

INSPECTION REPORT

**LONG DITTON ST MARY'S CHURCH OF
ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED JUNIOR
SCHOOL**

Long Ditton

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125180

Headteacher: Mrs C Susan Woods

Reporting inspector: Dr Vivien Johnston
8402

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th July 2001

Inspection number: 191683

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

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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:	Sugden Road Long Ditton Surrey
Postcode:	KT7 0AD
Telephone number:	020 8398 1070
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend David Lankey
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8402	Dr Vivien Johnston	Registered inspector	English English as an additional language Art Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? What should the school do to improve further?
9053	Mrs Vivienne Phillips	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27654	Mrs Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a small voluntary aided junior school, with 151 pupils aged 7 to 11. It has slightly more girls than boys. The number of pupils in each year group varies widely, from 27 in Year 6 to 55 in Year 5. About eight per cent come from minority ethnic backgrounds (mostly Indian). Six pupils speak English as an additional language, almost all fluently. The school has nine pupils from traveller backgrounds, many of whom are in Year 4. Most pupils come from the residential areas of Long Ditton, from favourable backgrounds. Thirty-eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is an average proportion. Their needs relate mostly to learning difficulties, with a few for behaviour. Only one has a statement of special need, which is a below-average proportion. The overall attainment of pupils on entry to Year 3 has tended to be above average, though the variation from year to year is unusually wide.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science, and in most other subjects. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, as are the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school. Relationships within the school and pupils' behaviour are strengths, as is the caring, community ethos of the school. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It is a caring school with a very strong sense of community and positive ethos.
- Some teaching challenges and interests pupils, enabling them to learn successfully.
- Relationships are very good, and pupils behave well.
- It provides very well for pupils' moral and social development, fulfilling its aims.

What could be improved

- The standard of pupils' work and their achievement in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Some teaching, as it is not focused enough on what pupils are expected to learn.
- The opportunities for pupils to write independently, in English and other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Its improvement since then has been satisfactory. Test results have risen, in line with the national trend, and standards of pupils' work have generally been maintained. Despite recent improvements to the provision for ICT, standards in this subject remain lower than they should be. Subject co-ordinators now have more responsibility for managing and monitoring their subjects, and have worked to make the teaching more consistent. Assessment procedures have improved and are now satisfactory overall, although still insufficient in some subjects. The school now has suitable arrangements for reviewing how well teachers perform their responsibilities. The strengths in the school's promotion of a happy and caring environment in which pupils are supported well have been maintained. The school's potential for further improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	D	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	E	D	D	
science	A	E	C	C	

Results in the national tests have varied widely, reflecting the differences in the year groups' overall attainment on entry to the school. Overall, the results have improved since 1996, in line with the national trend. Girls have tended to do better than boys, as nationally. In 2000, the English results exceeded the targets the school had set, but in mathematics they were lower than the target. The results in English, mathematics and science went up in 2001. Although they did not meet the target set in mathematics because of pupil absence from the tests, they were very close to it in English.

The standards attained by the pupils now in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. In relation to their levels of attainment when they start at the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all three subjects. The available evidence indicates that standards in geography, history and physical education are as expected for pupils of their age, and their achievement is satisfactory. In music, standards are better than expected and pupils' achievement is good because of the variety of musical activities available. In art and ICT, standards are lower and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. In most subjects, pupils do better in gaining knowledge than in developing skills and understanding. Their achievement in numeracy and literacy is satisfactory, except that pupils have too few opportunities for independent writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils generally like school and enjoy the activities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, and very good around the school and in the playground. In most lessons, pupils behave well but they become inattentive and restless when the teaching does not meet their needs.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development. Pupils are tolerant and show consideration for others. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is close to the national average. Unauthorised absence is above average, partly because the school does not automatically authorise absences for family holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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.

Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of the lessons observed, good or better in 55 per cent, and very good or better in 18 per cent. The teaching meets the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily, as are English and mathematics. Teaching and learning are good in science.

In the most successful teaching, the lessons included a variety of interesting activities that had been carefully planned to extend pupils' skills and understanding. The teacher and pupils shared a sense of urgency, and so the lesson time was used very productively. Good relationships were observed in most lessons, and teachers managed the class well. Some marking is helpful, with detailed comments that give pupils good advice on improving in future. Pupils work willingly, and do their best to live up to the teachers' high expectations.

In the nine per cent of lessons in which teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, and in some that were judged satisfactory overall, the key weaknesses were a lack of clarity about what pupils were expected to learn from the activities, and a slow pace. Pupils tended to lose concentration, and often struggled to carry out tasks well when they were not taught the skills they needed. Also, pupils' written work shows that teachers have made too much use of undemanding worksheets, limiting pupils' opportunities for independent thinking and writing. Overall, though, pupils' learning is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. All the National Curriculum subjects are covered appropriately, although this is recent in the case of ICT. The curriculum plans effectively for the knowledge to be covered by pupils each year, but not for developing their skills and understanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Staff know their needs well, and enable them to make sound progress. Learning support assistants provide good help to pupils with behavioural difficulties.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils who need extra help with learning English are given sensitive support and guidance that enables them to take a full part in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The very good provision for pupils' moral and social development reflects the high priority the school gives to promoting a sense of community in which everyone is equally valued. Spiritual, cultural and personal development are promoted well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good steps are taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health, safety and protection. The arrangements for assessing pupils' learning and using this information to help them do better are satisfactory overall, although teachers do not record assessment information systematically enough.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school's good links with parents involve them well in its life. The sense of community is shared well with parents, and links are strong in the area of pupils' welfare. The information given to parents on their children's academic performance is satisfactory overall, although reports are not clear enough about how well they have done.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The focus on developing pupils as confident, well-rounded, caring individuals reflects the school's aims. The headteacher provides an effective lead to other staff, working with them to help them fulfil their responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors are committed to the school, and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths, and are gaining insight into the areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the areas the school needs to develop and is working towards improving them. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities. A system for checking on the quality of teaching has been set up but is not carried out rigorously enough.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Staffing and resources for learning are satisfactory, and the accommodation is good. The school has clear procedures for considering educational and financial decisions and consulting parents. It provides sound value for money.

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 is approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework that is set The information they receive on their children's progress. The closeness with which the school works with them. The range of activities provided outside lessons.

The views about the school expressed by parents in the questionnaire and parents' meeting were generally positive. Inspectors agreed with parents that the school is approachable, and that the information sent in school reports is not clear enough about the standard of their children's work. However, the inspectors found that the homework set is satisfactory, and that the school offers a satisfactory variety of clubs and other activities in addition to lessons. The team also found that the school works very closely with parents in caring for their children and ensuring their welfare, although less closely in ensuring that they do well academically.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have varied widely since the last inspection, particularly in mathematics and science. This fluctuation is closely related to differences in the attainment of the year groups on entry to the school. Some year groups contained significantly more lower-attaining pupils than others. The overall trend in improvement in the results is in line with the national trend, with girls doing better than boys, as nationally.
2. In 2000, the results in English were average compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools (based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals). The results exceeded the target the school had set, that 71 per cent would gain Level 4 or above. Girls did better than boys, as nationally.
3. The results in mathematics were below average compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools in 2000. Although the results were higher than those reported on by the last inspection, the trend of improvement from 1996 to 2000 was less than that nationally. The results did not meet the target set for 2000, that 65 per cent would gain Level 4 or above. Boys' and girls' results have been broadly similar, with variations from year to year.
4. The results in science were in line with both the national average and that for similar schools in 2000. Results have fluctuated widely from year to year, but the overall trend is of improvement. The results for 2000 were considerably better than those of the previous year, and also better than the 1996 results reported by the last inspection. Boys' and girls' results were broadly similar, though with variations from year to year.
5. The results for 2001 were higher than those for 2000 in all three subjects, with the greatest improvement being shown in mathematics. This reflects the success of the 'booster' classes, as many more pupils were enabled to gain Level 4. However, the mathematics target, set at 83 per cent gaining Level 4 or above, proved too high because of pupil absence from the tests. In English, the school almost met its target that 83 per cent would attain Level 4 or above. The targets for 2002 are slightly higher than those for 2001 (85 per cent in both subjects). The targets are challenging, but likely to be met if the planned improvements to the teaching of writing and of mathematics are successful.
6. In English, the standards attained by the pupils now in Year 6 are average. Many pupils speak clearly and confidently, and most read fluently and with pleasure. Some higher-attaining pupils are not extended sufficiently to read more challenging books. Pupils learn to write in a good range of styles, and their spelling and punctuation are satisfactory. They have too few opportunities to write independently and at length, which lowers their attainment in this aspect of the subject. The achievement of pupils of all ages and levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
7. In mathematics, the overall standard attained by the pupils now in Year 6 is average. It is higher than the test results for 2000, largely because of improvements to mathematics teaching during this school year. Pupils have covered a good amount of work. It is very well organised. They have been taught good strategies for finding answers in different ways, although their previously-completed written work showed few examples of pupils using their initiative to solve problems for themselves. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.
8. In science, the standard attained by the pupils now in Year 6 is average. Pupils' work is well organised and clearly written up, and shows that they have a good understanding of what they have covered. They understand the importance of fair testing and use their mathematical skills to measure accurately. Pupils in the lower school have also completed an appropriate amount of work. However, too much of it has been recorded on worksheets or copied rather than being written in their own words. As a result, pupils do not readily recall what they have learned. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

9. In geography, history and physical education, the evidence indicated that standards are at the level expected of pupils in Year 6. Standards in music are above what is expected. Standards are below what is expected in ICT because Year 6 pupils have little experience of some areas of the National Curriculum, and have used computers infrequently. Standards are also below expectations in art. There was insufficient evidence to determine standards in design and technology

10. Pupils' achievement, in relation to their prior attainment, is satisfactory overall and in almost all subjects. The school's records of the various tests pupils have taken each year show that most have made the expected progress in English and mathematics. A comparison of pupils results in the national tests at the end of Year 2, just before they entered the school, and at the end of Year 6 also suggests that pupils have achieved satisfactorily. 'Booster' and 'Springboard' sessions to help pupils attain the levels expected nationally in English and mathematics, teaching pupils in sets in mathematics, support sessions provided for pupils with special educational needs, and sessions for gifted and talented pupils have all made a positive contribution to pupils' achievement. However, pupils do better in gaining knowledge than in developing skills and understanding, as is indicated by the focus on recording information in their written work. Pupils do well when they are given opportunities for independent investigative activities, but these are not provided often enough. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in ICT because they have not been taught all that is required by the National Curriculum and many have used computers infrequently. Their achievement in art is also unsatisfactory, because pupils have generally not been taught the techniques they need for their work. There was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' achievement in design and technology. Their achievement in music is good.

11. Pupils' achievement in literacy is satisfactory. Their reading skills are usually sufficient for them to cope with the demands of other subjects, for example to complete worksheets accurately. The quality of pupils' writing is higher in science than in other subjects such as history and geography, where there is too much copying. Pupils' written work is presented satisfactorily overall, with some that is very neat and careful, but also some that is untidy. Pupils' achievement in numeracy is also satisfactory. They have the skills needed in subjects such as science and geography, to measure and record data accurately.

12. The few pupils who have needed help with learning English have made good progress as the work has been adapted for them as necessary. Pupils with special educational needs, and those from the travelling community, also make satisfactory progress. Some pupils do well enough to be removed from the school's register of special needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The improvement in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development since the last inspection is satisfactory.

14. Attitudes are good. Pupils generally like school and enjoy the different activities offered. When experiences are stimulating, as with the school production 'Robin Hood', pupils show great enthusiasm for the opportunity to shine. They become very involved in activities that challenge them to make real effort, such as learning to swim and extra-curricular music. Pupils tend to lose interest when the level of challenge in lessons is not high enough, for example in dull and repetitive tasks such as copying text or filling in worksheets. When teaching focuses sharply on what pupils are expected to learn, with activities that are suitably challenging and interesting, they are happy to work hard.

15. Behaviour is good overall, and very good around the school and in the playground. Sometimes, pupils' behaviour is outstanding, as was observed during a rehearsal of 'Robin Hood' and at a parish communion service. Bullying is rare and any incidents that do occur are dealt with promptly and constructively. No pupils have been permanently excluded, and fixed-term exclusions are unusual, with just one in the year before the inspection. Most pupils behave very well most of the time. The instances of restlessness and inattentive behaviour in lessons usually occur when the learning activities are undemanding or the teacher's expectations of pupils' work and effort are too low. Pupils with special educational needs who receive extra help generally enjoy their lessons and try hard. Occasionally, pupils

with emotional and behavioural difficulties respond unpredictably to teachers' careful efforts to encourage them to work, although the teachers' skills in managing the class generally ensure that other pupils' learning is not disrupted.

16. Pupils' personal development is good. They are tolerant and show consideration for others. They respect and value each others' talents, as was clear from the genuine warmth of their applause after a rehearsal of 'Robin Hood'. Pupils in Year 6 who are house captains or vice captains take their responsibilities seriously, and are very helpful to visitors. Pupils are not always as independent and self-assured as others of their age, as seen in their occasionally immature responses in discussions in class and with inspectors. This is because most pupils have fewer opportunities than might be expected to use their initiative and contribute to the life and work of the school. Their work offers them less scope for developing critical thinking skills and independence than in most schools. As a result, their personal development is stronger in terms of kindness and concern for others than in independence and maturity.

17. Relationships among pupils and with adults are very good, reflecting the school's aims and ethos, which focus on harmony, tolerance and a sense of community. Pupils are very responsive to the school's daily routines and thoughtful assemblies. They help pupils to appreciate how their actions affect others. As a result they are friendly and helpful, for instance in their very warm welcome for new pupils on an induction visit. Pupils from very different backgrounds (including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, pupils who are learning English, and those from the traveller community) get on very well together. They work well together when given the chance, and collaborate very well on projects and in musical activities such as the choir.

18. Attendance is satisfactory. It is close to the national average. Unauthorised absence is above average. This is because a few families take too many holidays in term time, and a few traveller families do not always give notice of their absence. Traveller children make steady progress when at school, but their absences have affected their all-round achievement. The school is very vigilant about the number and length of term-time holiday absences because of the impact they have on pupils' learning. As a result, quite properly, it does not authorise such absences automatically.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of the lessons observed. The teaching was very good in 18 per cent of the lessons. It was good in 37 per cent, and satisfactory in a further 37 per cent. In 9 per cent, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. The proportions of good or better and very good or better teaching were a little lower than in many schools inspected nationally. Relatively few lessons (22) were observed because of various events and activities during the period of the inspection, including the whole school taking part in or watching a dress rehearsal for the school performance. The evidence of pupils' written work and teachers' planning also contributed to the overall judgement that teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory overall, and in English and mathematics. Too few lessons were observed in the other subjects to make a separate judgement for each of them.

20. The most effective teaching had a number of features that led to pupils learning very well. The lessons were well planned, and the teacher had identified clearly what understanding and skills the pupils were expected to gain from the activities. These were varied, and time limits were set for pupils' independent work. Consequently, levels of interest were high and pupils did their best to live up to the teacher's high expectations of their work and effort, for example by making thoughtful contributions to class discussion. Time was used very productively as teacher and pupils shared a sense of urgency. Occasionally, teachers made very good use of small whiteboards during a class discussion, such as of how to improve a story draft, by getting each pupil quickly to write down a suggestion. This led to much higher levels of participation than through the more usual method of answering orally, and enabled the teacher to monitor each pupil's understanding. At the end of the most effective lessons, a discussion reviewed pupils' learning and gave them further things to think about.

21. Strengths in many of the lessons observed were that the teachers had positive relationships with pupils and encouraged them to do well, while maintaining firm discipline and managing the lesson activities effectively. Pupils responded by showing interest, and working co-operatively and sensibly. Teachers gave much praise in recognition of pupils' successes, which motivated them further. Most teachers led question-and-answer sessions purposefully, often with a good focus on explaining unfamiliar vocabulary and encouraging pupils to use subject specialist language correctly, for example in mathematics. Written work has been marked regularly, sometimes with very helpful, detailed comments that reward success and give good advice on how to improve in future. This strength was also noted by the last inspection.

22. Weaknesses in some teaching, including in lessons that were judged to be satisfactory overall, occurred because of a lack of focus on pupils' learning. Teachers' planning did not identify the skills and techniques that needed to be taught or revised. The teachers did not explain clearly enough to pupils what they were expected to learn, and the work did not build explicitly on what pupils had previously learned. As a result, pupils often struggled to carry out the task well. The pace of these lessons was slow, often because teachers talked for too long. Pupils tended to lose concentration, and when set written work they did it slowly. Pupils' written work includes too much that is undemanding, such as colouring-in and copying. The sample of pupils' written work and teachers' planning showed that worksheets have been over-used, limiting pupils' opportunities for sustained, independent writing in English and other subjects. Some use of worksheets has been good because they have provided useful information together with extension activities for high-attaining pupils, for instance in science. Too often, however, worksheets require pupils to carry out routine tasks such as completing the gaps in a passage or answering a series of questions. These limit pupils' opportunities to think for themselves and to learn through writing in their own words. As a result, some pupils' recall of the work covered is weaker than it should be.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers and support staff work effectively together, and ensure that extra help is well focused for particular pupils. Teachers are aware of the pupils' needs, and the targets of their individual education plans. Sometimes, teachers adapt the work so that the demands are simplified for these pupils, such as by providing a framework to guide their writing. However, the sample of written work showed that on other occasions they have been set the same work as the others in their class, but have completed less of it. Sometimes, support assistants provide very good extra help. For example, a teacher was able to continue a literacy lesson while an assistant quietly and firmly dealt with some awkward behaviour, and so the learning of the other pupils was not disturbed. Planning ensures that, whenever possible, pupils who are withdrawn from lessons to receive additional support do work that is related to that of the rest of the class.

24. Teachers take care to involve pupils of different backgrounds and levels of attainment in discussion activities, which motivates them. Pupils who are learning English are given appropriate help. For instance, the opportunity to record information in both English and the pupils' home language was motivating in a science lesson, and helped the learning of English as well as of science. Appropriate provision is made for pupils from the travelling community. They are included in all aspects of school life, and the school makes good use of the support of the local authority staff to ensure that work meets the pupils' needs.

25. Gifted and talented pupils are withdrawn from class lessons once a week, and given other work that extends their skills in English and mathematics, for example through problem-solving activities. In a session observed during the inspection, the teaching was good because the pupils were enabled to discuss in depth and expected to listen to others' views carefully. In other lessons, teachers' questioning generally involves high-attaining pupils well, and they make satisfactory progress.

26. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily overall. Teachers expect pupils to record information carefully, and in science this is done particularly well. Numeracy skills are practised in a range of subjects, such as in carrying out surveys in work that links mathematics or science and ICT, and in recording weather data in geography.

27. Some parents expressed the view that homework is not set regularly enough, and insufficient demands are made of the older pupils. The inspection found that overall the use of homework is satisfactory. Books are sent home regularly for reading, and pupils have other tasks such as spellings or multiplication tables to learn. However, teachers make too little use of homework for other learning activities, and to extend and challenge pupils further.

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

28. The curriculum covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum, and is broadened by the addition of French and some Latin for the older pupils. Pupil groupings and the organisation of the school day have been revised since the last inspection, following consultation with parents, with the aim of improving the quality of education provided. For example, the afternoon session now gives a substantial time, usually an hour each, to foundation subjects such as art, geography and music. The mixed-age classes, with two parallel classes in the lower school and three in the upper school, have enabled teachers to plan together, giving consistency in the work covered in each class. This means that pupils in the different classes have equal opportunities within the curriculum, and the foundation subjects are given due attention. A good feature is that occasionally these subjects are taught in longer blocks of time, such as in a day focused on art work or design and technology activities. Visitors to the school make a good contribution to this work, enhancing the range and quality of experiences pupils are given. Additionally, some visits to the local area take place, and residential trips linked to work in history and geography are provided for pupils in the upper school. Links to the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

29. The school has planned carefully for the requirements of the National Curriculum to be covered on a two-year cycle, so that pupils study new topics each year. The planning sets out what is to be taught in some detail, but does not show the skills that the pupils in each year group are expected to learn through the content covered. This is reflected in teachers' lesson planning, which generally does not identify how pupils will develop their skills through the content that is covered. Consequently, pupils in Years 3 and 4 usually do the same work, as do pupils in Years 5 and 6, with the younger and lower-attaining pupils tending to complete less of it. As a result, pupils make better progress in their knowledge than in their skills and understanding.

30. The school day has been planned carefully to enable pupils to be re-grouped for mathematics, on the basis of assessments of the standards they have attained. This arrangement has been helpful in enabling staff to match the level of the work more closely to pupils' needs, and has helped to improve standards in mathematics. However, it has led to some classes having pupils from three (or even all four) year groups. The school has recognised that this is undesirable because of the differences in the speed of pupils' learning, and so from September 2001 it is to re-group pupils within upper and lower school, rather than across the whole school.

31. The school has invested in additional staff so that pupils can be taught in smaller classes for English and mathematics, to help raise standards, and so that pupils who are identified as being gifted or talented have weekly sessions in which they are given more challenging topics. This has helped them to do well in mathematics and science, for example through problem-solving activities. These features of the curricular provision are good. The curriculum also takes account of the pupils with special educational needs. Extra help is given to small groups in literacy lessons. Setting in mathematics ensures that pupils work at appropriate levels and those with learning difficulties are given extra support in the classroom. Pupils with sensory difficulties are suitably catered for, and enabled to take a full and active part in all lessons. Pupils' work and progress are tracked with the whole-class assessment.

32. The provision for ICT has been the weakest area of the curriculum as the requirements of the National Curriculum were not covered adequately until this year, leading to the older pupils not having covered all they should have. As a result, standards are below what is expected nationally. The work

covered recently is based on national guidance and schemes of work, and makes suitable links between ICT and other subjects.

33. Curriculum planning does not identify how pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy will be developed in other subjects. Nevertheless, both literacy and numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other subjects. The school has recognised that pupils are not developing their skills in independent writing sufficiently. To tackle this, the focus of work in the literacy hour has been shifted from reading to writing, with guided reading now taking place at another time of the day.

34. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Sex education is covered appropriately, as is drug misuse. The school has satisfactory links with other schools, particularly the infant school from which most of its pupils come.

35. Some parents expressed the view that too few activities are provided outside lessons. The inspection found that the extra-curricular provision is satisfactory, given the small size of the school and the work the staff have been doing on improving their skills in ICT and planning and developing the curriculum. A reasonably wide range of sports activities is available, including competitive team games. The opportunities for music, such as playing in the school orchestra, are good. 'Booster' and 'springboard' classes have helped some pupils do better in English and mathematics.

36. The provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A policy statement provides a very good, clear basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but has not yet had an impact on the curriculum. As a result, in lessons teachers miss some opportunities to encourage reflection, to draw on pupils' own rich and varied experiences and to share awe-inspiring moments.

37. Many strong links with the church, including a carefully-planned programme of shared assemblies, underpin spiritual development thoughtfully. There were some very good examples of these during the inspection, including a school assembly led by the rector and a parish communion which offered a real sense of occasion that was valued by the pupils. Good attention to spiritual awareness is reflected in everyday routines, including positive use of the rewards system to show that pupils' efforts are valued, and in projects such as the design and symbolism of the school's Millennium stained glass window. Spiritual development is fostered well.

38. The school cultivates moral and social development very well, reflecting the high priority it gives to promoting a sense of community in which everyone is equally valued. Led by the headteacher's strong example, adults set a very good example of care, concern and respect for others and of what is right and fair. They consistently encourage consideration for others, and have high expectations of the way children relate to each other and to adults.

39. The school's aims are very clear about its welcome for all children from the neighbourhood and its promotion of attitudes of mutual respect, responsibility and tolerance. These are reflected in its strong community ethos, which encourages pupils' moral and social development. Projects and productions provide particularly good opportunities for high-level collaboration and co-operation. Residential visits to places such as Hindleap Warren and the Isle of Wight contribute very well to personal and social development. Year 6 pupils have good opportunities to contribute to school life as house captains, with responsibilities such as choosing charities to support and acting as guides for visitors. However, in general pupils do not have enough scope for planning and using initiative in their work, and for taking significant responsibility and expressing their feelings and ideas about school life – although the introduction of a questionnaire for pupils in Years 4 and 5 is a useful start.

40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In general, the curriculum successfully promotes pupils' respect for different traditions, values and beliefs. Work on projects such as the playground mural contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of art. Extra-curricular activities in music and drama, including school productions, local festivals and trips to places such as St Paul's Cathedral, support cultural awareness well. The school uses its locality well to reinforce a sense of heritage and tradition through local festivals and visits to places such as Bushy Park and the Brooklands

Museum. It tries to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity through positive links such as those with the Jewish community and synagogue that now occupies the original school building. The school recognises the value of exploring the richness and diversity of other cultures. It has, however, yet to find a way of planning these fully into the curriculum so that the rich mix of children and wide network of friends and relatives from around the world are celebrated and understood better.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare, health, safety and protection are very good. This is a caring school, as it was judged to be at the last inspection. It has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for dealing with misbehaviour.

42. Teachers know individual pupils very well, whatever their background, and are fully aware of their personal and emotional needs. They respond to all pupils in a supportive and friendly way, mindful of the school's aim to create a caring, happy and tolerant community where all are welcomed. The school is particularly successful in reinforcing its sense of "our school, our community" in the quality of care it offers. Staff are well aware of the importance of a safe and well-supervised working environment and the need to promote a healthy lifestyle. They monitor pupils' personal development very carefully and provide very good personal support, in line with the school's priorities.

43. The school has identified pupils who have problems with behaviour. The strategies for dealing with their occasional awkwardness or misbehaviour are good. For example, learning support assistants give firm guidance and unobtrusive help to pupils whose behaviour would otherwise prevent the rest of the class from learning, and encourage them to join in the lessons.

44. The systems for improving attendance by diligent tracking of holiday absences and reminding parents of all the days missed during a child's time in school are very helpful. The school's practice of registering pupils after, rather than before or during, morning assembly is unsatisfactory. This is because it does not ensure that accurate records of who is in school are available promptly each morning, even if teachers believe they know who is missing on a particular day. Other than this, teachers record pupils' attendance with care and show the reasons for missed sessions clearly, which helps the school to track absence easily.

45. Since the last inspection, the school has gone some way to addressing the key issue regarding assessment. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress in English, mathematics and science are now satisfactory. The school uses a bank of tests, supplementing the national test results at the end of Years 2 and 6, to assess and monitor the academic progress pupils make. Results are analysed, and the information is used to organise teaching groups in mathematics. The information has also been used successfully to identify groups and individual pupils in need of support in both English and mathematics. The school has built up cumulative records of the results of these annual tests. However, the records are not analysed systematically to check how well pupils are doing from year to year, and to ensure that the teaching develops their skills in English and mathematics progressively.

46. Teachers set targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. The targets give clear indications of what each pupil needs to achieve and are reviewed regularly. In science, teachers assess what the pupils know and understand at the end of each unit of work. This is recorded in teachers' individual record books. Teachers' assessment records vary too widely in the amount of detail that is included and the format used. Reading records generally list the titles pupils have read – or have borrowed from the school library – but do not include evaluations of how well they are progressing. Assessment in other subjects remains unsatisfactory, as was reported by the last inspection.

47. Planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The school maintains suitable records for pupils with special educational needs, and involves parents appropriately in the review of their children's individual education plans. It also works closely with the infant school, which forwards details of the pupils' previous individual educational plans. Parents are invited to discuss these plans with the school each term, and both parents and pupils are involved in setting new targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The previous report described the school's partnership with parents in terms of regular help and close links. Parents are still willing to offer help and have a range of active links with the school. Improvement in the partnership has been steady. The school works closely with parents in caring for their children and ensuring their welfare, though less closely in relation to their academic progress.

49. Parents' views of the school are broadly positive. They think that it is doing a satisfactory job. They value the openness of the school, and feel comfortable about asking questions or discussing problems with staff. Over a quarter of the parents who answered the questionnaire do not feel that they are well informed about their children's progress. Some parents expressed reservations about whether the school works closely with them, particularly on academic matters such as homework and the rate of progress of their children. The inspection team found that this area of the school's work is satisfactory overall. Annual reports have been improved this school year. They comment usefully on work in each subject, but still do not give a clear enough idea of each pupil's learning, and whether the rate of progress is fast enough. This does not help parents to understand how well their children are doing academically, nor to ask the right questions about progress made. The targets set in the reports are too general to be helpful. In contrast, reporting on personal development is usually very good and values each pupil positively.

50. The school's links with parents are good, and involve them well in its life. Parents are very keen to support their children and come to events such as parents' meetings, the school production, sports competitions and special assemblies very readily. They come into school to hear readers and to help with the environmental project. They help to run after-school clubs and are on a weekly rota that ensures good supervision to and from swimming lessons. The school has a very strong sense of community which is shared well with parents from all backgrounds. As a result, there is a very active Friends of the School Association, which has donated money and resources to the school regularly. It organises well-attended social events throughout the year, many of which involve members of the local community such as elderly residents who thoroughly enjoy the monthly bingo sessions. Newsletters, the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are all very informative and easy to read, and help to foster strong links and a sense of belonging to the school community. The school is very good at working with parents to improve their children's behaviour, attendance and personal development, but the many productive links with parents have not been explored fully to promote pupils' learning and achievement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher, senior teacher and governors provide sound leadership and educational direction for the school. They are committed to creating a caring community in which personal development is given a high priority and pupils of all backgrounds are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The focus on developing pupils as confident, well-rounded, caring individuals reflects the school's aims. The aims are stated very clearly, and are evident in the daily life of the school. Pupils and adults are respected and valued, and relationships are very good at all levels.

52. The headteacher has a clear educational vision and an understanding of the areas that the school needs to develop, and is working towards dealing with them. Staff share an understanding of the need to raise standards, particularly in mathematics and writing, in which results have been inconsistent. They also recognise that ICT remains a priority for development. The school has taken some good action to help raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In particular, extra staff have been employed so that English and mathematics can be taught to smaller classes, and 'booster' and 'springboard' sessions have been introduced. National and internal tests are analysed, and the information is used to decide on pupil groupings in mathematics, to help teachers ensure that the work set matches pupils' levels of attainment. The school improvement plan identifies areas for future development appropriately. However, it does not link the actions to be taken to the impact on pupils' learning, nor state priorities and times by when each of the targets is to be achieved during the year.

53. The headteacher provides an effective lead to other members of staff, and works with subject co-ordinators to help them fulfil their responsibilities and roles. She carries out a systematic programme of monitoring the quality of teaching. However, teachers are not given sufficiently clear feedback on how they can improve pupils' learning. Subject co-ordinators now follow a well-defined timetable for monitoring, which includes examining the quality of pupils' work, checking the resources for their subjects and monitoring teachers' planning for the following year. This has improved the staff's knowledge of what needs to be done, although the monitoring is not well linked to actions to raise standards of teaching and learning.

54. Governors are committed to the school, supportive of its aims and feel part of the school community. Through its committee structure, the governing body ensures that the school meets its statutory requirements. Relationships between the headteacher, the school staff and governing body are very good, and this effective partnership helps the school considerably in implementing its proposals for future development. It also demonstrates the governors' strong commitment to the pupils of the school. For example, governors contribute to drawing up the school improvement plan. The headteacher and other key members of staff report regularly to the governing body and most governors also visit the school on a regular basis to get first-hand information, which they report back to other governors. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and gaining insight into the areas for development. They recognise the need for continuing attention to most of the key issues identified by the last inspection report.

55. The school has introduced a good system of performance management for staff, based on the national framework. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths of the staff. In the case of newly-qualified teachers, the school has developed good systems for induction, including support from a trained member of staff and the local education authority.

56. The arrangements for the financial management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher oversees the management of the school's finances effectively, assisted by the administration officer and the governing body's finance committee. Grants made to the school by outside agencies are used appropriately, and all the recommendations set out in the recent audit report from the local authority's auditors have been implemented. Finances are linked to the main objectives of the school improvement plan. The school has clearly set out procedures for ensuring that it achieves value for money for all items of expenditure. Its use of new technology is good except that it does not use ICT to track individual pupils' performance, although this is being introduced.

57. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator works closely with the class teachers and teaching assistants. The governor for special educational needs is involved, supportive and informed about developments in this area. Support staff are very well trained. The school draws on the support of external agencies to help pupils with special educational needs, and this has a positive impact on their progress. The co-ordinator liaises well with local secondary schools to ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to secondary education. Small teaching rooms are available for teaching pupils with special educational needs, and good use is made of other areas in the school for teaching small groups or individuals. Resources are satisfactory, although ICT is not sufficiently used to support these pupils' learning.

58. The school currently has enough teachers to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. As in most small primary schools, some teachers take on responsibility for subjects in which they do not have specific expertise. However, they take part in appropriate training to ensure that they are able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Good use is generally made of learning support assistants. The pupils and teachers value their support. They help to ensure that pupils make steady progress, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The special educational needs co-ordinator is committed to ensuring that all pupils on the special educational needs register are well supported.

59. The accommodation is good. There are plenty of classrooms and other teaching areas. These include a well-equipped music room, an art room and a science area, all of which are well used for individual and

small group lessons. The two classrooms in huts are unsatisfactorily provided for as they do not have running water. This makes it difficult for teachers to cover the full curriculum in art, mathematics and science. The school has good facilities for physical education, and pleasant grounds with a quiet seating area. Attractive murals, based on pupils' designs, are currently being painted on the external walls. The school has identified other areas for future development, including increased facilities for teaching ICT. The school has a satisfactory range of resources to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, although some of the classroom computers are unreliable, limiting pupils' opportunities for ICT work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To raise standards and further improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) improve the standard of pupils' work and their achievement in ICT, both as a taught subject and within the teaching of other subjects [*paragraphs 9, 10, 90, 92*]. The school is already working towards achieving this.
- (2) improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, by:
 - planning for the specific knowledge, skills and understanding pupils are expected to learn from the activities of each lesson, ensuring that the work builds on the prior learning of pupils in each year group, and making the learning objectives clear to pupils [*paragraphs 22, 29, 70, 83, 89, 90*];
 - ensuring that the pace of lessons is purposeful, so that pupils are fully engaged and work more productively during lessons [*paragraphs 22, 69,*];
 - keeping better records of pupils' independent reading, so that pupils can be given better support and guidance [*paragraphs 46, 63*];
 - keeping more systematic records of how well pupils have done in their work, especially in the core subjects, and using this information to inform curriculum planning [*paragraphs 45, 46, 69, 70, 85, 93*];
 - providing more opportunities for pupils' independent thinking and learning, for example by reducing the use of undemanding activities that limit pupils' attainment [*paragraphs 10, 22, 74, 78, 86, 87*].
- (3) Provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to write independently, in English and other subjects [*paragraphs 22, 64, 65, 80, 89*];

61. Other minor issues that the governing body may wish to include in the action plan are to:

- improving standards in art, by providing more opportunities for pupils to learn skills and techniques [*paragraphs 10, 84*].
- making more use of homework to extend pupils' learning [*paragraph 27*];
- improving the assessment of pupils' learning in foundation subjects [*paragraph 46*];
- improving the reliability of the classroom computers [*paragraph 93*];
- making annual reports more informative about how well pupils have done, with clearer targets [*paragraph 49*];
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and exercise responsibility, to promote their independence and maturity [*paragraphs 16, 39*];
- registering pupils promptly at the start of each school day [*paragraph 44*].

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	36.5	36.5	9	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)	151
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

1999-2000

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
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
	2000	17	24	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	10	15
	Girls	18	14	19
	Total	32	24	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (67)	59 (53)	83 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	28	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (56)	66 (47)	73 (64)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	9
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	139
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23 : 1
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Financial information

Financial year	2000- 2001
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	£
Total income	325,437
Total expenditure	339,893
Expenditure per pupil	2,237
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,785
Balance carried forward to next year	329

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	151
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	40	12	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	29	51	14	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	59	7	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	50	21	5	4
The teaching is good.	31	48	6	1	14
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	53	20	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	47	5	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	36	49	10	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	22	53	18	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	46	34	11	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	51	8	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	51	16	11	0

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

ENGLISH

62. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have varied widely since the last inspection. This fluctuation is closely related to wide differences in the attainment of each year group on entry to the school, as was shown by an analysis of their results in the national tests at the end of Year 2. In 2000, the results were average compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools. The results exceeded the target the school had set, that 71 per cent would gain Level 4 or above. Girls did better than boys, as nationally. Overall, the 2000 results were higher than those reported by the last inspection, mirroring the national trend of improvement. The results for 2001 are higher than those for 2000, and almost met the school's target.

63. The standards attained by the pupils now in Year 6 are average overall, and in all three aspects of the subject. The achievement of pupils of all ages and levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. As at the time of the last inspection, many pupils speak confidently and articulately. For example, pupils who took part in the school production 'Robin Hood' delivered their lines clearly and well. In lessons, the younger pupils tended to be the most articulate and fluent when answering teachers' questions, in English and in other subjects. The older pupils often gave short answers, rarely exploring ideas at any length, although they showed that they had listened with understanding as their answers were usually relevant.

64. Most pupils enjoy reading, and do so regularly at home as well as at school. They read a good variety of children's authors. For example, the favourite authors named by average- and higher-attaining pupils included Anne Fine and Roald Dahl. However, pupils are given insufficient guidance to ensure that the books they choose are at an appropriate level of difficulty. For example, higher-attaining Year 6 pupils are enjoying the Harry Potter series, but have not been directed towards more challenging, classic fiction. Some lower-attaining pupils are struggling with the books they have chosen from the school library, which they read with little understanding. Although the school uses reading scheme books with the pupils with special educational needs who still have significant difficulties with independent reading, there is no structured programme to help the others develop the skills they need, and they have too few opportunities to read to an adult. However, most pupils read with sound understanding of the events of a story, and so are able to explain how characters feel and to make sensible predictions as to what might happen next. Average- and higher-attaining pupils read aloud fluently and expressively.

65. Pupils learn to write in a good variety of styles, adapting their language according to the purpose of the text. For example, higher-attaining pupils in the upper school have organised their ideas into a coherent discussion of global warming, written in a formal style. Most pupils in the upper school use speech marks correctly in dialogue, spell accurately, and paragraph appropriately. Younger pupils improve the accuracy with which they punctuate sentences, with higher-attaining pupils meeting their target to learn to use paragraphs. Although achievement is satisfactory overall, too much of pupils' writing involves short tasks based on worksheets. Though the tasks set are usually appropriate in that they develop specific skills, pupils have too few opportunities to apply these skills independently, and to learn how to write well at length. This lowers their attainment in this aspect of the subject.

66. Literacy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other subjects, although this is not planned for systematically. Pupils' reading skills are usually sufficient for them to cope with the demands of other subjects, for example to complete worksheets accurately. Some higher-attaining pupils in the upper school have been encouraged to summarise the key points from the texts they have downloaded from the Internet or CD-ROMs, but other pupils have not been expected to do this. The quality of pupils' writing is higher in science than in other subjects such as history and geography, where there is too much copying. Pupils' written work is presented satisfactorily overall, with some that is very neat and careful, but also some that is untidy as teachers have not insisted that pupils apply the handwriting skills they have been taught and practised. The school has recognised that pupils are not developing their skills in independent writing sufficiently. To tackle this, the focus of work in the literacy hour has been shifted

from reading to writing, with guided reading now taking place at another time of the day. However, the over-use of worksheets that require only short answers has not been dealt with, and continues to limit pupils' opportunities to learn through writing independently and at length.

67. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. In some lessons, they are given good support by classroom assistants, who manage their behaviour well and enable them to take an active part in class discussion. Written work showed that some of these pupils have had too few opportunities for independent writing, however.

68. Teaching and learning in English are satisfactory overall. The teaching observed during the inspection varied from very good to satisfactory. The best teaching and learning was seen in the lower school. Features of the most successful lessons were the teachers' purposeful manner and enthusiasm, a good pace which was maintained by time limits being set on the varied activities, and the use of a good variety of resources. These led to pupils working hard, and enjoying the lessons. Strengths in most lessons were that new vocabulary was taught clearly, and teachers checked that pupils understood difficult words. They were alert to the language difficulties of pupils who are not yet fluent in English, and enabled them to join in lesson activities by explaining clearly and adapting written tasks appropriately. When teaching and learning were very good, the teachers challenged pupils to think, by asking them probing questions and encouraging them to respond thoughtfully. They were helped to understand how to tackle the tasks set, for instance by working through an example that modelled how to make a story more interesting. Teachers motivated pupils by giving praise, and so relationships in the lessons were good and pupils learned confidently.

69. Some weaknesses were observed in lessons that were judged satisfactory overall, and were reflected in teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' written work. Sometimes, the teacher had not decided specifically what pupils were expected to learn from the lesson activities, and this led to explanations being unclear. Pupils were unsure how to do the work, and the so pace of their learning was too slow. Teachers' expectations of pupils' oral work and reading were higher than of their writing, as a result of which some pupils did too little written work in the time available. Worksheets have been over-used, and teachers have not monitored pupils' independent reading closely enough. However, marking is often a strength, with some very good, detailed feedback being given that helps pupils understand what they have done well and what to focus on to improve in future.

70. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory overall, as is the development of the subject since the last inspection. Some improvements have been made, in response to an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in standards of work, but more remain to be tackled. Standards are similar to those reported by the last inspection and results in the tests at the end of Year 6 have improved, as nationally. The introduction of the literacy strategy has been managed successfully, and teachers' planning is thorough in respect of the content to be covered. The school tests pupils regularly, which enables staff to see whether they are progressing as expected, but this and other assessment information is not used systematically to ensure that the work is well matched to pupils' learning needs. This weakness is reflected in curriculum and lesson planning, that it does not identify what pupils of differing levels of attainment are expected to learn from the activities, and how the activities will build up pupils' skills systematically from year to year.

MATHEMATICS

71. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2000 were below average compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools. Although these results were higher than those reported on by the last inspection, the trend of improvement from 1996 to 2000 was less than that nationally. The results varied widely during this time, from well above to well below the national average, reflecting differences in the proportion of lower-attaining pupils in the year groups. However, results have risen steadily since 1999, with the results for 2001 being better than in previous years. Boys' and girls' results have been broadly similar, though with variations from year to year.

72. The overall standard attained by the pupils now in Year 6 is average. It is higher than the test results for 2000, largely because of improvements to mathematics teaching this school year. Pupils have covered a good amount of work. It is very well organised. They have been taught good strategies for finding answers in different ways, although their previously-completed written work showed few examples of pupils using their initiative to solve problems for themselves. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

73. Pupils are re-grouped for mathematics, into sets based on the standard of their work. This has helped to raise standards, especially of the younger pupils in each set. For example, the higher-attaining Year 3 pupils who are working with older pupils are learning well. They have a good understanding of addition and subtraction, and of odd and even numbers, but find it difficult to apply what they know to making general statements. However, the work in sets with wide age differences does not cater for the different ages sufficiently. The school is aware of this, and is to re-organise the groupings from September 2001. Older, higher-attaining pupils benefit from the more challenging work they cover in the weekly small-group lessons. They have a good understanding of the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages, investigate the size of different circles to find the value of Pi and construct and interpret different graphs and charts. Pupils with special educational needs have work well matched to their ability. The extra support they receive from the teacher enables them to make sound, and sometimes good, progress.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although it varies between classes and is not as high as reported at the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. During the inspection, the teaching and learning observed ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. In the most successful lessons, mental starter sessions moved at a good pace, with questions that involved all the pupils. Very good use was made of individual white boards to record answers, which meant that all pupils were actively involved. The pace and challenge were maintained throughout, and pupils were expected to explain how they worked out their answers. Astute questioning enabled teachers to assess pupils' understanding and learning and to correct misconceptions. In most lessons, teachers' explanations were clear and related well to what pupils had learned previously. For example, in work on graphs, a teacher's clear explanations of the four quadrants enabled pupils to apply themselves to the task confidently and to work out the co-ordinates of given points correctly. Where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, the work was undemanding and the teacher's explanations were too long. This led to the pupils becoming inattentive, and the pace of their work was slow.

75. In general, lessons are planned thoroughly, using the format of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, and make good use of praise to reinforce what they have done well. Teachers also reinforce the use of mathematical vocabulary, and expect pupils to work neatly and accurately in their books. However, some pupils are given too many worksheets to complete, and so they do not learn to organise work for themselves. Marking gives satisfactory support to pupils' learning. Teachers' comments in the books are positive and corrections are explained. However, too little emphasis is given to involving pupils in assessing their own work, to help them identify how they can improve further. Pupils enjoy mathematics, but during the inspection were often reluctant to answer questions in class unless they were asked individually.

76. Numeracy is promoted satisfactorily in other subjects. Pupils in the lower school have used their numeracy skills well in the work involving surveys, linked to science, geography and ICT. Science investigations also involve pupils in measuring accurately, and in geography they have recorded weather statistics carefully.

77. The management of the subject and its improvement since the last inspection are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching, and all staff are well supported. The procedures for assessing pupils are satisfactory. Test results are analysed to identify areas for development. Pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. This information is used to determine the set in which they will be working, in order to match the level of pupils' work closely to their needs. Target-setting for individual pupils is helping to raise standards. Although some use is made of ICT, it is not yet having an effect on raising standards in mathematics.

SCIENCE

78. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 were in line with both the national average and that for similar schools in 2000. Results have fluctuated widely from year to year, but the overall trend is of improvement. The results for 2000 were considerably better than those of the previous year, and also better than the 1996 results reported by the last inspection. Boys' and girls' results were broadly similar, though with variations from year to year. The results for 2001 were overall slightly higher than those for 2000.

79. The standard attained by the pupils now in Year 6 is average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. During the year, a good amount of work has been covered by pupils in the upper school, with suitable investigative work in each topic. Higher-attaining pupils benefit from the more challenging work they cover in weekly small-group lessons, extending the work done in class. Pupils plan their own work, which is well organised and clearly written up, and shows that they have a good understanding of what they have covered. They are encouraged to use their mathematical skills to measure accurately. They plot their results on line graphs correctly, and draw conclusions from their findings. Pupils understand the importance of fair testing. For example, Year 5 pupils carried out an experiment to discover which type of sugar dissolved in water the quickest. They appreciated the need to set up a fair test with only one variable. They went on to find out how much of each type of sugar was needed to make a saturated solution. They made particularly good progress in their understanding of the experiments. Pupils in the lower school have also completed an appropriate amount of work. However, too much of it is recorded on worksheets or copied rather than being written in their own words. As a result, pupils do not readily recall what they have learned.

80. The teaching and learning of science are now good overall. They have improved, following the recent introduction of revised curriculum planning. Teachers make good use of the school's environmental area to enrich pupils' study of animals and their environments. Pupils' written work showed that they have covered a good range of topics thoroughly, though with more focus on recording information than on developing their understanding of the content covered. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they are given the help they need. Teaching and learning varied from very good to satisfactory in the lessons observed. The lessons were well prepared, with suitable work for pupils' different levels of attainment. At the start, teachers explained clearly what pupils were to learn, and this led to positive attitudes and an enthusiastic response. The introductions to lessons also ensured that pupils recalled what they had learned previously, and reinforced the use of correct scientific vocabulary. When the pace of the lesson was brisk, pupils were given time limits for their activities. As a result, pupils worked hard and made good progress. Teachers questioned pupils to assess their understanding, and rephrased questions if the pupils did not understand. This was particularly helpful for pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, when the teacher did not manage the practical activities well, the pupils became noisy and lost concentration on the task.

81. The subject is well managed and its improvement since the last inspection is good. Teaching, pupils' work and teachers' planning have been monitored, and pupils' test results have been analysed. These activities have identified the need for pupils to do more independent writing. The use of ICT to extend pupils' work in science, which has been a weakness, is now being tackled successfully.

82. **In the foundation subjects reported on below**, judgements are based on the evidence of pupils' previously-completed work, including that provided in a sample of pupils and that on display around the school, discussions with teachers and scrutiny of their planning and other documentation, and on talking to some pupils. Lessons were seen in a few of these subjects. Where the evidence is sufficient, overall judgements on standards, pupils' achievement, teaching and learning have been made. Elsewhere, inspectors have evaluated the quality of what was observed without making overall judgements.

ART AND DESIGN

83. The art work seen on display around the school, in pupils' sketchbooks and in a portfolio of evidence indicated that satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection, although standards at the end of Year 6 are still below what is expected nationally. The evidence showed an improvement in pupils' opportunities for using a variety of media, including some three-dimensional work such as clay masks, models of trees and outdoor sculptures using natural materials. The study of other artists' work is now well-established. For example, pupils in the lower school have mixed colours well to create subtle shades for their paintings in the style of Monet. A strength in recent work has been the focus on responding to the environment, including designing murals for the outside area. Visitors have broadened the range of the art curriculum, for example to explore African art. Art now makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, cultural and personal development.

84. The evidence showed that sometimes pupils have been taught techniques, and have improved the quality of their work as a result. This was shown particularly clearly in upper school pupils' work on drawing faces, the final portraits being of the standard expected for pupils of their age. In the only art lesson observed, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made collage pictures from magazine illustrations, after discussing examples of surrealist art shown by the teacher. Though they worked enthusiastically, they lacked skill in planning and making their collages. The relevant techniques had not been explored sufficiently in the initial discussion. At the end of the lesson, pupils' comments when evaluating others' work were imprecise because the teaching had not helped them to develop the specialist vocabulary and insights they needed to discuss their intentions and how well they had been realised. Other evidence, such as the uneven quality of work in pupils' sketchbooks, showed that overall pupils' achievement in art remains unsatisfactory despite the improved range of art work covered. This is because teaching has not focused consistently enough on progressively developing pupils' skills and understanding. As at the time of the last inspection, records of how well pupils have done are not kept, and used to help them improve their future work. Overall, art is managed satisfactorily, although more remains to be done to raise standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. During the inspection, design and technology was not being taught. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements of the standards attained, pupils' achievement, and the quality of teaching and learning. It was also not possible to make an overall judgement on the improvement since the last inspection.

86. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is raising the profile of the subject, and has identified the areas that require future development in order to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress. Younger pupils have begun to keep a record of their plans and evaluations. Some of the older pupils' work, which they completed earlier this term, was displayed in the classroom and was of a suitable standard. The curriculum has been improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. The new scheme of work is based on national guidelines, and is organised into two-year cycles to allow for the mixed-age classes. The unit of work each term is focused on during one week, to help pupils' learning. Resources have been updated, in line with the new scheme of work. However, pupils' evaluations of their work are the only form of assessment, and other records of how well they have done are not kept.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

87. The evidence of pupils' previously-completed written work suggests that standards in **geography** are broadly in line with what is expected nationally, and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The evidence shows that pupils are strongest in their knowledge of geographical information. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have covered many aspects of mountains and rivers, accurately recording their answers to questions on what they have studied. The higher-attaining pupils have completed many worksheets and other tasks, including answering geographical questions such as why

people who live in mountainous places build homes for animals as well as people. Lower-attaining pupils have considerably less written work, mostly at a factual level involving brief answers. However, pupils of all ages have had too few opportunities to write independently, to enable them to develop their understanding and interpretation of the information they have been taught. Some pupils' work showed that too much time has been spent on copying and colouring activities.

88. The evidence of written work suggests that standards in **history** are broadly in line with what is expected nationally, and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. This is lower than was reported by the last inspection. The evidence indicates that pupils are now strongest in their factual knowledge. Some work suggested that pupils have discussed interpretations of evidence from the past, but that their skills in historical interpretation are lower than is expected for their age. The sample of their written work showed that pupils have spent too much time colouring-in worksheets, and copying information instead of consolidating their understanding by explaining in their own words. The younger pupils in each year group do the same work as the older ones, but less of it. However, some more challenging work has been carried out, as was shown by the work of lower-school pupils on Roman toys. This involved interpreting pictures of toys and making comparisons with the present day.

89. A lesson was observed, on the Armada. This had been carefully prepared, with a very interesting activity involving pupils discussing the military situation and what they would do if they were the Spanish or the English commander. Some of the boys' answers showed good strategic thinking. Overall, the activity led to satisfactory learning although the pupils were excitable and restless, and needed firm management. The historical understanding shown by the Year 6 pupils was broadly of the standard expected for their age.

90. Both subjects have made broadly satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, although the opportunities for independent writing appear to be fewer and pupils' understanding appears no longer to be as well developed. The curriculum for both subjects is now planned on a two-year cycle that covers National Curriculum requirements while ensuring that pupils do not repeat topics. Detailed planning identifies the content to be covered and which resources to use, but does not set out what pupils are expected to learn. This contributes to the weakness in developing pupils' skills and understanding in geography and history, in a systematic way. The use of ICT has improved recently. For example, in geography lower-school pupils have used the Internet to look for information on the weather in St Lucia, and have recorded weather statistics in a spreadsheet. In history, some upper-school pupils have used the Internet or CD-ROMs to find information on the Tudors, downloaded it and stuck it into their books. The subjects are managed satisfactorily overall. Some monitoring has been introduced. Areas of weakness, such as the need to plan for and assess pupils' learning more systematically, have been identified, although action has yet to be taken to deal with them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

91. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT are below what is expected at the end of Year 6. Most pupils have used computers infrequently at school. They have not covered all aspects of the ICT curriculum, and their knowledge and skills have not been built up systematically from Year 3 to Year 6. This has lowered pupils' overall attainment. Their achievement is unsatisfactory. The available evidence indicates that Year 6 pupils are most confident in word processing, locating and downloading information from the Internet and CD-ROMs, and using clip art to illustrate their writing. Although the standard of this work is below what is expected for their age, other evidence indicated that it had been set at an appropriate level of difficulty, given the pupils' relative lack of previous learning in ICT. They have done too little work in the other areas of ICT, particularly modelling, control, and interpreting information such as in databases and spreadsheets.

92. The evidence indicates that pupils in the lower school have had a wider range of opportunities ICT than those in the upper school. During this school year, they have been introduced to simple databases and spreadsheets, in data-handling work linked to science and geography. This has enabled pupils to record survey information, such as of sightings of foxes in the Long Ditton area, and to print out the

resulting data in the form of graphs and bar charts. Pupils have also learned to select clip art to make repeating patterns, and practised drawing their own pictures and adding a line or two of text. They have used email to communicate with others, and the Internet to find information. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have done work of a similar standard, which is at the level expected for pupils in Year 3.

93. During the inspection, pupils were observed using computers in several lessons. Each classroom has two computers, but quite often a fault meant that one was out of action. This problem contributes to pupils having infrequent opportunities for using computers. The pupils observed were set appropriate tasks, but had very little direct teaching as the teacher's attention was mainly focused on the rest of the class. Sometimes, well-prepared information sheets set out the instructions to follow, as when upper-school pupils used a clip art to make a picture in an art lesson. The pupils seen using computers worked co-operatively in pairs, showing satisfactory levels of interest and perseverance. They knew how to use the mouse, menus and keyboard, but often lacked experience and confidence in using the programs. This slowed their progress, as they needed more direct teaching than they received.

94. The school has recognised that ICT needs significant improvement, and has made this a priority within the current school development plan. Considerable progress has recently been made in improving the ICT curriculum and teachers' knowledge and skills. The curriculum is based on national guidance, and now covers all the elements of the National Curriculum for ICT. Nevertheless, the improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory, as many of the weaknesses in ICT identified four years ago remain. For instance, most pupils still gain their confidence and skills mainly from using computers at home, and have made too little progress in developing these skills at school. The pupils' learning in ICT has not been assessed, to enable teachers to plan how to build on what pupils already know and to ensure that their skills are developed systematically and steadily from year to year.

MUSIC

95. The available evidence indicates that standards in Year 6 are above what is expected for pupils of their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good. They benefit from the tuition of the extra-curricular music advisor. In assemblies, they sing tunefully and confidently in unison and in rounds. The choir adds an extra dimension to school singing, and the higher-attaining pupils take on more demanding music which includes singing in parts. The choir gave a very good performance in the end-of-term production of 'Robin Hood'. The proportion of pupils having instrumental lessons is higher than in many schools. They have the opportunity to play together in the school band and reach a good standard.

96. All teachers take their own class for music lessons, based on a published scheme. Although no music lessons were on the timetable at the time of the inspection, other evidence showed that pupils enjoy music and make good progress. In assemblies, pupils listen to a wide range of music from different times and traditions. It is carefully chosen to fit in with the theme of the assembly, and extends their cultural awareness. Pupils have a good variety of opportunities to be involved in music. Visiting instrumental teachers give lessons in violin, cello, guitar, flute and piano. Some older pupils are given the opportunity to receive a basic introduction to the keyboard or percussion. The choir is well attended by both boys and girls. The music curriculum is further enriched by the opportunities to attend local concerts, and by musicians visiting the school to run workshops and give demonstrations. For example, pupils learned to improvise in a jazz workshop, and participated in didgeridoo and gamelan workshops at the local arts festival. Pupils take part in Christmas and summer services at school and in the local church. They have participated in a local music festival and in concerts in Guildford, Basingstoke and London. The subject is well led and managed, and its improvement since the last inspection is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. The available evidence indicates that Year 6 pupils reach the expected standards in all elements of physical education. This term, there has been an emphasis on athletics and games. Pupils are aware of safety rules and understand the importance of warming up exercises. Younger pupils learn to throw and catch with increasing accuracy through a variety of small games. Older pupils progress to learning the cricket skills of bowling and batting. Swimming takes place throughout the year, and all pupils learn to swim at the local pool. Professional instructors give lessons, and this good provision means that the majority of pupils swim well by the time they leave school. During residential visits, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities, which also promote their social and personal development. At other times of the year, the school teaches a wide range of sports including football, netball, basketball and rugby. Professional tutors and coaches support these games, both in lessons and in after-school clubs. Pupils take part in competitions with other schools and local sports festivals. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator, who has been in post for only a short time, has continued to update the scheme of work and has organised sports events. There is a good range of resources for use in lessons, and the play equipment given to pupils at lunch times contributes to their physical development. The improvement in physical education since the last inspection is satisfactory.