

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE CRANBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117307

Headteacher: Chris Penney

Reporting inspector: Douglas Hayward  
21234

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 191064

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bridleway North Hoddesdon Hertfordshire
Postcode:	EN11 9PP
Telephone number:	01992 468665
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tim Hutchings
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Cranbourne Primary School is much bigger than most other primary schools. It is situated to the north of Hoddesdon about five miles from the county town of Hertford on a large residential estate. The school is for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. Currently there are 40 children attending the nursery on a part-time basis and 471 pupils in the main school. Twenty-six pupils (six per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well below the national average.

The school has a nursery class for part-time attendance by children aged three years and over. Children are usually admitted to the nursery at the start of the term in which they have their fourth birthday. Pupils are then admitted to the reception class in either September or January depending on their birthday.

Pupils are tested on entry to the nursery and then again when they start in the reception class to see what their attainment is in areas such as language and mathematics. Pupils' attainment levels on entry to the school are broadly in line with those expected at this age.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

**The Cranbourne Primary School is a very good school with many outstanding features. Pupils make very good progress. The school provides very good value for money.**

#### What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in national tests in English and mathematics for pupils at 7 and 11 years of age. The school uses the results of tests and assessments very well to set targets for pupils to improve.
- Teaching is very good. Teachers are hard working, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They work very well together as a team.
- The school has an outstanding ethos. It helps pupils to become excellent learners and gives them the confidence to believe in their own ability to achieve high standards. There are exceptional relationships between staff and pupils. They delight in each other's company!
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership. All staff and governors support them very well.
- The school helps pupils to develop excellent attitudes to the school community. Pupils care very much about each other and show great respect and care for the school.
- Pupils learn about a wide range of interesting and varied subjects.
- The school makes very good links with parents. It values the support that parents provide.

#### What could be improved

- The use of information technology to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge in other subjects.
- Planned opportunities for pupils to use a problem solving approach in a range of subjects.

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

### HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996 when it was judged to provide good value for money. Standards attained by pupils throughout the school were good then and they have improved since that time in many areas. Standards in English and mathematics are now very good and are very high in comparison with all schools nationally. Strengths identified in that inspection such as pupils' attitudes and social skills, the range of subjects taught and the leadership and management of the school have all been maintained. The level of challenge for more able pupils, the quality of teaching and planning in the nursery and the ways in which the school finds out what its pupils can do have all improved considerably. The quality of teaching throughout the school has improved significantly; the percentages of good, very good and excellent teaching are all higher than in the previous inspection.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. Comparisons with the results of similar schools are made on the basis of the number of pupils taking free school meals. Pupils nationally are expected to achieve Level 2 at the age of 7 and Level 4 at the age of 11.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A*	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A	A	A	
science	A	C	A	A	

The school has maintained standards that are well above average in national tests at the end of both key stages over the last three years with the exception of science in 1998. These results place The Cranbourne Primary School in the top five per cent of schools in England. The percentage of pupils achieving Levels 3 and 5 at the end of both key stages is well above the national average in this school. During the inspection it was judged that pupils' work in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are usually bubbling with excitement and look forward to their lessons. They admire, respect and trust the adults who work with them. They make sure that people know how good they think the school is!
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are well mannered and helpful. They are very polite and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school without any fuss, for example when going to the computer suite or leaving the hall after assembly.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils are mature, trustworthy and reliable. They look after each other, their school and resources very well.
Attendance	Very good. Better than in many other primary schools. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start promptly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Very good

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

During the inspection no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Almost 90 per cent of lessons were at least good and almost 50 per cent were at least very good and occasionally excellent. This is very high quality teaching that is found throughout the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently very good and has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils of all abilities. The teaching by ability

groups for English, mathematics and science is very successful. It enables teachers to plan their work very carefully for pupils of all abilities so that they are stretched and lessons are very well paced. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and care very much about their pupils and the progress they make. The ways in which they use questions to find out what pupils know is excellent. They have very high expectations of the standards of work that pupils can achieve and do their very best to make lessons interesting, exciting and challenging.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Subjects are well planned and offer a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities. There are good links between subjects. The school has successfully planned to make sure that pupils' basic information technology skills are carefully developed. It is aware that there are now opportunities to develop the use of information technology in other subjects. The school has quite correctly placed much emphasis on work in English and mathematics. Now that these areas are successfully established there is time for the school to try more problem solving activities in a range of subjects
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' special educational needs are identified very early and they have lots of extra support to help them make very good progress in reading and writing.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual development in assemblies. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and take their responsibilities seriously. Teachers set excellent examples for the pupils about how to conduct themselves. Visitors to the school and trips outside to places of interest help develop the pupils' appreciation of areas such as music and the arts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	It makes outstanding provision. The school provides an extremely secure setting. Adults know the pupils very well. As one pupil commented, " <i>We are not just respected for our talents in school, but also for our talents outside school</i> ".

All areas of the school's curriculum meet statutory requirements. As well as providing many opportunities for pupils to study different aspects of English and mathematics it also provides a wide variety of interesting opportunities in other subjects, for example pupils' work in science, history and design and technology. They have many good opportunities to carry out experiments and make informed guesses about what will happen. They speak confidently about life in past times and make sensitive judgements about difficult periods in history such as the 'Holocaust'. They have opportunities to develop good design and making skills and link this work well to their history and science studies. The school's use of computer-based literacy and numeracy programs designed for individual pupils has been very successful. Pupils enjoy the competitive element of this work and are keen to progress. The depth of their knowledge and their sheer enthusiasm for learning are obvious when they talk about their work.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding and inspirational leadership. They encourage the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and indeed all staff to take responsibility in playing a positive part in the running of the school. They place high emphasis and accountability on excellence from staff and pupils and get the best from everyone who works at the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are knowledgeable, hard working and very supportive. They fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school very well. They are keen to support the school in introducing new ideas that will help to improve pupils' education. They play a major part in planning how the budget can be best used to do this.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has at least maintained its high standards since the last inspection and in many areas it has improved. It is well aware of its strengths and is always looking to improve. It is a school that welcomes change that leads to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent use is made of all staff, the time available during the school day, equipment and the building to provide a stimulating and very high quality education for its pupils.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They believe that teaching is good and that their children make good progress.</li><li>• They believe that the school has high expectations for pupils.</li><li>• They believe that the school is well managed and led</li><li>• They believe that pupils are well behaved in school and on trips to places of interest.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• They would like to see a wider range of activities outside school.</li><li>• A few parents think that their children do not enjoy school as much as they used to.</li></ul>

The inspection team fully supports parents' positive comments. The team feels that the school's arrangements for informing parents about their children's progress are very good; they include two appointments each year with the class teacher and twice-yearly progress reports. Lengthy discussions with pupils of all ages reveal that they have a very enjoyable time in school. They like the range of subjects they learn about and they especially like their teachers. The range of free after-school activities is comparable with many other primary schools, although several clubs have been temporarily suspended due to staff absence.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

## WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**Standards are well above average in national tests in English and mathematics for pupils at 7 and 11 years of age. The school uses the results of tests and assessments very well to set targets for pupils to improve**

1. The results of the 1999 national tests in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 were very high compared with all schools nationally. In writing and mathematics they were well above average. Compared with those in similar schools the results at The Cranbourne Primary were well above average. This has been the picture in English and mathematics for the last two years at Key Stage 1 and for the last three years at the end of Key Stage 2. The percentage of seven year old pupils attaining Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. The percentage of 11 year old pupils attaining Level 5 in English and mathematics was also well above the national average. These results mean that the school stretches pupils of all abilities to reach their full potential. They place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. During the inspection pupils' work matched these levels.
2. In English pupils show excellent speaking and listening skills. They listen very attentively in lessons and assemblies to pupils and adults speaking and to music. Their diction when they are singing is exceptionally clear and is no doubt one of the reasons they have been invited to represent Hertfordshire schools in concerts at the Royal Albert Hall. They speak very clearly and confidently. Pupils have an extensive vocabulary that they use very well in class discussions and that is extended by their very good use of specific subject vocabulary. For example, in mathematics pupils in Year 2 refer to '*contrasting adjectives*' in a literacy lesson. In a numeracy lesson they use correct terms such as '*multiples*' and '*partitioning*' and in science they refer correctly to '*translucent*', '*transparent*' and '*opaque*' materials. Pupils in Year 6 speak confidently about a range of issues and display sensitivity and a tremendous sense of humour. For example, a pupil said "*I was upset in school yesterday and everyone helped me by hugging me and giving me support.*"
3. Pupils read an increasingly difficult range of texts confidently and expressively. They select books carefully from the library and use non-fiction material very well to support their work in other subjects. The full extent of their ability to locate and use different sources of information is especially apparent in Years 5 and 6 in pupils' individual topics that are researched over a long period of time. As well as using traditional sources pupils use personal sources of information as well as obtaining information by writing to different organisations and using the internet. Pupils' writing is frequently outstanding by the time they are 11 years of age.
4. The same sensitivity and humour that is apparent in their speech is clearly evident in their written work. For instance, one pupil wrote in her history book "*I have found learning about World War 2 to be very interesting. I was going to say enjoyable, but that seems to be the wrong word to use when you are learning about such activities.*" Pupils were asked to imagine what memories, feelings and thoughts they would take with them in a '*Magic Box*'. One wrote: "*I will capture in my magic box the warmth of a beam of sunlight caressing my skin, the scent of a burnt out firework as it lingers in the misty Autumn air.*" Pupils learn about the technicalities of the English language and are able to correctly identify and use '*similes*', '*oxymorons*' and '*pathos*' in their writing with increasing ease and accuracy as they get older. Pupils in Year 6 had opportunities to use '*oxymorons*' following the visit of a poet to talk about the work of Shakespeare. Pupils in Year 5 wrote their own 'poignant poems', which formed a memorable and moving display in the classroom. One wrote about the death of her Nanny, "*Fear no more about your old wheelchair,*

*Don't worry about your cancer any more,  
 You have finished with your food and water  
 Care no more about flooding the floor.  
 All your work is over and done,  
 Now you're in heaven and you can have some fun.  
 Your spirit will never go,  
 Just follow the river's flow."*

Their sense of humour and their appreciation of the effectiveness of 'puns' is apparent in their adaptations of the story of 'The Three Pigs' for a 'broadsheet' or 'tabloid' newspaper. One pupil wrote the headline *BIG BAD WOLF STILL AT LARGE AS PIGS MEET EARLY GRAVE(Y)*.

5. Clearly work of this quality in English and in mathematics has its foundations in the early stages of pupils' schooling. The advanced skills that are apparent when pupils are in Years 5 and 6 are built up gradually and deliberately as pupils move through the school. During the inspection it was obvious that pupils were consistently working at levels and standards that were beyond what one would expect to find from pupils at those ages in most other schools. Pupils in Year 2 were tackling work in mathematics that many pupils in Year 4 in other schools would find challenging. The school had for some years before the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies already introduced its own system of methodical and rigorous teaching in literacy and numeracy. During the inspection pupils' work in literacy and numeracy lessons was invariably planned for older pupils than those who were actually tackling it. This is the result of the school's work in assessing what pupils can do, ensuring that this information is used to plan work that is challenging and identifying areas where extra attention should be given through revision or additional challenge.
6. The school identifies areas where additional help is needed as early as the first few weeks after children start in the nursery. An analysis of data from tests shows if children need extra opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers or of books. This is the beginning of the school's collection of information on each child that helps them to track progress as pupils move through the school. The work that is done in the nursery to improve children's early skills is measured again as pupils start in the reception classes. Data show that there have been major improvements especially in children's basic skills. When the school identifies weaknesses in reading and writing skills it acts promptly at an early stage to provide pupils with as much help as possible. This careful analysis of pupils' progress throughout both key stages enables the school to group pupils accurately according to ability. It also means that there are opportunities for gifted pupils to work with pupils who are older than they are. The introduction of a computerised system to enable pupils to work individually on extending their numeracy and literacy skills has had a marked impact on their standards of work. They work at their own speed and enjoy the challenge of maintaining certain levels of accuracy within a given time.
7. Pupils in this school make remarkable progress especially considering the average attainment of most children when they start school and the well-above average attainment at the end of both key stages. Clearly the benefits of collecting considerable amounts of data are dependent of teachers using it to its optimum effect and this they do. The school sets regular assessments in specific areas such as writing to assess pupils' progress. Teachers use the results of national and optional tests to gauge the progress of pupils. The individualised computer sessions in numeracy and literacy provide valuable information about areas of weakness that need revision. Teachers set accurate and realistic targets about the improvements they expect and they share these explicitly with pupils. They talk in terms of achieving specific National Curriculum levels of work and pupils fully understand what these terms mean. One pupil talking about target-setting wrote *"I like them very much! It's like a promise to yourself!"*

**Teaching is very good. Teachers are hard working, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They work very well together as a team**

7. Teaching was good in almost 90 per cent of lessons observed. It is very good and occasionally excellent in almost 50 per cent of teaching. This is high quality teaching throughout the school. Lessons are exciting and stimulating and it is immediately clear why pupils like their teachers and lessons so much. Teachers know how to teach! They know what they want pupils to learn and the best way to go about achieving that. They are very good at assessing what pupils have done and then making sure that the next lesson is planned at just the right level to challenge and extend pupils. They know a great deal about the subjects they teach and are always willing to learn more. Teachers do not allow lessons to become tedious or boring. They make sure that what has to be done is done quickly enough and in such a way that pupils stay interested and absorbed. Perhaps the greatest talent they have is their very high expectation of what pupils can achieve and this is patently obvious in the standards of work that pupils attain in classes. All parents agree that the school has high expectations for their children.
8. Teachers work very well together as a team and offer a good deal of support to each other. Teachers who are new to the school are welcomed and quickly 'pick up' the Cranbourne traditions. Teachers all accept and seem to relish the individual and joint responsibility for ensuring that pupils maintain very good progress from year to year. Thus, pupils' results at the end of both key stages are not seen as being solely dependent on Year 2 and Year 6 teachers. All teachers understand the importance of their own role whatever year group they teach. The school's arrangements for teaching pupils in ability groups depend on teachers' enthusiasm and commitment for this system. The system in Years 5 and 6 for teachers to teach a particular subject across the age range works very well and offers them the opportunity to develop specific expertise which they can share with others.
9. One of the school's most successful features is the way in which teachers share with pupils what they expect them to learn by the end of the lesson. Teachers explain usually in no more than one or two sentences what they expect pupils to learn. This is often written on the board and referred to during the lesson to ensure that everyone is 'on track' to achieve the same ends. The *'intended learning outcome'* is checked with pupils at the end of the lesson to enable teachers to find out if pupils have learned what was planned at the beginning of the lesson. It also helps to ensure that the teaching stays clearly focused on the main elements of the lesson and that time in lessons is always spent purposefully so that not a spare moment is wasted.
10. The teachers' use of questioning to find out what their pupils know is often outstanding. Their frequency and depth provide valuable information for teachers to decide when to make pupils' work a little more challenging or whether some revision is required. The frequency and depth of questioning do not allow pupils to become complacent during lessons. All pupils are included and they never know when they will be the next one to be asked. This sharpens their attitudes to learning and develops their concentration. Teachers rarely answer a question with a straightforward answer. Frequently they answer a question with another question. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson the teacher asked searching questions such as *"If I asked what repeated addition sum that is, how would you explain?"* Pupils know that when they answer a question a teacher's supplementary question might mean they have to give a different type of answer. In the same lesson, for example, the teacher asked *"What do these numbers have in common?"* When a pupil answered that they were all in the 5 times table the teacher asked *"Is there a more 'mathsy' answer to that question?"* To which the pupil

replied *"They are all multiples of five."* Teachers insist on repeated questioning as an accurate way of finding out and double-checking if pupils understand. For example, in an English lesson a Year 6 pupil commented about a piece of writing from another pupil, *"I think the language is colloquial"*. To which the teacher responded immediately, *"Justify colloquial!"* and a moment later remarked *"I'm just doing my usual job of wheedling and needing to get answers!"*

**The school has an outstanding ethos. It helps pupils to become excellent learners and gives them the confidence to believe in their own ability to achieve high standards. There are exceptional relationships between staff and pupils. They delight in each other's company!**

10. From the moment visitors step through the door at Cranbourne and meet the pupils it is quite clear that this is a special sort of school. Pupils really enjoy it and they are very proud of what goes on there. They are sure that it is the best school for them and that they would not learn as much anywhere else. They are very anxious to show people around, to talk about their work and to put forward their opinions and to listen to others' views. In discussion with them pupils talked about *"How everyone is appreciated and the team feeling in school."* They talk enthusiastically about their teachers saying *"Teachers are more like friends. They have boundaries but they trust us. They give us responsibility and we can have fun with them. Our teachers are approachable. You can go to any of them and they will sort any problem out"*.
11. The exceptional relationships that teachers have with pupils is apparent in lessons and throughout the school day and has a positive impact on pupils' work. In short it helps them to learn effectively. For example, children in the nursery were not always accurate in their work on letter sounds but overcame their apprehension when the teacher smiled at them and gave them words of encouragement. Teachers are genuinely interested in the work that pupils do, in the answers they give and in the progress that they make. They create the right environment for learning by providing lots of good opportunities for pupils to respond to questions and to work together in pairs and groups. As a result pupils are well-motivated. They know that teachers place importance on the quality of their work. Pupils like that and comment that the quality of their work and their interests are recognised and acknowledged. As one pupil said *"We're not just respected for our talents in school, but also for those out of school."*
12. Pupils at The Cranbourne School are very confident learners. They approach all tasks enthusiastically and believe that they will succeed. Their high self-esteem is fostered by the ways in which they and their teachers interact. Teachers give real credit for pupils' efforts. Throughout the whole school there is an obvious emphasis on positive reinforcement and the use of praise. Effort as well as achievement is recognised, often in the form of 'stickers' that the pupils clearly enjoy receiving. There is an obvious desire for confident, happy and secure pupils with no fear of failure for pupils or adults. The recent *'Investors in People Award'* recognises the contribution of all parties to the work and life of the school. The school's use of individual computer programs to develop pupils' skills in numeracy and literacy is an example of the provision of unusual and exciting learning opportunities for pupils and their teachers. The fact that the sessions are held in two computer suites that can be rarely matched in any other primary school makes pupils feel good about their work. The whole school trip in January to the Millennium Dome at Greenwich is an example of the creative way in which the school cultivates bonds and shared experiences between the adults and pupils who work there. It was clearly a memorable experience for all the pupils, one of whom wrote about his first impression, *"It was like a gigantic umbrella with luminous yellow spikes!"*



**The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership. All staff and governors support them very well**

13. The impact of the outstanding leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher is clearly evident in the way in which the school has continued to provide a high quality education over a number of years. All the key issues from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. As in all successful schools ideas are constantly being put forward to meet new challenges and to raise standards whenever possible. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an extremely effective partnership, initially identifying priorities and making policy decisions. This is a school that welcomes change whenever it is seen as bringing positive benefits. It is a school that has always attempted to be '*one step ahead*' of national initiatives. For instance, it placed considerable emphasis on literacy and numeracy before national strategies were introduced. It introduced whole class teaching and specialist teaching in the core subjects before they became fashionable and offered home-school agreements before there were national requirements to do so.
14. Almost all parents feel the school is well managed and led. Governors and parents talk about the commitment of all the staff at the school and the quality of leadership the headteacher provides. They are aware that good leadership promotes good teamwork and that is the case at The Cranbourne School. Teachers feel that they are empowered by the managers of the school to take responsibility for specific areas. This responsibility is not in name only. It is real, with clear expectations regarding role and duties; for example, as well as taking responsibility for ensuring the quality of resources subject co-ordinators monitor the standards of pupils' work, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching. They take their lead from the headteacher and deputy headteacher who monitor the quality of teaching on a regular basis throughout the school and provide advice about any improvements that need to be made. It is the spirit of fair management that has promoted open discussion amongst staff, a willingness to '*have a go*' with new initiatives and an openness to professional development.
15. Governors have played a significant part in the growing popularity of the school. They are knowledgeable and very supportive. They have worked hard to support the school's ambition to introduce unusual educational initiatives and they share common aims with the headteacher. They have regular formal and informal contact with the school. The recent review of their committee structure reflects a modern and progressive attitude to their work, in line with national demands; for example, they now have a curriculum and performance review committee and a personnel and remuneration committee. They play a positive part in reviewing the performance of the school and support educational priorities through careful financial planning.

**The school helps pupils to develop excellent attitudes to the school community. Pupils care very much about each other and show great respect and care for the school**

15. In the previous report it was noted that pupils' attitudes were exemplary and this is still the case. Pupils are very responsive and talk enthusiastically about their school and their work. They want everyone to know how good they think the school is! Their willingness to listen carefully to what they have to do, to start work promptly and to concentrate and work hard means that no time is wasted in lessons. There is a real desire on their part to do their best and they have a genuine enthusiasm for learning. For example, in the nursery children showed real delight when they identified words containing the '*sh*' sound. The same children were disappointed when their teacher told them it was the end of the session and they should pack away the coins they had been using in their money sorting activity. All pupils in a whole school assembly listened in quiet awe as the school choir sang beautifully.

16. Pupils' positive attitudes mean that they care about the content of their work even when they are not supervised directly. For example, one or two parents were concerned that their children in Year 6 spent too much time at home working on their personal topics because they were so interested! When pupils use the individual numeracy programs in the computer suite their enthusiasm is not tempered by the fact that they are working alone. They maintain their determination to complete as many assignments as quickly as they can with as few mistakes as possible. They bring their positive and sensitive attitudes to different areas of their work. For example, many pupils were deeply moved by the story of the 'Holocaust' on their visit to the War Museum, while others brought compassion to their *'poignant poems'*. They get on well with each other and work very well in pairs and groups, listening carefully to others' ideas. Pupils in Year 6 were well aware of the possibly hurtful effect their constructive criticisms of other pupils' writing might have. They carried out the task thoughtfully and sensibly.
17. Pupils' behaviour remains very good since the last inspection. Almost all parents agree that this is the case in lessons and when pupils go on trips to places of interest. Pupils are very polite to adults and others. The school operates a system of organising ability groups for English and mathematics. This entails changing classrooms for these lessons and for visits to the computer suites. In turn this offers the possibility for restless behaviour between lessons whilst waiting for access to classrooms. In reality this is far from the case. The pupils' behaviour was very good on these occasions, as it was entering and leaving the assembly hall and going to and from the lunch hall. They take responsibility for each other's behaviour and are quick to let others know if they feel that they have not lived up to Cranbourne expectations!

### **Pupils learn about a wide range of interesting and varied subjects**

18. A few parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires expressed some concern that the pressures of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies had reduced the time available for their children to experience a full range of other subjects. This is clearly not the case. The school does indeed place appropriate importance on literacy and numeracy but it ensures that pupils are able to study a wide range of other subjects such as history, design and technology and physical education. Their work on classroom and corridor walls and discussions with pupils reveal that they enjoy other subjects and have a great deal of knowledge about them. Older pupils have lessons in European studies, including an introduction to spoken French and the school choir has twice represented Hertfordshire in concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in London.
19. Good links are made between the subjects, for example between English and science where pupils develop the ability to write extended accounts of science investigations they carry out. In Year 6 there are very good links between science and design and technology. Pupils carry out experiments on increasing and reducing friction and design a *'dream shoe'* for four different people, each of whom has a different shoe requirement. Pupils write sensitively about the trial and tribulations of the Second World War and they write about life in the Caribbean island of Barbados. Currently, however, the links between English and other subjects are not intentionally designed to develop specific aspects of pupils' writing, for example persuasive writing.
20. Visits to places of interest and visitors to school capture pupils' interest in their work. At the beginning of the year all pupils travelled to the Millennium Dome in Greenwich and on their return wrote very vivid descriptions of what they saw and did. The school's *'artist in residence'* helped pupils to create a very good three-dimensional sculpture. A trip to the War Museum added an extra dimension to the pupils' studies about life in England during the Second World War. The pupils have links with a multicultural school in North London,

a rural village school in Hertfordshire and a school in Bahrain. Much of the pupils' art work originates from topic based activities, although there is scope for further development of their art skills in a range of media. Some parents felt that there were not enough extra-curricular activities for their children. The school runs a number of lunchtime and after school clubs, including football, netball and very good drama activities.

**The school makes very good links with parents. It values the support that parents provide**

21. The school has worked very hard to form very strong links with parents and to keep them well informed about their children's progress. The school views the parents' contribution as a very positive feature of the school. Over 90 per cent of parents agree that they are happy to approach the school with problems or questions and that the school works closely with parents. The school's links with parents were recognised as a strength of the school in the previous inspection report.
22. The school provides lots of very good quality information to parents. The school prospectus is excellent. It is an attractive, informative first contact for many prospective parents. The school sends out regular news and curriculum letters and arranges two parent-teacher interviews each year. The school has recently introduced half-yearly written reports to further inform parents about their children's progress.
23. The school is so positive about including parents in their children's education that it has altered the organisation of the school day to accommodate them. With the introduction of the very structured format of the literacy and numeracy sessions the school realised that it was becoming difficult to arrange times for parents to hear readers. Consequently it arranged supported reading time at the beginning of the school day, before the literacy hour, so that parents could volunteer to help and then go on to work. The success of this initiative is obvious judging from the very large number of parents who help every morning.



## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The use of information technology to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge in other subjects**

24. The school recognises the important role of information technology in the pupils' education. It has recently invested tens of thousands of pounds in two outstanding computer suites that are unlikely to be matched in more than a handful of primary schools throughout the country. It has also employed a full-time technician to supervise the suites. There is some evidence of word-processing and data-handling and computers are used very well to promote individual numeracy and literacy programs. Currently, however, there are limited planned links between information technology and other subjects. The school has wisely chosen to concentrate first on developing pupils' information technology capability so that they are then able to transfer these skills to programs that develop knowledge in other subjects. The school recognises that this is an area in need of development.

### **Planned opportunities for pupils to use a problem solving approach in a range of subjects**

25. The school has, quite correctly, concentrated its focus of attention on recent national initiatives, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. They have both been very successfully implemented and are having a significant impact on standards of work throughout the school. As in many other primary schools throughout the country the focus in these lessons is on teacher-led activities. Pupils make systematic gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Additionally, the setting by ability for groups in literacy and numeracy and in Years 5 and 6 the use of specialist subject teachers has led to improved standards of attainment, mainly through a clear focus on specific tasks. The school recognises that there are fewer opportunities than in previous years for teachers to extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work, including its pace and direction, through a problem-solving approach. If this is to be successfully extended the school has the advantage of pupils who are totally committed to all aspects of their work, work extremely well together in small and large groups, are determined to complete tasks and can be relied upon to work well without direct teacher support or intervention.

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

26. In the context of its many strengths and the very high quality of education it already provides, the school should now:
- i ensure that full use is made of information technology by planning how it can best support learning in other subjects;
  - ii extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for a problem solving approach to their work, including its pace and direction.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
14	33	39	14	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	471
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	94

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	27	30	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	25
	Girls	29	29	30
	Total	56	56	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (97)	98 (96)	96 (92)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	27
	Girls	30	30	30
	Total	57	57	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (96)	100 (98)	100 (98)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	35	44	79

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	34	34
	Girls	40	38	41
	Total	74	72	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (79)	91 (76)	95 (83)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	34	34
	Girls	37	40	40
	Total	67	74	74
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (88)	94 (82)	94 (88)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (69)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	471
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	31

#### **Education support staff: YR-- Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998 / 1999
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	£
Total income	754,201
Total expenditure	756,688
Expenditure per pupil	1,649
Balance brought forward from previous year	50,670
Balance carried forward to next year	48,183

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate 43%

Number of questionnaires sent out	470
Number of questionnaires returned	203

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	30	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	45	8	2	3
The teaching is good.	63	35	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	48	17	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	45	7	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	72	24	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	42	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	49	13	2	7

### Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents were concerned that recent government initiatives have increased pressure on schools to attain high results in 'league tables' and this has in turn led to reduced enjoyment for children.