

INSPECTION REPORT

**CHEAM PARK FARM
NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL**

North Cheam

LEA area: Sutton

Unique reference number: 102966

Headteacher: Mrs Louise Austin

Reporting inspector: Mr George Crowther
18814

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th September 2001

Inspection number: 193496

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1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Molesey Drive North Cheam Surrey |
| Postcode: | SM3 9UU |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Peter Cook |
| Date of previous inspection: | March 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|---|---|---|
| George Crowther <i>Registered inspector</i> 18814 | Mathematics Art and design Design and technology | What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further? |
| Jane O'Keefe <i>Lay inspector</i> 19798 | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Georgie Beasley <i>Team inspector</i> 27899 | Science Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| Jo Harris <i>Team inspector</i> 3678 | English Music Religious education Equal opportunities | How well is the school led and managed? |
| Pauline Hoare <i>Team inspector</i> 27721 | Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Geography History | How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cheam Park Farm is a large, community infant school for boys and girls who are 4-7 years old. It has 245 full-time pupils and 52 who attend part time in the nursery. The school is popular with parents and is oversubscribed. It is situated in an area of mainly owner-occupied homes and serves families whose social circumstances are generally more favourable than national averages. Only five per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Overall, pupils' attainment when they join the reception classes is above average, particularly in their social and mathematical skills. Across the school, 27 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, for a variety of learning difficulties, of whom four have a statement. The proportion of pupils needing additional support is below average. About five per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Although 17 of these pupils are learning English as an additional language, none is at the early stages.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cheam Park Farm is an effective school with a number of very strong features. The staff have created a positive, happy environment for learning. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy their work, but they are also challenged to do their best, and each child's successes are celebrated. During their time at the school, pupils' achievements are good across almost all subjects. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science and, overall, pupils exceed the expected level of attainment in most other subjects. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. The quality of teaching is good overall, and was very good, sometimes excellent, in a significant proportion of the lessons observed. The curriculum is rich, varied, well planned and generally matched carefully to the needs of the pupils. The headteacher's strong, enthusiastic leadership has resulted in a staff team who have high expectations of what each child can achieve, and who are firmly focused on raising standards still further. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils' achievements are good in English, mathematics and science, with steadily improving results in national assessments at the end of Year 2.
- The headteacher provides very strong, astute leadership, which is ensuring that the school continues to improve.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, which results in pupils making good progress in a high proportion of lessons.
- The curriculum is rich and stimulating so pupils like coming to school and are very keen to learn.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very effective, and enables teachers to match work closely to individual needs.
- The school has a very productive partnership with parents, which supports pupils' learning very effectively.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school has no significant weaknesses, but there are four minor issues in the main report which the governors may wish to include in their plans for improvement.

1

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

When it was inspected last in March 1997, the school was judged to provide an environment in which pupils had positive attitudes to learning and were confident in their relationships with each other and adults. Since then, the school has built upon these strengths and placed a greater emphasis on raising standards, so the results of national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 have improved steadily. The school has also made very good progress in addressing the action points from the last inspection. Weaknesses in the behaviour of a minority of pupils have been solved through the introduction of an effective policy to encourage good behaviour, which is followed consistently by the staff. Weaknesses in the quality of teaching, in some classes, have been addressed. Teaching time has been increased so that all subjects can be taught thoroughly. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved considerably. Far better use is now made of information about pupils' attainment and progress so that work is well matched to their needs. More information is gathered about the quality of teaching and learning across the school, so that strengths are recognised and areas for development identified and tackled. The school improvement plan is a more effective tool for raising standards. The school is continuing to improve, and has a very good capacity to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 |
| reading | B | A | A | C |
| writing | A | A | A | A |
| mathematics | B | A | B | C |

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

Attainment on entry to the school is above average compared with what is expected nationally. Pupils' achievements (the progress they make in relation to their prior attainment) are good during their time at the school. Results in national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 have improved steadily over the last four years, and are at least as good as those gained by similar schools. Well above average results were maintained in 2001.

Inspection evidence shows that attainment in Year 2 is well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In all three subjects, pupils make good progress across the school. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are well above average throughout the school. Literacy skills are used and developed well in other subjects, such as history, but the development of numeracy skills is not considered enough when planning work across the curriculum. In religious education, pupils' achievements are good and attainment in

Year 2 exceeds that expected by the locally agreed syllabus. In information and communication technology, pupils make good progress and reach standards that are higher than those expected for their ages. In art, geography, history and music, pupils' good achievements across the school ensure that, by the end of Year 2, their attainment exceeds that expected for their ages. Pupils make sound progress in physical education and standards are as expected for their ages. In design and technology, however, pupils complete too little work, particularly in Year 2, and the range of work across the school is very narrow. As a result, their achievements are poor and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is well below that expected. Pupils' achievements in all subjects except design and technology and physical education have improved since the last inspection.

2

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show a real enthusiasm for learning. They are interested in activities, listen attentively in most lessons, and contribute their own ideas. They try hard with tasks and produce a good amount of work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Behaviour in the playground is good. In a few lessons, pupils do not settle to their work quickly enough, which inhibits their learning. There have never been any exclusions. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are excellent, which supports learning very effectively. Pupils listen carefully to each other and celebrate each other's successes. Where pupils are given responsibilities they carry them out sensibly. |
| Attendance | Good. Above the national average. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Good |

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, with a number of very strong features. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is very good in the nursery and in Year 2. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection, particularly in Year 1. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) because a wide range of activities are well organised, and effective support from adults enables the children to be confident in their learning. Throughout

the school, meticulous planning, a clear focus on what is to be learnt in each lesson, praise and encouragement, and an emphasis on improving pupils' basic skills are strong features of most lessons. As a result, pupils are eager to learn, work hard and make good progress. Where teaching was very good or excellent, enthusiasm, imaginative presentation of activities, and a good level of challenge for each pupil all promoted rapid progress. In the few lessons where teaching had weaknesses, a lack of pace and challenge resulted in pupils not making the progress of which they were capable. Occasionally, the teacher did not check that pupils were getting on with their work, so time was lost because pupils were not focused sufficiently on their tasks. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils successfully, including those with special needs and those learning English as an additional language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. The school provides a rich curriculum, enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. It is particularly strong for English, mathematics, science, and in the curriculum provided for children in the nursery. For most other subjects provision is good. The only weakness is in design and technology, where statutory requirements are not met because the curriculum lacks breadth and depth, particularly in Year 2. The lack of provision for outdoor learning for children in the reception classes restricts the range of learning opportunities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Very good. Provision is very well organised. The special needs of pupils are identified clearly, targets for improvement are appropriate, and teachers use them effectively to plan activities. These pupils are given suitable work and support in lessons so they make good progress. |
| Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language | Very good. The very few pupils who need support make good progress. Their needs are monitored carefully so that they are fully included in all activities. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. Pupils' personal development is a high priority, and this is reflected in the close relationships between staff and children, and within the curriculum. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good, and there is good provision for spiritual and cultural development. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school provides good care and support for its pupils through a range of effective policies and procedures. Very effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and achievements in English, mathematics and science help to ensure that work is appropriately challenging. |

| | |
|---|---|
| How well the school works in partnership with parents | The school has a very good partnership with parents and encourages them to be fully involved in its work and their children's learning. Parents value this partnership very highly. |
|---|---|

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very strong, effective leadership and a clear focus on raising standards. She works alongside her colleagues, supporting and challenging them. She has a very clear vision of how the school can continue to improve. Subject co-ordinators play an effective role in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Management of the Foundation Stage is still developing and is not sufficiently coherent through nursery and reception. |
| How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities | Governors are very supportive, and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very effectively. They have a good appreciation of the strengths of the school, monitor its work carefully and are fully involved in planning for further improvement. |

4

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED (continued)

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Very good. There is considerable evaluation of pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching and learning. This has helped the school to identify areas for improvement and to raise standards. |
| The strategic use of resources | Financial planning and management are very good. The school makes good use of its funding to raise standards, and plans ahead methodically. It considers the principles of best value very carefully when planning and reviewing spending. |
| The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources | The school has sufficient staff. Teachers and learning assistants are a committed, enthusiastic and hard working team. The building is adequate, and is shortly to be extended. The library is limited in space and the range of books. The reception classes lack a suitable outdoor area for learning. Resources for learning are good in most subjects. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their children enjoy going to school and make good progress. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some parents feel that there are too |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching is good. ▪ They are kept well informed about their child's progress. ▪ The school is very approachable if parents have concerns. ▪ The school expects children to work hard, achieve their best, and helps them to become mature and responsible. ▪ Behaviour in the school is good. ▪ The school works closely with them, and the amount of homework children receive is about right. ▪ The school is well led and managed. | <p>few activities outside lessons for the younger children.</p> |
|---|---|

About 30 per cent of parents returned the questionnaire but only a small number attended the meeting. The great majority of these parents are very pleased with almost all aspects of the school's work, and inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school provides an excellent range of activities outside lessons, mainly for the older pupils, and inspectors disagree that this area is a weakness.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is a range of attainment amongst the children who join the nursery but, overall, it is above average compared with what is typical nationally, particularly in social skills. Assessments made soon after children join the reception classes also show overall attainment above average, though children's literacy skills are not as strong as their mathematical and social skills. As a result of good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes, children's achievements are good in all areas of learning. Almost all are likely to exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Similarly, the personal, social and emotional development of the children is a high priority in all these classes, with all children exceeding the goals. Children with special needs are very well supported and also make good progress.

2. In the 2000 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2, results in reading and writing were well above average. Almost all the pupils gained the

expected Level 2 of attainment, with just less than a half reaching the higher Level 3 in reading, and about a quarter reaching Level 3 in writing. Results in mathematics were above the national average. Almost all the pupils gained Level 2, and about a third reached Level 3. Compared with similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), the results were average for reading and mathematics, but well above average for writing. Based on teachers' assessments, attainment in science was close to the national average. Unpublished results of the 2001 tests indicate similarly high scores overall, but with a distinct improvement in science following action taken by the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In all three subjects, there has been a steady improvement in results since the last inspection.

3. Inspection evidence, based on scrutiny of pupils' work from last year and observations of lessons in the current Year 2, shows that attainment is well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils begin Year 1 with skills that are above average compared with that expected nationally. In English, mathematics and science, pupils' achievements are good during Year 1 and Year 2, regardless of their prior attainment, owing to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. In most other subjects, pupils' achievements are also good so, by the end of Year 2, they reach standards that are better than those expected for their ages. In physical education, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In design and technology, however, pupils make a sound start in Year 1, but then complete too little work in Year 2. As a result, they do not develop their skills in designing, making and evaluating products and they experience work in a very narrow range of materials. By the end of Year 2, attainment is well below that expected and pupils' achievements are poor. Overall, attainment is higher than reported at the previous inspection, and pupils' achievements have improved in all subjects except design and technology and physical education.

4. Cheam Park Farm is a very inclusive school. It welcomes all children, regardless of their special needs, ethnic background or prior attainment. It treats each child as an individual and monitors their achievements carefully through very good systems for assessing attainment and progress. Work in lessons is always well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, all pupils achieve well. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their initial attainment. In lessons such as literacy and numeracy, where work is particularly well matched to their needs, they make very good gains in learning towards the targets set for them. In many lessons, these pupils are skilfully supported by learning assistants, who are well briefed about what needs to be achieved. This support also helps pupils with special needs to make very good progress. Higher-attaining pupils also achieve well. The pace and challenge of much of the teaching observed, particularly in Year 2, provides a setting in which higher attainers have to think quickly and work hard. The tasks they are given, particularly in literacy and numeracy, extend their existing

knowledge and skills appropriately. There are no significant variations in the achievements of boys and girls.

5. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well owing to the focused support they get on entry to the school. Very good support continues throughout the school because staff are well aware of these pupils' needs. They ask pertinent questions during lessons, which make sure that these pupils have a secure understanding of the meaning of subject specific vocabulary. Particular care is taken to ensure that pupils are able to read and understand all work with which they are presented.

6. Attainment in English is well above national expectations. Most pupils listen attentively in lessons, and many are articulate, confident speakers with a wide vocabulary. Pupils enjoy reading. The more able Year 2 pupils read aloud fluently and confidently, though some with limited expression. They recall books they have enjoyed reading and justify their opinions. Less able pupils lack fluency, but they recognise many words and use the pictures and the context well to help them read. High-attaining pupils write at length. For example, more able Year 1 pupils wrote several pages about their visit to Brooklands Museum, while Year 2 pupils wrote extended versions of traditional stories. Pupils are learning to edit their written work. By Year 2, most of the pupils use a joined style of handwriting, but some pupils in Year 1 are not yet secure with letter formation. The standard of spelling is improving.

7. Attainment in mathematics is well above national expectations. By the end of Year 2, lower-attaining pupils carry out calculations and investigations with numbers to 50. Their understanding of the place value of digits to 100 is developing well, and they have a good grasp of the properties of shapes and simple fractions. Average attainers are confident working with numbers to 100, and often beyond, and their work shows a good degree of accuracy when using a train timetable to calculate journey times or when measuring length to the nearest centimetre. Higher attainers use skills such as recognising that 80 divided by 10 is the inverse of 10 multiplied by 8 to solve problems. Their good grasp of place value enables them to order numbers to 10,000, and work interpreting block graphs or calculating the perimeter of simple shapes shows that they have moved well beyond the usual standard at the end of Year 2.

8. Attainment in science is well above national expectations. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of scientific processes and facts. They have a

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good grasp of science vocabulary. Pupils' skills in investigation and enquiry are good, and have improved recently because the school targeted this aspect of pupils' attainment and ensured that a greater emphasis is placed on pupils learning through practical investigation activities. As a result, science lessons are exciting and pupils are fully involved in their own learning.

9. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievements have improved considerably, largely because the planning of the curriculum and the quality of teaching are now much better. These improvements have been reflected in the results achieved by

pupils in national tests. Building on the many strengths that already exist, the school is well placed to raise standards still further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and this enables them to make good progress. The school is a welcoming and happy place, and parents say that their children enjoy both work and play. In almost all lessons, pupils are enthusiastic learners who take great pride in their work. For instance, in a Year 2 literacy lesson when pupils were creating their own books, all were very keen to take part and tried their best. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other and confidently express their opinions. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils concentrated extremely well when listening to the teacher describe an experiment about trying to keep an 'ice pop' frozen. They spotted immediately when the experiment was not fair, and predicted the outcome sensibly. Older pupils talked enthusiastically about the impressive range of clubs provided for them outside school hours.

11. The great majority of pupils behave very well in lessons. On rare occasions, a minority of pupils become too lively, fidgeting and being noisy, which stops them making the progress they should. In most cases, teachers deal with this sort of behaviour very effectively. Pupils move around the school quietly and sensibly. They are friendly and polite to visitors. Lunchtimes are orderly and relaxed. Pupils chat happily with their friends at these times and relationships with lunchtime staff are warm and supportive. Despite the cramped conditions in the playground, behaviour is mostly good. Relationships in the school as a whole are excellent. Both pupils and staff treat everyone with kindness and respect. Bullying is very rare in the school and there have never been any exclusions. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the standards of behaviour in the school.

12. Pupils' personal development is very good. In the nursery, pupils' independence is fostered effectively when tidying up resources and equipment at the end of sessions. Throughout the school, pupils are mature and sensible and take responsibility well when doing monitor jobs, such as returning registers to the office. In circle times pupils listen carefully to each other and during lessons they spontaneously celebrate each other's successes. Pupils worked well in pairs and small groups, for instance during an investigation in a Year 2 mathematics lesson. Inspectors agree with parents' view that the school does a good job in helping children to become mature and responsible.

13. Attendance at the school is good with levels above the national average. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. Few unauthorised absences occur and lateness is rare. Registers are completed promptly and efficiently at the beginning of each session. All lessons start on time.

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HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a number of very strong features. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is very good in the nursery and in Year 2. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection, particularly in Year 1. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) because a wide range of activities are well organised, and effective

support from adults enables the children to be confident in their learning. Throughout the school, meticulous planning, a clear focus on what is to be learnt in each lesson, praise and encouragement, and an emphasis on improving pupils' basic skills are strong features of most lessons. As a result, pupils are eager to learn, work hard and make good progress. Where teaching was very good or excellent, enthusiasm, imaginative presentation of activities, and a good level of challenge for each pupil all promoted rapid progress. In the few lessons where teaching had weaknesses, a lack of pace and challenge resulted in pupils not making the progress of which they were capable. Occasionally, the teacher did not check that pupils were getting on with their work, so time was lost because pupils were not focused sufficiently on their tasks.

15. The quality of teaching was good or better in almost three-quarters of the lessons seen, and very good, occasionally excellent, in just over one quarter. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when about a fifth of Key Stage 1 lessons were judged unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall, and was very good in a significant proportion of the lessons observed. Teaching is at least satisfactory and generally good for all subjects except design and technology, where pupils' past work shows that little teaching has taken place in Year 2.

16. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers make sure that work matches the needs of these pupils, through careful assessment that identifies the next steps of learning. They work very effectively with learning assistants and, together, develop a group plan for each lesson. This plan identifies the key learning and suitable questions and strategies for each pupil. As a result, pupils with special educational needs are suitably challenged, receive the right amount of support, and make good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 1, pupils with special educational needs worked alongside lower attainers ordering numbers to 10. The task was well matched to their existing understanding, and support from an adult ensured that they made good gains in learning.

17. Pupils learning English as an additional language are supported well in lessons. Teachers' planning for all subjects clearly identifies the new vocabulary that pupils will learn and this ensures that pupils learning English as an additional language receive appropriate language support. Teachers and learning assistants ask pertinent questions to make sure that these pupils understand fully what is expected, and they use facial expression and gesture to reinforce understanding. As a result, these pupils are fully included in all activities and make good progress.

18. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. In the nursery, effective planning ensures an appropriate balance between whole-class sessions and a good range of self-chosen activities. Learning is interesting, and relationships with adults are

excellent, which encourages children to be confident. Adults assess each child's progress carefully so that they can introduce the next step in learning, at the right

time. Within each session, there are activities that focus on learning particular skills with an adult, such as finding out how a programmable toy will move or making simple maps. This creates many opportunities for discussion, develops children's language skills, and strengthens personal and social skills. Teaching in the Reception classes also has many of these strengths. The day is more structured, including subject lessons such as literacy and numeracy, but the teaching is lively and well matched to the children's needs. As a result, the children are very involved in their learning and their skills develop steadily.

19. Teachers have a confident knowledge of most subjects. Their understanding of teaching literacy and numeracy is particularly strong. Where teaching was very good, subject expertise enhanced pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 ICT lesson, the teacher's confidence in the subject enabled her to demonstrate how to alter the size of pictures and position text so that the pupils soon learnt what they had to do. As a result, they were quickly involved in their work, applied the skills they had learnt and made very good progress. Specialist music teaching is characterised by a high degree of subject expertise.

20. The teaching of basic skills is very effective. Pupils make good gains in reading because teachers ensure that books are appropriately challenging. They monitor progress carefully, and sustain good contacts with parents, who provide very good support for reading at home. Letter sounds, spelling and punctuation are all taught well in literacy sessions, and this strengthens pupils' ability in reading and writing. Counting and calculating skills are taught effectively in mathematics lessons. For example, Year 1 pupils learnt how to find two more than and two less than a given number after very skilled teaching using a number line.

21. Teachers' planning of lessons is very thorough. They identify clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils so that they know exactly what they are trying to achieve. Many use WILF (What I'm looking for) to phrase the learning objective in a way that pupils understand. For example, in a literacy lesson for reception children, the objective was "To use knowledge of pattern in text to predict words". The teacher pursued the objective through shared reading of an entertaining story, with some words covered up that the children had to guess. A clear objective and a very effective strategy ensured that the children made very good gains in learning. Plans are particularly detailed for literacy and numeracy, and outline separate, matched tasks for groups of pupils. The evaluation sections of teachers' planning are excellent. They contain helpful indications of where pupils have understood the work, and where further consolidation is needed. Teachers amended their future plans on a number of occasions in response to these evaluations.

22. In most lessons, teachers have high but appropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve. Where teaching was very good or excellent, this was combined with imaginative presentation of tasks, and an infectious enthusiasm that motivated the pupils. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils learnt how words could show time sequence in their writing. The teacher shared a story she had written, riddled with errors, and acted as though she was pleased with it. This immediately captured the pupils' interest and provoked considerable discussion. By the end of

the lesson, the pupils' own writing included many of the words and phrases that the teacher wanted them to use.

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23. Lessons are well organised and teachers use a good range of methods and strategies to promote learning. For example, in a science lesson for Year 1, the teacher used a large reference book to prompt discussion about the topic 'Sight'. She then provided an interesting set of objects, which encouraged the pupils to develop their powers of observation, and they made careful drawings. The introduction of hand lenses extended the activity still further. The good range of strategies held the pupils' interest and extended their skills. All teachers explain tasks and ideas clearly, and many do so in a lively and interesting way that holds pupils' attention and encourages them to respond. Teachers have good skills in questioning pupils and leading discussions. Group and individual work is usually productive. In a few lessons, however, the teacher did not ensure that pupils settled quickly to their tasks, and did not set targets for the completion of work, so a few pupils did not make enough progress.

24. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. They provide motivating activities, praise good work and behaviour, and use the school's clear procedures consistently. Pupils respond by listening attentively, concentrating on their work and behaving well. Just occasionally, weaknesses in the teacher's management of pupils' behaviour slowed their learning. A common feature of the very good and excellent teaching seen was the pace of learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 2, a lively mental session was followed by an investigation in which pupils had to find all the ways of fitting three small, coloured rectangles into a large rectangle. The enthusiasm of the teacher, and constant reminders of the time remaining, helped the pupils to work quickly and productively. A weakness in few lessons was that the pace of work was too slow, so pupils coasted rather than making a real effort. Learning assistants make a very good contribution to most lessons, particularly working with groups of pupils.

25. Teachers have very good strategies to assess pupils' understanding. They usually begin the lesson with a review of previous learning to check what pupils know and, in the best lessons, learning assistants assess pupils' contributions. They observe pupils carefully in lessons to check their progress, and make helpful notes. This information is used effectively to plan future work. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is of high quality. Arrangements for homework are very good. The school has a clear policy, understood by parents and followed consistently by teachers, which results in a very good variety and quantity of tasks being completed at home. In their questionnaires and at their meeting, parents expressed support for the school's arrangements for homework. The work pupils complete at home makes a very valuable contribution to their learning at school.

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

26. The school provides a rich curriculum that is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. There are considerable strengths in

English, mathematics, science, and in the curriculum provided for children in the nursery. Religious education is taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Information and communication technology (ICT), art, history, geography and music also contribute well to the intellectual, physical and emotional development of the pupils. The only weakness is in design and technology, where statutory requirements are not met because the curriculum lacks breadth and depth, particularly in Year 2. In all other respects, the school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of all the pupils very well.

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27. Since the last inspection, there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the curriculum, particularly in English, mathematics, science and ICT. These developments have been an important factor in improving pupils' achievements and have led to better results in national tests. There have also been improvements in the curriculum for geography and history. Lack of outdoor provision limits the range of curriculum opportunities available to children in the reception classes, but teachers work hard to provide appropriate activities for this age group.

28. The school now meets national recommendations for teaching time, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This time is generally used well, though short lessons for some subjects do not allow teachers to extend pupils' learning sufficiently. The school provides equal access to the curriculum for all pupils and is very positive when faced with challenges. For example, a child with visual impairment was provided with a very appropriate and broad curriculum. The design of the curriculum and the way lessons are planned create a high degree of interest for the pupils.

29. The school has implemented its strategies for literacy and numeracy very effectively. These skills are consolidated and extended through a good range of activities. Pupils' literacy skills, in particular, are developed across a range of subjects. The development of pupils' numeracy skills, however, is not planned sufficiently within other subjects. The additional literacy support for pupils with special educational needs is very effective.

30. Provision for special educational needs, equality of access and social inclusion is very good. The school welcomes all pupils and makes sure that they are included in all aspects of school life by putting into place suitable support so that all pupils make good progress. Those pupils who have a statement of special educational need are particularly well provided for, and this aspect of the school's work is now excellent. These pupils are supported both academically and personally and most manage to take part in all activities. All pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, religion or race, have equal access to the broad curriculum. Each pupil's individuality is respected and all are challenged to do their best.

31. The school plans extra-curricular activities very carefully and there are very good links with the curriculum. Clubs such as art, gymnastics, science, board games, computer, drama, music and circuit training offer excellent opportunities for the older children. Parents indicated that they would like provision to be open to younger children also, but the inspection team feels that all pupils, in their turn, benefit considerably from the existing arrangements. The clubs are well attended

and valued highly by the children. Educational visits are very well linked to the curriculum and include trips to Brooklands, Bocketts Farm, the Florence Nightingale Museum, the Science Museum and Birdworld. There is also a very comprehensive programme of local trips. Pupils visit the local post office, church and shops and then visit the same type of locations in a neighbouring but contrasting area. This allows quite sophisticated levels of geographical enquiry to be carried out. There are also regular visits related to religious education.

32. There are regular, thoughtful acts of collective worship, which meet statutory requirements. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and is promoted

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effectively through religious education, music, art and the well-planned assemblies. For example, a Year 2 class had a discussion about the significance of poppies and many pupils made thoughtful contributions. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The curriculum and the general organisation of the school place an emphasis on right behaviour, personal responsibility for one's actions and consideration for others. This is most clearly shown in the Golden Rules, which are central to moral development as well as to behaviour management. Moral matters were also the focus of a number of lessons seen, such as a discussion on the behaviour of different characters in the Good Samaritan story, or a circle time when children had the opportunity to reflect on events and posed profound questions.

33. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in a variety of social situations, from working in pairs and groups to visiting places of worship. Teachers use group work effectively in ICT and mathematics to develop social skills. For example, children in a reception class responded well when asked to discuss their favourite room in pairs. They listened to each other and asked questions very sensibly. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. Work within religious education, art, music, history and geography makes a good contribution, and this is enriched by the wide range of visits and visitors. Many activities are planned to raise awareness of other cultures, such as when each class became an expert on a different country as part of Christmas celebrations.

34. All of this provision is organised through a very effective policy for personal, health and social education, which covers sex and drugs' education. It is managed by a very effective co-ordinator, and provision is very good. This aspect of pupils' education permeates the rest of the curriculum, forming a natural part of each subject. The circle times observed were particularly effective in developing many aspects of personal education and providing an opportunity for pupils to reflect and question.

35. Links with other educational institutions are productive. Teachers meet regularly with their colleagues at the junior school, and there is very good liaison

between the school and its local playgroup. There have been very good links with teacher training institutions, though no student teachers were in place at the time of the inspection. The nursery class regularly supervises students from local colleges.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Cheam Park Farm is a very caring school where staff get to know pupils and their families well. This ensures pupil's general well being, which in turn supports their achievements in all aspects of their work and personal development. Relationships are excellent throughout the school, and parents are particularly happy with the attitudes and values the school promotes. Each class has a weekly time when the children gather in a circle to discuss matters that are important to them, and when concerns or issues can be expressed. For example, in one Year 2 circle time many pupils openly shared their worries and fears about recent world events. The teacher used this opportunity very well to sensitively reassure and explain.

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37. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The policy is clearly written and emphasises the importance of respect for all and valuing each individual. The simple system of Golden Rules is understood and respected by all. Exemplary behaviour is celebrated each week in special assemblies and rewarded through Golden Time, which gives pupils a chance to choose their own activities each Friday afternoon. Pupils value this privilege highly. Effective procedures are in place for responding to child protection issues. The headteacher is the person designated to deal with any concerns and the school has produced its own useful policy to deal with this sensitive area. All staff have had training and are well aware of their role.

38. The premises are clean and well maintained by the site manager, and the governors carry out regular risk assessments. No health and safety concerns were apparent during the inspection. Appropriate procedures are in place for dealing with sickness and accidents. Four members of staff are trained in first aid, and pupils know what to do and where to go if hurt or unwell. Pupils' attendance is monitored carefully by the staff and through regular visits from the education welfare officer. The importance of good attendance is regularly stressed to parents in newsletters and the prospectus. Particular emphasis has been made recently on reducing the number of pupils taking holidays in term time.

39. Procedures for assessing pupils' performance are very good. The school uses standardised reading tests three times a year, mathematics tests half-termly, and these are used to set targets for each pupil. The results are discussed fully at parent consultation evenings and monitored closely to evaluate how much progress each pupil makes. There is a structured assessment timetable and all teachers follow this consistently. Each pupil's record of attainment is added to at the end of each term with focused assessments in English, mathematics and science and other identified subjects. A very high standard of marking identifies the next steps of learning and these are included in the next term's planning. A key issue at the last inspection was to improve assessment procedures in order to monitor pupils' progress effectively

and to plan future work to match their needs. This issue has been addressed very effectively and assessment is now one of the many strengths of the school.

40. Careful assessments are made of pupils' special educational needs or when pupils with English as an additional language first join the school. The information is used effectively to identify suitable targets for improvement and to provide appropriate support in the classroom. For pupils learning English as an additional language, a visiting specialist teacher carries out initial assessment and teaching and because learning assistants attend these sessions, appropriate planned support is continued between visits. Very good provision for all pupils with special educational needs ensures that they are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has a very strong partnership with its parents, which supports pupils' learning and achievements very effectively. The availability of the staff, and particularly the headteacher, is a key factor in building and sustaining good relationships. Each morning, parents gather at the school as they drop off their children, and staff exchange a few words, or find out about the small concerns that might affect a child's day at school. Many parents

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commented on how valuable they found this close contact with the staff. Home/school liaison books are also used well as a means of communication between parents and staff. The home/school agreement is well established and valued, and every family has signed it this year. A number of parents help in classrooms each week providing useful support for teachers, and they say that they are always made to feel very welcome.

42. A thriving parent/teacher association regularly organises fund-raising and social events, which are strongly supported by parents. For instance, a recently planned family disco was oversubscribed. Substantial amounts of money are raised by these events, which support the further development of the school and its resources. Most recently, this money was used to help finance the new ICT suite.

43. The school provides useful information for parents in the form of prospectuses, newsletters and a notice board. Meetings with teachers to discuss children's progress are held each term. Unusually, the pupils themselves are invited to attend these events and take part fully in discussions about their progress. These meetings work well and enable everyone to decide on areas the pupil needs to focus upon in the coming term. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the reviews of their children's progress. Written annual reports on pupils are issued in the summer term. These provide information on work pupils have covered but, in some subjects, information about pupils' progress is sparse. The reports also contain a lot of jargon and are not always easy for parents to follow.

44. There is a high degree of parental satisfaction with the school in almost all areas. Parents very much appreciate what the school does for their children and particularly value the 'happy family atmosphere' provided. Parents themselves strive

hard to support the school and are always keen to help in any way they can. For example, during the recent summer holidays a group of parents helped the site manager to redecorate some of the inside of the building. Parents and staff at Cheam Park Farm see the education of the children as an important, shared task.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher provides very strong, effective leadership, which is highly valued by staff, parents and governors. She is well supported by the senior management team. Her firmly held vision for continuous improvement in all aspects of school life is proving very successful. The headteacher's rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, with oral and written feedback for staff, has proved very effective in raising the standard of teaching since the last inspection. The school aims, relating to all strands of school life including pupils, adults, parents, the curriculum and the community, are being reflected very well in the school's work.

46. All subjects of the curriculum have an allocated co-ordinator and the role is well developed, though a few newly appointed co-ordinators have yet to have an impact on standards. Co-ordinators all have time away from their teaching to monitor their subject. They scrutinise pupils' recorded work and undertake lesson observations with the headteacher. The useful monitoring plan for the year clearly identifies which activities are to be undertaken, by whom, with expected outcomes. These activities have been a major factor in helping co-ordinators become effective and in raising standards through the school. This has successfully addressed one of the key issues for improvement from the last inspection.

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47. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides very good leadership. The schools' policy is very comprehensive and gives clear guidance on all procedures. These are followed consistently by all staff to make sure that pupils make good progress. The management of provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is very good. All pupils are treated as individuals and their needs are regularly assessed. Well-organised documentation ensures that all members of staff are fully informed about each pupil's needs.

48. Governors enjoy good relationships with the headteacher, who values their support and involvement. Each governor is attached to a subject or an aspect of the school's work, and many visit during the working day. The headteacher ensures they are aware of test results and the analysis of these. They are also provided with an overview of other monitoring activities and the detailed school annual review. As a result, governors are fully aware of the strengths and any areas for development within the school. Governors are appropriately involved in the formulation of the school improvement plan as they are invited to the annual review day with the staff, where an audit of the past year and current situation is undertaken. From this, action plans are drafted, which are discussed in governors' committees. The governing body monitors the school's provision for special educational needs very effectively through regular audits of provision and support.

49. The school improvement plan is a detailed document. Priorities for development are grouped under the same headings as the school's aims, and the main ones for the next three years are helpfully summarised. These priorities are fully appropriate, focusing on raising standards of teaching and learning as well as improving the building and ensuring effective communication with all. Each subject or aspect has a maintenance plan, showing targets, action, time scale and financial implications. Identification of who will undertake monitoring is included, but not how this will be done. Where the success criteria are not easily measurable, more precision is needed.

50. Educational priorities are well supported through very good financial planning. The recent audit report stated that the financial and administrative systems in operation were of a very high standard. Very good use is made of new technology within school administration. The chair of governors has been very involved with the headteacher in preparing bids for grants, particularly for improvements to the building, and many have been successful. The principles of best value are applied very well. For example, the school compares test results with similar schools, consults with parents annually by sending out a questionnaire and ensures value for money by requesting several quotations prior to placing orders. The attention to self-evaluation ensures questions are asked about how improvements could be made and whether expenditure is proving beneficial.

51. The school has enough appropriately qualified teachers, who work well as a team. They are well complemented by effective classroom assistants who are valued and effective members of the school community. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the performance management of the teaching staff and all have three objectives set for the current year. Arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers are very effective, with a well-prepared programme and opportunities to visit other schools and attend training.

52. The accommodation is adequate and has been improved over the past few years. Of particular note is the development of the computer suite. The provision of a new classroom, to ensure classes of less than thirty pupils, has helped to address an issue at the previous inspection, where there were too many pupils in small Year 1 classrooms. The environmental area in the central quadrangle is a very good use of the space. There are further plans for the development of the school house and its grounds and building work is due to start very soon to replace the temporary classrooms and provide a new office. The library is very small and consequently underused by the pupils, and the children in the reception classes do not have access to a secure outdoor area for learning.

53. The school is well resourced, with improvements since the last inspection, particularly for ICT and literacy. Many new 'big books', both fiction and non-fiction, and books for group reading have been acquired. Additional artefacts for religious education, benches for physical education and small equipment for numeracy all enhance the pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The school has no significant weaknesses, but there are four minor issues, which the governors may wish to include in their plans for improvement. Each is followed by a reference to the paragraph(s) in which it is discussed.

- Improve pupils' achievements in design and technology. (87-90)
- Make provision for teaching and learning more coherent through the Foundation Stage. (57)
- Improve opportunities for outdoor learning for the older children in the Foundation Stage. (57, 63)
- Improve the library area. (71)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

58

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

22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 4 | 12 | 26 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 7 | 21 | 45 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 26 | 245 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 0 | 12 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 4 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 27 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 17 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 3 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 2 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2000 | 43 | 53 | 96 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 40 | 43 |
| | Girls | 49 | 52 |

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Total | 89 | 90 | 95 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 93 (97) | 94 (96) | 99 (99) |
| | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 41 | 43 | 43 |
| | Girls | 51 | 51 | 52 |
| | Total | 92 | 94 | 95 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 96 (98) | 98 (99) | 99 (100) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86) | 88 (87) |

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 5 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 7 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 228 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 4 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only i.e. those in Years 1 and 2.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 12.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 28 |
| Average class size | 29 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2000-2001 |
|----------------|-----------|

£

Education support staff: YR– Y2

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 13 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 200 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 26 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 33 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 13 |
|--------------------------------|----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2.4 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Total income | 674524.00 |
| Total expenditure | 679639.00 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2236.00 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 16780.00 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 11665.00 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers**Questionnaire return rate**

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 370 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 104 |

The questionnaire was sent to parents in July 2001 so that all those who had children in Year 2 would be able to express their views before their children moved to the next school.

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 81 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 73 | 25 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 65 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 45 | 44 | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 76 | 23 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 62 | 35 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 76 | 23 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 78 | 21 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 63 | 35 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 79 | 19 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 66 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 46 | 25 | 13 | 5 | 12 |

An average proportion of parents returned the questionnaire, the results of which show very strong approval for the school. A significant minority of these parents included a brief letter expressing their strong satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work. Only 16 parents attended the meeting but they were also very positive about the school. They commented particularly on the happy, productive atmosphere and said that, if parents have concerns, the staff are very approachable. They appreciate the very helpful way in which the headteacher and her staff ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. These parents feel that the school achieves very good standards, both in terms of pupils' academic work and their social development.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The nursery is organised in two part-time sessions, with a maximum of twenty-six children attending each session, usually for three terms. Children start nursery shortly before their fourth birthday, and it caters mainly for the younger children in the year group. The older children enter one of the two reception classes, full-time, in September. Most children benefit from pre-school education. All the classes have good induction procedures, which inspire confidence in children and parents. Taken together, children's attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes is above average. Their achievements are good overall, though weaker facilities, particularly for outdoor learning, in the reception classes result in teachers being unable to provide fully for all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Nonetheless, all children are prepared well for the National Curriculum.

56. At the previous inspection, the work of the nursery was a strength of the school. Since then, a new stage of education (Foundation Stage) has been introduced for the youngest children, which covers both nursery and reception classes. The school has chosen to adopt some aspects of this guidance, but other elements have not been implemented, either because the school does not feel that they are appropriate, or because facilities are not available, such as those needed for outdoor learning in the reception classes. Nonetheless, standards in the nursery remain good, and work in the reception classes has many good features. Overall, improvement has been sound. By the time they join Year 1, almost all the children are likely to exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Similarly, the personal, social and emotional development of the children is a high priority in all these classes, with all children exceeding the goals.

57. Curriculum planning takes full account of the areas of learning specified for the Foundation Stage. The nursery has a well-designed outdoor area and sufficient indoor space to allow these requirements to be fully implemented. The reception classes, however, have insufficient space, particularly for outdoor provision. The reception class teachers work extremely hard and use the resources available very imaginatively, which ensures that provision is satisfactory. It is a weakness that the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is not mentioned in the school curriculum policy or in the prospectus for parents. The fact that the co-ordinator does not teach a class within the stage makes her role more challenging.

58. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall, with some that is very good, occasionally excellent. Teaching in the nursery is very good and remains a strength of the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers and support staff work closely together, sharing information about the children and discussing work to be undertaken. Although they did not attend the training for the Foundation Stage, staff have a sound understanding of the areas of learning. All staff use questions effectively to help children to think about their learning, and they use praise to encourage children to try their very best. They work hard to foster self-esteem and confidence. For example, in the nursery, children played on the car mat with enjoyment and staff extended learning through posing questions

about how 'Bob the Builder' might deliver his materials successfully. The children then adopted these ideas in their independent play, and used a wider range of language. As children returned to the activities, the progress they had made was very clear. Teaching in the reception classes also has many strengths, but with more emphasis on whole-class sessions to develop children's skills in literacy and numeracy. Well-chosen activities, lively presentation and high expectations of what children could achieve ensured that good progress was made in most of these sessions.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. The quality of teaching and children's achievements are good in this area. For example, children in a reception class talked seriously to each other about their favourite room, and listened carefully to what their partner had to say. They concentrated for a long period of time, engrossed in the exchange. In the nursery, children listened very carefully to the instructions of the conductor of their orchestra and responded to the baton by speeding up or slowing down, making their accompaniment softer or louder. Children co-operate and use equipment sensibly and with consideration in all classes. When one child accidentally wrote on another child's card, she apologised immediately, showing understanding that she has inadvertently 'spoilt' her friend's work. She fetched another card and loaned her special pencil. Relationships are excellent between the children and with staff.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Children's achievements are good in this area. The emphasis is on extending speaking and listening skills, and good opportunities are provided for children to extend their vocabulary and range of language. In a reception class, the teacher provided a very good model when she shared her feelings about her favourite room. The children were inspired to emulate her and made noticeable progress in their use of language during the lesson. Group activities are well organised in all classes. In a lesson on thinking skills, children discussed the level of difficulty of different puzzles and speculated on the reasons for this. Early reading and writing skills are effectively taught through sharing books and making class books. In a reception class, the exciting and dramatic story reading style of the teacher was imitated successfully by the children. Children learn letter sounds and enjoy looking at books. They take books home to share with their parents and many of them read a range of common and familiar words. Most children write their own names and are beginning to link letter sounds and shapes. A few children write simple sentences independently. The teaching of literacy is good with some strong features.

Mathematical development

61. Teaching is good in this area. The nursery provides rich mathematical experiences that link across all the areas of learning. Teachers in reception provide good opportunities in the learning environments available to them. For example, good teaching in the nursery used the context of 'Ten in a bed' to provide many opportunities for sorting, counting and matching. After this focussed session, some

children worked with numbers independently and discussed why putting the 1 first makes the number 12 and putting the 2 first makes 21. The combination of rich activities, focused teaching and further activities results in good progress in the nursery. This type of teaching and organisation is not followed in the two reception classes. Children

develop mathematical vocabulary appropriately. Early awareness of measurement is consolidated and ideas of shape are introduced effectively. Teachers' use of assessment enables them to build further challenge into the next activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. The quality of teaching and children's achievements are good in this area. Provision in the nursery is very effective. Provision in the reception classes is sound, and good for ICT, owing to the use of the computer suite. In the nursery, children use the outdoor environment to observe the natural world. In the reception classes, they use mirrors to make careful observational drawings of themselves, striving to match what they see in the mirror to the images they are making on paper. Children describe the weather, their walk to school, and understand that living things may require different conditions to thrive. The nursery offers an environment with a wide range of activities both inside and outside to attract children's interest and curiosity. For example, children confidently made beds for the 'Meanies', using a range of materials independently, and using glue and masking tape to join items. They used tongs to rescue 'Meanies' from the swamp (the water tray coloured blue, and containing lots of spaghetti worms), but they also felt and squeezed the spaghetti, finding different words to describe the sensations. Activities in the reception classes are limited by the facilities available, and they do not provide the same rich learning opportunities for language development and for enquiry.

Physical development

63. Teaching is good in this area. In the nursery, opportunities for physical development are good. Pencils, crayons, brushes and small tools are available and used with confidence. Children cut, paste and join materials with determination and perseverance. They attempt tasks enthusiastically and their skills are extended steadily. On occasion, children are over-challenged. For example, in the nursery, one child was encouraged to copy over letters before having developed an appropriate pencil grip. The outdoor environment and a well-thought out curriculum ensure that the development of running, jumping and climbing is effective. There are plenty of opportunities to build and experiment with developing physical skills. In the reception classes, more formal physical education lessons teach children to use the space effectively and respond thoughtfully to music through dance, but they do not have the variety of challenges possible in the nursery.

Creative development

64. An environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued supports children's learning, and they make good progress. Good opportunities, linked to literacy, are provided in all classes. Similarly, the excellent quality of music teaching, which challenges the children to a very high level, fosters imagination and the enjoyment of the expressive arts. Painting is used satisfactorily but, in the activities seen, the children were provided with pre-selected, pre-mixed colours rather than being able to experiment for themselves. Nonetheless, the quality of teaching is good in this area.

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ENGLISH

65. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have risen over the last three years. In 2000 they were well above the national average in both reading and writing. Compared with similar schools, results were average for reading and well above average for writing. The school had identified writing as an area for development and the emphasis given to this proved very effective in raising standards. Boys did considerably better than girls in both reading and writing, with significantly higher scores in reading, which is contrary to the national results. Unpublished results of the 2001 tests indicate similarly high scores overall, but a lower proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing. In order to address this, the headteacher is now taking groups of more able pupils for additional writing practice each week.

66. Inspection evidence shows that the standard of work attained at the end of Year 2 is well above the national average overall. When pupils start school in the reception classes, the standards they attain are above average. In relation to these prior levels of attainment, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where progress was judged to be satisfactory.

67. Standards of speaking and listening are well above average. Most pupils listen attentively in lessons, both to the teacher and each other. Many pupils are articulate, confident speakers with a wide vocabulary. A good range of opportunities is provided for pupils to engage in speaking and listening activities. For example, circle times enable all pupils to contribute to discussions. In a very good lesson, Year 2 pupils worked in pairs to discuss special wishes, which they reported to the whole class. This was followed by an open discussion about issues concerning them, which was handled very sensitively by the teacher. Opportunities for paired work were seen in several lessons, including when using the computers in the suite and when working on mathematical investigations. Technical vocabulary is well used in all subjects. For example, pupils were encouraged to describe plane shapes in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, for others to recognise the shape.

68. Pupils enjoy reading and Year 2 benefit from their fortnightly visits to the local library. Parents hear their children read at home regularly and this has a positive impact on standards. The more able Year 2 pupils read aloud fluently and confidently, though some with limited expression. They recall books they have enjoyed reading and justify their opinions. Less able pupils lack fluency, but they recognise many words and use the pictures and the context well to help them read. While Year 2 pupils blend sounds into syllables to work out unknown words, many Year 1 pupils are not able to do this yet and try to work them out from individual sounds. Teachers promote different authors effectively with books by a focus author displayed in each classroom. Teachers' lively reading of big books with their classes develops pupils' enthusiasm for books very well. The emphasis given to book language such as author, illustrator, title page, italics and different punctuation marks ensures many pupils understand these terms. Year 2 pupils have a valuable quiet reading time most days, when the teacher hears groups of pupils read. Standards of reading are well above average.

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69. A very wide range of writing is undertaken through the school. This includes imaginative stories, letters, poems, book reviews, instructions and accounts. Standards are well above average. The school's analysis of test results indicated that spelling was a weakness and this is receiving focused attention now, with improving results. There are good opportunities for high-attaining pupils to write at length. For example, more able Year 1 pupils wrote several pages about their visit to Brooklands Museum, while some Year 2 pupils wrote extended versions of traditional stories. The last inspection report noted that pupils would benefit from having more experience of drafting. This has been addressed successfully in both year groups. In an excellent lesson, Year 2 pupils were very proud of their ability to correct their teacher's story! They suggested alternative words to make the story more exciting and they corrected spelling and punctuation errors. By Year 2, most of the pupils use a joined style of handwriting, but some pupils in Year 1 are not yet secure with letter formation. Good opportunities for pupils to practise their developing literacy skills are provided in other subjects. For example, Year 1 pupils kept a plant diary and Year 2 pupils wrote diary extracts and poems after their history study of The Great Fire of London.

70. The standard of teaching seen was good overall, with two excellent lessons in Year 2. In these lessons, the lively approach and excellent relationships, highly motivating activities, very good questioning and high expectations ensured the pupils were fully involved and worked very hard. Resources were well prepared and group activities were appropriate for pupils of differing ability. Classroom assistants were fully involved with the pupils throughout the lesson. For example, in one of the excellent lessons, the classroom assistant recorded pupils' oral contributions during the whole class time, providing a valuable assessment. Time at the end of lessons was well used to reinforce the pupils' learning. For example, in the other excellent lesson, some pupils read out their stories and the teacher pointed out the language of time that was being used, which had been the lesson objective. In all literacy lessons seen, classroom assistants supported one of the groups very effectively. Some teaching weaknesses included inadequate planning leading to an unfocused

lesson, objectives not shared with the class, classroom assistants insufficiently involved with the pupils during whole-class sessions, and a lack of reinforcement of pupils' learning during the final part of the lesson. The quality of marking throughout the school is of very high quality, often with reference to the learning objective and giving points for improvement.

71. The literacy strategy is well established through the school. Teachers' lesson planning is detailed and usually guides the learning well. Pupils' reading progress is tested termly and results are carefully analysed, with action taken if appropriate. Most teachers, particularly in Year 2, note progress in individual pupil's reading records, alongside the written comments from home. Evaluations of every lesson are undertaken through the school and provide very useful on-going assessment, which helps subsequent planning. Overall, assessment is good, though there are few formalised approaches to assessing pupils' progress with speaking and listening. Resources have improved considerably since the last inspection, with many new 'big books' and books for group reading. The library is very small and restricts opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills. However, the school has plans to relocate it in the future. The subject is very well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has led staff training in aspects of the literacy strategy. She has monitored teaching and learning by undertaking lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' written work and analysing test data. This has led to focused activities to raise standards still further.

MATHEMATICS

72. Pupils' achievements have improved significantly since the last inspection because the quality of teaching and the structure of the curriculum are much better. Results of the 2000 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 were above the national average, and close to those of similar schools. Almost all pupils gained the expected Level 2 and a third reached the higher Level 3. Boys did considerably better than girls, contrary to the national picture, but this was owing to the characteristics of a particular year group rather than any weakness in the school's provision. Results in 2001 improved, with all pupils reaching the expected standard and a slightly higher proportion gaining Level 3.

73. Inspection evidence showed that the standard of work attained at the end of Year 2 is well above national expectations. Pupils' work from last year confirmed that they were all working at least at the expected standard, and that about a third were exceeding it. Lower-attaining pupils carried out calculations and investigations with numbers to 50. Their understanding of the place value of digits to 100 was developing well, and they had a good grasp of the properties of shapes and simple fractions. The average attainers were confident working with numbers to 100, and often beyond, such as when ordering numbers to 1000 or carrying out addition and subtraction of money to £1.00. Their work showed a good degree of accuracy when using a train timetable to calculate journey times or when measuring length to the nearest centimetre. Higher attainers used skills such as recognising that 80 divided by 10 is the inverse of 10 multiplied by 8 to solve problems. Their good grasp of place value enabled them to order numbers to 10,000, and work interpreting block

graphs or calculating the perimeter of simple shapes showed that they had moved well beyond the usual standard at the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence from lessons observed in the current Year 2, showed that this year group contains even more high attainers. A significant minority of these pupils is already working at a level beyond that expected at the end of the year. Therefore, weighing all the evidence, standards at the end of Year 2 are higher than indicated in the 2000 national tests.

74. When pupils start school in the reception classes, the standards they attain in mathematics are above average, overall, because a significant proportion are high attainers and there are very few low attainers. During Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements are good, regardless of their earlier attainment. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils began by ordering numbers to 20, then moved on to numbers to 100, and then were challenged to order numbers to 500. Both the whole-class session and the group tasks ensured that pupils made good progress, regardless of their previous understanding. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils investigated the number of different ways of placing three coloured rectangles within a larger rectangle. All the pupils participated in this activity, at their own level, and all made good progress in developing strategies to find all the combinations. Pupils' recorded work from last year also showed that skills are built steadily so that pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress in lessons and are well supported in their learning. Teachers form groups within their classes so that tasks can be matched to pupils' special needs, and an adult usually works with these pupils and provides skilled support.

75. Most pupils have good numeracy skills, and many have a recall of number facts that is better than would be expected for their ages. They are given good opportunities to use and develop these skills in mathematics lessons and in daily class routines. However, too few opportunities are planned to use and develop pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects.

76. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with a number of very strong features. It was at least satisfactory in all of the seven lessons seen, good in three, very good in one, and excellent in one. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly in Year 1. Lessons are planned in great detail, with helpful evaluations that enable teachers to adapt the content of future work. Learning objectives are very clear, and shared with pupils so that they know exactly what they are trying to achieve. Mental starter sessions usually move at a good pace, with activities prepared carefully to challenge all the pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy these sessions and are keen to offer answers. For example, a Year 2 lesson began with pupils calling out the number that would make a given number into 10. The teacher led the game, and then pupils were asked to lead it, which they enjoyed. The speed of the activity was gradually increased to inject challenge. On occasion, however, the pace of the mental session was too slow, and some pupils were not fully involved.

77. Individual and group activities are very well organised. Where teaching was good or better, the pace and challenge seen in the whole-class session was continued through the group activities. A weakness in a few lessons was that the teacher did not ensure that pupils sustained their concentration, so they did not complete the amount of work of which they were capable. All teachers have very good relationships with their classes, which support good management of behaviour. The very good and excellent teaching has all these strengths, combined with imaginative presentation of tasks and an insistent pace. As a result, pupils are captivated by the activities, eager to contribute, and work rapidly on any tasks they are given. For example, a Year 2 lesson began with pupils making amounts of money, each using cards showing coins. The rapid pace of this session, and the involvement of pupils demonstrating their answers, kept everyone on task. The main activity was totalling the cost of items bought at a shop and, though this was potentially mundane, the enthusiasm of the teacher ensured that all the children found it exciting. By the end of the lesson, all the pupils had developed their skills and had enjoyed the activity. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is excellent, usually including a note of what the pupil has achieved as well as praise for hard work. Homework is used very effectively to consolidate pupils' learning.

78. The curriculum is well planned, broad and generally balanced, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' work shows an increasing emphasis on using and applying their skills in investigations and problem solving. There is little indication, however, that ICT is used sufficiently to support work in mathematics. Assessment procedures are very good, and have improved rapidly since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment and progress are monitored, both in lessons and through half-termly tests. This is ensuring that work in lessons is well matched to pupils' needs. Organisation of the subject across the school is good. The co-ordinator supports planning and leads developments effectively. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is well established and enables the school to identify strengths and areas for development. At present, however, plans for improvement are not precise enough or linked to identified weaknesses. Existing high standards, and a clear commitment amongst all the staff to raise them still further, provide a good basis for continued improvement.

SCIENCE

79. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning and the organisation of the curriculum have improved considerably. As a result, standards of attainment are now well above national expectations by the end of Year 2. This is because pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of scientific processes and facts. The decision to include science vocabulary in teachers' planning has been an important factor in improving pupils' understanding of scientific processes. The school is continuing to raise standards in pupils' investigation and enquiry skills. Good progress has been made to date, and an average proportion of pupils now attains the higher Level 3 in this aspect of science. This is partly because the curriculum now places a greater emphasis on pupils learning through practical investigation activities. Consequently, pupils achieve well in comparison to their earlier attainment and make good progress overall.

80. Science lessons are exciting and pupils are fully involved in their own learning, whether this is planning an investigation or trying to identify what is in a bag using only their sense of touch. Their practical involvement makes sure that they listen, concentrate on learning about the world in which we live, and find ways of solving problems. In Year 1, pupils were learning about their senses and how these are used to investigate and find out about materials and the environment. They were fully involved in the practical activities and their curiosity was aroused further when they learnt how to use magnifying lenses correctly to notice the detail in a sunflower head. The pupils' before and after drawings showed good progress in the amount of detail, the precision of the shapes, and the patterns they could see.

81. The quality of teaching is good. Very good teaching was seen in Year 2 during the inspection. The challenge to find a way to stop ice pops from melting motivated pupils' interest, evident from the intense faces as pupils thought of different ways to prevent this from happening. All knew that a freezer would be the best possible way but without this being available less obvious ways were planned. Suggestions were varied and, owing to the very strong relationships between adults and pupils and with each other, most pupils contributed including those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Astute questioning by teachers encouraged pupils to consider carefully how to test a range of chosen materials in which to wrap the ice pops, and how to make their test fair. Although the majority of pupils are not yet able to identify what they need to do to make a test fair, they all could identify when it was not. This was demonstrated clearly when teachers tried to wrap the ice pops in a large sheet of bubble wrap, then a small sheet of tin foil. All pupils recognised at once that it was not fair because one material was a bigger size than the other.

82. Teachers assess pupils' skills and understanding very well. Their careful marking and assessments are used to identify the next steps in learning accurately, so that the next lesson focuses appropriately on the development of specific skills for different individuals and groups of pupils. Outlines for recording investigations are used very effectively to match the writing demands to pupils' capabilities.

83. The co-ordination of science is very good. Improvements are a direct consequence of focused and clear evaluation of teaching, learning and the curriculum, which has identified strengths and weakness precisely and informed future development. A programme of training

was implemented; teachers' knowledge of the subject and their expectations of what pupils can achieve were raised in consequence. The curriculum is well organised, relevant and planned in detail to include focused learning objectives. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject, and this aspect of practice is improving. There is a good range and quality of CDs and the Internet is used effectively for pupils to research their topic each term.

ART and DESIGN

84. At the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are above national expectations, and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' achievements are good during Year 1 and Year 2. No art lessons were observed, so judgements are based on an examination of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff.

85. Pupils' past work showed their good skills in drawing and painting, with some three-dimensional work, and occasional pieces using fabric, collage and printing. Pupils learn a variety of skills, such as batik and work with modelling clay; they study the work of famous artists, and produce work in a similar style; and they focus on different aspects of art, such as colour or texture. In Year 1, observational drawings of vegetables show good attention to detail, for example in picking out the various tones in a cross-section of a carrot. Painting in watercolour, inspired by the work of Monet, captures imaginatively his style and the range of shades in his painting of a 'Lily pond'. Model houses, linked to a study of the locality, are well made and carefully painted. Currently, self-portraits in a variety of media, from paint to salt dough, exemplify the good standard of work in Year 1. In Year 2, observational drawings of historical kitchen utensils show how the pupils' skills develop, with careful shading to create depth and form. Their batik project, which included making a design and experimenting on paper with wax resist, is a good example of working in a challenging medium. A class hanging, including a piece of batik from each pupil, is a striking piece of artwork. Drawings in pencil and pastel, based on the designs of William Morris, are of good quality, show close attention to detail and indicate that pupils can develop their work over a series of stages. Attractive displays of pupils' work, throughout the school, celebrate its quality and enhance the environment.

86. Good teaching is evident in planning and the pupils' finished work. A minor weakness is that, although pupils use a range of materials and techniques, they rarely develop the same idea through a variety of media. Similarly, much of the artwork is channelled by the teaching so pupils do not have enough freedom to express their ideas. This was noted as a weakness at the last inspection. The school has recently introduced a good scheme of work, which provides detailed support for teachers' planning. The range of work seen, however, is not yet as extensive as indicated in the scheme. Art is linked well to work in other subjects, and pupils have good opportunities to experiment with simple graphics programs in ICT. Special events such as an 'Arts week' result in some outstanding work, for example the 'Wizard of Oz' puppets made by Year 2. The art club is always very well attended. Organisation of the subject across the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the role, but she monitors teachers' planning systematically, and has already identified key priorities for improvement.

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

87. At the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are well below national expectations. During Year 1, pupils' achievements are satisfactory because they complete a number of projects that develop their skills steadily. In Year 2, however, there is very little evidence that pupils have been completing work in the subject and their achievements are poor. Only one design and technology lesson was observed, so judgements are largely based on an examination of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff. At the last inspection, no judgement was made about pupils' standards of attainment, owing to lack of evidence.

88. In Year 1, pupils designed and made sliding mechanisms and hinged mechanisms, which developed a good range of skills in cutting and joining materials. Having learned these skills, they used them to make a range of puppets, starting with finger puppets and then animal puppets hinged with paper fasteners. Pupils' written evaluations of this project show the beginnings of identifying the strengths and weaknesses in their products. Linked to geography, pupils looked at houses in the locality and then drew a design for a house that they would like to make. These designs are of good quality, and include labels and a list of materials needed for the project. The completed houses are finished attractively in a variety of materials. Year 1 pupils have also learnt how to make small wood frames, to which they attached decorated shop windows. In contrast, past work in Year 2 includes only one project. Pupils drew a design for a stained glass window, based on observations of such windows in local housing. These designs were made in card and tissue paper. The quality of the designs shows no progress on those seen in Year 1, though the finished work is satisfactory.

89. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good. Year 2 pupils made photograph frames using card, or clay, or thin sponge, referring to designs they had drawn earlier. The teacher had organised the resources effectively so pupils could work independently, and they showed great enthusiasm for the task. An effective discussion at the end of the lesson enabled pupils to evaluate the challenges they had encountered in using the various materials.

90. The curriculum for design and technology lacks breadth and depth, particularly in Year 2. Work does not develop pupils' skills systematically in investigating, designing, making and evaluating products, and there are few examples of focused practical tasks to develop skills in cutting and joining. The range of materials used is very limited. For example, work with foods, fabric, plastics and wood is largely absent. Year 2 teachers have been combining design and technology with art and, as a result, artwork has been dominant so the distinctive knowledge, skills and understanding involved in design and technology have not been taught sufficiently. Planning for the current term still shows art and design and technology combined, though the lesson seen during the inspection did not match this planning. A good draft scheme of work sets out very clearly the requirements of design and technology and an effective pattern of work across the school. It provides a good basis for future improvement. Organisation of the subject across the school is unsatisfactory, mainly because there is a lack of consistency in approach. The co-ordinator is recently appointed and has already laid the basis for more consistent practice across the school. She knows what the weaknesses are and has clear plans to remedy them.

GEOGRAPHY

91. Since the previous inspection, the school has been successful in raising standards. Pupils' achievements are now good and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is above national expectations. For example, pupils' knowledge and understanding of geography are developed effectively when they visit the local church. The walk itself is planned as a geographical enquiry, and the church is considered not simply as a place of worship but also as a significant building in geographical terms. Work produced after a comparative visit to another place of worship shows that pupils can observe and understand similarities and differences. Fieldwork investigating such topics as car usage and building function shows that pupils understand some of the differences between their own and a contrasting neighbouring area. Pupils' recorded work shows that they also have a good awareness of places further afield.

92. No lessons were seen during the inspection, but scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed the good standards reached. The range of geographical challenges is very wide, including nationally recommended materials about a village in Scotland. Pupils' developing knowledge and awareness of place is clear from their recorded work and indicates that the quality of teaching is good. Astute marking helps pupils to understand how to improve their work. Displays are imaginative and catch the attention of the pupils, who take pleasure in pointing out their own work and that of their friends.

93. The curriculum is well planned and provides opportunities for pupils to learn a good range of geographical enquiry skills. A strong emphasis on practical work ensures good progress and a high level of interest. Work is planned largely around first-hand visits, which is a key factor contributing to good standards. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed the already strong programme of visits by focusing on the enquiry skills required and the types of tasks given to the pupils. As result, pupils are now better at exploring geographical questions, rather than just learning facts. Valuable assessment is carried out at the end of each unit of work, which is also an improvement since the previous inspection and helps teachers to plan the next set of lessons. The co-ordinator has a firm grasp of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject and has put considerable effort into improving the standards achieved.

HISTORY

94. Pupils' achievements are good and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is above national expectations. This represents significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' understanding develops well by studying the stories of famous individuals, by examining an interesting range of historical artefacts and through a well-chosen range of visits.

95. The youngest children study their own life and family, making simple family trees. They begin to find out how their own lives are very different from those of their grandparents. This is extended using well-chosen books with a historical content. Older pupils learn about such events as the Great Fire of London through well-chosen extracts and materials, and they find out about important people in history

such as Florence Nightingale. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed effectively by these approaches. They learn information about life in the past and learn to ask and answer relevant questions. The emphasis is on historical enquiry skills and developing an enthusiasm for history.

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96. In the few lessons seen, teaching was good. Pupils' recorded work also indicates that teaching is varied and exciting, particularly for pupils in Year 2 classes. Marking is helpful, indicating how work can be improved. Detailed planning shows that teachers are knowledgeable and interested in history, fully understanding its importance in developing thinking, speaking and listening skills. There are many well-presented and informative displays, and it was common to see pupils reading the information and looking at the books (often made by the pupils) associated with the displays. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well through history. Pupils participated in a Victorian day, and wrote evaluations of their experiences, which they word-processed. Computers are used for recording, but seldom for research. Expectations of the level of skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils can achieve are very high. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

97. Visits to places like the Florence Nightingale Museum enhance the curriculum and are carefully planned so that pupils' learning is maximised. Pupils visited the museum after their study of Florence's life, and were already reflecting on what questions they would ask at the museum. It is this intelligent approach to the curriculum that is typical of the school and forms the basis of its effectiveness. Pupils use a wide range of resources, including well-chosen videos, and these have improved since the last inspection. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic and hard-working co-ordinator who monitors standards through planning, work samples and occasional visits to classes.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

98. Standards of attainment in ICT are now above national expectations and this signifies very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievements are good. The high quality of the computers in the ICT suite makes a significant contribution to the rate of pupils' learning. There are enough for pupils to work together in pairs and sometimes there are suitable opportunities for pupils to work individually. The network has a wide range of software, which supports learning in all subjects effectively. When working in the ICT suite, most pupils make good progress and find the activities challenging. However, higher-attaining pupils, many of whom are very familiar with using computers at home, are not always challenged sufficiently. Although they make satisfactory progress, the school recognises the need to increase this challenge further. Due to the good structure provided by the scheme of work and support from all adults working in the ICT suite, Year 1 pupils are already very confident and use the mouse with good control, for example to draw pictures of people. They select from a tools menu to draw shapes and fill colour, and with good guidance from supporting adults save their work to disk.

99. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is supported well by a clear scheme of work which gives good guidance on lesson content, the range of software available and the development of pupils' ICT skills. Links are identified to other subjects, in particular English, mathematics and science and, wherever possible, lessons are linked to a particular week's literacy and numeracy objectives. This link adds interest to activities and keeps pupils' attention focused and motivated to learn new skills. Pupils in one Year 2 class learned how to reposition and resize pictures of bears selected and inserted from a graphics menu, to enhance their writing about the book 'Big bear little bear' being studied in literacy. Each lesson begins with a clear review of previous learning. The teacher, often helped by

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pupils, demonstrates new skills, which aids assessment of whether pupils have retained what they have learned. Simple strategies, such as lifting the keyboard so that all pupils can see which keys are used to make things happen on screen, are employed effectively to make sure that all pupils know exactly what to do before they start their activities. The teachers and the learning assistant have very good expertise and this enables them to assess needs and give good support to individuals and groups of pupils.

100. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. There has been recent evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, and precise priorities for development have been identified. These are now being addressed very effectively in the ICT suite, though computers are not always used sufficiently in the classroom. The Internet is used very well throughout the school to support pupils' learning. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils were fascinated by their visit to the National Gallery website, which allowed them to view many paintings on display from the comfort of school. The Sainsbury website has a virtual shopping experience set in Victorian times for pupils to explore and develop their understanding of what it was like to shop in the past. 'Bob the builder' is a popular site for the youngest pupils. There is a suitable policy for using the Internet to provide security for pupils.

MUSIC

101. In the lessons seen and in assemblies, pupils' attainment was above national expectations, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Singing is a particular strength. Pupils sing a wide range of songs tunefully and with great enthusiasm, particularly when accompanying them with actions.

102. Year 1 pupils enjoyed using their voices, hands and feet to create different sounds. They were inventive and, in pairs, explored and suggested a number of unusual sounds. The focus in Year 2 lessons was keeping a steady beat while playing long and short sounds. Pupils were fascinated to see a metronome and all kept time with the ticking pendulum. The small amount of teaching seen was all satisfactory or better. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher's expertise, good control and high expectations enabled the pupils to make very good progress as they were challenged by increasingly difficult activities. Almost all pupils played a percussion instrument in time with the teacher's steady beat. Then, as half the class

played untuned instruments making short sounds, the rest played instruments such as chime bars or Indian bells, which resonated to make long sounds. The pupils concentrated very well, following the teacher's instructions to play on certain beats, while sustaining the pulse.

103. Pupils use their own symbols to record their compositions. They listen to music and respond in a variety of ways. For example, Year 1 pupils expressed their feelings through pictures as they listened to 'Mars' from 'The Planet Suite' by Holst. Music is played as the pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies, but the opportunity to discuss the music is missed. There are a number of opportunities for pupils to perform in school, such as for class assemblies, the Christmas concert and the Year 2 summer production. The quality of last summer's production, 'A Twentieth Century Tour', was of an exceptionally high standard, according to a number of reports. Pupils sing at the Day Centre at Christmas and take part in the local schools' music festival. During the Arts Week last year, a drum workshop enthralled the pupils. They have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and to join an after school music club.

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104. The recently completed scheme of work is being used through the school, and new arrangements to assess and record pupils' progress have just been introduced. A good supply of instruments and a new CD player in each classroom enhance pupils' learning. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has undertaken lesson observations with the headteacher. In order to meet staff needs, an outside expert and the co-ordinator provided valuable in-service training.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Across the school, standards of attainment are close to national expectations. These are similar standards to those found at the previous inspection. As assessment procedures have been strengthened since then, improvement overall is satisfactory.

106. Pupils' achievements are sound. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching in gymnastics and dance was satisfactory. Teachers' planning identifies learning objectives clearly and, as a result, suitable activities are organised. Pupils are challenged to increase the variety in their sequence of movements on the benches and tables. However, too little emphasis is given to the development of quality in these sequences, so there is often insufficient progress in this aspect. The time in lessons is short and, while this keeps the pace of learning brisk, it often means that there is not enough time to develop skills and ideas sufficiently. While teachers evaluate pupils' work well, and provide considerable praise and encouragement, pupils do not have enough opportunities to evaluate their own work so their knowledge of their own learning is insecure. This means that they do not know what they must do next to improve their work.

107. There is adequate equipment and apparatus for the subject. In some gymnastics lessons, however, there is insufficient variety of equipment for pupils to develop their skills and ideas. Many pupils wait for a space on apparatus because those using it are concentrating so hard to add variety to their sequences that they take a long time. This means that some pupils, despite being encouraged by

teachers to practise their sequences on the mats, are waiting for too long. Also pupils are given too little opportunity to select for themselves which piece of apparatus is most suitable on which to develop their ideas.

108. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has not yet had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. The purchase of Top Play equipment and activity packs has added interest and variety to lesson content and this is not only supporting teaching and learning in gymnastics, dance and games effectively but also stimulating pupils' interest. The very good range of extra-curricular activities makes a significant contribution to games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. Pupils make good progress and achieve well for their abilities. Evidence from lessons and the good amount of recorded work indicates that they gain a secure knowledge of Christianity and an early understanding of four other world religions. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above that seen in most schools, and exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

110. Pupils in both year groups visit the local church and understand what features such as the font, lectern, altar and pulpit are used for. Year 1 pupils compare this church with the one

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at Churt, when visiting that village as part of their geography studies. Year 2 pupils visit a

Hindu Mandir and learn about the customs associated with that religion. They use their literacy skills to write letters of thanks afterwards. They understand that the Bible is Christians' special book, and know a number of stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Acts of collective worship contribute to this knowledge. For example, during the inspection an outside visitor told the pupils the story of Zacchaeus and, on another morning, some Year 2 pupils acted out the story of Martha and Mary.

111. Year 1 pupils enjoyed discussing people who help them at home and in school. They recognised the kind and unkind people in the parable of the good Samaritan and suggested ways that they might help others. This concept is developed in Year 2, for example when the pupils study St Francis and discuss both his and his father's feelings when he gave his clothes away. Pupils know the main Christian festivals as well as some of other religions, such as Hanukkah and Divali.

112. The small amount of teaching seen was all satisfactory or better, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A strength of the teaching is the sensitively led discussions and the identification of similarities and differences between the major religions. In a good lesson, Year 2 pupils were fascinated to learn about Jewish customs and see Torah scrolls. Recorded work is marked to a high standard, with the best posing questions to encourage reflection. Teachers interest the pupils

successfully, using the recently acquired big books and artefacts very well. The detailed scheme of work addresses the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and identifies learning intentions, experiences, key vocabulary and resources required for each theme. A formal assessment of pupils' progress is made annually and the scheme identifies useful assessment indicators, which help teachers evaluate each lesson. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who monitors planning and pupils' recorded work.