

INSPECTION REPORT

BUSBRIDGE CE (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Godalming, Surrey

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125186

Headteacher: Mr Martyn Wilde

Reporting inspector: Mr Nigel Power
2790

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th February 2000

Inspection number: 191242

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brighton Road Godalming Surrey
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Loveless JP
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

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			The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Teaching and learning
			Key Issues for action
Ian Clark	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Ann Clark	Team inspector	English	
		English as an additional language	
		Equality of opportunity	
		French	
		Geography	
		History	
Tom Comer	Team inspector	Mathematics	Leadership and management
		Information technology	
Doreen Hansen	Team inspector	Science	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Art	
		Design and technology	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Busbridge CE (VA) Junior School is a voluntary aided school affiliated to the Church of England and caters for pupils aged 7 to 11. With 240 boys and girls on the roll it is fully subscribed and of average size for junior schools nationally. The school serves an area in which the socio-economic indicators are well above national averages. Although nearly a third of pupils are on the special needs register for a variety of conditions, only 5 have statements of special educational need and the overall attainment level on entry to the school is above average. There are five pupils for whom English is an additional language, but none requires specific help with English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many strengths. The level of attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average. When they leave attainment is well above average. This increase in their achievement is due to good teaching, the commitment of staff to pupils' personal development and a positive climate for learning. However, there are some areas that need further attention which management will need to address. Although the amount spent on educating each pupil is above the national average, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average. Pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- Attainment is particularly high in mathematics and in pupils' speaking and listening.
- Teaching is good overall with more than a fifth in the upper school being very good or excellent.
- Provision for pupils with special education needs is very good.
- The ethos of the school and relationships reflect the school's aims. The positive climate for learning is a strength of the school. Pupils are well cared for and encouraged to apply themselves to their learning.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- Attendance is well above average.

What could be improved

- Though well above average, standards could be raised further, especially of the more able pupils.
- Procedures for monitoring standards of work, teaching and the curriculum are not sufficiently well focussed to identify how improvements can be made.
- The school's development plan does not show clearly enough what should be done to raise standards.
- Strategies for literacy and numeracy are not yet implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Parents and governors are not informed sufficiently about the work of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

National Curriculum test results have improved at a similar rate to the national trend. The quality of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning is still a strength of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is now on a much more secure footing. The school has many more computers than it had. Several points for improvement were raised at the time of the previous inspection in November 1996. Whilst most of these have been tackled, more progress still needs to be made, in particular with the monitoring of standards, teaching and learning. Since the arrival of a new deputy headteacher more consideration is being given to these issues.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A	C
mathematics	A	A	B	C
Science	A	A	A	C

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

In most lessons pupils attain standards that are generally above average or higher. By the end of Year 6 the level of work is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are above average in information technology and in most other subjects. There are no subjects in which standards are below average. Pupils apply themselves conscientiously to their work, achieve well and make good progress, although some higher attaining pupils could do even better. In each of the last three years performances in the core subjects in the national Curriculum tests have been well above the national average. In 1999, in a year group with a higher than average number who entered the school with below average reading ages, the proportion of pupils achieving nationally expected levels was in line with that achieved in similar schools. In the previous year the school's performances were well above those in similar schools. Over the past three years test results have improved in line with the national trend and there is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. The school is seeking to improve the performances in the national tests in Year 6 and is extending its monitoring of the results of testing in an attempt to achieve higher targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school. They are very keen to learn and to participate in all school activities. They concentrate on their work and listen well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in lessons and throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show respect for others and are trustworthy. They willingly take responsibility for duties in school and for their own learning. They enjoy very good relationships with one another and with staff of the school. The way in which pupils show initiative and are willing to accept responsibility is excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

The teaching in the school is good overall and enables all pupils to make good progress. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science. Very little teaching of information technology could be seen. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and two-thirds were at least good. One in six lessons was very good or excellent: half of these lessons were in Year 6. Teaching is better than at the time of the previous inspection when six per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory. The best teaching is mainly seen in the classes for older pupils and in these classes pupils progress at the fastest rate. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

The strengths of teaching are the teachers' good knowledge of the subjects of the curriculum, their enthusiasm which is communicated to pupils, their high expectations of the way in which pupils should present their work and their encouragement of pupils' involvement in discussion and group work. Teachers manage pupils well and have good relationships with their classes. Their encouragement and the use of praise make a positive contribution to their pupils' achievements. Teachers lack confidence in using computers to aid their teaching. There is inconsistency in the ways teachers implement strategies for improving literacy and numeracy. In a few lessons teachers' introductions last too long with the result that higher attaining pupils are kept waiting to continue their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall, but the strategy for literacy devised by the school is not consistent in its implementation. The whole school planning of information technology in the curriculum needs further development. The pupils benefit from enriched provision through residential experiences, the school's links with a local engineering consultancy and the provision of a range of extra-curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with learning difficulties receive very good individual support both in class and when withdrawn for special help.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are fully assimilated in the life of the school and make the same good progress as other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	At least satisfactory in all respects. In particular, social education is very good and provision for pupils' moral development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides an environment for pupils in which they can feel comfortable and happy, although some sanctions applied are inappropriate. An effective partnership with parents enables them to support their children's learning but a significant number of parents would like more consultation about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school provides an effective climate for learning in which pupils can thrive: this is recognised by parents. However, the monitoring of lessons and the curriculum by the headteacher, senior management and subject co-ordinators needs further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, but should be more involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its test results thoroughly. The governors are aware of the standards achieved, but are not always aware of some of the school's procedures.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing and resources are satisfactory, but some of the school's teaching accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school is careful with its purchases and always seeks best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's results, success in national tests and their children's standards of work. • The children's behaviour. • Teachers' high expectations for attainment and personal development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their partnership with the school. • The management of behaviour, in particular the 'patio policy'. • Information on their children's progress and what they will be learning. • Extra-curricular provision

The inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. They also agree that the patio policy is inappropriate and note that governors wish to see its use discontinued. Although inspectors feel that the partnership between parents and the school is generally effective and that school reports are reasonably informative, they suggest that communications with parents could be improved and that more information could be given on what is taught. Inspectors understand some of the concerns expressed about the extra-curricular provision, but feel that, with the planned extension of musical activities, the school offers as wide a range of opportunities as found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Over the last three years, including 1999, the school has consistently achieved results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 that are well above the national average. The proportions of pupils achieving level 4 in English, mathematics and science are well above the national figure. Prior to 1999, results were also well above the average achieved in similar schools, but there was a dip in the performance in relation to similar schools last summer, when performances were in line with the national average for schools in similar circumstances. The school has examined reasons for the slightly less strong performance in all three core subjects, which was particularly noticeable in mathematics. Several factors have emerged, some of which are issues on which the school can take some action. Of those where the school is in a position to make improvement some specific action has already been taken, for example, appointing a new co-ordinator for mathematics.

2. An analysis of the performance of pupils when they enter the school reveals that standards in mathematics have been consistently high in Key Stage 1 national tests over the last four years, but in reading and writing there have been some clear differences between year groups. For example, the proportions of pupils who entered the school last September having achieved and exceeded, in mathematics, the nationally expected standard were well above average. This healthy position did not apply to reading and writing. In reading, performance at level 2 was well above average, but at level 3 it was below average. In writing, achievement at level 3 was only in line with the national average and at level 2 it was below average. While the proportion with reading ages below average has been less than the national figure for several years there is variation between year groups. More than a third of the 1999 Year 6 had reading quotients below average when they entered the school. This figure is higher than any current year group in the school and more than double the proportion in Year 5.

3. The senior management of the school consider that the below average facility in reading, when they entered the school, of a relatively high proportion of the 1999 Year 6, may have contributed to a lower performance at the end of Key Stage 2 than in previous years. However, the school is aware that action needs to be taken to ensure that future year groups perform better. They recognise that more pupils should be achieving level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 and some should have opportunities to aspire to level 6. The targets set for the proportions of pupils achieving level 4 in English and mathematics are not over ambitious in relation to previous performance and might have been set higher. Although the school examines pupils' performance on entry, and subsequently, and makes a prediction of likely achievement at the end of Year 6 no targets are set for performance at level 5, nor for level 6. As a result, there is no indication of the school's determination to add value to the standards pupils might be expected to achieve after four years' progress in the school. The school would do well to consider setting such targets as a means of raising standards and including them in the schools' development plan. Nationally there has been a slight but steady upward trend in performance based on the figures for the past four years. This covers the period since the previous inspection of the school and during that time, in spite of the dip in 1999, the school's overall improvement in performance has matched the national trend.

4. The school's analysis of performance on entry has identified a weakness in reading

and writing amongst boys. This gender difference does not exist at the end of Year 6 where the boys have performed very slightly better than the girls and have exceeded the national performance for boys by a greater margin than the corresponding achievement of girls. Although the school has recognised a concern about reading and writing when pupils enter the school, they do not yet follow a consistent practice for teaching literacy throughout the school. Pupils generally read well and they have highly developed speaking and listening skills. Much of their writing is competent and serves its purpose well, but it is less strong in its imaginative content and suggests that many have not had contact with a wide range of literature.

5. Although the national numeracy strategy is not yet followed fully in all classes, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above average and many are developing good methods of mental calculation. They are confident in handling numbers and apply their skills in a variety of contexts. Many pupils show above average levels of competence in their knowledge and understanding of the use of computers, but they are less adept at using the keyboard and do not use computers enough in their learning across the curriculum.

6. In all subjects taught in the school, including French in the upper classes, pupils achieve standards by the time they leave school which will provide them with a firm basis for further study. However, attainment overall is further above the nationally expected levels in Years 5 and 6 than in lower years. This reflects the stronger teaching in the upper school and a greater degree of urgency as pupils get older. It also results from the greater maturity that older pupils have towards their learning and the way they apply themselves. As yet some of the Year 3 pupils are still adjusting to the positive learning culture that exists in the school. Overall, pupils achieve well: they make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress as a result of the very good provision that is now made for them. The pupils for whom English is not their first language are in no way hampered in their learning by any lack of facility in English, and being fully integrated into the school community, make similar progress to their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and personal development is excellent. Teachers have a very positive attitude towards the pupils, constantly encouraging them to develop their inter-personal, written and spoken skills. Pupils like coming to school and their self-confidence is high. They can discuss their work, interests and ideas fluently and sensibly. Consequently, the quality of relationships established between pupils and with adults is a strength of the school. These standards are similar to those found during the previous inspection. Parents identify strongly with the school's values and think that the school helps to develop maturity, responsibility and a high standard of behaviour. No pupils have been excluded in recent years.

8. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen very carefully during whole class lessons and when teachers call for attention during group tasks. They react well to their teachers, often volunteering ideas and answers. Pupils work well in groups, usually showing perseverance and independence, even when their group is not being directly supervised by an adult. Pupils are generally proud of their work and their standards of presentation are good. They are able to speak very successfully in public, for instance in assembly when presenting prizes to winners of a charitable fund-raising competition, that they had organised.

9. The school functions as a very orderly community. This confirms the views of the

vast majority of parents that standards of behaviour are good. Pupils behave well whether they are in classrooms, moving around school or in the playground. They usually walk calmly in the corridors and are sensible in lessons when changing places for different activities. Pupils show a positive respect for the school building and the grounds. They handle equipment and books carefully. The school is generally effective in dealing promptly with the occasional incidents of bullying that occur. The school's Golden Book records examples of good progress, behaviour and contribution to the school community: specific achievements are commended in school assembly.

10. The very good quality of the relationships that exist between pupils, and between pupils and adults, contributes very well to the ethos of the school and to pupils' progress. Boys and girls get on very well together, joining in games at playtimes and collaborating in lesson tasks. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 4, pupils collaborated well when searching for patterns in mathematical sequences. Pupils show much respect for the values and ideas of others, as shown in a Year 6 lesson about the writing of Martin Luther King. They show consideration for those with special educational or physical needs, supporting them in lessons.

11. Personal development is excellent throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and debate ideas and investigate problems. At the last inspection, it was judged that pupils were developing good independent learning skills and could organise themselves effectively and efficiently in class. This positive learning climate still exists and pupils display good independent attitudes, responding well to changes in the curriculum. In science and in mathematics they conduct investigations and solve problems. In literacy and music, there are some positive opportunities to work in groups. Pupils show independence when using the computer, for example when writing rap poems for a Year 3 assembly. They contribute to discussions about their class rules and take suitable responsibilities for day to day routines, such as helping to prepare for assemblies, putting out equipment for physical education and taking registers to the office. They willingly collect equipment and help to tidy their classrooms. The school provides residential experiences, which encourage independence and self-reliance. Pupils respond well to the needs of others, raising funds for charities and contributing to appeals such as CRISIS. The 'house' system is well run by the pupils themselves.

12. Parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school. Overall attendance is well above national averages and there are no unauthorised absences. Punctuality is very good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection no lessons were seen in which the teaching was unsatisfactory, although some were less strong where supply teachers were less familiar with the class and could not extend pupils as much as they might have done had they known the pupils better. Nevertheless, about two-thirds of the lessons seen were good or better with one in six being very good or excellent. Very good lessons were seen in every year group. In both Year 5 and Year 6 nearly 90% of the teaching was good: half of the very good and excellent teaching took place in Year 6. Generally the teaching becomes stronger and more closely focussed on pupils' learning as pupils get older.

14. Teaching has improved slightly since the last inspection when the proportions of good and very good teaching were a little higher but 6 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers have good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach and even when they do not have skills in a specific subject, such as music, they prepare well making sure they understand the topic and provide good leadership for their pupils. They are able to respond to pupils who ask questions about related matters, but which were not in the teacher's planned lesson content. All teachers enjoy good relationships with their classes and, other than the occasional calling to order, they do not need to resort to disciplinary measures. In most lessons the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is communicated to the pupils who are keen to learn especially if involved in exploring a new topic, in history or geography, or undertaking an investigation in science. Through encouragement and the use of praise teachers extend pupils' thinking and stimulate them to explore ideas further.

15. Teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' written work. They also expect, and achieve, good participation in class discussions when pupils use their well-developed speaking and listening skills to good effect. They provide opportunities for pupils to work together in groups as, for example, when pupils work collaboratively on compositions in music. The maturity of many of the pupils, particularly in Year 6, enables their teachers to give them opportunities to work together: such collaborative working stimulates pupils' social development and encourages the groups with higher attaining pupils to produce more advanced and better polished results.

16. There are three areas in which the quality of teaching could be improved. The use of information technology in the study of many subjects is underdeveloped, although pupils have the skills to work with computers without the need for close supervision. Although teachers have had training to improve their own skills they need guidance on how to use computers to aid their teaching across the curriculum. Pupils are achieving well in the development of their skills in literacy and numeracy, but the current good progress could be impeded if the lack of consistency in the teaching strategies employed is allowed to continue. In some lessons, the guidance of the national strategies is used to good effect as in a Year 4 mathematics lesson. However, an hour on spelling, as contained in another lesson, does not accord with the structure of the literacy hour and can be counterproductive with some children, especially if this is the only time in the week when spelling is highlighted and if it is not considered in an appropriate context. The third area in which teaching could be improved relates to the use of lesson time. All teachers plan their lessons to achieve specific objectives. The objectives are sometimes shared with the class, but pupils are seldom set specific targets in terms of what they should achieve in a given time. Most lesson plans do not indicate how long each element of a lesson might last, so that sometimes activities are allowed to continue for too long.

17. The provision made for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The needs of pupils are carefully assessed, and action is taken to ensure that the needs are met, either in class with support from 'special needs assistants' or sometimes by withdrawing them from classes for special consideration. The establishment of booster classes for help with literacy or numeracy skills also provides additional help outside school hours. In each year group, pupils are set, according to their attainment level, for their mathematics lessons and for some lessons an additional teacher either takes a group or provides specific assistance. This arrangement enables all pupils to make good progress. Both through this mechanism and also by focussing the nature of the tasks clearly on the needs of groups of pupils, teachers are able to provide support or stimulation matched to the stage pupils have reached in their understanding of the subjects. A similar provision has recently been introduced to improve pupils' progress in English. Pupils who have

physical difficulties are fully included in all the activities they are able to pursue and they are treated with great sensitivity by their teachers. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive little or no specific help, because they do not need any, being sufficiently fluent in their use of English to enable them to be treated in the same way as the rest of their classmates.

18. There is a purposeful and productive climate for learning and pupils contribute fully to the strong work ethic that exists. Pupils are committed to learning, they enjoy strong parental support and they collaborate well with each other, while also encouraging a positive competitive spirit which manifests itself in the very good standard of work they produce. Most take care with the way they present their work and older pupils are well motivated in the way they record the results of practical activities. Generally pupils are conscientious in doing the homework set them and such exercises help them to consolidate their knowledge and understanding. Occasionally, however, they find difficulty in balancing the priorities in completing their homework and participating in other educational activities, such as dancing or music lessons, outside school. The school needs to ensure that pupils have sufficient time to complete homework tasks.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

19. The previous inspection reported that the school provided a curriculum which was balanced, broadly based and effectively promoted pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. Since then the school has successfully extended the range of opportunities offered to pupils in mathematics, made greater use of the school grounds as a resource for learning in science and art, and introduced a personal and social education programme. The school has taken note of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, but, particularly in relation to the former, has decided not to implement fully the pattern of the literacy hour. This alternative arrangement to the national strategy is not clearly stated in the school's brochure. Currently there is inconsistency throughout the school in the way literacy and numeracy are taught. The new information and communication technology suite, when commissioned, will provide facilities for the extension of pupils' application of information technology across the curriculum.

20. The school complies with legal requirements to provide the National Curriculum and religious education. The current quality and organisation of the curriculum is sound with the exception of the use of information technology across the curriculum, where the school recognises further development is needed. The school has reviewed and revised some curriculum policy documents and has a programme for reviewing others. Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs: this is a strength of the school. The recent introduction of booster classes for literacy and numeracy, before and after school, helps pupils to improve basic skills.

21. All subjects have policy documents: these are not always accompanied by schemes of work or detailed guidance for their implementation. When these are in place they will provide a guide for teaching across the school and bring greater consistency in curriculum provision. Generally, subject planning provides an overview for the teaching of subjects and skills. Teachers plan subject coverage in long, medium and short term plans. Short term planning is not consistently well done, learning intentions in daily plans need sharper focus. The match of work to the needs of individuals is relevant but the school should reconsider the withdrawal of pupils from the same lesson week on week to receive support teaching: this is impeding those pupils' access and entitlement to the full curriculum.

22. Sex Education is appropriately included within the framework of the school's personal and social education policy. This programme also includes an awareness of the misuse of drugs. It forms part of the school's programme to encourage good citizenship and includes opportunities to meet workers from essential services such as the police and fire services.

23. Governors have a curriculum committee to monitor the curriculum, approve subject policies and obtain information from subject leaders on the current state of their subjects in school. The committee has recently been re-formed and is re-establishing its priorities and responsibilities. Individual governors have been given specific responsibilities for literacy, numeracy, and special educational needs.

24. The school provides opportunities for pupils to go on educational visits and the provision of residential experiences in Years 4, 5 and 6 fosters pupils' personal development. The Outdoor Visits Policy provides clear and important guidance for the safe conduct of such visits. The use of the local environment in lessons is a valuable resource. Visits to museums and art galleries are frequent and follow-up work features in classroom displays. The provision of French is a further enrichment of the school's curriculum.

25. Extra-curricular provision, including young engineers, gardening club, chess and a range of sporting and musical activities also add breadth to pupils' experiences. Parents support extra curricular provision by giving their time. It was noted during the inspection that relatively few pupils availed themselves of some of the extra-curricular opportunities offered. The school takes part in friendly competitive games and athletics fixtures with other schools in the area and there are links with a local football club. Several parents also pay for their children to have Instrumental music tuition in school.

26. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school complies with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship that is mainly or wholly Christian in content. Circle time also successfully addresses pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. The school aims to provide high quality education in a distinctively Christian environment which challenges and stimulates all pupils according to their abilities and aspirations. In these aspects of pupils' development the school is successfully meeting its aims.

27. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. In subjects such as science, art and music, spiritual development is an area under review by subject co-ordinators. In the most effective lessons teachers plan for pupils to reflect and, whenever possible, consider the non-material dimensions of life. In an art lesson, demanding close observational drawings of natural and manufactured objects, this aspect of pupils' development was encouraged. In science, pupils study conditions and habitats which provide the necessary elements to support plant, animal and insect life. Pupils look at the school grounds, surrounded by trees, grass and plants and the school pond and apply the knowledge they gain to their learning and understanding of the wider world. The opportunities for spiritual considerations are not planned for in all subjects and this the school needs to address.

28. The provision for moral development is good. Governors plan to revise the behaviour policy to bring emphasis to positive reactions rather than a list of sanctions. Achievement is celebrated and self discipline encouraged. The school helps pupils to appreciate the world around them, to care for the environment and to show respect for property, recognising their place within the school community and the wider world. During personal and social education lessons there are discussions of right and wrong along with

work on raising self esteem. A positive effect of the school's approach to moral education is that there is no graffiti or damage to the building and resources are well cared for.

29. The provision for social development is very good. The school provides a caring and supportive environment. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of the whole community, not just part of the small world of the school. Pupils enjoy taking an active part in local environmental conservation and the improvement of the school grounds, helping to make the area, such as the recently planted spinney, attractive. Pupils take part in local festivals and competitions, developing co-operative social skills. Visitors from the local community, such as the police and fire service, help pupils to develop as responsible citizens. Pupils support a range of charities, some by devising fund raising projects such as 'playground sales' by themselves. On residential visits they develop the skills of caring for themselves and each other. Pupils also have the opportunity to contribute to their own learning by working within class on group projects such as scientific investigations and taking part in extra-curricular activities including sports. Pupils undertake responsibilities around the school and when given the opportunity show they can use their initiative in, for example, re-arranging the classroom furniture and allocating resources and apparatus.

30. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall with some improving features. Since the last inspection planned opportunities for the study of non-European cultures and faiths other than Christianity have been implemented. Classroom displays show artefacts and photographs to support the study of Kenya, China and Egypt in humanities. The school provides appropriately for pupils to appreciate their own local culture and is addressing living in a racially mixed world with an appreciation that all cultures make to life in England. The school teaches pupils to appreciate and develop their own cultural traditions through work on the Celts, Romans and Tudors, through visits to museums, concerts, theatre groups, and occasional visits from artists and poets. Opportunities are being developed for pupils to appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures, including awareness of musical styles from different traditions. Festivals of other faiths are taught and a visit to a mosque has taken place, but these developments are still at an early stage of implementation. The library and classrooms have a small collection of multicultural books, these range from cookbooks to stories from different traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. This is a very caring school. The arrangements for supporting pupils' academic performance and personal development and to promote pupils' welfare are strengths of the school. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and are very responsive to the needs of individuals and groups. Child protection procedures are good and conform to legal requirements. All staff know how to respond to child protection issues so that the school is equipped to take effective action whenever necessary.

32. Procedures for promoting pupils' health and safety are good. There are regular health and safety inspections by the headteacher and governors and any necessary action is taken promptly. However, the boys' toilet floor surface has been damaged and action is required to eliminate the resulting unpleasant odour. Safety practices are constantly emphasised in lessons. Good access facilities are available for disabled pupils. The school has secure policies for ensuring pupils' safety on educational visits and there are sufficient members of staff with first aid qualifications. Fire drills are effectively carried out and the fire brigade inspects the premises annually.

33. There are very good procedures for encouraging attendance. Many pupils come to school early and read or engage in constructive activities before registration begins. Teachers are conscientious in checking reasons for absences or lateness and there are very efficient administrative procedures to record and track attendance patterns, including good co-operation with supporting agencies.

34. Procedures are good for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, reflecting the school's clear policy statements. However, although the school's discipline policy clearly states that sanctions should only be used for poor behaviour, they are also applied for things outside pupils' control, such as their parents failure to sign homework diaries. Parents, and pupils think that the patio detention procedure is inappropriate. Governors also wish to see the practice discontinued. There is good collaboration between teachers and the midday staff although at times the number of supervisors on duty is low, partly due to recruitment difficulties. The school's arrangements for rewarding and praising pupils' achievements contribute very well to the high standards of behaviour and to the virtual absence of harassment or bullying.

35. Procedures for monitoring attainment and progress are good. The school has established systematic methods for monitoring and recording pupils' academic progress. However, assessment procedures are not yet matched to the programmes of study or schemes of work in all subjects. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' performances and keep records of their progress. This enables them to plan lessons that are matched to pupils' requirements. However, those capable of higher attainment could be given more opportunities to be extended even further. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very carefully monitored, sometimes in collaboration with outside support from speech and occupational therapists, the educational psychologist and the learning and language support service.

36. Teachers and classroom assistants monitor pupils' personal development very well. Evidence is taken from pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships in lessons and at play. Pupils' personal development is also tracked when they share ideas during personal, social and health education lessons, including circle time discussions. Parents agree that pupils are helped to become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. Overall the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Many parents think that the school is very happy and successful but some would like the school to work more closely with them. Comments submitted by parents indicate that poor communications with the school are the cause of these concerns. Specific examples of matters about which parents made comments are: the variable quality of homework given; lack of guidelines about what is to be achieved from homework; little input of the school to the pupils' reading records; the use of punishment for non-completion of work; difficulty in obtaining immediate access to teachers to discuss minor problems.

38. Parents agree that behaviour is very good, teaching is good and that most pupils make good progress. Nearly a third of those who responded to the questionnaire do not think that they are well informed about how their child is getting on, but agree that the school expects pupils to work hard and to achieve their best academically and personally.

39. The school provides a satisfactory quality of information to parents. There are frequent and informative newsletters. Pupils' annual written reports contain constructive comments about progress and show ways in which they can make improvements. The school's prospectus is well presented, giving a consistent degree of information in a "reader friendly" style.

40. The headteacher and staff are available and willing to listen and respond to parents' concerns and questions by appointment. However, parents would welcome the opportunity to meet teachers informally to discuss concerns. The previous inspection report made similar comments. Parents' evenings are held in the autumn and spring term, but the opportunity to discuss progress at the end of the school year would be welcomed: this is a matter that the senior management team is currently planning to introduce.

41. The last inspection report said that many parents would appreciate the provision of more information on a regular basis about the work in the classroom. There are occasional meetings for parents, for example about literacy and numeracy, at which changes in the curriculum, and how parents can help their children at home, are discussed and explained.

42. Parental involvement in children's learning is very good. Some parents give regular help in classrooms and in the library; they accompany pupils on educational visits and assist in events such as football training and school sports. Parents give very good support to their children at home, for example by hearing them read and helping them to complete tasks and projects. Most have signed the home/school agreement and use the reading diaries to support their child's learning. Effective review meetings are held with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to share in discussions about the educational provision for their children and in the drawing up of their Individual Educational Plans. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) gives generous support to the school, organising a range of social and fund raising events. It has given valuable help in providing computers, mathematics books, games, and other equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The school enjoys much success in meeting its aims for pupils' achievement and personal development. The school's management has successfully established an effective ethos for learning. Expectations of conduct, effort and achievement are high and relationships are very good. This is an effective, high achieving and happy school in which all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and in which all may thrive.

44. The previous inspection found that the school was well managed but that governors were not sufficiently involved, and there were weaknesses in monitoring the school's work and in communicating with parents. Although some action has been taken on these areas further development is needed.

45. The morale of the teaching staff is satisfactory but improvements in the school's leadership are necessary to provide clearer direction and to show the teachers how to improve the quality of their work. In particular, the monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum by the governors, headteacher and other staff, including subject co-ordinators, needs further development because it is insufficiently rigorous to identify strengths and weaknesses and to show clearly how improvements can be made. Attention needs to be given to the nature, procedures and frequency of monitoring and to the systematic and centralised recording of outcomes and the effectiveness of subsequent action.

46. The work of the subject co-ordinators to plan the detail of the curriculum is generally satisfactory but they are less involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching. However, the co-ordinators currently have insufficient time to check up on the work in classrooms first-hand. Strategies for literacy and numeracy are not consistently implemented in all classes and there is, as yet, no detailed planning of the way in which the school will use information technology across the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed.

47. The governors fulfil their legal responsibilities to ensure that the school is on a sound financial footing, that a system of appraisal evaluates the quality of each teachers' work, that the statutory curriculum is in place, and that pupils are safe and cared for. Governors set the statutory targets for achievement and they monitor the work of the school first hand. Governors are aware of the school's performance and are aware that, though high, standards can be raised further. Governors are not sufficiently informed about important details of the school's work which are their concerns. For example, the chair of the curriculum committee was unaware that the school had not implemented the national literacy hour: this national initiative, though not mandatory, through its consistent pattern could help the teachers to raise standards further. The chair of the governing body also had not been consulted by the headteacher about the 'patio policy' for discipline, with which some parents are clearly unhappy.

48. A weakness of the school's planning for development is a lack of focus on what can be done to raise standards and to achieve the governors' targets. This will remain the case until the monitoring of classroom performance improves and provides clearer information.

49. The school's income per pupil is above average. Money received for particular purposes is spent appropriately; for example, funding for the education of pupils with special educational needs. In fact, the school decides to allocate more money for these pupils than is strictly merited and so is able to provide very well for them. Parents generously raise money to supplement the school's income and resources in order, for example, to provide the equipment for the new computer suite.

50. Staffing is adequate with sufficient well qualified staff to cover the curriculum. The school has enough learning resources and these are of reasonable quality, although some mathematics texts are out of date and there is some over-reliance on undemanding worksheets in some subjects. Much of the accommodation is good but some is unsatisfactory, especially two temporary external classrooms and the old building which houses Year 6 and the library. The siting of the library across the playground from the main building inhibits its use.

51. The most recent audit report found that the school's financial management was secure and made a very few minor recommendations, all of which have been implemented. In its purchasing, the school takes steps to ensure that it achieves best value; for example, through competitive tendering for stationery supplies.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to raise standards further and to improve the school's effectiveness the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) institute a more rigorous means of monitoring teaching, learning and the curriculum which ensures effective control of the quality of the work undertaken in the school, particularly through:
 - regular focused observations of lessons to show how improvements can be made;
 - systematic scrutiny of samples of pupils' written work;
 - analysis of class timetables to ensure appropriate balance in the time devoted to different subjects;(Paragraphs: 44, 45, 60, 74)
- (2) ensure that the school's development plan clearly reflects the results of monitoring and shows the specific action needed, especially to meet its targets.
(Paragraphs: 3, 48)
- (3) encourage consistent implementation of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy throughout the school.
(Paragraphs: 4, 5, 16, 19, 46, 47, 56, 60, 64)
- (4) improve communication between the school, governors and parents by:
 - ensuring that governors have the information necessary to carry out their duties effectively;
 - ensuring that parents are better informed about the progress of their children and what they are taught.(Paragraphs: 37, 40, 44, 47)

In addition to the above key issues the school should also attend to three minor issues by:

- ensuring that planned revision to its discipline practice, particularly in relation to punishments, accurately reflects the aims of the school and the school's discipline policy;
(Paragraphs: 28, 34)
- ensuring that teachers make the best use of lesson time;
(Paragraphs: 16, 58, 82, 86, 88, 91, 101)
- implementing a planned programme for the use of information technology throughout the curriculum
(Paragraphs: 16, 20, 49, 64, 87)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

47

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

70

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	13	47	36	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	240
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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	22	35	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	31	27	32
	Total	51	47	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (91)	82 (88)	91 (95)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	22	22
	Girls	31	28	34
	Total	52	50	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (91)	88 (93)	98 (89)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	237
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.0
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	400 627
Total expenditure	400 006
Expenditure per pupil	1 674
Balance brought forward from previous year	15 000
Balance carried forward to next year	15 621

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	240
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	40	9	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	34	50	13	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	60	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	59	13	3	1
The teaching is good.	35	52	5	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	15	51	28	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	34	38	15	11	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	47	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	18	46	25	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	23	48	12	5	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	57	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	40	25	11	3

Other issues raised by parents

In addition to the 42 parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector, 37 written comments were included with the questionnaires. Most of the comments are reflected in the above table. Although the majority of the parents who responded agreed with all the statements, there were some categories where a significant minority expressed concern. Areas on which a significant minority of parents expressed concern are: homework, information, communication, partnership, leadership and management and extra-curricular provision. The majority of parents who completed the questionnaire and/or attended the meeting expressed overall satisfaction with the school. In particular, parents feel that the quality of teaching and the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. Inspectors agree with these views. In addition to the issues above of which parents were critical, several expressed concern about the achievement by those children considered capable of attaining high standards. Particular concern was expressed about unevenness in the degree to which pupils are challenged, with a suggestion that teachers' expectations in Years 3 and 4 are not as high as those in the upper school. Some parents also felt that pupils are not required to do enough extended writing. Inspectors judge that academic standards are well above average, particularly in English, mathematics and science, but also consider that some of the more able pupils could achieve yet higher levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6. In the lessons observed during the inspection the quality of teaching was always at least satisfactory, but stronger in Years 5 and 6 than in the lower school.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

53. In the 1999 national tests, the proportion of pupils who attained the national standard of level 4 was well above the national average. The number of pupils who exceeded it was also above the national average. This performance is in line with the standard achieved in similar schools nationally. Over the last four years the test results were their highest in 1997 and have been slightly lower in the two following years. Test results in 1999 show a slightly better performance by boys than girls. Over the previous three years, however, the girls' performance was slightly higher. Standards of work seen during inspection were well above average, with a significant number of pupils likely to attain at a level above average. Several pupils are also capable of higher still: the school now plans to enter more pupils for the extension paper. Since the last inspection report, standards in English have been maintained at a level above the nationally expected average in all areas of the English curriculum, but have not been raised.

54. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening are well above average because they are provided with effective opportunities to develop these skills throughout the curriculum. All pupils speak with confidence in classroom discussions and in public performances. They have a good command of the English language and are able to express themselves confidently and clearly. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke confidently in an assembly. Younger pupils from Year 3 used good expression and confidence in a rehearsal for a class assembly, enthusiastically enacting sketches they had written themselves. All pupils use talk to develop ideas thoughtfully and are regularly required to do this during lessons.

55. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading is above average. Pupils read fluently with expression across a range of texts. They show a good understanding of plot, events and characters. High attaining pupils select key points within the text to justify their views. They compare authors' different styles confidently and with perception. All pupils have skill in using non-fiction texts and receive regular opportunities to work with these books in class, particularly in the upper classes. They can read and scan for information from reference material, as when Year 6 pupils were studying the Egyptians. High attaining pupils have good skills in using the full range of strategies with non-fiction texts. They know how to use the school's coded system for reference books in the library. They are aware of the contents, index, glossary and illustrator of books. Pupils with special educational needs use reference books well and are given good support by adults. Opportunities for pupils to read outside literacy lessons, in times specifically provided for this activity, are not a regular feature of the timetable.

56. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in writing is average, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining level 5 which is above the nationally expected standard. These higher attaining pupils write for different purposes with lively and thoughtful ideas. Pupils write biographies, reports, letters, poems and newspaper reports. They are able to note-take and draft work before making a final copy. They use words well in context to illustrate mood. For example, a Year 6 pupil describes the river as "a weeping willow hanging down like torrents of green rain". Metaphor and similes are used well to enhance writing.

Another Year 6 pupil describes seeing dolphins as "it was like a dream seeing the sun's rays on the water and the dolphins gaily jumping". The school has recognised a need to develop the pupils' writing skills which are weaker than other areas of English and are using effective

methods to do this. They show a good understanding of grammar and use it appropriately. Higher attaining pupils interpret complex text, understand inferences and the reason for the writer's use of repetition or particular language. This was seen in a lesson on "I have a dream" text by Martin Luther King where the pupils debated and appreciated the full meaning and impact of the text. Pupils extend their writing skills in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education, but this is not fully developed. In some classes there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their literary learning when lessons are constrained by the overuse of either the commercial scheme or worksheets. Standards of handwriting, presentation and spelling are good. Pupils with special educational needs often attain the expected level and make good progress in relation to their Individual Education Plans. They are given clear guidance by support staff and teachers.

57. Progress in Key Stage 2 is very good in speaking and listening. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop these skills as teachers expect them to contribute to whole class sessions and group discussions. Progress in reading is very good, including those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils receive well-managed support, which provides good teaching directly related to their needs. The school provides a well-structured reading scheme but regular school reading opportunities both within literacy lessons and in other class situations are not always provided. Progress in writing is good. There are regular timetable lessons to teach the skills of comprehension and writing and pupils in Year 6 are put into sets grouped on the basis of attainment to improve specific skills. Pupils' handwriting is good and their work is generally well presented.

58. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good throughout the school. They show interest in their English lessons, work with considerable application and show very good concentration and application. Pupils are very well behaved and work collaboratively in groups and pairs. They are particularly motivated when the work is challenging, has pace, rigour and variety and is well matched to their ability. On rare occasions, pupils become restless and lose interest if the lesson introduction is too long.

59. The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and generally sustain very good discipline and control. A wide range of teaching strategies is used and teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils. Features of good teaching include the use of a range of strategies to elicit answers from the pupils. This was seen in several lessons. However, in some lessons teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging tasks to raise standards of performance. They are very caring, know their pupils well and pay careful attention to individual needs. They encourage and praise their pupils' work, rewarding effort and success. Resources are used well and most teachers have them readily at hand. The library is well used as a non-fiction resource by the whole school. However, because of its position, away from most classes, its use as a reference resource for all classes is limited.

60. Although the school has informed the governing body and parents that it has 'embraced the literacy hour', it has not done so fully. The statement in the school brochure is misleading as the school does not provide the pupils with a daily literacy hour. The teaching of English has incorporated some of the ideas from the National Literacy Strategy, but the teaching of English throughout the school is now inconsistent in both approach and teaching. A commercial scheme has been bought to supplement the teaching, but it is not being used by all staff in the way it is recommended. Teachers' planning is not in line with National Literacy Strategy guidelines. For example, lessons devoted to an hour of spelling or grammar are not delivering the curriculum as recommended in the National Literacy Strategy, particularly when used to start the week. The co-ordinator needs to monitor what is happening lessons more rigorously, so that greater consistency is achieved in the

approaches adopted.

61. Teachers make frequent assessments of their pupils' performance and keep careful records of their progress. Their use of the information gained in planning future teaching is not so well developed. Reading records are well maintained and the home school reading diary is a good link between home and school. The marking of work is well managed across the school and up to date and pupils are aware of the marking system and of how they are progressing.

MATHEMATICS

62. The results of the national tests taken by the pupils at their infants schools indicate that their overall attainment is well above average in mathematics when they join the school. The results of national tests at the end of Year 6 are usually well above average. Both boys' and girls' test results are well above average though the boys' results are consistently higher than those of the girls. However, in 1999, the results were lower than in previous years: though they were above average they were no better than those of similar schools.

63. Standards of work in lessons are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. Standards are well above average in Year 6, and broadly match the test results over recent years. Overall achievement of the Year 6 pupils is therefore satisfactory in relation to their good starting point at the beginning of Year 3.

64. Pupils are taught in ability groups throughout the school. The higher attaining pupils are generally a year or so ahead of their age whilst even the weakest pupils are close to the standards expected. The strengths of the pupils' attainments lie in their good understanding of number and basic skills and in their ability to apply these key elements well to the solution of problems. However, even in these areas, pupils could still achieve higher standards. The new national strategy for numeracy is being implemented successfully in some of the classes, notably in Year 4, but less consistently so in Years 3 and 6. A particularly well taught numeracy lesson for higher attaining Year 4 pupils showed the pupils' good grasp of basic numerical facts, such as multiplication tables, and very good ability to solve difficult problems. On the other hand, numeracy lessons for some other classes were less effective when undemanding exercises were set from commercial mathematics schemes. Some of the worksheets used are over-prescriptive and insufficiently open-ended, as a result they hinder the development of pupils' mathematical thinking and their creative ability to solve problems. Nevertheless, Year 6 pupils' work shows very good overall performance in number and algebra, for example, in the equivalence of fractions and decimals, and in ratio and proportion. On occasions, pupils resort too readily to the calculator to solve problems which could be more profitably tackled in other ways. Pupils use computers and spreadsheets effectively to present the results of investigations and enquiries in the form of tables or graphs but more could be done to develop geometry and algebra through information technology.

65. The teaching is good throughout the school and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The strengths of the teaching are the teachers' knowledge of teaching mathematics at junior level, which reflects confidence and their very considerable experience; their effective control and discipline and very good relationships with the pupils; and their hard work. Some very good teaching was seen, for example, when Year 4 pupils responded with a high level of personal motivation to their teacher's high expectations of them and to the challenge and demanding nature of the number work set them. As a result they achieve high standards. The co-ordination of mathematics is generally effective though there are a

few weaknesses: for example, a tendency for teachers to rely too much on undemanding commercial material which is greatly inferior to what the teachers can devise for themselves. There is some lack of rigour at this early stage in implementing the national strategy for numeracy, and computers are not used enough.

SCIENCE

66. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in science are above the national average and in line with those achieved in similar schools. Throughout the school pupils make good progress. These findings apply to pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and confirm the results of the 1999 statutory tests and teacher assessments. The percentages of pupils reaching and exceeding the national standard in 1999 were above the national averages with no significant difference in the results of boys and girls. However, no pupils are yet given the opportunity to take the extension papers.

67. The focus for the science curriculum across the school is the pupils' involvement in experimental and investigative work. This method is applied whether considering the properties of materials, plant and animal life, forces or the provision of a healthy diet. Pupils are making good progress in developing scientific skills. They are able to identify, with growing sophistication, criteria for testing the fairness of their experimental methods using a range of equipment. Pupils record their experiments (younger pupils use a planning board, whilst older pupils use more detailed formats), observe the results and draw conclusions using scientific language correctly. Many pupils are able to suggest how they could extend their work further or apply their findings and conclusions to other experimental work. Older pupils are particularly adept at predicting what would be the result, then confirming their predictions. They are making good progress in thinking as scientists: pupils of all ages enjoy discussing their work.

68. Younger pupils in Year 3 follow instructions carefully and, after making observations and discussion with their teacher, are beginning to understand how to devise their own simple experiments. By Year 5, pupils are able to relate cause and effect, such as investigating how the position from which it is dropped affects the resulting height of the bounce of a ball. Detailed work on the human body is also taught in Year 5 in conjunction with the sex education programme. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are above average.

69. Pupils' attitude to their learning is good overall, and very good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils enjoy science and take investigative and experimental work seriously. Older pupils carefully apply criteria to ensure that there is no bias in their experiments; they work hard and stay on task. They work well with others when devising experiments and solving problems. They reach conclusions and suggest other experiments that would confirm their findings and use the results of their work to develop further lines of investigation. Pupils listen attentively and respond positively to teachers' questions, concentrate hard on their work, and are proud of their success.

70. The quality of teaching is good overall, with one example of excellent teaching during the inspection. Most teachers are knowledgeable of the science they teach as well as the stages pupils have reached in the development of their skills. Most teachers set high expectations, that by the end of each lesson the pupils will know more and have greater skill than at the beginning. Most plan work which is appropriate for pupils' abilities and make the learning intention of every lesson clear at its outset. Most teachers choose appropriate teaching strategies, frequently using demonstration, practice and evaluation matched to the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. Teachers have good organisational

skills, provide resources that are appropriate and to hand, enthuse pupils and manage time to give structure, challenge and pace to their lessons. Some opportunities for pupils to research information using computers are provided in Year 6 but more could be developed. Teachers of the older pupils assess accurately what pupils learn during lessons, and record end of topic and end of term assessments, which include pupils' individual critical assessment of their work. During experimental work teachers frequently remind pupils about any health and safety aspects of their work such as not tasting, tying back hair, turning back cuffs and wearing protective clothing in case of spills.

71. Since the last inspection long term planning has been subject to revision with extension of work covered previously. The co-ordinator for science monitors provision by examining teachers' plans, and some classroom observation of lessons. The previous inspection reported that teaching, and pupils' standards of attainment and progress were good. The school has sustained and is building on those good standards and continues to develop the subject.

ART

72. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. Work throughout the school in classroom displays demonstrates that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, attain average standards and make satisfactory progress.

73. The art curriculum is supported by a detailed policy which includes guidance for teaching the subject. Pupils receive a breadth of experiences and a variety of stimuli to inspire their creative activity. They have worked with clay to make pots following an educational visit to a Celtic village. Pupils have produced silhouettes of animals set against painted skies, the paintings inspired by listening to music entitled 'African Dawn'. Charcoal sketches and tie-dye are used in displays. Pupils study the work of Monet and paint in his style. A still life setting in Year 6, comprising patterned ceramics, fresh fruit, basketwork, French bread, fabrics, cutlery, a wine bottle with detailed label, and a wine glass, posed considerable challenge to the observational and colour matching skills of pupils. Collages of paper, fabrics and textured natural and man-made materials is used in displays throughout the school. Art work from past years is sometimes used by teachers to encourage pupils to consider how their own current studies may be illustrated creatively. A good range of media is available including computer graphics software.

74. Art is not identified as a distinctive curriculum subject on all class timetables. The previous inspection report noted that pupils within year groups and across the school were having fragmented experiences in art and were not making appropriate progress or reaching the high standards of which they were capable. Regular monitoring of the curriculum should be undertaken to ensure that pupils receive an appropriate experience of the subject. The school should review the provision made for pupils throughout the school, at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that pupils' experience of the subject enables them to make continuous progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

75. It was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Discussion with the co-ordinator established that the school is very well resourced for the subject and enjoys the support of a firm of consultant engineers who provide expertise and financial support. The co-ordinator has attended a course for the new (September 2000) National Curriculum orders. Experience of the subject for older pupils is arranged through the 'young engineers club' established nine years ago: this is popular and

all pupils in Years 5 and 6 are involved. The co-ordinator makes assessments of the work achieved by Year 6 pupils. The school has an impressive photographic record of work in the subject.

76. Design and technology lessons for younger pupils are timetabled within a 'focus term' during the school year. Subject coverage was evident in some classroom and corridor displays. During the current academic year younger pupils have studied the process of bread making and the use of fabrics for different purposes. Store rooms hold models constructed by pupils: these show the application of simple circuitry using batteries as power sources, others include linkage for computer control.

77. There is a detailed policy for the subject and the co-ordinator has a range of comprehensive guidance documents and project ideas which are available as a teaching resource in support of the subject. These include suggested amendments for pupils with special educational needs. The school has also benefited from a visit by the Surrey University Technology bus. Resources available to support the subject are excellent and include a wide range of materials, tools, fixing and articulating mechanisms, and computer control software.

78. The previous report noted that standards of attainment, whilst good overall, were variable. Scrutiny of the limited amount of pupils' work presented as achieved by pupils in the present academic year support the findings of the previous inspection. Overall progress in the subject since the last report is satisfactory and development has taken place with successful implementation of some control technology activities.

GEOGRAPHY

79. Judgements are made from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays of work and discussion with pupils. Since the last inspection the co-ordinator has reviewed planning, developed the information technology resources and provided increasing opportunities for personal research.

80. All pupils make good progress in learning geographical skills and the standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 provide a good foundation for further study. Pupils develop a good understanding of map reading, the study of places and of rivers. By the end of Key Stage 2 they understand, and use, a wide technical vocabulary, using words such as impermeable, irrigate, filter, divert and reservoir. They can read a cross section of a river course and appreciate the importance of a dam on the surrounding area as well as on the people. Year 5 pupils are enthusiastic in recounting their residential visit to the Isle of Wight by making a travel brochure. They can identify the geographical features of the island including the physical features. Pupils can read maps; they know the compass points and read co-ordinates and grid references. Geography makes a positive contribution to literacy as pupils are expected to use reference books to research information. Their written work develops descriptive writing well, but a closer link with the literacy hour would develop it even further.

81. Pupils enjoy geography: they display positive attitudes to their work, show real interest and are very keen to enter into debate and discussion. They settle to their tasks very well, showing very good concentration and co-operation. Year 5 pupils clearly learned a great deal about the environment on their recent residential visit. Year 6 pupils entered into a good debate about the advantages and disadvantages of the Aswan dam on the locality. In such discussions pupils are very considerate of the views of others.

82. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers' control of their pupils is very good and they establish good relationships within the classrooms. The planned topics include a balanced range of skill acquisition, the study of places and fieldwork. The school arranges a wide variety of visits to enhance the pupils' geographical knowledge. These include the locality, the school grounds, a supermarket and a visit to the river Wey. There is an ongoing study of the weather. Resources are well organised and well used. Teachers use questioning skills well and use good technical vocabulary in lessons, repeating and checking to establish understanding. In some classes, particularly those with older pupils, very good use is made of investigation and individual research. This also includes pupils' own studies done as homework. There are good links with history and art. Sometimes lessons lack pace when teachers spend too long on their teaching input or when pupils are given too many worksheets.

HISTORY

83. Judgements are made from observing lessons, from discussions with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, and from teachers' planning. Since the last inspection in 1996 the school has maintained the high standards of work in history.

84. Pupils make good progress both in classes and over time as they work through the planned programme of work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils appreciate the past, understand events that took place many years ago and carry out their own investigations. In Year 6, for example, pupils investigate the Egyptian gods to compile a book for younger children. They use a wide variety of resources such as CD-ROM, reference books and teacher initiated information. They are encouraged to use their own initiative to compile an individual book in their own style. Pupils are also encouraged to research their own information as when they made studies of the Evacuation during the Second World War and presented their work through letters from their grandparents' memories of the war and interviews.

85. Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. They are keen to learn, concentrate well and are very well behaved. They work well in groups and in pairs, showing respect for each other and consideration of others. Pupils are motivated and interested. They take part eagerly in class discussions, as some in Year 6 demonstrated when they engaged in a lively debate about a social pyramid, stimulated by the teaching of Egyptian society.

86. Teaching in history is good. Teachers use questioning effectively to expand pupils' knowledge and understanding of history. In Year 6 they challenge pupils' thinking and reasoning and use the correct technical language to build up their vocabulary. They use resources well, including artefacts, first hand resources and visits. These include the historic town in which they live; Butser, an Iron-age settlement; Fishbourne Palace, of Roman interest; and the Globe Theatre. They link their study well with geography to enhance understanding. In some classes there is an overuse of worksheets and sometimes the lessons are too long to sustain interest and make the best use of time. Although the teaching of topics is secure, there is a lack of detailed guidance for teachers to help them in their lesson planning. This omission can create a difficulty for new staff coming to the school.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

87. The previous inspection found that pupils' standards of work were broadly average for their age and that the work of a significant minority of pupils was particularly good in handling and communicating information. At that time, the school had identified information

technology as an area for improvement. Since then, standards have improved: Additionally, the school now has much better resources, as a result of considerable financial investment in a new computer suite, with generous help of parents and other friends of the school. However, computers are still not used frequently enough in lessons.

88. Discussion with Year 3 pupils and observing what they can do when at the computer shows that their knowledge and skills, especially of word-processing, are above average for children of their age. The work of the Year 6 pupils is similarly above average for their age, and this represents a satisfactory overall achievement in relation to their good starting point when they enter the school. The Year 6 pupils are generally very knowledgeable about the workings of computers and their construction. They understand that computers can be used for a wide range of purposes. They are proficient and skilful users of computers and some have considerable expertise. Many pupils have access to a computer at home though some pupils use them almost exclusively for playing interactive games. Pupils have good knowledge and skills of information technology, especially of word-processing and desk-top publishing, but they can also apply their knowledge of spreadsheets very effectively in mathematics and science, for example, to present numerical information, gained from enquiries, in the form of graphs and tables. Their work in the application of new technology for control is also good. For example, all Year 5 pupils participate in the Young Engineers lunchtime club, which includes a valuable weekly teaching input by personnel of an international engineering consultancy. In these sessions the pupils learn to programme and control a machine which they construct from a technical model kit. The school also avails itself of the generous help of other members of its community to enhance the teaching of information technology; for example, during the inspection a volunteer parent was helping the Year 6 pupils to make a multimedia presentation of their project work on the Egyptians. Pupils often use computer-based encyclopaedias to research information; however, as found at the time of the previous inspection, teachers still present pupils with relatively few routine opportunities to use and develop their good skills further in all subjects.

89. Though some teaching by visiting engineers and a parent was seen during the inspection, insufficient teaching of information technology was being done by the school's teaching staff for inspectors to judge its quality. Pupils were making good progress in the sessions referred to above.

90. Pupils have good attitudes towards information technology in their learning. When working with inspectors, pupils showed that they were enthusiastic as well as knowledgeable and that they could persevere with difficulties and problems until they found a solution. Their behaviour was excellent.

91. The management of the subject is satisfactory but some training is still needed to raise the teachers' confidence in using new technology; the scheme of work for the subject needs to set out clearly what should be taught in each year and how curricular links can be established with other subjects. This development will have implications for the system of assessing pupils' attainment.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

92. The teaching of French takes place in Year 5 once a week and for each Year 6 class every other week for an hour. This is an extra educational activity, which is part of the twenty per cent of curriculum time, additional to that required for the National Curriculum and religious education, provided for such purposes. The school also seeks to promote the pupils' ability to cope with another language. Pupils certainly show a real aptitude and interest. Although there are no national expectations for modern foreign languages at Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress.

93. Although teaching takes place in both Years 5 and 6, lessons were only observed in Year 6, as Year 5 lessons were not timetabled during the inspection. Year 5 work was inspected and pupils were spoken to.

94. Pupils begin by learning the days of the week, numbers and colours and simple sentences such as "My name is" and "What time is it?" Lessons include a substantial amount of spoken French as well as written work. They progress to descriptions of the weather, play pelmanism and sing French songs. They are able to follow commands given in French, count and begin to learn the fundamental rules of grammar. Pupils make good progress. They have the opportunity to speak in French, including at times other than French lessons, and they do so with a good accent and intonation, following the good lead of the teacher.

95. Teaching is good and conveys enthusiasm and enjoyment. The teacher uses the French language for a good part of the lesson but could extend it even longer as the main language of the lesson. The strategies used are most appropriate for the needs of the pupils. Pupils are motivated and interest is sustained. The teacher uses a variety of resources, including textbooks, games, worksheets and BBC radio tapes.

96. Pupils have very good attitudes to work. Their concentration is good and they apply themselves well to their tasks. They work very well in pairs and groups and they always display good behaviour in lessons. There is a relaxed atmosphere and pupils concentrate well and are obviously pleased with their success when they answer correctly. They play the matching game with application and help each other with the vocabulary.

97. Since the last report the teaching of French has improved, but assessment has not been developed enough.

MUSIC

98. The standards achieved in music by the time pupils leave the school are in line with those achieved in other schools and a significant minority attains higher levels of competence, particularly in playing instruments. Pupils generally have a good sense of rhythm, especially in Years 5 and 6 and they are able to repeat clapping patterns accurately as a class and in time with each other. In their singing and the performance of their own group compositions they are developing an appreciation of the discipline of ensemble work. By Year 5 they are able to hold an independent part, as shown in clapping and in singing where one group maintains an ostinato pattern while others perform different phrases. When pupils sing, in collective worship or music lessons, they produce a pleasing unforced tone and the pitch is secure. However, although most participate when singing is included in lessons, many do not sing with conviction in assembly. The interest in the re-

established choir indicates that pupils are not averse to singing, but regular opportunities should be provided for pupils to sing in music lessons.

99. Pupils have a good knowledge of orchestral instruments, as demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson when pupils suggested suitable instruments that the composer might have used to portray certain animals before they listened to extracts from 'The Carnival of the Animals'. When planning their compositions pupils work well in groups and show that they can use their imagination to create ways of representing events in sound. By Year 6, they use their evaluative skills to identify where improvements could be made. Although one group in a Year 3 lesson chose appropriate instruments to represent a dragon, most of the pupils in the class needed more guidance about which instruments to use. By Year 6, however, groups show much more discrimination in their selection of instruments.

100. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and generally participate very well. They listen carefully, especially when asked to appraise a composition, either of a recorded work by a famous composer or a performance by their peers. They are generally sensible when participating in practical work, which they enjoy, and treat the instruments with respect. The written record that they keep of some of the work they have done, including their use of graphic notation, is above average for pupils of their age. Those who have instrumental lessons have a good grasp of musical notation and some others have a rudimentary appreciation of note types and their lengths, as was witnessed in a Year 5 lesson when a few pupils were able to follow simplified notation to maintain an ostinato phrase.

101. Although most teachers are not specialist musicians, and have a limited knowledge of the subject, they prepare their lessons well and generally provide stimulating and interesting sessions. Lessons are usually well structured, but because the time allocated to the subject is less than that normally given to it in primary schools, particularly in the upper school, teachers and pupils sometimes do not have sufficient time to develop the work as much as they would wish. Consideration should be given to the possibility of lengthening some lessons so that activities can be explored in greater depth, even if it means missing out on music in some weeks to compensate other subjects.

102. The school has been without a co-ordinator for music recently, but this situation has been remedied this term. The choir has begun again and this provides additional extra-curricular activities to recorders and guitars: there are plans for more musical performances later in the year. The school has a good foundation in place on which to build and music could soon make a strengthened contribution to the school's reputation for high standards. Attention still needs to be given to the creation of a structured programme for the subject, which is lacking although commented on at the last inspection, and more guidance for teachers of ways of teaching the topics contained in the scheme.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. Only three lessons were observed during the week, all in dance. In addition Year 3 classes attended their weekly swimming lesson at the local leisure centre where most have now achieved the 25m standard originally identified in the National Curriculum. Inclement weather caused the cancellation of an outdoor games lesson. Pupils' response was good and they enjoyed the lessons. The standard of teaching was satisfactory overall. The introduction of commercially produced lesson tapes part way through all the lessons slowed the pace from that of the effective teaching observed prior to their use. The previous report noted that standards of attainment, although variable, were in line with national expectations. In the lessons seen attainment was average overall, with good achievement made during the lesson involving older pupils.

104. Discussion with the co-ordinator established that the school offers a curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject policy is detailed and provides guidance to teachers. Physical education is timetabled with two hours set aside for the subject for every class each week. When weather permits games are played on the recently resurfaced playground or the school field, both of which slope significantly. During summer months pupils practice athletics using the games field of a nearby school. Resources for physical education are good, they include wall mounted gymnastics equipment, vaulting boxes, soft landing mats, balls, bats and other outdoor equipment.