

INSPECTION REPORT

St Catherine's Bletchingley Village School
Redhill

LEA area : Surrey

Unique Reference Number : 124941

Headteacher : Dai Davis

Reporting inspector : Terry Browne

Date of inspection : 18 to 22 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707819

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

Information about the school

Type of school : Infant and Junior, with a Nursery and a Language Unit

Type of control : Community

Age range of pupils : 3 - 11

Gender of pupils : mixed

School address : Coneybury
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Redhill RH1 4PP

Telephone number : 01883 743337

Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Graham Saunders

Date of previous inspection : 29 January to 2 February 1996

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

children have good attitudes and relate well to each other
 children under-five make a good start to their schooling
 the language unit is effective and the children are well integrated in the school
 the support for children with special educational needs is good
 extension classes for older children lead in particular to some high quality English work
 children achieve good standards in swimming and other sport
 children gain much confidence in the use of computers
 the school provides a good range of visits and very good extra-curricular activity
 parents support the school very well
 the school benefits from the strong leadership of the headteacher

Where the school has weaknesses

there is an unacceptable variation in the quality of teaching between the Key Stage 2 classes
 pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding do not build up consistently in all subjects.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. These weaknesses will form the basis of the action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in January 1996. In response to the Key Issues identified then, the school has:

- sustained the high standard of pupils' behaviour and their very positive attitudes to learning
- continued successfully to involve parents and the community in the life of the school
- taken significant and appropriate action to improve the quality of teaching in three classes, although in two classes the weaknesses still remain
- clarified in general the allocation of responsibilities for curriculum co-ordination, improved co-ordination of religious education; but having had the appropriate focus on literacy, numeracy and information technology, the school has yet to address geography and other non-core subjects
- developed procedures for monitoring of cost effectiveness, which fully involve staff and governors.

The strong leadership, effective management and careful target-setting are enabling the school to maintain and build on its strengths and tackle its weaknesses.

Standards in subjects

The table shows standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	In comparison with all schools	In comparison with similar schools	
English	D	C	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Key well</i></p> <p><i>above average</i> <i>B</i></p> <p><i>average</i> <i>C</i></p>

Mathematics	C	B	<i>below average</i> D
Science	E	D	

The above table is based on the mainstream pupils. It shows for example that the 1999 test results were below average in English when compared with all schools but average when compared with a similar group of pupils in other schools. As indicated, the results in mathematics were higher but in science were lower than English. Pupils have confidence and competence with computers and achieve sound standards in information technology. Pupils' standards in religious education match those expected. In other subjects pupils generally achieve the standards to be expected for their ages, with high standards in swimming and lower standards in art and design technology.

If the small number of language unit pupils were included in the above table of results, each of the grades for English and mathematics would be one grade lower, and science would be well below average in both comparisons. However, taking account of their prior attainment, the language unit pupils made good progress and achieve creditable levels at the age of eleven.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	good	satisfactory	satisfactory
mathematics	good	satisfactory	satisfactory
science		satisfactory	unsatisfactory
information technology		satisfactory	satisfactory
religious education		<i>insufficient evidence</i>	satisfactory
Other subjects	good	satisfactory	unsatisfactory

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 87 per cent of lessons seen. The teaching was very good in 13 per cent of lessons and good in a further 30 per cent. The teaching in two of the Key Stage 2 classes was unsatisfactory overall, but in another it was good overall.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
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Behaviour	good; pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school;
Attendance	good; just above the national average;
Ethos*	good; great strengths in pupils' attitudes and personal development, and in their relationships with each other and with adults; a sound commitment to high academic achievement, with inconsistencies in Key Stage 2;
Leadership and management	good; strong leadership from the headteacher, deputy and governing body; good strategic management; good partnership with parents; co-ordination of some subjects and monitoring of teaching has not been effective enough;
Curriculum	satisfactory overall; the curriculum is broad and balanced, and enhanced through visits; there are some weaknesses in planning and assessing subjects other than English and mathematics; extra-curricular activity, including sport, is very good;
Pupils with special educational needs	good; these pupils make good progress as a result of the considerable support provided; the work of the unit is effective and the pupils are very well integrated into the school;
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	good; very good moral and social development; a positive approach promotes very good values and pupils respect each other; good spiritual development, especially through the headteacher's assemblies; sound cultural development, for example through music, art and French;
Staffing, resources and accommodation	satisfactory overall; the school has a large number of teaching and support staff; learning resources are satisfactory; the accommodation is sufficient but has not been well-developed for the needs of the school;
Value for money	satisfactory.

Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● children very much like school ● it is very easy to approach the school with questions or problems ● the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on the children ● they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school ● children achieve a good standard of work ● there are high standards of good behaviour ● parents get a clear understanding of what is taught ● parents are kept well informed about their children's progress ● they are satisfied with the work children are 	

expected to do at home ● children are encouraged to be involved in more than their daily lessons	
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The inspectors agree with the parents' very positive and supportive views about the school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise the standards of achievement and improve the quality of education at St Catherine's, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ensure that the quality of teaching in the Year 3 and in Year 6 classes is improved to an acceptable level, by requiring and rigorously monitoring:
 - lesson plans that provide appropriate content and activities
 - teacher expertise that is appropriate for the subjects taught and teaching methods used
 - high expectations that promote a good pace of learning
 - classroom organisation that makes effective use of time and resources;

(see paragraphs 23 - 32)

- ensure that full and effective use is made of schemes of work for all subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2, and improve:
 - teaching of the knowledge and understanding set out in the national guidance
 - teaching of skills that need to build up through the school, for example in art and DT
 - assessment and records of pupils' progress in all subjects to support teachers' planning
 - the impact of co-ordination on standards and quality of learning in subjects where needed.

(see paragraphs 33 - 36)

The school has been working on the first of these issues since the last inspection and has plans to address the second in the Spring Term 2000.

In addition to the key issues above, these less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- improving achievement in science *(see paragraphs 97 – 103)*
- improving the opportunities and quality in pupils' writing at Key Stage 2 *(see paragraph 85)*
- doinf all possible to improve aspects of the accommodation and its use*(see paragraph 65)*
- extending pupils' knowledge of other cultures*(see paragraph 44)*
- continuing to monitor, evaluate and review the value for money achieved from the school's very large overall budget *(see paragraph 70)*

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Catherine's Bletchingley Village School has 199 full-time pupils on roll, with slightly more boys than girls. Twenty five of these pupils are attached to the language unit. This is fully integrated in the school and provides places for children with severe speech and language difficulties who attend from across the county. In addition, the school has a Nursery providing up to 20 places for children in each of the morning and afternoon sessions. The school is situated in the Bletchingley ward in South East Surrey. Pupils come from an area that has a mixture of local authority housing and private dwellings. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is about average at about 20 per cent. No pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of children from ethnic minority backgrounds is very small. Pupils' attainment when they start school is wide ranging but overall is just below average. Ninety-two pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. In the mainstream classes the school is required to provide individual education plans for 41 of these pupils, including five with statements of special educational need. The 25 pupils in the language unit all have statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above national averages.

2. The aims of St Catherine's are introduced in the school prospectus under the headlines:
 To equip a child for life.
 To provide a broad, balanced and relevant education in a stimulating, secure, safe and happy environment, actively promoting the Aims of the National Curriculum.
 The school motto "In Pursuit of Excellence" permeates the school and its documentation.

3. The School Development Plan includes a wide range of targets and action plans covering all aspects of the school. Recent priorities have focused on literacy, numeracy and information technology. The school has to set targets as percentages of cohorts achieving the expected level at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This is complicated because of the very high and varying proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school set high targets for Key Stage 2 pupils in 1999. The majority of pupils achieved their targets and the school made a thorough and constructive analysis of the results. For the Year 2000, the targets for the proportion to achieve the expected level 4 have been set at 65% for all pupils at the school, but at 100% for all the pupils who do not require external support for their special educational needs.

Key Indicators

4. Attainment at Key Stage 1 (figures in brackets for 1998)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	12	10
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage at NC	School	72 (78)	72 (81)	75 (81)

Level 2 or above	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)
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Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	10	16
	Girls	14	16	12
	Total	25	26	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (78)	75 (84)	80 (78)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2 (figures in brackets for 1998)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7	10	12
	Girls	10	12	11
	Total	17	22	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	53 (63)	69 (53)	72 (63)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	9	11	13
	Total	17	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	53 (60)	63 (70)	72 (93)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%	
	Authorised	School	6.0
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
		Absence	National comparative data

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

		Number
	Fixed period	1
	Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

		%
	Very good or better	13

Satisfactory or better	87
Less than satisfactory	13

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

5. The mainstream children achieve satisfactory standards overall. The under-fives make a good start to school life and their standards at the age of five are broadly in line with those expected. Infant pupils make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 their attainment is in line with the national average. However, progress in the juniors is more variable. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average in mathematics, but below in English and in science. Evidence from the inspection and from recorded work suggests progress is good in Year 5 and in the extension English and mathematics groups. However, there is weaker teaching in Years 3 and 6 and pupils make insufficient progress in these classes, so overall progress across Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Local authority value-added analyses, based on pupils' prior attainment, suggest pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and sound progress at Key Stage 2.

6. The children in the language unit make good progress right through the school. Although they have significant special educational needs they also exhibit a wide range of abilities and some notable personal strengths. Mainstream pupils with special educational needs make good progress in achieving the targets set for them. At the end of Key Stage 2 the large majority of these pupils achieve test results that show good progress in terms of their prior attainment. This is due, in part, to the considerable additional staffing support provided by the school.

7. Excluding the language unit children, the school's 1999 Key Stage 1 test results were above average in reading and were about average in writing and mathematics compared with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, the reading results were well above average, the writing above average and the mathematics about average. In the teacher assessments of science, results were about average. Over the last four years there has been little significant trend in the core-subject results or in any difference in the performance of boys and girls.

8. Excluding the language unit children, the school's 1999 Key Stage 2 test results in mathematics were average compared with all schools nationally and above average compared with similar schools. English results were below average compared with all schools and average compared with similar schools. Science results were the weakest of the core subjects, being below average compared with all schools and well below compared with similar schools. Evidence from lessons and from recorded work matches these test results from the previous year. Over the last four years, results have varied according to each year group, although a common feature is the wide spread of achievement in the results.

9. Pupils in the language unit make good progress in meeting personal targets in their individual education plans. They make good progress over time, particularly in relation to their base-line entry scores. Several pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have attained results in line with or above the national average scores in English and mathematics. Last year at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils attached to the unit all attained level 3 or above in English and this was a good achievement.

10. Pupils attached to the language unit make at least good and some make very good progress in their speech and language development, as well as in overall curriculum learning and in their social and personal development. All the language unit pupils benefit from their time in subject lessons with mainstream classes. Several progress to spending the majority of the school day in mainstream lessons and some to being based in a mainstream class.

11. Children in the Nursery and in the reception class make sound overall progress in all areas of learning. Some children, particularly those with limited language development, make good progress. The good teaching and collaboration of staff support the children's personal and social development. In language and literacy, for example, they begin to write, they show an interest in books and listen attentively to stories. Their mathematical understanding develops well through a variety of practical number activities. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is sound and benefits from practical experiences and visits, for example to a farm and to a wild-life centre. The children develop sound physical and creative skills, for example in craft work and in singing.

12. Overall in English, pupils make satisfactory progress over time and in lessons, although the 1999 results were below the national average. Pupils make good progress where the quality of teaching is high. For their ages, most pupils read accurately and enjoy reading. Some higher-attaining pupils read fluently and with expression, although many pupils have limited vocabulary and knowledge of books. In general, pupils speak confidently and most listen well, but many have difficulty explaining and discussing ideas. Pupils benefit from a consistently good emphasis on formal writing skills. The quality and content of writing varies considerably according to pupils' abilities. Opportunities for extended, personal writing are sometimes limited, but the high-attainers in extension groups produce impressive work of great sensitivity, making use of precise vocabulary.

13. Pupils make sound progress in mathematics across the school, although standards at the end of Key Stage 2 appear to have varied over recent years. Pupils achieve sound standards in measuring work and data handling, some of which involves good use of the computer. Pupils learn to investigate and look for patterns in number. Most acquire a suitable level of skills and understanding of number, for example in rounding up or in computation. Progress in Year 6 lessons is unsatisfactory because the teaching is weak. However, Key Stage 2 pupils in extension groups for one lesson each week make good progress because they are well taught.

14. In science, pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. This again is directly related to the quality of teaching. In Key Stage 1 for example pupils learn about human beings, and most are beginning to be able to classify living and non-living things. Towards the end of Key Stage 2 pupils carry out experiments but have a limited understanding of variables and fair-testing. The teaching insufficiently challenges the older, higher-attaining pupils. Although they gain some knowledge and skills, for example about electric circuits or materials, the quality and quantity of their work is poor. This matches the low standards in previous national tests.

15. Standards in information technology (IT) are sound with some good features. Pupils have considerable confidence in using computers and can quickly access files and run programs. Their skills in using e-mail and the internet are rapidly developing throughout the school. Pupils can word-process and print out written work for other subjects. Also, older pupils can write programs to control apparatus linked to the computer and use statistics packages to collate and display data.

16. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education. For example, although young pupils start with a limited knowledge of world religions, Year 3 pupils recall the names of the holy books associated with different religions and Year 5 pupils identify a range of emotions involved in the story of Joseph. Religious education is used well to further pupils' personal development.

17. The standard of work in other subjects is generally in line with that expected for pupils' ages, but is very dependent on the quality of teaching and the use made of schemes of work. In history,

Key Stage 1 pupils learn to use historical sources of evidence and Key Stage 2 pupils display considerable knowledge of periods of history such as World War 2. Recorded work and discussions suggest that pupils' knowledge and skills in geography at Key Stage 2 are below those expected for their ages. Standards of work in the Key Stage 2 art lessons seen were below those that should be expected, although drawings and paintings around the school are of a sound quality. Design and technology work is rather patchy although it often overlaps with craft work in art. Pupils' music-making and appreciation are satisfactory, although there is a current need to rely on recorded broadcasts. Pupils achieve the standards expected in all aspects of physical education, and standards in swimming are high.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

18. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their good behaviour and the productive relationships that they exhibit with each other and their teachers are major strengths of the school. In all but a few lessons pupils' response was at least satisfactory. They generally show a willingness to learn and an interest in their tasks. They listen carefully to the teacher and are keen to share their knowledge during whole class discussions. When working individually or in pairs or groups they are generally able to sustain concentration well for an appropriate length of time, enabling them to complete their tasks. For example in a mathematics lesson pupils listened attentively, showing an interest in the work on shapes. They settled quickly in groups to the task that was set and worked with good levels of concentration. When given the opportunity, older pupils in particular show that they are capable of using initiative and organising their own work. A good example of this positive work ethic was seen when pupils in a Year 5 mathematics lesson showed enthusiasm in carrying out their own research work and setting their results out neatly in tables, following this up with work on the computer. In the few exceptions observed, some pupils became inattentive while being addressed by their teacher and lost concentration while undertaking the tasks set for them. Nevertheless, even when the teaching is unsatisfactory most pupils still exhibit a positive approach to their work.

19. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, and there were few instances of pupils disrupting the learning of others. Even in more active lessons, for example physical education, pupils behave sensibly, respond well to guidance from their teachers and work sensibly. Around the school pupils are well behaved, friendly and polite. They move around the school sensibly and are particularly courteous to adults. They play well together and a friendly atmosphere pervades the school. In order to maintain its standards and ethos the school made one permanent exclusion of a pupil last year.

20. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to support and show a willingness to try hard to succeed. The support they receive has a good impact on their personal development, particularly those with behavioural problems. Good relations between all pupils with special educational needs and all other pupils are a strong feature of school life. Pupils in the language unit are well integrated into the life of the school, and all pupils show sensitive regard for those with disabilities.

21. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. Pupils work well together, and with the many adults who work in or visit the school. No evidence of bullying was found during the inspection and relationships between pupils were friendly and sociable. Pupils value and support the after-school clubs, and Year 6 pupils are particularly enthusiastic about their residential trip.

Attendance

22. The school attendance figures are slightly above the national average and show no

unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually each morning and there is a smooth and prompt start to the school day. Registration sessions are brisk and efficient, ensuring that lessons and other activities begin on time.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

23. The quality of the teaching is the main contributory factor to the progress pupils make. Overall the teaching of pupils under-five is good and the teaching in the language unit and in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. However in Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching varies unacceptably between classes, from consistently good to unsatisfactory. These judgements are reflected in the quality of pupils' work and in their achievement in national assessments.

24. During the inspection 13 per cent of the teaching was judged to be very good and 30 per cent good; 44 per cent was satisfactory and 13 per cent was less than satisfactory. All the teaching seen was at least satisfactory except that in Year 3 and Year 6, the majority of which was unsatisfactory.

25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs was always at least satisfactory. The carefully planned support makes a significant impact on these pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers maintain these pupils' individual education plans in their classrooms, and review targets rigorously and frequently.

26. The overall quality of teaching in the language unit is sound with many good features. It is carefully planned to address pupils' individual speech and language needs. Mainstream and specialist staff work very effectively together. Unit pupils are sensitively and appropriately supported in mainstream lessons. Specialist language teaching is well-structured. Pupils make sound or better progress where teachers clearly explain the purposes of a lesson, used a variety of dynamic teaching approaches and provide resources to support multi-sensory learning. In some unit-based lessons however the pace of teaching was a little slow and activities did not sufficiently challenge all the pupils or encourage them to work independently.

27. In mainstream classes, the teachers' planning has both strengths and weaknesses. It is satisfactory overall. Planning for early years classes is good because it is based closely on the children's needs. Key Stage 1 and 2 staff have developed the literacy and mathematics lesson planning in recent years and this provides a consistent basis for teaching. Planning for non-core subjects, especially in Key Stage 2, is not well enough based on schemes of work. In some science, design technology and art lessons for example, planning did not match the guidance available in schemes and did not ensure that pupils' previous knowledge and skills were built upon. Planning in Years 3 and 6 is particularly poor.

28. Teachers' overall expectations are appropriate in the early years and in Key Stage 1, but within Key Stage 2 they vary from being high in Year 5 to being low in Years 3 and 6. Where expectations are high, the pupils make good progress, as in the specialist teaching of French, which is lively and demanding. Expectations, pace of learning, use of time and use of resources are all weak in the teaching in Years 3 and 6.

29. Most mainstream teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of what they teach. Good expertise is available and is used well in the teaching of English and mathematics to the extension groups in Key Stage 2, and in the teaching of French. Particular weaknesses in Years 3 and 6 reveal a lack of knowledge about the detailed guidance in the national schemes of work. Very good teaching in Year 5 involved clear objectives, precise use of terminology and high

demands reflecting excellent subject knowledge and contributing to good progress. This was evident in mathematics, history and physical education lessons.

30. Discipline in classes is good throughout the school, even though in some classes there are pupils who could show challenging behaviour. The good organisation and positive relationships in early years classes contribute to the children's settled and productive start. Key Stage 1 lessons were characterised by calm and effective class management, for example in science when a parent visitor brought in a baby or when groups carried out different sorting tasks.

31. The quality and use of assessment is very good in the early years where careful records are kept about children's progress. Most teachers question pupils in class and mark their work to assess achievement. However the records kept and use of this information to plan appropriately challenging work varies between classes in Key Stage 2.

32. The questionnaire suggested that a very high proportion of parents are satisfied with the arrangements for homework. Pupils regularly practise reading at home and this contributes to their progress in reading, for example.

Curriculum and assessment

33. In keeping with the findings of the previous inspection report, the school continues to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant overall to the needs of its pupils. Provision is particularly good for pupils with special educational needs, and all pupils benefit from the joint planning and shared expertise with the learning unit. The national strategies for both literacy and numeracy have been satisfactorily implemented, and the school ensures that the time remaining is used to cover other subjects. Extension groups are provided for older pupils at Key Stage 2, and those for English are of a particularly high quality. Parents express satisfaction with these groups, and felt they valuably raised pupils' self-esteem.

34. The quality of planning varies between subjects. It is satisfactory overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and religious education. Mathematics in particular provides good coverage across all aspects of the subject, especially in relation to the use and application of mathematics. The scheme of work for religious education is based on the locally Agreed Syllabus, and now provides sufficient detail for the development of knowledge and understanding. Medium term and weekly planning overall gives sufficient detail to support daily lessons and provide clear learning objectives in mathematics and English, although weekly planning for other subjects is much weaker. Whilst the science curriculum is satisfactory overall, the quality of planning is inconsistent across classes, and this adversely affects the progress of pupils at Key Stage 2. Medium-term planning is satisfactory in physical education and music where published schemes are used. The school has adopted national guidance material in several subjects, including information technology, history and geography. However, this guidance and other planning material are not yet being used with sufficient thoroughness or rigour in all subjects to ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are being progressively developed. This particularly affects art, design technology and personal and social education.

35. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are maintained efficiently and reviewed often. Good use is made of tests to identify and track pupils at risk and there is an effective emphasis on early identification and support. The school's policy is to integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream lessons as far as possible, and this is achieved through differentiated work and high levels of support. Language unit pupils follow an appropriate broad and balanced curriculum. Their access to the full National Curriculum and religious education is carefully planned according to their needs. Individual education plans are carefully devised and monitored with targets, especially at Key Stage 2, being linked to specific subjects in

the curriculum. Integration into mainstream classes is very effective and is a strength of the school.

36. The school has a policy for equal opportunities and this philosophy is particularly effective with regard to the integration of pupils from the learning unit. However, some Year 6 pupils suffer from being withdrawn from the class to work in small groups, or work on the computer whilst other lessons are taking place.

37. Extra-curricular activities are a very strong in the school. They include computer, art and design clubs, in addition to mathematics, musical and sports activities. Large numbers of pupils take part and staff are generous with their time and sharing of interests. A high proportion of parents indicated their recognition and appreciation that the school encourages pupils to get involved in more than daily lessons. A traditional feature of the school is the annual Christmas production. All pupils participate in song, dance or drama or the production of set and costumes. The resulting event is of high quality, and much appreciated by the school community.

38. The strength of the school's assessment systems lies in the extensive analysis of national, local and internal test data. This has resulted in focused support being provided for targeted groups of pupils. Extra classroom support is provided in lessons and groups are withdrawn from the classroom. Extension groups are taught for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 and this contributes significantly to achievement at the end of Key Stage 2.

39. In some classes there is good quality marking. This effectively identifies areas of strength and weakness. Dialogue between teachers and pupils results in short-term targets being set and reviewed. Whilst procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are satisfactory overall, they are unsatisfactory in all other subjects. Samples of assessed work in investigative aspects of mathematics and science, and to speaking and listening skills have been collected to provide whole school assessment information. Teachers evaluate lessons in broad terms, but make insufficient use of assessment information in planning at a classroom level.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

40. The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school attaches great importance to this aspect of its work and is seen in the clear commitment to the personal development of each individual within a secure and caring environment.

41. Assemblies play a significant part in promoting spiritual and moral awareness. They are carefully planned and cover a wide range of themes. Those conducted by the headteacher are of particularly high quality, offering many valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own feelings and on the world beyond themselves. Assemblies during the inspection promoted moral values very well, sensitively exploring the area of overcoming disability. Pupils are quiet and respectful in assemblies and join in singing willingly. Religious education lessons make a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development: pupils are taught an awareness and respect for the traditions of other cultures. However there are generally few occasions for spirituality and reflection during subject lessons. Planned opportunities for spiritual awareness have not been established throughout the curriculum. During the inspection a few good examples of this dimension were seen, for example the thoughtful and expressive poetry by the Year 6 extension group, and the Year 1 lesson where pupils reflected on the wonder of the sun and moon. However, such occasions were rare.

42. Moral development is a considerable strength of the school. Good work and behaviour are

rewarded through praise and the house point system, and inclusion in the school's Merit Book. As well as the school rules, each class displays its own set of rules negotiated between pupils and teachers at the beginning of each academic year. All rules are written positively emphasising appropriate behaviour and respect for others. The positive approach to behaviour in the school, where each pupil is valued for his/her own worth successfully promotes very good values. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Parents strongly support the values and attitudes which the school promotes.

43. Social development is well promoted throughout the daily life of the school. Most pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults. The Friday assemblies are used to celebrate pupils' successes both in and outside school. Diverse extra-curricular activities are valued by the pupils and their parents and create a social life for them, providing opportunities for them to make friends from different age groups. In a wider context pupils are encouraged to show concern for others by raising money for charitable causes, including sponsorship of a boy in El Salvador. They are developing some understanding of citizenship with their participation in community events, and they invite a local group of disabled people to attend school concerts and barbecues. Older pupils are given some good opportunities for responsibility as house captains and members of the Watch Out Club. This was a St Catherine's initiative, now taken on by the Safer Surrey Partnership. The school has recently set up a Children's Council to provide opportunities for pupils to have a voice in the running of the school.

44. Cultural development is satisfactorily promoted through various aspects of the curriculum. Pupils study the work of various artists and listen to music of various kinds. The part literature has to play in the cultural development of pupils, however, is underdeveloped. A good range of clubs operates after school including sports and art. Pupils also have many opportunities to widen their cultural horizons through a broad range of visits, most of which enrich their studies in history. Through well-taught French lessons pupils are given a good understanding of the language and traditions of another European country.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

45. The school is a caring community which provides a secure environment for the pupils. They are well known to the staff who treat them with respect and help develop their self-confidence. The Language Unit is well integrated into the school. External agencies such as the child psychologist and occupational therapist are appropriately involved and provide additional support when needed.

46. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class and appropriate individual education plans are drawn up to meet their needs. The pupils also work in smaller groups which are supported effectively by non-teaching staff. Their progress is monitored well and achievable targets are set for improvement. Reviews are carried out regularly and efficient records kept

47. The school has established good systems for monitoring pupil attainment and progress in English and mathematics through the regular use of tests, including the standardised tests. However the school lacks procedures for monitoring attainment and progress with the same rigour in other subjects of the curriculum. Higher attaining pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have been identified and receive extra teaching in extension classes in English and mathematics.

48. Although there is no structured programme for the teaching of personal and social education, aspects of drugs and sex education are covered in Years 4, 5 and 6. 'Circle Time' throughout the school is used to promote social development and to provide a forum for pupils to explore their personal thoughts and feelings.

49. The school has a clear policy for encouraging good behaviour. The school rules are listed in the prospectus, and each class draws up its own classroom rules, based on a series of 'do' statements rather than 'don'ts'. A house points system helps to reinforce positive attitudes and is valued by pupils. There is appropriate use of praise and reinforcement of positive attitudes in most classes, which encourages a positive learning ethos.

50. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer and ensures that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the locally agreed procedures, and disseminates information to teachers and support staff. A health and safety policy is supported by regular monitoring of the premises by the governing body. There is a good level of supervision in the playground. The school keeps careful records of pupils with medical problems and all staff have undergone first aid training. This is very good practice. The school's measures for promoting pupils' regular and punctual attendance are good. Absences are followed up promptly and the Educational Welfare Officer provides any necessary support.

51. Language unit pupils receive very good support from the school based speech and language therapy service, from the educational psychologist and occupational therapy services. Guidance and support for unit pupils is individually planned to meet social, emotional and learning needs. Well-run systems ensure all staff involved with any one pupil are fully consulted and guided in ensuring the optimum support for effective integration. There is very good liaison with specialist nursery feeder schools and secondary schools with specialist units. Care is taken in contacting schools and in sharing professional expertise to support the reintegration of pupils into mainstream schools. The commitment to timing and detail to meet individual needs and ensure success is excellent.

Partnership with parents and the community

52. The school recognises the importance of good relationship with parents and works hard to promote a strong partnership with them. They are kept well informed about their child's education and encouraged to support their learning. Parents are made to feel welcome in the school and their views are regularly sought over relevant issues, such as the recently drawn-up Home-School agreement. The school aims to be as accessible as possible to parents - the headteacher is regularly available to meet parents and encourages them to approach the school immediately if they have any concerns about their child. Other members of staff are available to meet parents informally just before the school day begins, and at other times by appointment. Consultation evenings are held each term with targets set in the spring term. While these are generally well attended, fewer parents have supported meetings held to inform parents about curriculum matters.

53. Written information for parents is good overall. The school provides parents with suitable guidance to support their child with reading at home. Information sheets are provided, notifying parents of the areas of the curriculum being studied. Parents are encouraged to ensure that homework is completed and to listen to their child reading. Most parents are positive about homework but few children receive little or no support at home. Annual reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory, although many tend to contain generalised information and are not specific to each pupil. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about school events and activities.

54. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and completed questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel well informed, involved and believe that any concerns they have will be acted upon promptly. A small number of parents help in the school on a regular basis, mainly in the nursery class. Several others provide valuable support through the Friends Association, which organises a range of well-attended fund-raising events. The association bought and finances the running of the school minibuses and in addition provides

funds for a final school outing for year 6 pupils.

55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and are fully involved in decisions about their child's support. Staff make themselves available both formally and informally to deal with parental concerns about special educational needs. The school has excellent systems for working in partnership with the parents of language unit pupils. Home-school contact books are used and appreciated. Parents receive regular and relevant information about the curriculum, their child's progress and any concerns. There is good induction of new pupils with their parents and the various on-going meetings. These establish good working relationships with parents which benefit the pupils. Parents are fully involved in annual reviews and in the identification and supporting of targets. The quality, frequency and ease of contact between home and the unit staff are very good.

56. A strong feature of the school is the good links it continues to develop with the local community, and these make a significant contribution to pupils' education and personal development. Visitors, including the police liaison officer, train safety officer and an animal welfare worker are invited in to speak to pupils, and a number of local residents come in to help with reading and to support less able pupils. Pupils sing carols locally and take part in various community initiatives such as litter collection and maypole dancing. There is good liaison with the two main secondary schools to which most pupils transfer, including links on assessment and some curriculum subjects. The school facilities are let out to several community groups and organisations, so strengthening the school's ties with the local village and beyond.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

57. The overall management of the school is good and has maintained the standard from the previous inspection. Some of the unsatisfactory teaching recorded in the previous inspection has been resolved, but some still exists. This remains a key issue for the school. The headteacher leads the school very well and is much respected by staff, parents, governors and pupils. Organisational structures for managing the school are very good. The headteacher makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development. He sets a pleasant tone for the school in which all feel valued and supported. He has a very good working partnership with the deputy headteacher. They have shared, as well as specific, responsibilities and fulfil these very well. For example, there are well-organised systems to monitor standards through annual testing and to identify particular areas of weakness. Some careful attention is given to targeting improvements in specific year groups and for particular pupils. There are some well-planned opportunities for monitoring the on-going work of the school, although these need to become more rigorous. For example, mathematics provision in Year 6 was not matched carefully enough to pupils' understanding but this had been unresolved.

58. The school's senior management team plays a major supportive role. Its meetings have clear agenda and there is a definite purpose to its work. Decisions reached at all meetings are recorded and followed up. There are very good systems for planning the school's immediate and longer term developments. This process is very thorough and takes in a wide range of opinion including that of the parents and the pupils. The school's current priorities are generally appropriate and on target but they have not included sufficient attention to the provision of structures for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in some subjects, for example in art, music and geography.

59. The school is meeting its aims and fully implementing its values in its day-to-day life. Agreed policies are evident in practice. The governing body plays a major part in the life of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Several members visit regularly. They often focus on classroom practice in specific subjects. In so doing they follow a code of practice and provide reports in a common format.

60. Subject co-ordinators review termly-planning and provide advice for colleagues. A structure is in place for monitoring the work of specific subjects in classrooms on a rotational basis. However, in some subjects, skills do not build up through the school and this needs to be addressed through more effective co-ordination.

61. Relationships amongst the staff and between the staff and pupils are very good. In most classrooms there is a good working atmosphere and in all a sense of trust and support. Pupils enjoy their school life and are provided with good opportunities to develop their particular interests and to make progress through the many extra-curricular activities, homework clubs, and extension groups.

62. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well qualified and organises the provision for these pupils effectively. Individual education plans are monitored and updated frequently to help these pupils make good progress. The school complies with the Code of Practice. Staff training, professional consultation and rigorous review the levels of support are all well managed in the language unit. The named governor for special educational needs also monitors the provision conscientiously, and maintains an effective working relationship with the co-ordinator.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

63. The school is adequately staffed with many experienced teachers. Flexible use is made of teachers to promote the progress of groups of pupils in English and mathematics. The induction of new staff is a positive feature of staff management. The ratio of pupils to teachers is well below average although class sizes vary considerably. The good number of special needs assistants is a very effective feature. They contribute to the good progress that pupils with special educational needs make throughout the school.

64. Staff development is a strong feature of the school's management. The school development plan refers to necessary training to realise specific action plans. For example, training in the National Literacy Strategy has clearly had a positive impact on the teaching of English. Appraisal takes place for both teachers and support staff annually and helps to identify training needs.

65. The building provides good accommodation for teaching the National Curriculum. However, classrooms vary in size, and there is limited flexibility for group work, some of which takes place in corridors. The school recognises the need to improve this aspect of provision and has good plans to convert toilets that are unsuitable for pupils of primary school age to a multi-purpose room. The rooms used by the language unit provide good accommodation for its pupils. The hall

is spacious and well appointed. Storage is no more than adequate and some rooms and areas are rather cluttered. The playgrounds are sufficient for the school's needs, secure and well maintained. The outdoor provision in the nursery contributes to the good standards seen there. There is a pleasant library but this was not being used during the inspection. Attractive displays, and a generally tidy and clean building contribute to a pleasant learning environment. The premises manager plays a key role in maintaining the building in a safe and cost effective condition.

66. Learning resources are generally satisfactory. The number of computers is sufficient for teaching IT. There is an adequate range of books for most subjects and practical resources are available for art, technology, IT and PE. The school is fortunate in having two minibuses, maintained by the Friends Association. These are well used to make possible the extensive swimming programme and the very good range of visits that is a feature of the school's educational provision.

67. Language unit staff are appropriately experienced, and some support staff are also well qualified. The language unit is effectively situated centrally in the school. This supports the integration and the independent movement of the pupils around the school. Resources, storage, display and furniture need attention in order to support pupils' independent learning.

• **The efficiency of the school**

68. Overall the school makes efficient use of its resources. Because of the additional funding for the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the overall expenditure per pupil at the school is well above average. But, given its context, the school provides satisfactory value for money in terms of the standards being achieved and the quality of education. The most recent audit report indicated that the school's financial management and internal controls were operating effectively and there were no matters of significance to be addressed.

69. The efficiency of the school is supported by clear routines and good day-to-day organisation. In most classes the teaching makes effective use of time, although there is a loss of efficiency in the two Key Stage 2 classes where the pace of work is slow. However, there is some very effective re-grouping of pupils, for example in providing extension groups for English and mathematics or groups to work with support staff. Appropriate use is made of the accommodation and learning resources, although some classroom computers are under-used.

70. The use of support staff is effective in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The delegated part of the budget for special educational needs is a very large proportion of the school's funding. The school decides to give the highest priority to the levels of staffing and has detailed arrangements to monitor where this money goes. However, attention needs to continue to be given to evaluating and reviewing the value for money in relation to all areas of expenditure, particularly given the wide fluctuations in each year's funding. Currently, the overall class sizes are small and expenditure per pupil is very high, so it continues to be important to ensure value for money through careful strategic financial management, in which the governors are fully involved.

71. Staff contribute to the planning of expenditure on resources. A good improvement since the last inspection has been to develop systems to monitor value for money from such spending decisions. A simple procedure helps staff and governors to check that spending has benefited the pupils.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

72. Children are usually admitted part-time to the nursery at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. They transfer to the reception class in the September or January whichever is nearer to their fifth birthday and they then begin full-time education. During the period of the inspection all children in the nursery and most of the reception children were still under five. Baseline assessments are carried out during the first half of their first term in the Reception class and these are repeated at the end of the reception year to gauge the children's progress. Previous baseline assessments and informal nursery assessments indicate that the attainment of the children on entry to both the nursery and reception ranges widely from well below to well above average. By the age of five most pupils have achieved the government's expectations in learning for young children. They make sound progress in all the areas of learning and in their overall development. A few children, particularly those with limited language development, make good progress.

73. The children's personal and social development is sound. They make effective relationships with one another and with adults. They share equipment sensibly, take turns, concentrate and play co-operatively. They show sensitivity to the needs of others. They can tidy up after using equipment but most need to be reminded. They show self-help skills, for example they put on and take off their own coats. They sit quietly and are well behaved during registration and line up quickly and sensibly when required. They are able to listen to one another and to their teachers. They can make choices about some of the activities and adapt quickly to classroom routines and procedures.

74. In language and literacy most pupils attain in line with expectations by the age of five. They can recognise their own name and also know the sound of the first letter. Nearly all can write their own name with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. About half the children by age five can recognise a few words and the occasional child has made a start to reading. Most children show an interest in books and listen attentively to story. They can use appropriate language for their age in a variety of settings aided by their experience of role-play and outside visits which are a strong feature of the curriculum. Children follow instructions carefully. They begin to make meaningful marks on paper in the nursery in their role play opportunities. By the age of five many of the children can copy write under their own teacher's writing with suitably formed letters.

75. In their mathematical development by the age of five pupils know the names of colours and can group objects together of the same colour. They know the names of common shapes such as circle and triangle. Most pupils can recognise the numerals one to ten and count these numbers sequentially. A smaller proportion, but approaching half the children, can recognise and count numbers to 20. They can form simple repetitive pattern by shape and colour and sort and compare objects. They know and understand several number rhymes. They are becoming acquainted with positional language such as 'behind', 'above', and simple comparative terms such as 'bigger' and 'longer'. Attainment for most is in line with expectations for their age.

76. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. The children suggest that when water enters a silver foil boat they have made it sinks because the boat is heavier. They know that newspaper soaks up water whilst it runs off silver foil. They appreciate that rain and sunshine are good for growing things and that roots go down and shoots go up. They know about seeds and that trees and flowers come from seeds. They look after their own garden plots, plant seeds and vegetables and can talk about the different colours and sizes of them. Through visits to local places of interest such as farms and wild life centres they

understand about different types of animals and sea creatures. They learn where milk and wool come from for example. They can recognise the symbols for some types of weather and most can order the days of the week.

77. By age five standards in creative development are satisfactory. Children use simple printing techniques such as hand prints and make pictures from different media such as seeds. They enjoy taking part in role-play activities, as in the 'palace' and dress up as the princess or queen or go to the 'library' to exchange books, taking on the roles of librarian and borrower. The children use structural apparatus to create models such as wheeled vehicles. They can create necklaces from various items such as pasta by threading. In music, several children are confident to sing back a reply. They can identify slow and quick movement and join in with action rhymes, although they are sometimes muted in their singing.

78. In their physical development they can jump on the move and make different shapes. They understand long strides and can point to different parts of their body which they are using such as elbows but not all know 'knuckles'. They can make statues but do not all appreciate the expression 'run in and out of' as when other children were acting as trees and they were asked to run in and out of the trees. They have satisfactory climbing skills and confidence on apparatus. Most can catch a large ball either from a gentle pass or bounce. In their general activities they can manipulate scissors correctly, use plastic spanners in their technology and tighten up screws and nuts to make their vehicles. They can thread large needles and hammer wooden picture parts with supplied nails into soft board.

79. The area occupied by the two under five classes is spacious overall. The external nursery area includes grassed, hard surface and garden areas. However, the enclosed hard surfaced area for the nursery children is quite limited and the nursery classroom lacks space. By contrast the Reception class is very spacious. Both classes make good use of the excellent hall provision. Resources are satisfactory for the under-fives, although there is a lack of storage space in the nursery to enable the children sufficiently to choose and return their own equipment.

80. Nursery and reception staff combine well to provide for the under-fives and plan according to the government's recommendations for under-fives. There is a good balance of directed and opportunities for personal choice and imaginative play. The teachers plan the activities well and ensure that the teaching assistants are fully involved in the teaching experiences which the children receive. Teaching assistants are well briefed about their roles. The overall quality of teaching for the under-fives is good and careful records are kept of individual children's progress. These are used to good effect in the planning of future work to ensure that the children are appropriately challenged. The under-fives children are developing positive attitudes to school and to one another in a well structured and supportive environment. The education of the under-fives has retained the good standard reported on in the previous inspection report.

English, mathematics and science

English

81. The 1999 Key Stage 2 national test results for the mainstream pupils were below the national average for all schools, but in line with the national average for similar schools. The 1999 test results show Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment to be below average in reading and writing, in relation both to all and to similar schools. However, based on pupils' prior attainment, previous analyses by the local authority have indicated that pupils have made good progress in Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2.

82. Overall, pupils at both Key Stages 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress over time and in

lessons. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their speaking and listening skills and in reading, and the school actively seeks to encourage their phonic skills. However, progress is limited overall in terms of discussing text critically, and in the use of non-fiction material to develop research and library skills. Most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in the formal skills of punctuation, spelling, grammar and handwriting. Where pupils are being encouraged to extend and enrich their vocabulary, very good gains are made in the quality of their writing, but these experiences are not provided consistently through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, and particularly when they are supported in small groups.

83. Throughout the school, pupils speak confidently and most listen well. However, many pupils are less confident in explaining ideas or concepts clearly, and explanations are often short and undeveloped because there are insufficient opportunities to engage in discussion. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 take part in drama sessions, but these sometimes provide pupils with few hints on improvement.

84. Most pupils read accurately and enjoy reading, and some higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. However, generally pupils throughout the school are not familiar with a range of books or genre and they are less confident when talking about the content of stories. In their final year at Key Stage 1, middle attainers read simple texts with growing accuracy. Lower attainers recognise familiar words. In their final year at Key Stage 2, higher and middle attainers are fluent readers, and tackle unfamiliar words with some success. Throughout the school many pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses confidently and this is considerably supporting the further development of their vocabulary.

85. Pupils benefit from a consistently good emphasis on formal writing skills. In their final year at Key Stage 1, most pupils are joining their handwriting, although not always with confidence. Many use full stops and capital letters, and spelling is mostly accurate or phonetically plausible. Overall, content often lacks interest, and sometimes opportunities for extended, personal writing are limited. In their final year at Key Stage 2, higher attainers in extension groups produce work of great sensitivity, with a wide range of precise vocabulary and the use of strategies such as personification to powerfully extend and develop their ideas.

86. Generally, pupils are attentive and interested in lessons throughout the school. In a literacy session at Year 1, for example, pupils showed high levels of interest. Many put up their hands to answer questions and volunteered to point out words in "The Little Red Hen". They concentrated well during subsequent activities and tried hard to find the correct word. In consequence they created a purposeful working atmosphere. Pupils are particularly responsive in some lessons at Key Stage 2, as a direct result of stimulating teaching. However, sometimes pupils are noisy and fidgety when whole group sessions fail to challenge or involve pupils sufficiently.

87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There are examples of good quality teaching at both key stages, and very high quality teaching in extension groups for older pupils at Key Stage 2. The most effective teaching is characterised by a lively manner and interesting strategies which very effectively challenges pupils. For example, in an extension lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher's own enthusiasm was clear. The pupils considered the use of personification in a poem, and then listened to music as a stimulus for writing their own responses in poetic form, and the teacher wrote with them, providing an excellent role model. As a result, pupils presented mature ideas with a sensitive use of imagery and vocabulary. Support staff are well-used with individuals during whole group sessions, and with group activities, for example when reading playscripts. Where teaching fails to motivate pupils to this degree, there are missed opportunities for them to be fully involved, and ideas are not sufficiently explored. Whole group sessions fail to explore ideas, and too little is expected of pupils. Homework is satisfactorily used overall.

88. Planning is satisfactory overall, and the school has focused appropriately on areas they have identified as needing further support, for example in relation to writing and phonic knowledge. The school independently undertook the National Literacy Strategy in advance of its official introduction, and have evolved their own planning formats particularly at Key Stage 2. These satisfactorily include the main elements of the strategy, and the school is now seeking ways in which it can provide more opportunities for extended writing. Weekly planning gives adequate detail. There is also a concentration on planning writing in some lessons for younger pupils, but this has yet to make a full impact for all pupils. Assessment of national and internal data is satisfactory, and clearly influences the focus of extra support. For example, the school is planning to introduce booster classes this term to raise achievement for specifically identified pupils. Volunteer readers provide good support to individual pupils. Special needs pupils are particularly well-supported through joint planning with the learning unit, and the sharing of expertise. In some classes developmental marking is of a good standard, and this is used to set individual short-term targets for pupils. However, this practice is not consistent.

89. Literacy skills are not satisfactorily used or developed across the curriculum. Some technical vocabulary is encouraged in geography, and there are some examples of empathetic writing in history. At Year 5, pupils planned to reproduce the story of Joseph as a cartoon strip. Computers are also used to find out information and word process work. However, opportunities are not rigorously planned for. In science, work is recorded in written form, but it is not structured, and marking does not support the development of scientific vocabulary.

90. The co-ordination of the subject is shared. The good links with the language unit benefit all pupils, for example with regard to exchanging resources. The co-ordinators are conscientiously seeking to develop the subject and improve standards. A lot has been done to improve parental involvement in their children's learning, including the *words, words, more words* activities for use at home and the development of a small library where parents may chose books. Planning is monitored and some classroom observation has been undertaken. There is a good range of recently purchased books to support literacy, but in keeping with the findings of the previous inspection, some books are still old and uninviting. During the week of the inspection, little use was made of the library.

• **Mathematics**

91. The 1999 Key Stage 2 national test results for the mainstream pupils were in line with the average for all schools and above average for similar schools. The 1999 Key Stage 1 test results were below average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Over the past four years results have been inconsistent, being both above and below the national average. Based on pupils' prior attainment, analyses by the local authority have previously indicated that pupils have made good progress in Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2.

92. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils can identify common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They have a good understanding of comparative mathematical vocabulary such as 'longer than', 'narrower than' and 'shorter than', can identify articles shorter than a metre and measure accurately in centimetres. They can add two digit numbers together and understand simple place value. They have a good knowledge of multiples of ten and five and can count in two's. They can recognise odd and even numbers. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can create block and line graphs from data they have gathered and interpret several different types of graph including pie charts. They can round up numbers to specified criteria, for example to the nearest ten or hundred. They understand how to add and subtract four digit numbers. They can investigate mathematical problems and are able to look for pattern in number and use such terms as 'triangular numbers' and 'prime numbers'.

93. Overall pupils in both key stages and of all abilities make sound progress in mathematics. However, it is sometimes unsatisfactory in Year 6 when pupils undertake the same work irrespective of ability and when the explanation of the work they are doing is too obscure, as for example, in a lesson on calculators during the inspection week. Special needs pupils throughout the school are well supported by teaching assistants and this helps them too to make sound progress.

94. Nearly all pupils have good attitudes to their work and complete a sufficient amount of work in lessons. They try hard to present their work neatly and most succeed. They are co-operative with one another and with their teachers and share resources amicably in lessons. Most pupils are well behaved and listen attentively to what is being said. They can work well in pairs or small groups on mathematical investigations.

95. The quality of mathematics teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and also overall. It ranges from mainly satisfactory to occasionally good in Key Stage 1 and from occasionally poor to very good in Key Stage 2. In the best teaching, as in Year 5, there is good discussion of mental strategies, pupils are kept active on challenging tasks which gain their full involvement and interest, pupils are asked to explain their thinking and they are constantly supported and encouraged as they work. When development points are noticed during the lesson these are pointed out to all the pupils so that all can learn from each other's mistakes. In the unsatisfactory teaching, as in Year 6, the work is not sufficiently matched to the needs of different abilities and work is sometimes badly explained. In these lessons pupils do not make sufficient learning gains.

96. The mathematics co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and works hard to ensure the pupils become interested in the subject. His own mathematics lessons are interesting and represent a good example for other teachers. He has introduced a good scheme and planning system for lessons. A whole school approach to the recording of pupils' progress in mathematics is shortly to begin. In addition he has arranged extension groups for some of the more able pupils and a mathematics club operates once weekly for Years 5 and 6 pupils. Good arrangements are made to target improvement and to track individual pupils. Resources for the subject are adequate but in some classrooms they are not always arranged well so that pupils can select the most appropriate piece of equipment for a mathematical task.

• **Science**

97. The 1999 Key Stage 2 test results show the mainstream pupils' attainment is below average for all schools and well below average compared with similar schools. The 1999 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments suggest that pupils' attainment is similar to that expected of pupils aged seven nationally. Inspection evidence confirms these findings. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. This is evident both in lessons and also in the standards attained at the end of the Key Stage. Where pupils make satisfactory progress it is often linked to well-organised practical lessons. Unsatisfactory progress is most notable in pupils' scientific skills of investigation, and in lessons where teachers do not challenge pupils with sufficiently demanding tasks.

98. At Key Stage 1 pupils are learning about how human beings develop, and about the need for sleep, exercise, and a balanced diet. Pupils in Year 1 know the names of a range of common animals and can match mothers to baby animals. Most pupils show that they are beginning to be able to classify living and non-living things and are becoming aware of categories such as vegetables.

99. Towards the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are carrying out experiments involving filtering and

dissolving. However, there is little evidence in lessons that they understand the idea of a fair test or the need to control variables in an experiment. Pupils carry out practical activities involving finding how sound travels and how to light a bulb in a simple electric circuit. Higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in some lessons and this is partly due to lack of science subject knowledge on the part of support staff or teacher. Pupils are learning the characteristics of materials in the context of buildings, and the difference between natural and man made materials.

100. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall. In some cases there is evidence of careful presentation, successful co-operative work and immense curiosity about human development. Where behaviour is less orderly pupils are insufficiently supported and lessons lack practical challenge. There are also examples of untidy and poorly presented work from the oldest pupils, due to insufficient direction in methodical scientific recording. In general, pupils are attentive and interested in their science lessons and ask relevant questions.

101. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but is unsatisfactory for a significant proportion of lessons at Key Stage 2. Good features include effective demonstrations, well-organised practical work and good use of questions. There are also examples of useful assessment activities, although many books are either not marked or merely ticked. Resources are usually well-prepared and support for pupils with special educational needs is often effective in promoting these pupils' progress. Unsatisfactory features include low expectations, poor pace, and a lack of genuinely investigative activity.

102. The recent decision to adopt the national science scheme of work is a sound one, but this has not been sufficiently well thought through to ensure that pupils receive a balanced programme of scientific experience. The retention of a topic approach in some year groups is unhelpful in promoting the acquisition of the distinctive skills of science. Teachers' short term planning is insufficiently detailed and the relationship between this and medium term planning is muddled. Insufficient time is allocated to the subject to ensure adequate coverage at Key Stage 2. There are weaknesses in assessment and record keeping in science and little evidence of teacher assessments informing curriculum planning.

103. The subject co-ordinator has received appropriate training and ensures that the subject is adequately resourced. However, procedures for monitoring standards of attainment or science teaching are inadequate. The school grounds are a valuable resource for the teaching of science and a range of visits (e.g. to the Discovery Centre in Guildford) provides useful opportunities for promoting children's scientific understanding.

• **Other subjects or courses**

104. Evidence for the following subjects draws on the observation of a small number of lessons together with scrutiny of available work and teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.

105. In **religious education**, pupils satisfactorily meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Scrutiny of work and documentation suggests that progress is satisfactory over time.

106. Year 1 pupils have a limited general knowledge about world religions and sometimes confuse their beliefs and practises. However, they are beginning to remember key words associated with Islam and make satisfactory gains in their knowledge of some aspects of the Muslim faith, for example in relation to their worship. At Year 3, pupils learn about special books and recall the names of the holy books associated with Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and some of their practices. They also begin to consider why it was important to write down the stories

contained in these books. However, sometimes progress in these lessons is inhibited by low expectations of what they are able to understand. Pupils in Year 5 showed a good knowledge of the story of Joseph. They thoughtfully identified the range of emotions Joseph might have felt throughout his experiences, and linked these with particular events and characters.

107. There is insufficient evidence to judge either pupils' response to the subject or about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. Both are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. Pupils are usually well behaved. In interesting activities, for example where Year 5 pupils were turning the story of Joseph into a cartoon strip, pupils generated lots of ideas, and concentrated on their work. In some lessons where pupils are not involved in discussion, or not prepared sufficiently for their activities, they lose concentration. Where teaching is good pupils' ideas are encouraged and used. These lessons are lively and make good use of resources and support staff.108.

109. Since the last inspection a detailed scheme of work has been drawn-up and this satisfactorily supports planning. Assessment however, is minimal but resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is newly appointed and is keen to develop the subject further, particularly with regard to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

110. Standards in **information technology** (IT) are broadly in line with those expected, with strengths in some areas. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and generally cover the National113. Curriculum requirement117. s120. .123. Their skills in using e-mail and the internet are rapidly developing throughout the school. This is a current strength, with pupils learning about how computers can be used and also enhancing their literacy skills at the same time.

114.

Pupils have considerable confidence in using computers. For example, many can quickly and competently use the mouse and keyboard to access files and run programs.

119.

Pupils know how to save and print out their work. Some of the older pupils showed well-developed skills in using computers for control work, as they wrote programs to activate an electric motor linked to a pulley. Others used data handling packages to collate and display statistical information. This supported their work in mathematics. From a young age pupils word-process and print out written work for other subjects. They use graphics packages and confidently explore the drawing tools available. Whether working independently or in groups, pupils are sensible when using the equipment.

115. Some timetabled teaching of IT was seen during the inspection. These focused, whole-class sessions were efficient and effective. Pupils in both Year 2 and Year 4 were being introduced to similar skills in e-mailing, although this indicated how pupils' knowledge and experience have yet to be built up through the school. The overall expertise of staff is sufficient and growing as a result of the useful school focus on information technology. The school has sufficient computers and access to the internet. This provides good opportunities for pupils to make regular use of IT. An after-school computer club is very popular, with a large number of pupils making good use of computers around the building.

116. Standards in the **art** seen were in line with those expected for pupils' ages in Key Stage 1 but generally below those expected for pupils' ages in Key Stage 2. The school recognises that art as a subject has been overshadowed by the recent focus on core subjects and this could account for the weaker progress through the school. A key factor would also be the unsatisfactory teaching of the subject seen in Key Stage 2.

117. Work on display shows that pupils explore a range of media and techniques in Key Stage

1. This includes printing, collage drawing and painting. Both Year 1 and 2 classes had recently learnt about primary colours and colour-mixing. Overall in Key Stage 2 the evidence of drawing and painting from observation or imagination was less than should be expected. Some work involves copying the work of famous artists, some of which is skilfully executed. Pupils have used media such as pastels and watercolour to produce attractive versions of Monet's waterlilies, for example. Some individual work is of a high standard.

118. The teaching in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory, for example as pupils practised painting with just primary colours. However, teaching in two of the Key Stage 2 classes was unsatisfactory. The management of practical activity was weak, planning and teacher expertise were poor and expectations were low. There is no consistent approach to using sketchbooks or to following a scheme of work in order to build up skills and experiences. There was little evidence of opportunities for pupils to work independently, choose their own materials or extend their own evaluation of art.

119. In **design and technology** there was little evidence on which to base judgements, although this suggested standards were below those to be expected. In Key Stage 1 pupils use construction kits and develop their making skills, for example with constructions in paper and card. In Key Stage 2, some Year 6 pupils were creating their models of a fairground ride. Progress was very slow with pupils having poor designing and making skills. There was no evidence of recorded designing, and pupils lacked an understanding of the process. The teacher cut out the main materials. Although the school intention is to use the national scheme of work for DT, there was little evidence of this. In most classrooms there are tools on racks but these appear little used.

120. Scrutiny of **geography** work and discussions with pupils suggested that standards are below those expected for pupils' ages. At Key Stage 1 pupils are becoming aware of other localities and are developing geographical vocabulary through a study of islands. This links with work in English. They are able to compare contrasting localities in simple terms. At Key Stage 2 pupils are finding out about the local area and its features, such as the River Medway. However, recorded work is untidy and evidence suggests the development of geographical skills is weak. The work is not pitched at an appropriate level. There is some evidence of local studies and mapwork in Year 5.

121. National schemes of work are intended to ensure adequate coverage and progression in geography. However, discussions with pupils indicated that coverage of the subject is inadequate. Assessment is weak with little marking and record keeping. Evidence suggests that overall teaching at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Resources are not used effectively and there are indications of low expectations. Pupils' recorded work shows a lack of care and precision in the drawing of sketchmaps. In some teaching seen, Key Stage 2 pupils were quiet and passive, unmotivated by the unimaginative teaching methods.

Resources for the subject are barely adequate. There is a limited range of relevant library books, although there are some useful maps and some stimulating displays around the school. The co-ordinator is able to monitor medium-term plans, but has no overview of standards of attainment or teaching. Visits, such as the residential trip to Hindleap Warren, do provide good opportunities for extending geographical skills, through activities such as orienteering.

122. Standards in **history** are in line with those expected for pupils' ages, on the evidence of discussion with pupils, lesson observation and scrutiny of work. Key Stage 1 pupils are learning to use historical sources to find out about aspects of the past, such as old toys, through use of questionnaires. Key Stage 2 pupils display considerable knowledge of various periods of history. They are aware of the conditions of life in World War 2 and the chronology of this period. They

also show a grasp of more recent historical events. They are able to use a range of evidence, such as artefacts to ask and answer questions about the Victorian period.

123. Pupils' attitudes towards history are good. They respond well to the varied use of resources and visitors, are keen to ask and answer questions and they handle artefacts carefully. They are able to work collaboratively on research. They are interested in history, for example when teaching encourages empathy with children's lives in the past.

124. Teaching is satisfactory or better. Positive features include confident exposition based on good subject knowledge, very good use of resources, good use of visiting speakers, and use of IT for both research and recording data. Lessons are well-planned, well-paced and build on previous work effectively. Some recording relies too heavily on the use of published worksheets. Assessment in history is weak with little evidence of marking or records. The range of historical periods covered is appropriate and encouraging the skills of historical enquiry is integral to the history curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of books, videos and artefacts to bring the past alive. The use of visits, for example to the Black Country Museum, enriches the study of history.

125. In **music**, the school currently relies heavily on recorded broadcasts for lessons in Key Stage 2 due to the lack of musical expertise amongst the teaching staff. Pupils' progress within the lessons seen was generally satisfactory in both key stages and attainment was broadly in line with that expected for pupils' ages.

126. Key Stage 1 pupils can tap out the rhythm of their first names and most can sing in tune and keep to the melody. Most can join in at the correct point of a song when actions are required. They play the various non-tuned percussion instruments with satisfactory skill. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils sing in tune with a satisfactory level of volume. They sing well in unison and work well to fit words to complicated offbeat rhythms. They listen with maturity to classical musical excerpts and can pick out the different dynamics in a piece of music.

127. In both key stages pupils are interested and are usually well behaved during lessons. Key Stage 1 pupils sing enthusiastically and enjoy playing the instruments. They show respect for the instruments and are quite willing to take turns. Key Stage 2 pupils listen attentively to the broadcaster's instructions and follow the words in the accompanying pamphlets carefully. They enjoy the songs, although on occasion a few pupils show signs of restlessness.

128. In Key Stage 1 the teaching was lively in the one lesson observed. The pace was brisk, the content appropriate and the pupils were encouraged to sing well. The broadcaster largely dictates the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. Whilst teachers use the pause button to good effect to rehearse parts of songs, they sometimes miss opportunities to reflect on the content of the broadcast, for example to hear again and appraise excerpts of classical music and to learn about the composer.

129. Currently the headteacher is the acting co-ordinator for music. He has good musical skills, leads separate key stage song practices well and improves the pupils' quality of singing through judicious focus on specific songs. He leads the school choir practice as an extra-curricular activity and this is popular amongst the pupils. Assemblies provide pupils with good opportunities to hear good quality music and to learn more about famous composers. In addition to the choir about twelve pupils are learning specific instruments ranging from piano to trumpet. The school has a good provision of pianos and keyboards and a satisfactory number of tuned and untuned percussion.

130. Pupils have opportunities for a wide range of **physical education**. Pupils' attainments

meet national expectations by the end of both key stages and exceed them in swimming by the end of Key Stage 2. Key Stage 1 pupils can jump on the move and make different movements such as a wide shape at the end of such movements. They can express themselves as giants in dramatic movement and respond appropriately to music. They can carry out a simple sequence of movements. They know that they should land on the front part of their feet when landing and flex their knees to absorb their weight. By the end of Key Stage 2 nearly all pupils can swim at least 25 metres and many can swim much further. Several pupils have more advanced water skills including life saving skills. In gymnastics they are confident in working at height on the apparatus. They can balance on different parts of their bodies and combine movements to create a sequence. They handle equipment, particularly large apparatus, safely and correctly. In games lessons they have satisfactory catching skills and a suitable sense of position. In dance they can respond creatively to the crash of a tambourine and verbal commands. In both key stages pupils make sound progress overall, but good progress in Key Stage 2 swimming.

131. Pupils enjoy PE lessons and are well behaved. They show good levels of interest and a keenness to perform well. They work well in partnered activities and are willing to discuss, practise and try out movements, which they work hard to improve. They demonstrate good listening skills and good attitudes in lessons. Pupils display a good sense of fair play.

132. The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In the best teaching the teacher has good subject knowledge and pupils work vigorously. An important part of the lesson is the critical but supportive way in which pupils evaluate the demonstrations given by each other and set against the criteria laid down by their teacher. Pupils' performance is enhanced by appropriate teacher intervention. For example, pupils' movements were significantly improved when they were asked to use an imaginary letter drawn on the floor. Where teaching is unsatisfactory it does not guide the pupils and help them to improve, relationships are distant and the learning objectives are vague.

133. The accommodation, both internally and externally, is very good and contributes to the provision of physical education. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall, with good fixed and portable apparatus. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and leads the subject well. A published scheme of work and other written documentation support members of staff with their lesson planning and includes safety rules. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular sport through such activities such as football and netball training and coaching from professional bodies for soccer, basketball and hockey. Pupils have good opportunities to compete against other schools in various sporting activities.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **Summary of the inspection evidence**

134. The inspection was undertaken by six inspectors over a period of five days. Seventy observations were made of teaching and this totalled about 52 hours. English and mathematics lessons were observed at least once in all classes. Inspectors also observed around the school at other times. The inspectors evaluated the written work of a sample of pupils in each year and heard a sample of pupils reading. Many informal discussions were held with pupils and discussions with two groups of juniors. Inspectors held discussions with the teachers, the headteacher and three governors, and also with other staff. Policy documents, teachers' planning and records, and pupils' reports were inspected. Parents' views were noted from the 16 parents who attended the meeting, from those that gave written evidence, and from the 54 returned questionnaires.

Data and indicators

135. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on the school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Nursery	16.5	-	8	-
YR - Y6	199	30	80	40

Qualified teachers (YR - Y6 including the unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.9

Education support staff (YR - Y6 including the unit)

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked each week	217.5

Average class size:	22.1
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Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.5

Education support staff (Nursery class)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	60

Financial data for 1998/99

	£
Total Income	594,746
Total Expenditure	553,173
Expenditure per pupil	2,249
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,854
Balance carried forward to next year	61,427

Parental survey

Number of responses 54

Percentages of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in their child's education	56	44	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with any queries or concerns	77	21	0	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents effectively	27	54	19	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of my child's progress	43	57	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child's progress	39	57	4	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a high standard of attainment	41	56	4	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in extra-curricular activities	35	50	13	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) are doing	42	53	4	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	56	39	6	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good practice	47	49	4	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	67	30	2	2	0