37. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Careful oversight of all children as they enter the other 2 classes in the school from part-time provision ensures appropriate practical experiences, together with a challenging curriculum to meet the needs of these higher attaining children. The overall provision has improved well since the last inspection.

38. In children's **personal, social and emotional development** achievement is good because teaching and learning are effective. The children have a good start, working in the small group part-time, where basic school routines and relationships are established very well. The older reception children benefit from working alongside pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 who are very good role models in their confidence and behaviour. The children concentrate for long periods of time and are confident when tackling new work. They work very well together in their own age group and with older pupils as a whole class. Children have a very good understanding of the need to listen to others, to take turns and to share resources. They know the school routines well and are confident, happy learners.
39. The children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**. Teaching is never less than good, which helps the children learn effectively. Speaking and listening skills are well developed and staff are very skilful at questioning children to extend their vocabulary and understanding. The youngest part-time children have a good introduction to books, sharing stories such as 'Bing and the Bone'. They can discuss the pictures, make predictions and recognise known names. Older reception children are able to use their knowledge of letter sounds to build words and write independently. They are reading simple books fluently. Higher attaining children are working well within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Teachers and classroom assistants successfully promote writing and reading throughout the day in a broad range of activities. Children are encouraged to write in a variety of contexts and to read regularly at home. Overall, children are likely to reach well above the Early Learning Goals for expected nationally at the end of the reception year.
40. In their **mathematical development**, the children also achieve well and the quality of teaching and learning is good. By the end of the reception year, all children have a good knowledge of numbers, shapes and measures and are working confidently within the early stages of the National Curriculum. They are working well above the Early Learning Goals. Many add 3 numbers together and subtract 2 numbers, including money. Children order numbers well beyond 20 and understand what is heaviest and lightest and organise objects and children that are taller or shorter than each other. A good number of the part-time children already recognise most numbers to 10 and match numbers of objects to number cards. Teaching is very good and activities for are very carefully planned to match the children's levels of attainment. In one lesson about estimating and checking, children demonstrated that they were able to estimate and check bundles of socks and record their calculations. During this session, children began rapidly to see the value in counting in groups of numbers. All children could count easily to 20 and several could count, write and recognise much larger numbers.
41. The children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is already above the goals expected at the end of the reception year. Teaching is at least good and children have a wide range of interesting experiences. The youngest children followed up their story of 'Bing and the Bone' by digging the garden. They excitedly gathered objects of interest, which were examined on returning to the classroom. The teacher very skilfully encouraged children to investigate the soil by using their senses to identify features of texture and colour and what would happen if they squeezed it to make a ball. Older reception children have geography and history lessons with pupils in Years 1 and 2. They recognise the features of the main road in the village and, following a recent walk, they could identify various buildings. In one lesson, they made their own buildings from recyclable materials and placed them accurately on a large scale simple map. Children are regularly read stories from the Bible and helped to compare other faiths such as Hinduism with Christian traditions.

42. In **physical development**, planning and photographic evidence show a broad range of activities covering all aspects of this area of learning. In the short session seen, children enjoyed climbing and controlling large wheeled toys in the playground. The sloping playground means that children have to be carefully supervised. In **creative development**, children play happily together creating shapes and patterns using large and small bricks. They immerse themselves in the imaginative roles they have created in the role play areas, looking after the home area and the playhouse in the playground.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are very high in Year 2.
- Pupils are committed to hard work and their achievement is rapid in Years 1 and 2.
- Throughout the school teaching methods are consistently challenging, well selected and very effectively matched to the pupils' needs.
- Classroom assistants are very well directed and support learning very effectively.

Commentary

43. The very high standards and pupils' very good achievement reflect very good improvement since the previous inspection. The results in 2004 were very high in reading and in the top 5 per cent of similar schools nationally. Results in writing were high. The differences between the test results and the work seen are mainly due to the differences in prior attainment between the two year groups.
44. Reading and writing are taught systematically throughout the school with a strong emphasis on teaching pupils to get enjoyment out of being independent readers and writers. Pupils in Year 2 are articulate. They talk about their work and contribute to class discussion with confidence, using a very good range of vocabulary to emphasise their views and ideas. In Years 1 and 2, pupils read enthusiastically, enjoying a broad range of stories and characters. By Year 2, pupils' writing for different audiences is varied and interesting. One of the particular strengths in writing is their imaginative use of words. Spelling is normally correct. Handwriting is neat and legible.
45. School records and pupils' work show that pupils' achievement is very good. A key strength is the ways pupils apply their skills in science, design and technology, history and geography. One of the reasons for the strengths in pupils' achievement is that the teaching motivates the pupils to work very hard and energetically.
46. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are self-critical and continually seek ways of improving their skills. Higher attaining pupils, including pupils from the reception year who work with pupils in Year 2 for English, respond very well to the challenges presented to them. A major strength of the very good teaching is that activities are based on a secure knowledge of the different age groups and levels of attainment in each class. Teachers are very skilful at asking probing questions that make pupils think and apply what they have learned in other lessons. Teaching methods are very well selected to provide opportunities for pupils to work independently or in groups on activities with just the right level of challenge to extend their literacy skills and knowledge.
47. Classroom assistants support the teachers and pupils very well. Very effective teamwork enhances their role, and pupils work equally as well with the classroom assistants as with their teachers. One of the important roles of the classroom assistants is to support the different age groups in the mixed-age classes, demonstrating their experience and knowledge of the pupils as well as their wide-

ranging skills. One of the reasons that the provision for special educational needs is very good in English is that pupils are fully involved in lessons, with very effective support for their speaking and listening skills from the teachers and classroom assistants.

48. Subject leadership and management are very good. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The headteacher works closely with other teachers to maintain the momentum of improvement, very high standards and high results in national tests. Teaching and learning are carefully monitored and evaluated and results of tests and assessments provide useful information to set targets and track pupils' achievement. The quality of marking is very good and provides helpful suggestions about how pupils can improve their writing and spelling. Pupils find this helpful. Resources in English, including computers, are very good and contribute to the very effective learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. One of the strengths of the English curriculum is the carefully planned opportunities for pupils to apply their skills through links with other subjects. Pupils use computers to write letters and record their work. There are many examples of high standards of writing in history, geography and science. Lists, labels and charts appear in design and technology.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good because the work planned is interesting and challenging.
- Pupils' skills in basic numeracy and their knowledge of place value are at a very high level because teachers help pupils to practise their skills at every opportunity.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and their attitude towards their work is excellent.
- Teachers know the pupils very well and use assessment information very effectively to plan challenging work.

Commentary

50. Standards in Year 2 are very high. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were in the top five per cent in national terms, and were high when compared to similar schools. Early assessment indicates that results will be similar this current year. This shows excellent improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be average.
51. In the work seen the achievement of all groups of pupils, whatever their level of attainment, social background or age, is very good. The main reason for this is very good leadership from the co-ordinator, who supports teachers in planning high quality tasks. As a result, pupils are challenged to reach very high standards. Teachers know just what to provide for pupils because they track children's attainment very effectively from when they start school. Pupils are carefully allocated to classes and groups that match their attainment. Grouping is flexible and enables very high attaining pupils to

work very successfully with older more able pupils, whatever their age. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because they are very well supported both by class teachers and teaching assistants and their progress is very carefully monitored. Activities are very successfully planned at just the right level of difficulty to help them learn and be confident in their numeracy.

52. Teaching and learning are very good. One of the key strengths is that teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Very good relationships with pupils inspire exemplary behaviour and promote excellent attitudes to mathematics. Lessons are conducted at a very lively pace and are interesting, which captures the pupils' attention. For example, in one lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher used a game to help children understand how to count back in tens from a given starting point. By the end of the session, all pupils could count back mentally in tens. Mental starters for lessons are stimulating and very challenging. In the Year 1 and 2 class pupils were asked, using a blank number square, to understand the direction of the grid by the identification of two numbers and then identify further random numbers. The whole class, including a very high attaining reception child, were able to make sensible contributions to solve the problems, which really challenged and focused their very good basic numeracy. Another major strength is the way work is very carefully planned well to match the age and ability of all groups of pupils. Pupils are interested and excited by their work in mathematics and meet challenges set by the teachers with confidence and enthusiasm. Leadership and management are very good and the co-ordinator is a very good role model for teachers.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Excellent use is made of mathematics across the curriculum, which is another major strength. Links with other subjects are very carefully planned to enhance the pupils' understanding of what they have learned in numeracy lessons. For example, they use graphs in science to represent and analyse their findings. There is particularly good use of computers to reinforce current work by well chosen mathematical programs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and changes made to the science curriculum by the co-ordinator have been successful in raising standards.
- Challenging targets are set, and these enhance the pupils' achievement.
- Lessons challenge and interest pupils because they are practical.

Commentary

54. Standards are now above average and pupils are achieving well, which marks a good improvement since the previous inspection. In 2004, the results of the national teacher assessments were very high for pupils reaching the average Level 2, but no pupils reached the higher Level 3, which was well below the teachers' assessments in similar schools. The results were carefully analysed to assess why pupils did not reach the levels they reached in mathematics. This has led to a major review of the science

curriculum. Effective leadership and management by the co-ordinator have led to changes and science is now taught separately. Greater attention is now given to Attainment Target 1 - Scientific Enquiry - and this is enhancing pupils' achievement. Assessment and tracking have improved considerably, and targets are now set. As a result, standards are rising. The work seen and teachers' records demonstrate that pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average.

55. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are skilled at questioning to review previous work and involve pupils in contributing their ideas. Work is challenging. For example, pupils in Year 1 are beginning to predict, record and investigate the suitability of various materials to make ear protectors. By the end of one lesson, pupils had made good gains in their understanding of how to make a test fair and that greater amounts of insulating materials provided better sound insulation. Achievement in independent investigation is good. Pupils in Year 2 can use a box of equipment to investigate how to make a circuit to make a bulb light up. In a lesson when they had achieved this, they were then asked to make an on and off switch with a small block of wood, two drawing pins and a paper clip. With great excitement all the pupils were successful.
56. Assessment procedures are good and have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Achievement is carefully monitored through half-termly assessments. Challenging targets that further enhance their skills of investigation and enquiry are then set for pupils as a result of these assessments. Pupils' literacy skills are developed effectively in science. Pupils record their work neatly using scientific methods and terminology. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and communication technology was sampled because only two lessons were timetabled to take place during the two days of the inspection, both in Year 1.

57. A broad range of information and communication technology work on display reflects the wide range of skills and applications taught. The curriculum is well planned and successfully incorporated in other subjects. Information and communication technology is now well established within the timetable, marking a very good improvement since the previous inspection. In the two lessons observed in Year 1, teaching was good and generated a great deal of discussion and hard work. Good quality tasks enhanced pupils' learning. In one lesson pupils enjoyed managing an art program, using a broad range of applications to create a water picture. They were confident printing their work and a buzz went round the computer suite when the pictures began to appear from the printer. In another lesson the teacher skilfully used data collected by the pupils to create a block graph. There was great excitement as the computer program interpreted their traffic surveys. Good use of technical language extended the pupils' vocabularies. Resources for information and communication technology are good and still developing with the planned inclusion of boards linked to the computer in each classroom.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their skills in a range of subjects. This support is demonstrated most effectively in English, mathematics and geography. For example, in literacy the pupils used word processors to report on visits from drummers and an Indian lady who showed the pupils her saris. Data handling in mathematics and geography provides pupils with very good opportunities to create pictographs and block graphs.

HUMANITIES

History and geography were sampled. Religious education was sampled because no religious education lessons took place during the two days of the inspection.

59. **History** and **geography** are taught together. In the two lessons observed, teaching was very good. Links with other subjects such as literacy and personal, social and health education were good. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, very successful teaching helped pupils recall a walk down the village high street, where they had taken photographs of buildings. Pupils gained a very good understanding of how the road had changed by looking at pictures of buildings 100 years ago and comparing them with the current buildings. In another very well taught lesson in the Year 1 and 2 class, pupils were made aware of the safety risks posed by traffic and roads, which promoted a great deal of interesting discussion. Resources are good and in the lessons observed pupils used various scale maps of the village to identify the roads and the location of buildings. They also identified changes using photographic evidence. The curriculum in history and geography is broad and balanced, providing interesting activities for the pupils at just the right level for them to learn the skills specific to each subject.

60. The **religious education** curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and is now well established within the timetable. This marks a good improvement since the previous inspection. The work seen demonstrates that a broad

range of work is covered in depth. The curriculum is broad and relevant for the age and attainment of the pupils. Both Christianity and other major world religions are included and good links are made with the personal, social and health education curriculum. A range of visits and visitors enhance the curriculum; for example, the dog which supports a hearing impaired owner, and the local clergy talking about their different clothing. Furthermore, good links with literacy, geography and art and design enhance the pupils' experiences.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not inspected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

61. The very caring and positive ethos, and the very effective way all the different groups of pupils are included in all aspects of school life enhance the pupils' personal development. From an early age, young four-year-olds are given good opportunities to gain self-confidence and develop socially and morally both in the classroom and beyond it. By Year 2, pupils have some responsibilities. Some help distribute milk in the playground, collect rubbish and put away the playground toys. They are always keen to help their teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils in each year group are encouraged to help each other and parents feel the way older pupils help the younger pupils is one of the school's strengths. The family atmosphere is appreciated by the pupils, and relationships are excellent. Many opportunities are taken in lessons to help pupils understand the ideas of citizenship and belonging to a larger community outside home. Pupils learn effectively what it means to be helpful, considerate and mature within their school community. Through the wider curriculum pupils learn about the world around them. A good example of this was in history and geography, when pupils were analysing the hazards around the village and particular attention was given to road safety near the school. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss their views but they are not consulted about developments in the school. The policies for sex and relationships education and drugs education meet statutory requirements. They are appropriate for this age group and sensitive to the stage of development of these young pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	1
Attendance	1
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).