

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HANDCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Handcross, Haywards Heath

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125932

Headteacher: Mrs S Piper

Reporting inspector: Catherine Shirley  
17811

Dates of inspection: 18 – 19 June 2002

Inspection number: 196715

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: London Road  
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Haywards Heath  
West Sussex

Postcode: RH17 6HB

Telephone number: 01444 400291

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Vinall

Date of previous inspection: May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Handcross Primary School is a community school for girls and boys aged between four and eleven. There are 99 pupils on roll organised into four classes, all of which contain pupils of more than one age group. The school roll has risen by ten pupils since the last inspection. Except for the Reception and Year 6, all other year groups have a significant imbalance of boys and girls. Handcross School is situated on the edge of the village. About half the pupils come from the local area, but the small classes attract pupils from Crawley and the wider area in West Sussex. The backgrounds of the pupils attending Handcross School reflect the wide diversity of the area, with a mixture of owner occupied and housing association properties. Pupils' ability on entry to the school is in line with the national average.

The school has six pupils eligible for free school meals, which is below average. There are twenty pupils who have special educational needs, including two pupils with a statement. This is in line with the national average. The needs of these pupils are very diverse. English is the first language for all pupils in the school, the majority of whom have a white UK heritage background; only two pupils have a black African heritage and one has a Pakistani background.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Handcross is a good school. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and the relationships within the school are excellent. In their work they reach standards that are in line with the national average overall and by the time pupils leave the school, they achieve well in English and science in the national tests. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the links with parents are very strong.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good and relationships in the school are excellent.
- Teaching at Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- There is a supportive and effective partnership between parents and the school.
- The care and welfare for pupils is very good.
- Achievement in swimming is high.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, especially the quality of writing.
- Progress of pupils with special educational needs.

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

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

Under the leadership of the current headteacher, the school has made significant progress in improving its practice in all areas and is very well placed to sustain this rate of improvement. Following its last inspection, the school had two key issues to address: the quality of teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory and the curriculum lacked breadth and balance. Overall, good progress has been made in addressing both these issues. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is now good and many elements are very good. The quality of curriculum planning has improved significantly. All policies and schemes of work have been developed, the curriculum is monitored regularly to ensure its quality and the full coverage of all subjects, good procedures for assessment are in place and pupils' end of year reports

contain all the details required. While some teachers use assessment information very well, overall progress in this aspect is satisfactory as there is still inconsistency in practice.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	D	A	A
Mathematics	D	E	C	C
Science	A	D	A	A

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

Standards in English and science are high and pupils are doing especially well by the time they leave the school. The school also compares well with similar schools. There have been significant improvements in SATs results in Key Stage 2 recently in English and science. In mathematics standards match the national average. The overall trend for the last four years has been upward in line with the national picture. In Key Stage 2, the school adds good value to the pupils' education. The school set targets of 81 per cent for English and mathematics in 2002 SATs, which are lower than those last year. In 2001, it reached its target for English but not for mathematics. The small numbers of pupils and uneven year group sizes account for the fluctuations in the targets the school sets and its results.

The results in the KS1 SATs tests have fallen steadily in writing since 1998 and have not kept up with the national trend for improvement. During the past year, the school has implemented strategies to improve its standards. For the last comparable results in 2001, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, with results for writing particularly low and in the bottom five percent of schools in the country. While results for 2002 have not yet been validated nationally, the school's analysis indicates that standards have risen this year, especially in writing.

In English and mathematics, work seen during the inspection supports this positive picture in Key Stage 2 and the Foundation Stage. While there is some good work in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1, standards are inconsistent. The standards in other curriculum subjects seen during the inspection are in line with those expected nationally, in speaking and listening standards are above and in swimming they are well above national expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. They are keen to come to school and are very enthusiastic to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and staff and pupils themselves are excellent.
Attendance	Good.

The ethos created by the staff is very positive and pupils participate fully in all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils' personal development is addressed very well.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching and learning are good at Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach, have high expectations and use their knowledge of individual pupils to extend and encourage them very effectively through questioning and discussion. Throughout the school teachers' plans are very good with clear learning objectives outlined for every lesson and resources are used well to support learning. A good range of techniques for managing pupils is used.

In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning is thorough and pupils are well managed but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and manage their own work and there is an over-reliance on worksheets. The teaching is not always sufficiently focused so pupils are given insufficient guidance about the lesson objective and what they need to do to complete the task. As a result, pupils waste time and make little progress in some lessons.

English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily in Key Stage 1 and well in Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage pupils are making good progress, though there is an over-reliance on paper and pencil tasks. Overall, the school meets the needs of pupils of all abilities well and literacy and numeracy skills are effectively used to support work in other subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned and pupils receive a very well balanced education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. It is managed well by the co-ordinator but the level of support in the classroom is not always sufficient.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is very good. The breadth of cultural educational is more limited but provision is satisfactory overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils receive very good care and welfare.

The school works very well in partnership with parents and this is a strength of the school. All subjects of the curriculum are planned thoroughly and fully meet the statutory requirements, though the provision for pupils to develop an understanding of the multi-cultural aspects of the society in which they now live are less well addressed within the curriculum on offer. The school strongly encourages pupils to learn how to be good citizens. Pupils receive very good support and the school shows a high level of care in all aspects of their development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED



Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher's leadership is very good. She provides clear guidance to staff and governors and keeps them well informed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Strategies for providing strategic direction are improving and governors are becoming more closely involved with school life.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Effective self-evaluation underpins its strategies for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. However, budget constraints are having a negative impact on the level of special needs support in the classroom.

The school is very well led by the headteacher, whose clear vision and leadership abilities have had a major impact on the work of the school. The Governing Body has made great strides recently to ensure it fulfils its strategic role and its meetings are purposeful. Decisions are based on good information and are focused on getting the best for pupils at the school.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are happy at school.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and children make good progress in learning.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with a concern.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Children develop a good sense of responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour of some children.</li> <li>• The range of activities out of lessons.</li> <li>• Management.</li> </ul>

The inspection team concurs fully with all the very positive views that parents hold about the school and these were strongly reinforced at the parents' meeting. The improvements parents would like to see are areas that were less strongly supported in their responses. Behaviour of pupils is very good. Any unsatisfactory behaviour is dealt with promptly and, where linked to a pupil's special educational needs, it is managed appropriately. The range of activities outside lessons reflects the situation in most schools and was judged to be good. The management of the school is good. Over the past year, there have been a number of confidential issues that have made it difficult for the school to keep parents fully informed. However, these have been managed appropriately by the headteacher.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good and relationships in the school are excellent.**

1. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. Regardless of their age pupils show sustained interest in their learning and good levels of concentration. As a result of the pupils' positive attitudes to school, attendance is good. They show an eagerness to be in school and an enthusiasm for all they do. They are keen to work together and do so in many different situations. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils worked in pairs on a task to develop the characters and their feelings in their writing. The interaction was very positive and they showed an awareness that they both had good ideas to offer. Pupils collaborate frequently on joint tasks and are developing good negotiating skills. This ability to co-operate and consider the views and feelings of others is very strong in all classes, including the Reception where, despite their young age, children relate well to their classmates. The school builds on this good start. A group of the oldest pupils engaged in reading a play-script with the teacher were relaxed and confident, while the remainder of the class completed their comprehension task, all sustaining excellent levels of concentration.
2. Whenever the pupils get together there is a strong sense of community and a responsibility for each other. The assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes are all examples of this and pupils learn both the importance of being able to live in a community and how to achieve it. The school creates a sense of harmony so the individuality of all pupils, parents and staff can be celebrated in the classroom and around the school generally. Pupils show an understanding of others' difficulties. They are very good at ignoring the outbursts and inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils with particular special needs. In one lesson observed, pupils sustained their concentration well and continued with their work while the teacher dealt calmly with the situation, following the school behaviour policy. Overall, behaviour is very good in class and around the school.
3. At playtimes the pupils mix very well within and across classes and show a high level of maturity in the way they relate to their peers. The role of mediator is taken on by many of the older pupils who flourish when given this responsibility. The pupils understand their roles as mediators as they have been well trained and this underpins the positive responses they make to each other.
4. Relationships within the school are excellent among pupils, between staff and pupils and between pupils and other adults who are in school. Pupils learn from the start what is expected of them and they respond very positively to their school friends and all adults. Relationships are characterised by a high level of respect for others. Staff support and guide pupils in a calm manner, making clear the school's expectations for their behaviour and developing in pupils a sense of responsibility for their own actions.

**Teaching at Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures pupils make good progress.**

5. Teaching and learning are consistently good at Key Stage 2 and frequently better. The progress of pupils at Key Stage 2 is good, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good.
6. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and make learning lively and fun for pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and the teachers plan and manage the diverse needs well. For example, during a design and technology lesson in Years 5 and 6 the teacher used her good knowledge of the subject to structure it well. She ensured the pupils made very good progress by setting clear objectives for them to design and build a strong platform, then evaluate their design after completing it. In this successful lesson, a pupil with special educational needs worked particularly well with his partner, achieving more than any other group in the class. All pupils achieved the levels expected nationally.
7. Assessment not only underpins the teachers' planning, but they are constantly aware of how well pupils are doing, adjusting the questions they pose and the support they provide according to what they see happening in the lesson. Work is differentiated for the pupils with special educational needs as well as for the average and more able. Teachers have a very good range of strategies to support pupils' learning. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a particularly good understanding of the progress they are making and how they might improve, because staff talk to them about their work in a meaningful way and provide helpful comments when marking work.
8. Teachers pace the lessons very well and intervene and challenge pupils effectively. A mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6 was bright and lively, with the teacher holding the pupils' attention throughout the introduction and keeping them concentrating on their individual tasks. This enabled her to focus on the more able group to extend and consolidate their understanding of decimals. This group of pupils has a very good grasp of place value and can swiftly add and subtract two digit numbers with a high level of accuracy. However, the majority of the class also have a firm understanding of place value and pupils calculate decimals with a good degree of accuracy.
9. As a result of good teaching, pupils' progress is good in all lessons. For example, the teacher modelled writing very effectively in one lesson in Years 3 and 4 so that pupils knew what they needed to do to develop their ideas. She gave the pupils a structure on which to write their narrative which helped them plan their ideas successfully and used the pupils' work to provide examples of how others might develop their ideas. Working successfully in pairs, they all achieved a good quality piece of narrative writing.
10. In the Foundation Stage children achieve the Early Learning Goals as a result of the good teaching. The planning is very good and covers all six areas of learning very well. The range of activities available is good and children are supplied with a good range of resources. While children need to learn to participate in literacy and numeracy sessions, the learning of the youngest children would be further enhanced by fewer sessions that over-emphasise the formal recording of work and are too teacher directed.
11. Teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures children develop a high level of independence and are learning to organise much of their work themselves. They are confident speakers generally and are able to learn together very successfully. Their language and mathematical development is good overall and, in other aspects of their

learning, they employ these skills well. For example, in their Class Council meeting the children showed a very good understanding of what they might take forward for discussion at the School Council meeting, stating their ideas clearly and confidently. The children understood that a meeting is conducted formally with an agenda and those acting as chairman and secretary fulfilled their roles well under the guidance of the teacher.

12. There are some aspects of teaching that are effective throughout the school. All teachers establish very good rapport with the pupils and this underpins their effective management of them, using a good range of techniques. In all classes planning for the curriculum is very good with clear learning objectives outlined for every lesson and a good range of resources are employed to support learning. Homework is used effectively to support the work in the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities within the general day to day management and organisation of the classes. Teachers encourage good attitudes among pupils through positive encouragement.

**The headteacher provides very good leadership.**

13. Since the current headteacher took up post, the pace of improvement has increased. She has built on the school's strengths and provided a strong sense of direction. Her clear vision and confident use of expertise available within and from outside the school have enabled her to identify further issues for development and work successfully with staff, governors and parents.
14. The headteacher has very effective leadership skills which help her drive the school improvement agenda and support others in their roles. A number of issues relating to staffing and individual pupils have been managed with a high degree of confidentiality. The need to address fully the two issues from the last inspection has been given a high priority and both have been dealt with well. The curriculum is now well balanced and ensures pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement. It is creatively planned so that it is not a straightjacket but supports the creativity of teachers. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well embedded and are used to support and extend the work in other subjects. Standards are rising as the national test results for eleven year olds show.
15. The school runs very smoothly on a day to day basis under her management and the administration of the school is very efficiently run by the office staff. Support staff know their roles and fulfil them well. Curriculum resources are improving and two particular developments which are starting to have a very positive impact are the school library and the computer suite. Pupils and parents are well informed about the daily routines and have easy access to staff. The headteacher is readily available to staff, parents and pupils and sees this as a key part of her role. Her relationships with governors are very good and their support is sought when necessary. The Governing Body now receives from the headteacher extensive and relevant information to enable it to fulfil its role and the headteacher has encouraged its increasingly effective links with the school.
16. Pupils are central to all the headteacher's decisions and she is keenly aware of them as individuals. There are very thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress in their learning and their personal development is given a high priority too. The inclusion of all pupils, regardless of their ability or needs underpins the work of the school. Since her appointment, the identification of pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly and the school very efficiently liaises with other agencies. The school does

its best to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs within the current level of support in the classroom.

17. The continuing professional development of all staff is seen as a key part of school improvement and it is targeted very effectively. All new staff now complete an induction programme and regularly attend a wide variety of training and development activities. These link well to both the whole school agenda for improvement and to the individual needs of staff. Links with other schools enable staff to see good practice in other establishments as well as their own. Teaching Assistants have received some useful training to develop their skills and would benefit from further professional development to increase their confidence in supporting the class teachers generally, as well as the pupils' particular special needs. Teachers are given good support to fulfil and develop their roles of responsibility and are encouraged to consider how they might plan their own professional development. The headteacher draws on particular strengths and expertise where possible. For example, the newly appointed named teacher, who is given responsibility when the headteacher is not present, is being given time and encouragement to develop into the role of a senior member of staff. Her expertise will inform her job description once it is finalised.

### **The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.**

18. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The excellent quality of relationships encourages pupils to learn how to live and work alongside others. The school has created a strong community within which a sense of well-being is considered to be very important. This ethos is helped by the commitment of all staff and parents are seen as a key part of the equation. The role of pupils in developing and sustaining the school community is emphasised very firmly by the actions as well as the words of the adults who work there. The school effectively supports pupils' development through its curriculum and through outside links with the wider community and other schools. Its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very strong. Pupils are given opportunities to experience a wide range of activities that develop their awareness of western culture.
19. The similarities and differences between people in their school community are celebrated, as are their successes both in and out of school. The school has strong values and encourages pupils' commitment to them. They are helped to learn what motivates and drives others by being given opportunities to talk about their own values and ambitions. Pupils have learned ways to accept and celebrate the differing values and beliefs within their community, including discussions during Circle Time. Through the way the school operates on a daily basis, pupils get to know how what they do as individuals can have an impact on their classmates and staff. The role of mediator which some of the oldest pupils are trained to take on, has helped strengthen the school community and the sense of shared responsibility. This strategy has had a positive impact on the behaviour of pupils in the playground and has also successfully allowed individuals to grow into a challenging and important role in the school.
20. Through these and other strategies such as Class and School Councils, pupils learn to play a key part in the school community. Pupils are fully committed to these and learn early about the roles and responsibilities of citizenship within the school and the wider community. The youngest children hold their own Class Council meetings with the help and guidance of their teacher, they participate in the School Council and have some sensible concerns to bring to the meeting. All pupils are encouraged to work and co-operate well together in all classes and the curriculum is planned to support the development of their social skills.

21. From the start of their time in school they are expected to take on responsibilities which will have an impact on the running of their classroom community. Staff help them to develop the skills and understanding to enable them to do so effectively and pupils are keen to take on the various roles. Assemblies and events within the school are effectively used to enhance the sense of sharing by pupils, staff and parents. In one, the farewell to a family who were moving away provided a chance for everyone to acknowledge the efforts and support of all.
22. The school's links with the village community are welcomed and are growing. During the inspection, pupils of all age groups attended a meeting of the Rosemary Club for retired members of the community. The pupils were very keen to share what they were learning and eagerly performed for the villagers a range of activities relating to their music, history and English studies. This type of activity also contributes significantly to the pupils' cultural development and to their understanding of society's past.
23. The moral code at the school is strong and pupils see the school's behaviour policy being consistently implemented. They see good behaviour rewarded and unacceptable behaviour challenged. As a result, pupils themselves understand right and wrong. The school provides a safe and secure learning environment and expects pupils to take responsibility for themselves, their classmates and their environment. It ensures there are opportunities for pupils to discuss relevant issues and express their views in an open and honest way. Pupils' understanding is reinforced through the way in which the curriculum is planned and the way the school's code is modelled by staff.

**There is a supportive and effective partnership between parents and the school.**

24. Parents strongly support the work of the school and acknowledge how much is done for their children. Links with parents are seen as an important part of school life by the staff too. Parents are welcomed into school as part of the community whenever possible to help and support in a range of ways. A number of parents commented that it was difficult not to become actively involved with the school and they liked this atmosphere. In general, they have a good knowledge of what goes on in the school and feel that the pupils are put first at all times. The impact of this supportive partnership on pupils' achievements is very positive.
25. Information about procedures and policies are given to parents regularly and these are understood by parents who are then able to help relieve the pressure on the school, which does not need to follow up many issues. They welcomed the newsletters, with dates and reminders, which are posted up as well as being sent out to them. Parents have ready access to the staff but also understand when is the best time to talk to teachers. The School Prospectus is clear and unambiguous, providing useful practical guidance about the curriculum. It also explains clearly the expectations the school has for the amount and type of homework which pupils will be expected to complete and parents found this very helpful too. They commented that homework is now given regularly whereas it used to be sporadic and was less useful in supporting learning.
26. The school is very good at keeping parents informed about all aspects of its work in the classroom. Parents are pleased to be told what their children will be learning and feel that they can help support specific aspects of this learning. One parent commented on the current unit of work for the oldest pupils based on the Tudors. She was impressed by the knowledge her child had but also felt able to contribute actively to discussions. The detailed and comprehensive information provided about children's progress also

pleases parents who find it gives them a clear picture of what children can do and need to improve.

27. For those parents whose children have special educational needs, staff and parents meet very regularly to keep everyone informed and up-to-date on progress in learning and methods of support. The school's efforts are appreciated and their impact on pupils' learning is recognised.
28. Parents have a good understanding not just about what is taught in the school but also about ways of teaching and the resources used. The improvements to the curriculum were acknowledged and parents clearly play a part in supporting these. The re-establishment of the pond and the gardening club, the planting of the hedgerow and the opportunities for using the adventure playground are given much support. There is shared understanding that the curriculum is more than what is taught during lessons and the activities outside lessons support pupils' personal and academic achievements. There is a commitment to improve the school environment further and one parent commented on the building now being very child-friendly, and much brighter and cleaner. Parents actively engage in improving the level of resources available to support teachers in their work. For example, they helped set up the school library.
29. The school gives parents information that helps them understand and recognise the importance of providing a range of learning experiences. There is support for the high expectations which teachers have but also agreement on the way these should be achieved so there is no undue pressure put on pupils. The shared understanding that reading is about comprehension and not just saying the words encourages pupils to read and enjoy their books. Parents know that it is important for pupils to engage in a range of activities and so they expect their children to write in a range of styles, learn to use a dictionary and thesaurus, and apply their knowledge of mathematics in a practical way. The school and parents work well together in practical ways too. For example, parents helped to make costumes for the performance at the Rosemary Club and they welcome the strengthening links with the community.

#### **The care and welfare for pupils is very good.**

30. The school displays a high level of care for its pupils. The welfare and safety of pupils is at the heart of its work and arrangements for child protection are very good. The Governing Body places a high importance on ensuring the pupils learn in a safe and secure environment. There are very good levels of supervision at all times of the school day, but this is achieved without restricting the range of pupils' responsibilities. The environment is welcoming and well maintained. Due consideration is given to potential hazards but the environment has been developed to support the curriculum. There is controlled access to the pond but it is clearly visible and pupils appreciate it as part of their environment. The pupils regularly go out into the village to use the facilities for swimming at the adjacent private school and as part of their curriculum visits. Whenever this happens, staff take great care and draw on the willing support of parents.
31. The school has effective strategies to plot the progress of pupils, both in their work and in their personal development. The planning and provision for pupils' personal development is very good and teachers know the individual pupils well. As a result, they are able to support and encourage pupils effectively.

#### **Achievement in swimming is high.**

32. The pupils' attainment in swimming is well above that expected by the age of eleven. The current Year 6 pupils are able to swim at least two hundred metres using front and back crawl and one hundred metres breaststroke. They have acquired many other skills such as sculling, rotating, somersaulting and retrieving and clearly benefit from the easy access to good facilities in a local school. These results justify the costs involved.
33. Where appropriate, the school uses specific teaching expertise and this is the case with swimming. The instructors are excellent and, as a result, the progress of all pupils regardless of age in this subject is excellent. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 made exceptionally good progress even within one lesson. The instructors use pupils as exemplars of good practice, getting them to demonstrate while they emphasise what is good.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, especially the quality of writing.**

34. Standards of work in lessons at Key Stage 1 are not as high as those in other parts of the school and the low national test results in 2001 emphasise this. In writing, the results in the tests have fallen steadily since 1998 and have not kept up with the national trend for improvement. In 2001 results for writing were particularly low and Handcross was in the bottom five percent of schools in the country. For the last validated results in 2001, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. While results for 2002 have not yet been validated nationally, the school's analysis indicates that standards have risen this year, especially in writing. In English and mathematics work seen during the inspection there were some examples of good work in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1, but standards are inconsistent.
35. The key impact on standards is the quality of teaching. As identified earlier, there are some strands of teaching which are good throughout the school, including managing very effectively the extreme behaviour of a few pupils with special educational needs. While teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, expectations of pupils are too low. Lesson plans are detailed and teachers' levels of subject knowledge are satisfactory. However, through the academic year there have been insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and manage their own work, which is reflected in the continuing over-reliance on worksheets. Assessment information is not always used to extend pupils' learning or develop their skills and understanding. In a number of lessons, work was not matched to the needs of all ability groups within the class and pupils did not know how to improve their work.
36. The teaching is not always clearly focused on the stated learning objective for the lesson, so pupils are given insufficient guidance about the activity and what they need to do to achieve the objective. For example, the pupils not participating in the performance to the Rosemary Club were brought together for a history session based on a comparison of entertainment today and long ago. Pupils were asked to plan and produce a Punch and Judy show, but were given too little help to structure it and they found it difficult to create a story in which the puppets were used to illustrate their ideas. In this extended session, the pupils wasted time and made little progress in their learning.

### **Progress of pupils with special educational needs.**



37. The school identifies the pupils' special educational needs well, liaises effectively with a range of agencies and plans the support for groups and individuals. However, the range of the pupils' needs are very diverse, the behaviour of a few pupils is particularly challenging and the special needs of some require a high level of support. Within the current resources, the school is generally doing its best to meet the needs of these pupils, but there are occasions, particularly in mathematics and English lessons when there is insufficient support particularly for pupils with special needs. In a number of lessons, pupils with special needs were left to complete tasks by themselves while the teacher worked with others. Their difficulties were exacerbated when tasks they were given by the teacher were too demanding and, as a result, they achieved little. Governors are aware of the difficulties created by the reduction in direct support, which is due to the requirement to balance the school budget. However, as a result of the restricted level of support available, some pupils make less progress than they might.

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

38. To improve the school further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise the standards in Key Stage 1 by:
    - improving the quality of teaching so that it is at least as good as in Key Stage 2;
    - ensuring teachers have high expectations;
    - helping pupils to understand what they can do improve their work.  
(Paragraphs 34, 35 and 36)
  - (2) Improve the progress of pupils with special educational needs by:
    - improving the level of learning support provided in the classrooms for pupils with special educational needs;
    - continuing to provide training for learning support staff;
    - ensuring the work planned always matches pupils' individual needs.  
(Paragraph 37)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	6	6	1	0	0
Percentage	5	26	32	32	5	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 one five percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	99
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (76)	73 (65)	91 (76)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (71)	82 (71)	100 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

The table showing the results for 2001 has been omitted as the groups of boys and girls taking the national tests number fewer than eleven.

In the 2001 national tests when compared with the average points score, the school's performance in reading and mathematics was well below the average nationally, with results for writing particularly low and in the bottom five per cent in the country. In comparison with similar schools, the picture was the same.

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (71)	82 (50)	100 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (64)	82 (50)	100 (79)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

The table showing the results for 2001 has been omitted as the groups of boys and girls taking the national tests number fewer than eleven.

In the 2001 national tests standards in English and science were well above average and in mathematics were in line with the average nationally. The school's performance in English and science was also well above average in comparison with similar schools and close to the average of the group in mathematics.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	24.5

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	272,129
Total expenditure	259,174
Expenditure per pupil	2,672
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,796
Balance carried forward to next year	15,751

### **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	1.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.2
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	99
Number of questionnaires returned	50

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	20	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	34	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	58	10	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	54	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	76	22	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	42	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	40	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	38	48	14	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	36	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	40	16	0	2

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents' views overall are very supportive of the school. One area of concern mentioned by a number of parents is the behaviour of a small group of children. The special educational needs of these children have been appropriately identified and behavioural issues are being dealt with using an effective range of strategies. However, the education of this small group is hindered by the lack of sufficient support within the classroom.