

INSPECTION REPORT

THE ROYAL SCHOOL (CROWN AIDED)

The Great Park, Windsor

LEA area: Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 110014

Headteacher: Mrs. Gloria Ringrose

Reporting inspector: Jo Cheadle
23233

Dates of inspection: 28th – 30th January 2002

Inspection number: 195549

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary Aided (Crown Aided)
Age range of pupils:	5 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Great Park Windsor Berkshire
Postcode:	SL4 2HP
Telephone number:	01784 434 274
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Canon John Oviden
Date of previous inspection:	6 th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Registered inspector	English; information and communication technology; physical education; art; the provision for pupils with special educational needs; equality of opportunity	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
9053	Viv Phillips	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
27654	Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; design and technology; geography; history; music; areas of learning for the Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Royal First School is a voluntary aided school that is unique because of its Crown Aided status. Since its establishment in 1843, by order of Queen Victoria, successive monarchs have continued to demonstrate a close interest in its development and in the well being of its pupils. It is set in very attractive surroundings in the Great Park, Windsor. There are currently 87 pupils on roll between the ages of 5 and 9 years. The school initially serves the children of families who live and work in the park estate. These represent a third of the current school roll, with other pupils admitted from surrounding local area. Nearly all pupils come from white backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs for a variety of learning difficulties is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is low in comparison with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Royal School is a good and effective school. It provides a purposeful learning environment in which pupils achieve well and are cared for efficiently. The school aims to achieve the best for all the pupils, and it is successful. The school consistently attains better than average results in national tests, and the proportion of pupils who attain levels higher than would be expected is above the national average. The overall quality of teaching is good. The headteacher leads the school well and has taken on the challenges of new initiatives with drive and rigour. The headteacher, staff and governors value the contribution made by parents to their children's learning and parents are well involved with the work of the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are good in English, mathematics and science and most other subjects.
- The school creates an environment in which pupils develop very positive attitudes to their work and really enjoy coming to school.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers are very good role models of respectful, supportive and positive relationships.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development; the values of the school are based on fairness, kindness and respect.
- The school is well led and managed; the headteacher, staff and governors work very well as a team, sharing a commitment for continual improvement.

What could be improved

- Information given to parents about what their children will be learning and how well they are doing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997. The many strengths noted in the previous report have been well maintained and there has been good improvement in many other areas. The headteacher, staff and governors have responded effectively to the need to change and improve, and new initiatives and challenges have been managed and implemented well. The well-structured school improvement plan, clearly now outlines staff development as a tool for improvement. Aims of the plan are appropriately prioritised and costed. This is much better than at the time of the last inspection. The strengths of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection, and in the current inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The school now makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage, enabling them to achieve well over a short period of time. The curriculum for all year groups is now fully in line with the recommendations of the National Curriculum and pupils' learning experiences are broader. Practical and investigative experiences, particularly in mathematics

and science, are now a planned and important part of learning, which has a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably since the last inspection. Teachers have also received good training in this subject and are now ready to teach the full range of ICT experiences.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	A*	A*	A	C
Writing	A*	B	C	E
Mathematics	A	A	B	C

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In the 2001 national tests, pupils achieved better results than the national average in reading and mathematics. In reading, their results were well above average. Pupils' attainment in writing was similar to the national average and lower than in previous years. Results over time show that pupils consistently achieve better results than nationally, even though there has been some fluctuation. As a relatively small group of pupils take the tests each year, the results of each individual impact heavily on overall percentages. Each pupil represents between 5 and 7 per cent of the total.

While some children start school with very good skills, particularly in reading, the majority have average levels of attainment. During the Foundation Stage children achieve well. In Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements continue to be good and attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average. Standards of work in the current Year 2 class reflect this. Pupils in Year 4 achieve well and standards of attainment are also above average.

Standards in reading are high and this has a very positive impact on how well pupils learn in all subjects of the curriculum. Pupils have very good speaking skills and are very confident and capable of expressing their thoughts and opinions. They listen carefully and respectfully to what others have to say. After analysis of test results, the school has appropriately targeted pupils' writing skills for improvement. Although good written work was seen during the inspection, particularly in Year 4, test results have been affected by the lack of opportunities to complete written tasks in lessons, largely due to the need to balance the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy with what is essential for pupils at the school. Extended writing sessions are now used to allow pupils to write freely for longer periods of time. In addition, a new handwriting programme has been introduced to improve the speed, fluency and presentation of written work.

Pupils in Year 2 are currently attaining at expected levels in mathematics, and in science standards are above average. In Year 4, standards attained by pupils are above average in mathematics and science. In music and physical education, standards are above average throughout the school. In all other subjects standards are average. Standards in ICT are currently average, but with the full implementation of new resources and the impact of recent staff training, there is good capacity for future improvement

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They are very happy to come to school. They enjoy interesting and challenging activities very much.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Most pupils behave very well, in and out of lessons. A few individuals have more difficulty, than the majority, in accepting the need to listen to others and take turns in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and opportunities for using initiative; particularly by the time they reach the top of the school.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. Absences are well below the level found nationally.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3-4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

All the teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is effective because it takes very good account of what children already know and can do and challenges them to achieve well. As a result they are very ready to begin National Curriculum work in Year 1. Teachers throughout the school know their pupils well and plan work that is well matched to their starting levels and needs. The result is that all pupils learn well in lessons, including those with special educational needs.

Teachers greatly encourage the very positive relationships that are evident in school. They manage pupils in such a way that good behaviour and respectful attitudes are the norm for learning. In one or two lessons, the needs of pupils with specific behavioural needs are not met effectively enough. As yet there has been little training for teachers in the specialised management of such pupils, as it has not been a concern until recently. Teachers use a good range of teacher methods to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. In response to the last inspection report more investigative and practical work is now evident in the curriculum. As a result, pupils make better rates of progress in these aspects of mathematics and science work in particular.

The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are taught well and their impact has been evaluated. Teachers now provided regular opportunities for extended independent writing in response to this evaluation. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well through other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are especially well developed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities, both within and between subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Visiting specialist teachers and extra-curricular activities enrich the pupils' experience.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have clear educational plans and these are well used to structure their learning. There are currently a small number of pupils who have more complex learning and behavioural needs that the school is not able to cater for with complete success in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development through its day-to-day work and the very good relationships between pupils and with staff. The school fosters spiritual, moral and social development very well. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The overall quality of care provided is good. Informal monitoring of personal development is very good. Good behaviour is encouraged well although there is evidence of inconsistency in the way incidences of misbehaviour are managed. Procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing are satisfactory.

The school greatly encourages parents to support and be involved with their children's learning, although not enough information is provided for them about what pupils are being taught. There is an active parents' group that organises regular social events and provide help with work and activities in school. The contribution that parents make to pupils' learning is highly valued by the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction to the school and leads with pace and rigour. She has built an effective team who are committed to raising standards. Subjects of the curriculum are well managed, although priorities for development in some subjects are not identified clearly enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They work closely with the school and are knowledgeable about aims and priorities. In some instances, governors do not work closely enough with the headteacher to ensure that parents are kept as well informed as they would like to be.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for evaluating its work. Analysis of test results and pupils' work directs curriculum planning and teaching and learning in lessons. Good teamwork ensures that all involved know the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well used. Specific grants and all resources are used effectively to ensure that pupils learn well. Planned improvements and developments are clearly costed and the impact of expenditure is evaluated. In some instances, where there are specific needs in certain classes, learning support assistants are not deployed as effectively as they could be.

The school accommodation is very clean and attractively maintained both inside and out. There have been recent improvements that have included a new classroom for pupils in Year 3. This area is very small for the current number of pupils who work there. The number of teachers and other staff is

adequate to meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum. The quantity of learning resources is satisfactory overall and resources are of good quality. The amount of resources for ICT is now good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents are happy that their children enjoy school and that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. ▪ They believe that quality of teaching and of leadership and management is good. ▪ Parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or complaints. ▪ Parents feel that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best, and that they make good progress in their learning. ▪ They think that the school encourages children to behave well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents do not always feel well enough informed about how their child is doing. ▪ Parents are concerned that their children do not receive the right type of homework.

Inspectors strongly agree with parents' positive comments and support the many parents who say that it is a privilege for their child to be at the school. Inspectors also support parents with their concern over the type of information they receive about what pupils will be taught. The school does not yet have a satisfactory method of keeping parents informed of this, which would assist them in helping their children at home. Information about how well pupils are doing is improving. There is very good informal exchange of information, and results in National Tests are well explained. Annual reports to parents have improved since the last inspection, but they still do not fully help parents to understand clearly the standards their children attain in relation to national expectations. Inspectors feel that the amount and type of homework is appropriate for the age of the pupils, although a consistent pattern for each year group is not firmly established.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. While some children begin school with very good skills in reading, writing and mathematics, levels of attainment on entering the reception class are average overall. Baseline assessments show that the majority of children attain standards that would be expected for their age. During the Foundation Stage, pupils achieve well and, by the time they join Year 1, their attainment is above average. Children's literacy skills are particularly well developed, which enables them to make good progress in all areas of their learning.
2. In the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were well above the national average in reading, above average in mathematics and close to the national average in writing. Based on teacher assessments, pupils' performance in science was close to the national average. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, pupils' results were above average in reading, close to the average in mathematics, but well below average in writing and science. The school's results are compared with those where the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is 8 per cent or less. Due to the very unusual context of the Royal School, the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is negligible, as the proportion of parents in employment is much higher than the national average. However, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the national average. Therefore, comparison based on the free school meal criterion alone is not reliable.
3. While results in writing had been close to or better than the national average until 2001, results over time have shown a decline. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has broadened pupils' knowledge of a more varied range of writing skills, but shortened the time that pupils have to apply these writing skills in independent writing. The school has taken action to provide more opportunities for extended writing. In addition, cursive handwriting is now taught in a consistent way from the reception class, encouraging greater accuracy and speed by the age of 7. Since 1999, action taken to improve pupils' attainment in mathematics has shown positive results. In response to the last inspection report, pupils now have planned opportunities for investigative and practical work, and test results have improved. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 2, in 2001 showed a dip in both writing and mathematics on previous years. The group of pupils taking tests in this year included a higher than normal number of Summer born pupils and a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs, two of whom joined the school in the term before tests were taken. This is of particular significance for the small group of pupils taking tests, where one pupil represents five per cent of the total result. Taking the results of the last three years' tests together, pupils' attained better results than found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in reading were significantly better than national results. Pupils' good reading skills have a very positive impact on their achievements in all subjects.
4. In the 2001 tests, the percentage of pupils who attained Level 3, which is higher than the expected level, is well above the national average in mathematics, above average in writing and reading, and close to the national average in science. Results at the higher level were similar to those in previous years, indicating consistency in the performance of higher attaining pupils. The highest attaining pupils are challenged well and in previous test years, these pupils have attained at Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics. Although boys and girls do similarly well in national tests in reading and mathematics, exceeding the national average over the past three years, in writing boys do less well than girls and their results fall below the national average. Moreover, as a general picture, girls attain better results than boys in each testing year. The school's analysis of results has clearly identified this.

Strategies have already been put in place to improve boy's writing and new texts have been purchased to increase their interest and achievements in reading. Boys' results are affected by the fact that a larger number of pupils on the school's register for special needs are boys and also, of those pupils who are Summer born, the largest proportion are boys.

5. Attainment in the current Year 2 class is well above average in speaking and listening and above average in reading and writing. Pupils' confident and articulate spoken language has been further enhanced by participation in a special programme for spoken language skills. The standard of their oral contributions is well in advance of what would be expected for their age group, as is their capability to listen for extended periods of time. In mathematics, pupils are currently attaining average standards in number work, and their investigative skills are developing well as result of greater emphasis on this aspect of the mathematics curriculum. In science, standards are above average. The standard of pupils' work is similar to that seen at the time of the last inspection, with the exception of mathematics where standards were found to be above average. Pupils achieve well on their starting levels in most subjects. In geography, history and art and design pupils make satisfactory achievements.

6. In Year 4, standards are high. In all aspects of English, pupils attain at above average levels and their spoken language skills are very well developed. In mathematics and science, attainment is also above average. Pupils achieve well in all subjects except for history, geography and art and design where their achievements are satisfactory. Those pupils with particularly well-developed skills or notable talent, most often identifiable in Key Stage 2, are achieving well and reaching their potential.

7. In all other subjects, standards are at least average and pupils achieve well. Current standards in ICT are average overall, although many pupils have good ICT skills as a result of their learning at home. With the full implementation of new ICT planning and resources, pupils are set to make good progress and achieve well on their starting points. In music and physical education, the standards that pupils attain are better than would be expected for their age groups.

8. Pupils with special educational needs for a variety of learning difficulties attain appropriate standards and achieve as well as all other pupils. There are currently a higher than normal number of pupils with very specific special needs that affect their ability to listen attentively at all times, concentrate for whole lessons and behave well. These pupils receive appropriate support from visiting specialists and have relevant personal educational plans. Their learning needs are well planned for in whole class sessions and in general they make the same rates of progress as other pupils. However, as some of their needs affect both learning and behaviour, additional support and specialist knowledge are needed for the teaching of whole class sessions to ensure that they are able to concentrate well at all times, make the best possible progress and not affect the learning of other pupils. At times, the cramped conditions in which the Year 3 group work do not help this situation. For instance, pupils are not able to move freely in the classroom to fetch practical equipment that would help them to work independently and concentrate for longer periods.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development were judged to be very good at the last inspection and their overall high quality has been sustained well. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are very willing to explore ideas and activities that interest and challenge them, particularly in the best literacy and numeracy lessons. This is because the range of tasks and questions gives them the chance to work individually, show what they can do and learn from others. One or two pupils are not quite as good at listening to others as the vast majority and miss opportunities to learn from other people's different knowledge and experiences, because they want to be the centre of attention. In

general, the way in which teachers ask searching questions encourages pupils to think and become very involved in activities, as when Year 1 children tried to use imaginative descriptions and illustrations to design a menu.

10. Behaviour in and out of classrooms is very good. Almost everyone behaves very well, almost all of the time. Occasional small-scale squabbles are treated as a normal part of young children learning to share and accept each other's rights to use resources in the classroom and playground. Older pupils honour codes of behaviour that require consideration for others. One or two individuals find it harder than everyone else to take turns, particularly when a teacher wants to encourage quieter children to speak. The very few pupils with specific difficulties, such as relating to others or following codes of conduct, respond well to clear, consistent encouragement from staff to do their best. There are no exclusions. When bullying or anti-social behaviour occurs, it is dealt with firmly but fairly. The positive, caring climate in the school makes a significant contribution to keeping such behaviour to a minimum.

11. Personal development and relationships are very good. This is a result of the school's efforts to foster a community in which individuals learn to respect others and believe in their own talents and virtues. Pupils are quick to recognise someone else's endeavour. For example, they praised a boy spontaneously for his efforts to play the piano to accompany their departure at the end of an assembly. Pupils are good at knowing what will happen if they do something, but less skilled at understanding how their actions make others feel. This is because there are few regular opportunities, outside assemblies, for them to discuss their experiences and consider how they could act differently to be less self-centred or to make others feel better. Their respect for others' beliefs is very good. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils provide strong support for learning and standards achieved. Pupils of all ages enjoy taking responsibility for routine tasks, such as helping to put out or clear away resources and delivering the registers. The older pupils are very keen to make a contribution to the school community, for instance as library monitors or helping out with visitors and special events.

12. Attendance is very good. Pupils do not stay away without good reason. Punctuality is very good so lessons start on time. The opportunity for exchange of news and for parents to work with their children before the official start of the school day makes a significant contribution to very positive attitudes, values, relationships, attendance and time-keeping.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching at the school is good and this strength has been maintained since the last inspection. During the current inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this is an improvement since the last inspection. In 19 per cent of lessons seen teaching was very good, in 57 per cent it was good and in 24 per cent it was satisfactory.

14. Teaching in the Foundation Stages is effective because it takes very good account of what children already know and can do and challenges them to achieve well. In the mixed reception and Year 1 class, basic skills are taught to the youngest children very well, but an appropriately flexible approach is taken to ensure that they can access the curriculum for Year 1 whenever they are capable of doing so. Planning for different ages of pupils in the same class is very well accomplished and as a result all pupils make good progress. In Key Stage 1, planning for mixed age groups is also well done. Teachers plan together to ensure that there is consistency between the two Year 1 groups in different classes. Lessons are planned with extension activities to ensure that higher attaining pupils in Year 1 can access Year 2 work whether they are working with Year 2 pupils or not. This is a strength of teaching and highlights the good use that teachers make of assessment information; pupils achieve well because teachers have a clear understanding of what they already know and can do and plan new

work accordingly. In Key Stage 2, the two year groups are able to work separately for the main part, although the restrictions of space in the Year 3 classroom means that, at times, a few Year 3 pupils need to work in the Year 4 classroom. Teachers manage this as well as they possibly can, ensuring that plenaries and discussions are held with the whole of the year group. There is no

evidence to demonstrate that pupils' progress is affected by these teaching arrangements, but the situation is not ideal. As in Key Stage 1, teachers in Years 3 and 4 set realistic challenges for pupils and therefore the majority attain standards that are in advance of what would be expected for their age. Teachers throughout the school know their pupils well and therefore plan work that is well matched to their starting levels and needs. The result is that all pupils make good progress in lessons, including those with special educational needs.

15. Teachers greatly encourage the very positive relationships that are evident in school. They manage pupils in such a way that good behaviour and respectful attitudes are the norm for learning. When pupils do not behave well, teachers are very firm, but fair. The support that teachers give to pupils with special needs is well planned according to their needs and to ensure good progress towards the targets that are set for them. In some classes more specialised behaviour management strategies are needed to ensure that pupils with very specific learning and behavioural needs achieve well and do not affect other pupils. Teachers acknowledge this and they are constantly seeking to help pupils to behave well so that they can learn well. For example, in an English lesson in Year 3, the teacher praised the positive and sensible contributions made by pupils who were finding it difficult to concentrate, encouraging them to feel proud of themselves. In the reception class, children are quietly moved to sit by the teacher or gently touched on the shoulder to make them realise they should listen more carefully and not interrupt others. As yet there has been little training for teachers in this area, as it has not been a priority concern until recently, when new pupils joined the school.

16. Teachers now use a good range of methods to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. In response to the last inspection report more investigative and practical work is now evident in the curriculum. In a design and technology lesson in Year 2, the planned opportunity to investigate in groups the best method of moving a heavy pile of books encouraged very high level discussion, as pupils talked freely about why certain methods were more effective. The activity allowed higher attaining pupils to demonstrate their skills and understanding and all pupils were able to share in this. As a result all made good progress. In Years 3 and 4, class swaps and team teaching allow teachers to teach to their specialisms, with the result that pupils achieve well and attain high standards. Specialist music teaching encourages higher than average attainment in this subject. Group work, work in pairs and whole class sessions are all used to good effect to ensure that pupils have a full range of learning experiences that develop their academic, personal and social skills. Varied teaching styles ensure that pupils are very interested and concentrate very well in lessons. However, teachers do not create enough opportunities, such as 'circle time', to develop pupils' social skills and recognition of the impact of their actions on other people.

17. Teachers encourage the development of literacy skills very well in all subjects. They use specific vocabulary appropriately and pupils replicate this in their own spoken contributions. Explaining, describing, discussing, relating are evident in lessons in all subjects; pupils' spoken language skills are very well fostered in this way. Reading, spelling and number work are regular aspects of homework set for pupils. The amount, type and frequency of homework are not always consistent and parents would appreciate a clear statement about homework to be expected in each class. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and are consistent in their approach to pupils' levels of concentration, pace of work and general attitudes. At times, there is some inconsistency in how minor misdemeanours are dealt with and this means that pupils sometimes do not know what to expect if they behave in a certain way.

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

18. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all its pupils are good. The school meets statutory curricular requirements, including those for religious education. Appropriate provision is made for teaching personal, social and health education through science. Sex education and the awareness of the proper use of medicines also come into this area of science where appropriate, and parents are informed of this. Schemes of work provide good guidance for teachers, to ensure pupils make progress as they move through the school. The schemes of work are based on national recommendations and adapted well for the school's specific needs. The weaknesses reported in the last inspection, relating to the breadth and balance of the curriculum, have all been dealt with and the school now provides a balanced curriculum in all subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented and updated. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in English and mathematics and also in other subjects. For example, in science pupils measure accurately and draw graphs to record their results.

19. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. These children are taught with Year 1 pupils. Their work has been carefully planned to run parallel with the National Curriculum, but skillfully adapted to their needs. However, the outside play area is not suitable for some of the larger toys that are recommended for children of this age. Throughout the rest of the school, all staff take an active part in planning and developing the curriculum which is planned in a two-year cycle. Since the last inspection, planning has improved. Plans are based on national guidelines and the planning for mixed-aged classes takes into account the broad range of learning needs in each class. For English and mathematics, pupils of the same year group are taught together which ensures there is equal opportunity for all pupils.

20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special needs are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken to meet their needs and help them to achieve as well as all other pupils. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have very clear personal education plans, which are well used to plan for teaching and learning. Those pupils with particular talents are greatly encouraged to fulfil their potential. Budding mathematicians have attended mathematics workshops on Saturdays. Musicians are provided with ample tuition and many opportunities to perform. Boy singers have the chance to join the Royal Chapel choir. As yet, the school has no specific register for gifted and talented pupils and they do not have personal education plans.

21. Pupils' learning is enriched by the good provision of extra-curricular activities, which include dance, drama, recorder, choir, football and netball. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments with visiting teachers. Visits include local arts' festivals and concerts. Visitors to the school include drama groups, musicians, the police and speakers from charitable groups and the local community. The school makes good use of the Great Park to support studies in history and geography. Pupils are involved in annual events such as the Royal Show and carol singing in the Royal Chapel and at various venues around the Park. Children have a variety of pre school experiences. As a rule, information about their development is passed on to the school, but this is not consistent. However, the

school has good links with local middle schools, which ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

22. Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Where improvement was needed, such as giving better attention to cultural development, this has been done well. Provision for spiritual development is very good, particularly in terms of creating a caring, Christian ethos that underpins the school's work. The high quality of assemblies makes a significant contribution to this. A minor weakness is that the curriculum lacks sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experiences and respond emotionally to art, music and literature. Otherwise, the way staff, led by the headteacher, value pupils' different experiences, qualities and achievements is very significant. This and the everyday routines and idyllic setting of the school support high quality spiritual development very well.

23. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The moral principles underlying the school's procedures and everyday life make a particularly strong contribution to this. There is a little room for more work on learning to co-operate, compete fairly and relate to others, to raise the standard of provision from high quality to outstanding. Pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on others is not as well developed as other personal and social skills. This is because the lack of regular personal and social education, outside high quality assemblies, limits the opportunities pupils have to discuss the need to listen, take turns, think about how others feel and recognise when other people should come first.

24. Provision for cultural development is good. The school has worked hard to lay strong foundations for effective development of pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage and the richness and diversity of other traditions. As a result, there is careful attention to choice of texts, music and artistic traditions that reflect the reality of a diverse society beyond the immediate area. The school recognises that there is still further work to do to draw on the skills of local artists, storytellers, musicians and writers, as well as those from further afield. It is beginning to draw on different traditions in literature, art and music to help pupils to appreciate and value the very rich range of experiences available to them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The overall quality of care provided by the school at the last inspection was good. Provision has improved well as a result of a stronger focus on both personal and academic achievement for all pupils. The school takes satisfactory steps to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils within a very caring environment. The school recognises that further staff training is necessary to ensure that everyone is aware of the impact of recent legislation and current guidelines on its arrangements for child protection, which are just adequate. Additional training is booked. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are very good because the school is small and adults know pupils very well. As a result, informal procedures are particularly strong. Formal recording of observations of behaviour and personal development is less common, except where required for reports. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to note how individual pupils respond to activities and, therefore, to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in academic performance and personal development. For instance, in specific lessons, there are times when, rather than just watching the teacher, support staff could be observing and writing down key points about how well pupils concentrate, listen and answer.

26. The current procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and achievement are adequate and improving. Baseline testing procedures are well administered and the school makes good use of baseline information to plan for children's academic work and personal needs. Pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified from an early stage and the necessary steps are taken to

ensure that they achieve in line with others, including the use of outside expertise for some difficulties. Pupils are treated respectfully and their progress is praised. The highest attaining pupils are also quickly identified, and provided with every opportunity to reach their full potential. As a result, these pupils attain at levels well in advance of those expected for their age. The school makes regular use of various tests, both in-house and National Tests, to monitor progress and assess attainment. Reporting procedures have been up-dated and improved, but there is still room for development to ensure that parents fully understand the standards their children attain and how this compares with what is expected for their age.

27. Attendance is monitored well, with scrupulous attention to recording absences in registers. In general, adults monitor misbehaviour and encourage good behaviour well, with very careful attention to discouraging any form of bullying. The size of the school and fact that adults have such good understanding of the children, leads, occasionally, to overlooking the importance of keeping notes of changes in behaviour and other factors that might be relevant in identifying specific support needed or targets to be set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

28. At the time of the last inspection, when there was less emphasis on the very important role that parents share with the school in supporting the education of their children, partnership with parents was identified as a strength. The key features of open access and parental involvement are still present. Communication was described as sound. The school has made good efforts to improve this with regular newsletters and encouragement of parents from all walks of life to become involved with the school's work and their children's education.

29. Parents' views of the school are generally positive. A significant minority of parents feel that they are not always kept well informed about their children's progress and curriculum matters. The inspection found evidence to support their view that information could be improved through regular outlines of the work to be covered each term being sent to parents and better reporting. The school has made good efforts to keep pace with changes in the curriculum and what is expected of schools, and to reflect this in trying to communicate more effectively with all parents. A few parents, who were happy with previous ways of doing things, have found it difficult to deal with a different pattern of communication and priorities.

30. Links with parents are effective. In most cases, everyday contact with teachers and regular involvement with the life of the school builds very effective links. A few misunderstandings about the school's aims and its need to adapt to the demands of a new National Curriculum, have resulted in a number of critical comments from parents who expected a different educational ethos. The school recognises that it could have done more to explain the reasons for necessary changes to the education it offers, in line with the national picture and the particular emphasis on working with all parents to support pupils from all backgrounds and of varying ability.

31. Parents are involved well with the school's life and work, particularly through a very active and successful PTA (parents' and teachers' association) and the willingness of people to support events, as well as educational activities. The very strong focus of parents on academic achievement has a great impact on standards reached, because families expect to read and work with their children to help them develop their skills.

32. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory overall. The school has worked very hard to improve reports on pupils' progress so that they reflect the national expectation of clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do, not only in English and mathematics,

but also in science and all the subjects of the National Curriculum. The changes to reports have been reviewed year by year to try to achieve the right balance between summarising the content of what has been taught and highlighting strengths and weaknesses in what each child has learned. Staff have begun the process of trying to identify specific targets for improvement, in line with best practice, at least in English and mathematics. Some reports have targets that are very specific and focused sharply on an identified gap in skill, but others are too vague. There are still too many instances of “keep up the good work” or “must try harder” without saying exactly how and why.

33. Parents contribute well to their children’s learning at school and at home. At its best, such support involves encouragement for children to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable, as well as enjoying and benefiting from the full range of learning experiences available in and out of school. It is very clear that parents value education and want their children to do as well as possible at school. In a few cases, the thrust for success is focused on English and mathematics, whereas the school and national curriculum focus on a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. There is scope for the school to specify its aims and commitment to developing children’s personal qualities and all round academic achievement very clearly, to avoid misunderstanding and disappointment when parents have different priorities and want a different curriculum.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The headteacher, governors and staff are meeting the challenges of all new national initiatives efficiently and, therefore, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher gives clear educational direction to the school and is committed to the continued development of both pupils and staff. The school continues to improve because she is addressing the wider scope of needs, in relation to national changes and pupils’ individual needs, which were not fully addressed at the time of the last inspection. Her vision for the education of pupils at the school includes not only achieving their full potential academically, but also providing them with the social and personal skills to learn from and value all life experiences. The headteacher has built an effective team, which contributes to the development of the school as a whole, and is committed to raising standards. Her work is supported by systematic and effective administration carried out by the secretary. The strong sense of purpose and the changes that have taken place are highly appropriate to the school’s needs. There is good delegation of responsibilities among staff, and subject co-ordinators are given good guidance on how to carry out their duties effectively. Management of subjects has improved since the last inspection and co-ordinators are now more aware of the role they must play in the development of the subject for which they are responsible. However, priorities for developments within some subjects are still not clear enough, particularly for non-core subjects. The management of special educational needs is carried out efficiently.

35. The school’s aims, which are published in the prospectus, are evident in all aspects of its work. The school is meeting these very well by creating a stable, caring and ordered community. As the school has changed and developed, the current aims no longer reflect exactly the way in which the school works. The school plans to review them. Good relationships exist between all members of staff and there is a shared determination to raise standards. Accompanied by the headteacher, teachers have had the opportunity to observe other classes, and are now more confident in giving oral and written feedback about strengths and weaknesses. The school also has a detailed improvement plan, which gives a breakdown of results achieved by pupils and strategies to achieve targets. These strategies are well thought out and linked to cost and professional development. The plan clearly identifies whose responsibility it will be to implement and evaluate the targets. This ensures a clear direction for the work of the school and its future development. As a result, the necessary policies and planning have now been put in place to ensure that pupils are given the maximum opportunity to attain

high standards. The school is effective both in setting its own agenda for improvement and also in responding to national initiatives.

36. The governing body is very committed to the school and is an integral part of the community. Through its appropriate committee structure, it helps the school to carry out its work effectively. Governors have a very clear commitment to pupils and the school as a whole. All governors visit the school and support the work of teachers by observing lessons and discussing what they have seen with the staff involved. Some governors regularly assist teachers in lessons. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the school. In some instances, governors do not work closely with the headteacher to ensure that parents are kept as well informed as they would like to be. They approve the school improvement plan each year, and effectively monitor its implementation through reports given at meetings and by visits to the school. A competent Bursar supports the headteacher and governors very well in all financial matters, and ensures that the school uses its available funds in the most effective and efficient way. The governors and Bursar work together to ensure that the principles of best value are applied.

37. The school has a very good system of performance management. This involves setting targets for teachers to improve their work with relevant in-service training needs also identified. These targets are reviewed at the beginning and end of each school year. All staff have undertaken training on school self-evaluation. Training has taken place to increase teachers' knowledge and expertise in the use of ICT. Newly qualified teachers are given very good support. A clear system of professional development, based on the needs of individual teachers, together with the school improvement plan, ensure that the school's objectives are met and that the quality of teaching and the standards of attainment achieved by the pupils are improving. The quality of professional development has shown good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths of the teachers and also areas for future development. These are shared with the staff, who are all committed to sharing good practice with each other.

38. The school has an adequate number of teachers to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met well. Due to the small number of staff, teachers take on responsibility for several areas of the curriculum. Although one of the classrooms is small, the overall accommodation is good. The idyllic setting, large playground, forest area, swimming pool and well-organised library very successfully contribute to the learning environment. Resources to support pupils' learning are adequate, with recent significant improvements in the provision of new computers. While provision for the Foundation Stage is good for most areas, children do not have opportunities for climbing or riding wheeled toys, because their outside play space is on a downward slope. There are plans to improve this facility in the near future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

39. In order to improve the work of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (1) Improve the clarity and regularity of information provided to parents about what their children will be taught and the standards they attain in relation to national expectations.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	7	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	57	24	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 more than four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	87
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3
Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	7	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	13
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	20	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	81 (90)	95 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	6	7	6
	Total	17	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (90)	95 (95)	90 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	77
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR- Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.4
Average class size	21.8

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	221174
Total expenditure	218974
Expenditure per pupil	2407
Balance brought forward from previous year	14020
Balance carried forward to next year	16220

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	87
Number of questionnaires returned	55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	53	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	55	24	0	6
The teaching is good.	52	44	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	38	25	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	35	7	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	44	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	49	18	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	40	2	4	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	27	5	0	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	46	20	5	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Children start school at the beginning of the term during which they become five years old. At the time of the inspection, there were thirteen reception-aged children in the reception/Year 1 class. Children come with different pre-school experience. Most of them have attended a nursery school or playgroup for at least one term. As result of good induction procedures they settle quickly and become familiar with routines. Parents are encouraged to come and work with their children at the beginning of the day and are invited to sit with them at lunchtime. This ensures that children are happy and comfortable in the school environment and are ready to learn. Planning and provision is firmly founded on the recommended curriculum for the Foundation Stage and children are gaining from imaginative activities closely matched to their needs and abilities. Teaching is consistently good, and often very good in all areas of learning. As a result, pupils achieve well in lessons and the vast majority are attaining and often surpassing the expected goals. They move smoothly on to the National Curriculum by the time they are in Year 1. At the time of the last inspection provision for children under statutory school age was not reported on separately so it is not possible to make a comparison.

41. Both the teaching and the curriculum for children's personal, social and emotional development are good and because of this they make good progress in their learning. Although most children have average social skills when they begin school, they follow the example of older pupils and learn to respond appropriately to school routines. They sit quietly when required, wait their turn and put up their hands to answer questions. Most children answer confidently and work and play together very well. Children begin to show initiative and to accept responsibility for organising or tidying resources.

42. The provision to promote children's communication, language and literacy skills is good. The majority of children enter the school with above average skills in this aspect. The basic skills of literacy are taught well and during their time in the reception class, children make good progress. Overall, the majority of children reach standards higher than expected in this area by the time they start in Year 1. In groups or whole class lessons, the teacher promotes good habits in speaking and listening. Children are encouraged to speak clearly and do so with increasing confidence. They are also becoming better at listening. Teachers explain new words clearly, so children increase their knowledge of vocabulary well. Through class stories and group reading, teachers promote children's enjoyment of stories and imaginative ideas. Many activities are linked to the book chosen for the week and this helps children to take part in imaginative role-play situations. An example of this was how their work in knowledge and understanding of the world was linked to the story of the "Three Little Pigs". As a result of this very good focus on books, and the encouragement to recognise or sound out many words, children make exceptionally good progress in learning to read. In this they are well supported by their parents who regularly encourage them to read at home. All these strategies help most children to exceed the early learning goals for reading by the time they join Year 1. Children are taught to form letters correctly and develop secure writing skills and the most able children write simple sentences independently.

43. The provision for children's development of mathematical language and skills is good. On entry to school, most children's knowledge of number and mathematical concepts is average. The good attention given to developing mathematical vocabulary helps the children make good progress in this aspect. Most children recognise and order numbers to ten and are beginning to do simple addition and subtraction with these numbers. More able children work with higher numbers. From the time they start school, children make good progress in writing numbers accurately. They learn to recognise and

name two-dimensional shapes. Children make good progress because they work in small groups helped by support assistants and parents.

44. Provision for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world is good and especially good for science and history. This area of learning is taught in a two-year cycle through subject-focused lessons of the National Curriculum. Good planning ensures that activities are adapted for the younger children and the teacher promotes children's interest very well. As a result, children acquire good early scientific investigation skills. For example, children chose the most suitable materials to 'blow down' the card that represented the Three Little Pigs' straw house. They were taught the correct vocabulary and showed that they understood it. Children acquire early historical and geographical knowledge through learning about the history of their school and The Great Park. The use of the mouse and keyboard to operate the computer is taught well. All children are likely to reach the standards expected in this area of learning by the time join reach Year 1

45. On entry to school, most children have the physical skills expected for their age. These are developed well through the handling of objects such as puzzles, and the use of pencils, crayons, and other resources for art and craft activities. By the time children join Year 1, most have developed the expected skills in cutting, sticking and shaping materials. Although there is access to an outdoor play area, there is currently no large climbing apparatus or wheeled toys for children to use. Children take part in physical education lessons with Year 1 pupils. The majority of children reach the level of skills expected by the time they leave the reception year.

46. Opportunities are more limited for children's creative development because they follow the same art and music curriculum as pupils in Year 1. They achieve well in their musical development. There are many good opportunities to help children to learn songs by heart, such as the hymns in assembly and the words of the national anthem. They sing in tune and enjoy putting the actions to the words of songs. In art, teachers ensure that children experience a range of materials through which they can express their creativity. Role-play is developed through other areas of learning such as the 'mud hut' linked to their work on homes.

ENGLISH

47. In the 2001 national tests, Year 2 pupils at attained well above average results in reading and average results in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, Level 3, was above the national average in both reading and writing. Results in national tests have been consistently high over previous years, although there has been a downward trend in writing that the school is addressing through its improvement plan. The year group tested in 2001 included a higher than normal proportion of pupils with very specific learning needs. Additionally, the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy initially had a negative impact on standards attained in writing; while pupils' general skills with grammar and other aspects of English have improved, the shortened time allowed for writing freely to the conclusion of a piece of work has reduced the overall quality of pupils' written work. The school has already addressed this issue and there are now two sessions each week for extended writing. Although a difference in test results attained by boys and girls was evident in the 2001 tests, this has not been a significant pattern overtime. However, in order to improve boys writing in line with national improvements, targeting this aspect of their work in English has also been a priority for the school.

48. In the current Year 2 class, pupils attain above average standards in English overall, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This is a similar picture to at the time of the last inspection. The planned action for developments and improvements in the subject has been well implemented and there has already been a positive impact on standards. Standards in

Year 4 are also above average. Pupils successfully build on their experiences in Key Stage 1 and maintain good levels of achievement.

49. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average by the end of Year 2. Teachers consistently encourage the use of specific vocabulary in lessons, and oral contributions are revised and improved through all subjects. Pupils in Year 2 show their good understanding of language by using new vocabulary in discussions and plenaries. In a lesson using dictionaries, they gave very full explanations of the definitions found for words, using examples and comparisons to make their answers interesting and complete. Speaking and listening skills are also well above average in Key Stage 2. In a mathematics lesson in Year 4, the very good use of a problem solving activity involved pupils listening very carefully to each other to know exactly when to say their problem aloud. They recognised well the need to speak very clearly and precisely so that all could hear properly and answer accurately. As a result, not only were pupils' mental mathematics skills developed, but also their speaking and listening skills were very well improved. The highest attaining pupils in Year 4 have well above average speaking skills. In assemblies pupils contribute very confidently when answering questions or making comments and observations that are relevant to the assembly theme. In all lessons, teachers give good encouragement to develop spoken language. The general atmosphere for learning enables pupils to voice their opinions, explain their ideas and feel free to speak at length. In turn, teachers listen to pupils and model good, respectful listening skills. On the few occasions when pupils do not listen well, teachers manage this firmly and make their high expectations very clear.

50. Pupils' reading skills are a great strength and are very well developed throughout the school. The contribution that parents make is very highly valued by the school. Parents are conscientious in hearing their children read at home and are quick to talk about difficulties with the teachers. This means that minor problems that could affect progress are quickly overcome. Pupils' very good reading skills enable them to make good progress in all subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 1 already make good use of dictionaries, because their reading skills allow them access to this resource. In lessons, teachers plan work that is very appropriate to the needs of all ability groups, ensuring that all achieve well. For example, in Year 2, lower attaining pupils used interesting games to develop their phonic skills. Teachers allocate extra adult support to make sure that skills are well practised and remembered. Pupils enjoy reading and talk earnestly about characters and plots. They have a real desire to be good readers and recognise the value of books in developing all areas of knowledge.

51. Pupils attain above average standards in writing by the end of Year 2. While this area of English work remains a focus for development, the action already taken in response to analysis of test results has already shown positive effect. The introduction of a new handwriting programme, beginning from the reception class, is improving the overall presentation of written work. Pupils in Year 1 already have a very clear desire to make their work "look good". In handwriting practice sessions in Year 2, pupils use a well-formulated cursive script. In independent writing, pupils are becoming more fluent and faster. Parents have also been involved in the introduction of this new programme and many attended a workshop session, so that they are able to help their children at home. Pupils' written pieces are interesting and demonstrate a good range of topics and styles. There are good examples of pupils' cultural development with the retelling of stories from other cultures. In the work of highest attaining Year 2 pupils, good use is made of similes to make work interesting to read. In Year 4, pupils good knowledge of grammar devices is demonstrated in sophisticated story writing. Highest attaining pupils use clauses, correctly punctuated with commas, to explain and extend their ideas. Pupils write in a variety of styles for different readers. They make good use of computer programs to plan, check and amend their work.

52. Teaching in English is good throughout the school. Teachers plan very appropriate

tasks that take good account of the National Literacy Strategy recommendations, yet are made most relevant to the needs of pupils. This is a positive feature of the provision for pupils who in general, have very well developed reading skills, mature speaking and listening skills and good general knowledge to support their creative ideas. For this reason, pupils achieve well on their levels of prior attainment. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and make this clear in lessons; behaviour is at least good in lessons and pupils are really interested in their work. Although there are mixed age classes in the school, arrangements for teaching English ensure that pupils of the same age group are taught together.

53. The subject is well managed. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has benefited from relevant training in subject co-ordination and this supported her analysis of test results, prioritising targets for development and evaluating the impact of action taken. The staff work well as a team and therefore they are able to evaluate their work effectively. Lesson observations, with feedback to teachers, have been an essential part of this work. Teacher assessments in 2001 were lower than actual test results. The co-ordinator recognises that teachers, many of whom are new to the profession, need more support in precisely judging standards.

MATHEMATICS

54. Results in the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 2 are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Although results fluctuated in the intervening years, they have remained close to or above the national average. There has been no significant difference between the results of girls and boys. In 2001, results were above the national average, with the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 well above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school's performance was close to the average of similar schools. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils in the current Year 2 are working in line with national expectations, with above average aspects of work in number. Pupils in Year 4 are achieving standards above the national expectations. Pupils in both key stages make good progress in their learning.

55. Pupils in Year 2 are confident in addition and subtraction, which they apply to their work on money and measures. They order numbers to 100 and know what each digit represents. They show good understanding of this as they quickly add and subtract 10 to and from two digit numbers mentally. Pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of their 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 times tables and use these when solving multiplication and division problems. They read the time on digital and analogue clocks, and draw block graphs from data they have collected.

56. By the time they reach Year 4, pupils show a good understanding of word problems. They use various methods to calculate their answers, and can explain the reasoning for their calculations. They know that division problems can be checked by multiplication. The work in their books shows that they have made good progress throughout the year and covered all the appropriate areas of mathematics. Much of their work in data handling and measuring is used effectively in science.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons follow the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy. The pupils are keen to answer the brisk, challenging questions at the beginning of each lesson. Teachers' introductions to lessons are lively and motivate pupils who, in turn, are keen to learn. Pupils learn basic skills well because teachers consolidate what has been learned in previous lessons with well-focused questions. The good emphasis on vocabulary enables the pupils to express themselves when explaining their work. They are encouraged to use different methods of working and discuss the methods they use. This has improved since the last inspection. Pupils from the same age group are taught together, and although this sometimes involves pupils changing classrooms, it ensures they all follow the appropriate curriculum. Lessons are well planned and pupils of different

abilities, including those with special educational needs, are well catered for in both questioning and written activities. In the best lessons, the pace and challenge are good and teachers use different activities and frequent reinforcement to ensure that the majority of the class make good progress. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and make the lessons fun. They use games to motivate pupils and vary activities in order to repeat facts and still maintain interest. Pupils are well behaved and their interest and enthusiasm contribute to their good achievement. Marking is very good, with positive and encouraging comments, and most effective where pupils correct their work.

58. The subject is well managed by the headteacher. The mathematics policy has been updated and the scheme of work is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers draw on a good range of materials to support their planning. Teaching and planning are monitored effectively, and new staff are well supported. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This information is used well to match the level of pupils' work to their needs. As yet, not enough use is made of ICT to benefit the mathematics curriculum, but new computers and programs have been purchased and will soon be fully in use.

SCIENCE

59. The results of teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2001 were in line with the national average. This is not as high as the last inspection, although a greater percentage of pupils now achieve the higher Level 3. The weaknesses that were identified were in pupils' knowledge of materials and their properties and some physical processes. The work seen during the inspection shows that these areas have been well covered this year and standards are similar in all aspects of scientific knowledge. There has also been particular improvement in investigative science, which was identified as an area for development in the last inspection. At the end of Year 2, pupils achieve above average standards and make good progress in their learning.

60. Year 2 pupils are confident in explaining the advantages and disadvantages of using different equipment and methods to move objects across the classroom. They can describe different forces using the correct vocabulary. This good use of correct vocabulary is emphasised from the start. The youngest pupils learn to explain their work using words such as 'method' and 'result' when talking about their investigations on the forces needed to blow down the 'Three Little Pigs' straw house. They make decisions about their work and discuss their conclusions.

61. Year 4 pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of different aspects of science. They have a good understanding of fair tests and have used this to draw conclusions in their work on separating solids and liquids and dissolving materials in water. Their work is recorded carefully using a variety of graphs, tables and labelled diagrams. More able pupils demonstrated good knowledge of previous work on forces and magnetism. They explained how magnets attract and repel various objects. Year 3 pupils showed good knowledge of light and shadows. They were able to predict which materials would form shadows and group these materials using transparent, translucent and opaque as classification. Standards in Year 4 are above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons.

62. Taking account of lessons seen and samples of previous work, the quality of teaching is good overall and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Very clear planning includes reinforcement of previous work. Astute questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves and steers them towards the right conclusions. Teachers encourage pupils to learn and use scientific vocabulary. They manage pupils well and the carefully planned practical activities ensure that pupils remain interested and make good progress. In a lesson where a few pupils' behaviour was not good, the pace slowed. However, the majority of pupils were unaffected by this and remained focused on their work. Support assistants are

not always used effectively, such as where time is not constructively used listening to the teacher's summing up of the lesson. Pupils make good progress in lessons because the teachers involve them in reinforcing what has been learned. Marking is good, with appropriate praise given for good work and comments for pupils to achieve higher standards, especially in presentation. Regular assessment tests give the pupils a good idea of their progress. Teachers' evaluation of lessons identifies areas for development or individual pupils who need extra help. This is well used in future planning.

63. Leadership and management of the subject is good. National Test and non-statutory test results are closely monitored to highlight areas of weakness in pupils' attainments. Good focus has been given to Attainment Target 1, the practical and investigative aspect of work in science, to ensure that pupils are given ample opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge they learn in testing situations. This has been a key characteristic in improving attainment at higher levels. Resources for the subject are adequate and used well. The school has yet to make full use of new ICT resources in science work.

ART AND DESIGN

64. During the current inspection only one art lesson was observed. Judgements are therefore based on discussions with teachers and pupils and observation of work around the school. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2. While this does not signify improvement since the last inspection, standards have been maintained at an appropriate level in a period of great change to the curriculum. The school has responded appropriately to new curriculum requirements and this ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make sound achievements on their starting levels.

65. The school is attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work. These are largely two-dimensional pieces, although there are some examples of small models and clay work. A display relating to "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe", with contributions from all classes, decorates the main school corridor. Teachers and pupils have worked together to create an eye-catching focal point for the school. In a separate building, there is a useful room for art activities, although at the time of the inspection this was not in use.

66. Management of the subject is sound and the right level of emphasis has been placed on developments within art since the last inspection. Resources are satisfactory, although better use could be made of three-dimensional materials. At present, there are not enough opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness through art activities. The use of local artists and more extensive work on the creations and talents of others is also lacking.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

67. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve at least satisfactorily, and some of the most able pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 design and plan different rooms and think about the materials they will use. They use scissors and glue effectively to construct three-dimensional shapes to make houses. They investigate different ways of making hinges. Pupils in Year 4 apply the skills they have been taught about a range of simple mechanisms to make pop-up books with moving parts. They evaluate their work and modify it. More able pupils adapt and extend their lever mechanisms to improve the quality of their work.

68. In the few lessons seen, the teaching was good. Work was well planned, resources were well prepared and materials made available for the pupils to use. Teachers' explanations are clear and,

because skills are well taught, pupils are able to work independently with interest and concentration. Pupils solve problems for themselves without constantly asking the teacher for help. Homework is well used. Pupils wrote up explanations for their designs with labelled diagrams so time was well used in lessons to modify their work. It was clear from these lessons and in talking to pupils about previous work that they enjoy their activities in this subject and make good progress. They show very good relationships, supporting each other very effectively when working together. Teachers and support assistants work together as a team, aiding pupils' good achievements.

69. Teachers' planning ensures that all elements of the National Curriculum are covered. The school is following the nationally recommended scheme. The co-ordinator has updated the policy for design and technology and is improving resources. She supports colleagues and assists with planning. There is no action plan to improve the subject, and therefore priorities for improvement have not been established.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

70. Provision for geography and history is satisfactory and similar to that at the last inspection. No lessons were observed, so judgements are based on teachers' planning, analysis of written work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils. These indicate that pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages. However, the standard of work of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils is, as reported at the last inspection, above that expected nationally. Overall pupils' achievement in relation to their abilities in geography and history is satisfactory.

71. Pupils use the locality to learn geographical skills. The youngest pupils have carried out a survey of the kinds of houses in The Great Park and compared their houses with homes in other parts of the world. Year 2 pupils draw plans of the class and map routes around the school. Older pupils extend their knowledge of the locality and study how Windsor has developed. Where appropriate, this work is linked to history. For example, a study of rivers related to a history topic about invaders and settlers. Good use of resources and local knowledge has enabled pupils to learn about the history of their own school. They have compared the education of the pupils for whom the school was built in Victorian times to the subjects they study now. Pupils' achieve a satisfactory sense of time and can talk confidently about why things have changed. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show a good knowledge of Ancient Greece, its nature and its culture and a very good understanding of what it must have been like to live then. They understand how the past can influence the present and compare modern and ancient Olympic games. Geography is used to develop mathematical skills. In their studies of world climates, pupils use graphs when recording and comparing different climates and temperatures.

72. The co-ordinator organises geography and history well. She has revised the scheme of work to include new statutory requirements. Assessment makes good use of the levels of attainment specified by the nationally recommended scheme. Information and communication technology is under-used as a research resource at present. This is due to the computers being only recently updated. A clear plan for the development of both subjects, including use of ICT has not yet been established.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

73. While there are pupils with well-developed ICT skills in each year group, overall standards in are currently in line with expected levels by the end of Year 2 and in Year 4. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The school has made good use of recently received National Grid for Learning funding and improvements to resources have been very good. At the time of the current inspection the school was in the final stages of installing new equipment and Internet connections. Teachers have

undertaken appropriate and useful training and good attention has been given to planning the curriculum for ICT in line with national recommendations. With the full implementation of new schemes of work, the use of new resources and application of new teacher expertise, the school is well placed to improve the standards that pupils attain in this subject.

74. Good working areas for ICT have been organised in each classroom. Pupils have easy access to computers and the Internet. The provision of several computers in each class means ICT can be used to extend learning in other subjects. In the classroom where Year 3 is currently working, all attempts have been made to use the available space most effectively, but the working area is cramped. In the reception/Year 1 class, pupils confidently use a mouse to move the cursor and with assistance, they can print their work. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 are exploring new programs and gaining confidence with keyboards and functions. Many pupils in Year 2 have good knowledge of computer actions. They can explain “cut and paste”, know how to delete and amend work on screen, start programs independently and explain that the computer must be shut down in a set pattern of steps. In Year 4, pupils use the computer to write first drafts of stories and accounts. The use spelling and grammar checks and amend their work for final versions. They change fonts and font sizes and print their work independently.

75. The school has approached the development of ICT work in an effective way. While resources have been slowly expanded since the last inspection, and the most recent purchases through national funding now mean that resources are plentiful, the most valuable improvements have been in the development of the curriculum and teachers’ skills and knowledge. Teachers now have greater confidence and make good use of computer devised materials for lessons and displays. There is clear recognition that work in ICT is more than computer work and this is identified in curriculum planning. The co-ordinator for ICT knows which areas of the subject require further development, including aspects of control technology throughout the school. Use of ICT in other subjects is improving as resources become available. New programs have been wisely purchased to improve not only ICT skills, but also standards in all areas of the curriculum.

MUSIC

76. At the time of the last inspection, standards in music were above national expectations and the school has maintained these high standards. Although too few music lessons were observed to make a judgement on teaching for the whole school, provision for learning is very good. Singing at assembly is of a high standard. The pupils listen to the music being played at the start of assemblies and those who learn to play the piano take turns to play the music for the classes to leave at the end. Pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. At the beginning of the week, they sang ‘God Save the Queen’ from memory and were accompanied on the piano by one of the pupils.

77. In the one class lesson observed, standards were above national expectations and pupils achieved well in relation to their abilities. Pupils showed a good understanding of creating mood in their compositions. They practised short interesting patterns and collaborated in their groups to fit these into an overall structure to create a sense of water flowing. They described their responses to ‘Morning’ from ‘Peer Gynt’ sensitively and imaginatively. They have a good knowledge of musical vocabulary and play the instruments well.

78. Pupils benefit from the expertise of a music specialist who takes class lessons. Pupils enjoy music and many take part in the range of musical activities provided for them. They are given the opportunity to learn instruments such as the piano, violin, cello or a brass instrument or to join one of the five recorder groups. The advanced players achieve high standards for their age. Some of the boys who sing in the choir go on to sing in the Royal Chapel choir. Pupils’ learning is enriched by the

many opportunities to hear musicians perform and to perform themselves. For example, the school holds regular concerts. Ensembles perform regularly in the community, in local musical festivals and in children's concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. Music provides very good opportunities for pupils' creative, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

79. At the time of the last inspection standards in physical education were found to be above average and these standards have been well maintained. Moreover, since the last inspection, the curriculum for physical education has been developed and there is now good work in team games and sporting activities. This is good improvement. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are above expected levels for their age. The Key Stage 2 curriculum is well taught in Years 3 and 4 and pupils attain standards in swimming and some aspects of gymnastics and team sports that are much better than would be expected for this age group.

80. The school benefits from its excellent location, and facilities that have a very positive impact on pupils' level of attainment. Pupils use the school swimming pool regularly during the summer months and all pupils attain the expected level of swimming proficiency well in advance of expectations. Two thirds of pupils achieve the expected swimming distance for 11 year olds, 25 meters, by the end of Year 2. Many pupils well exceed this distance by Year 4. Team games and sporting and athletic activities are taught in whole school sessions, once a week. Pupils play football, netball and cricket and compete in matches with other schools, being regular winners. After school clubs further improve pupils' skills. A mixed sex football club is run by one of the learning support assistants each week.

81. Gymnastics is well taught. Teachers' good subject knowledge is demonstrated in clear planning, containing precise and appropriate aims and clear development on prior knowledge and previous lessons. Good attention is paid to health and safety issues and pupils show their recognition of the need to move safely in the hall when using apparatus. In a Year 2 lesson, emphasis was effectively placed on warming up properly before physical activity. In some instances the restricted space in the hall affects the overall attainment of the most able pupils; it is very difficult to demonstrate full gymnastic potential, when room for cartwheels, tumbles and springs is limited.

82. The subject is well managed and the curriculum very appropriate to the needs of the pupils and the environment in which they work. Pupils really enjoy physical activity and are quick to change for lessons and ready to start work. Pupils of all abilities make good efforts and join in with all activities. Resources are satisfactory overall, and they are well used and looked after. Pupils are expected to care for resources and show their ability to do so in the sensible way they help with setting up and putting away apparatus.