

INSPECTION REPORT

RINGWOOD CE INFANT SCHOOL

Ringwood

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116309

Headteacher: Mrs Jean Thomson

Reporting inspector: Mr Andy Bond
17263

Dates of inspection: 21st - 23rd January 2002

Inspection number: 197545

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
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Canon John Turpin
Date of previous inspection:	22 September 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ringwood Church of England Infant School is a voluntary-controlled school located in the centre of the market town of Ringwood, Hampshire. It serves children from a mixture of different types of housing; some live in owner-occupied homes, others in rented homes. It caters for children between the ages of 3 and 7 and is larger than most other infant schools. At present, there are 254 full-time pupils on roll: 126 boys and 128 girls. Eighteen children (14 boys and 4 girls) are taught on a part-time basis in the pre-school Early Learning Group for children with speech and communication difficulties. This is a specialist unit, which draws children from a wide catchment area. Almost all pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds, and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Thirty-six per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and this is above average. The majority of these pupils have difficulties with basic literacy and numeracy skills. There are 1.3 per cent of pupils in the main school with a statement of special educational needs. There are 10 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals; this is below the national average. The majority of children have favourable social backgrounds and begin school in the Reception class with above average attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ringwood CE Infant School is a very effective school. Pupils attain standards that are well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment in these subjects is also well above average. They generally make good progress in school. Pupils have very good attitudes to work, form good relationships with each other, and use their initiative well. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, and subject managers, provide the school with excellent leadership. The levels of improvement since the last inspection are judged to be very good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain well above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and they make good progress.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject managers is excellent and they promote high standards throughout the school.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships in school.
- The strong teamwork and commitment of all the staff to school improvement has created a high quality learning environment in which pupils mature and raise their levels of achievement.

What could be improved

- The use of time within the school day, and opportunities for the teaching and learning of history and geography in Key Stage 1¹ to take place on a more frequent basis.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Since that time, the school has made very good progress in addressing the six key issues for improvement. The quality of teaching is much better and is now judged to be good overall. There is no evidence of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have greater expertise and confidence, having had additional training in information and communication technology and religious education. Computer resources have been updated and pupils gain regular access in lessons. Teachers work together much more closely in planning lessons and by sharing effective teaching methods. A long-term curriculum framework exists and this ensures that an adequate balance of time is given to subjects. However, some thought needs to be given to history and geography in Key Stage 1 to ensure that they are taught on a more frequent basis. The linking of subjects across the curriculum is developing well.

¹ Key Stage 1 caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

Assessment procedures have been extended to all subjects and are now very good. The information gained helps to direct planning and enables teachers to set well matched targets so that pupils can achieve better. The subject managers' role has improved tremendously and is now judged to be excellent. They monitor and manage their subjects extremely well, and analyse pupils' performance thoroughly, to ensure that any new developments are founded on accurate information. The role of the teacher in the Early Learning Group has been reassessed and there is now more of a focus towards school improvement. Budget decisions are now carefully monitored and evaluated, and priorities in the school improvement plan are directed towards increasing pupils' achievement levels. In addition, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have improved over the last four years and the headteacher's excellent leadership has given the school a sharper focus towards improvement, and a stronger sense of team spirit now exists amongst the staff.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ²
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	A	A

Key

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The table shows that pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and also well above average compared with similar schools. Teachers' assessments show that standards are very high in science. Inspection findings show that pupils currently in Year 2 are also attaining well above average standards in these subjects. An increasing percentage of pupils are reaching the higher levels of attainment in reading, mathematics and science. Higher-attaining pupils reach appropriately high standards because teachers ensure that the work they do is well matched to their capability. Generally, pupils make good progress throughout the school, although pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are supported so well by teaching assistants. Girls attain slightly higher standards than boys in reading, writing, and mathematics, but the differences are similar to the national picture.

Children in the Foundation Stage³ also make good progress and the majority are expected to reach above-average levels by the time they start Year 1. The children with difficulties in speech and communication, who attend the Early Learning Group on a part-time basis, make generally good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They enjoy learning and work hard in lessons. They listen well to the teacher and to each other in discussion groups.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the school is very good. Pupils move around the building sensibly and show respect for adults and other pupils in school.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships throughout the school. Pupils collaborate well in group work, and monitors act responsibly when undertaking their duties.

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

³ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

Attendance	Satisfactory overall, but an above average percentage of pupils take holidays in school time.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Early Learning Group and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. In a third of the lessons observed it was very good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection period. Teaching and learning in the Early Learning Group is good because children are managed well by teaching and support staff and are given appropriate activities to improve their speech and communication levels. The teaching of English and mathematics is strong throughout the school, especially in the skills of literacy and numeracy, and, as a result, pupils learn well in these important areas. Pupils are encouraged to reason and apply their skills to different situations, and this they do very effectively. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and match tasks well to different ability groups within their classes. Pupils sustain interest and concentrate well, particularly when completing their work. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially to that of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The support they give enables these pupils to make very good progress in their learning. Teachers plan and assess pupils' work thoroughly.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Literacy and numeracy are given a high priority but a sound curriculum balance is maintained. However, the time within the school day could be used better to increase learning opportunities. Pupils could make better progress in developing their history and geography skills in Key Stage 1 if these subjects were taught more frequently. All pupils have full access to the whole curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made for these pupils both in the main school and in the Early Learning Group. Their needs are well catered for because teachers and assistants skilfully support them and provide suitably matched work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Equally very good, in all aspects. Collective worship is used very effectively to enhance pupils' development. There are well-defined opportunities in lessons to reinforce this work. Adults in school encourage pupils to take responsibility and contribute positively to the life of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good care arrangements in place for pupils' welfare. Staff work well together to provide a supportive family atmosphere. The school is welcoming and friendly. Assessment procedures are very good and pupils' progress is monitored very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject managers provide the school with excellent leadership and management. There is a very strong school team spirit, which promotes high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors show a good level of commitment to the school. Their management role is good. They have a growing awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the implementation of a successful monitoring system. However, there are some minor omissions from the governors' annual report and school prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good systems are in place to assess the school's performance and to take effective action. Priorities for school development are based on very good analysis.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its learning resources, teaching assistants, site facilities and allocated finance. However, there are pockets of time within the school day, which could be used more effectively for pupils' learning. The school applies the principles of best value well by consulting widely and by ensuring that contractors give good value for their services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children like school. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school is well led and managed. • Pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour in school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents believe the school could provide a greater range of activities outside school hours. • Some parents would like more information about their children's progress.

There were 243 questionnaires distributed to parents and 50 replies were received, representing a 20 per cent response. Ten parents wrote individual notes or letters expressing their views of the school. Twelve parents attended the pre-inspection meeting arranged for parents.

The inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by the parents who responded to the questionnaire. However, inspectors do not agree with the small percentage of parents who think that after-school activities could be improved. Inspectors believe that the school has a sound range of after-school activities, considering its size and the age of pupils. There are arrangements being made to set up a joint after-school care club at the neighbouring junior school. The information provided by the school for parents about their children's progress is judged to be good. There are ample opportunities for consultation with teachers and parents receive detailed reports about their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils attain well above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 and they make good progress.

1. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 show that pupils are reaching well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. Compared with pupils in similar schools, results are also well above average. In science, teachers' assessments show that pupils attain very high standards; they are amongst the top five per cent nationally. The findings of the inspection confirm that the pupils at present in Year 2 are reaching similar, well above average standards in these subjects. Girls generally do better than boys in National Curriculum tests, but the gap in performance has narrowed in recent years due to the strategies applied by the school. Approximately half of the pupils who took the tests in the last school year attained the above average standard, which is Level 3, in reading, mathematics and science. In writing, 15 per cent of pupils reached the above average standard, which although this appears to be low is slightly above the national average. However, the school has already put strategies into place to improve this area. Standards have risen in line with national trends in reading and mathematics but in writing they have been slightly better.
2. Pupils throughout the school generally make good progress. Children in the Early Learning Group, who have specific difficulties in speech and communication, make good progress because there is a good emphasis on developing communication skills. Effective use is made of the Signalong Signing System and children are involved in appropriate activities. They are taught and managed well by the teacher and the well-qualified teaching support staff. The majority of children enter school and join the reception classes with above average standards across all the areas of learning, having had some pre-school experience. The results of assessments carried out when children start school support this judgement. In the reception classes, the teaching is well targeted at developing children's literacy and numeracy skills, as was seen during one lesson, where the teacher gave the children the initial letter sound of a cuddly toy, 't' for teddy, then asked children to locate it in the text of a simple story book. The environment is stimulating and the support given by the teaching assistants is very effective in helping to raise standards. Children have very positive attitudes to learning and concentrate and collaborate well when completing tasks. The majority of children exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals⁴ by the time they begin Year 1. The good progress is maintained in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching remains good. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are set targets for improvement in their English and mathematics work. Pupils' reasoning skills are well developed because teachers use well-worded questions which make pupils think, and teachers set tasks which are challenging and require investigation. This was demonstrated well in a Year 1 numeracy lesson, when the teacher phrased her questions in such a way, by saying, for example, 'What happens next?' and 'Explain how you worked it out', that the pupils had to think and give lengthy answers. Teachers plan very thoroughly and match the work set for pupils in literacy and numeracy very well. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they receive skilful, patient support from teaching assistants and have well constructed and relevant targets to address their weaknesses in learning.
3. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic readers, and the majority reach above-average standards. They take their books home frequently in order to practise their reading. The higher-attaining pupils read silently and at speed, recalling the main events and predicting what is likely to happen next in the story. Average-attaining pupils are also confident, fluent readers who give a clear picture of the plot when describing the main characters. Lower attaining pupils are less confident and read in a more mechanical style. They know how to break down words by sounding out letters and use clues from illustrations to help them make sense of the text. All pupils have well developed skills when using a

⁴ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

dictionary. They use alphabetical order to locate words. The most able pupils understand the meanings of nouns and verbs.

4. In writing, standards are also high in Year 2. Higher-attaining pupils spell most words accurately and use exciting vocabulary such as 'These terrifying creatures have teeth with orange mould all over them'. These very capable pupils use speech marks correctly in their written work and join their handwriting in a legible style. Average-attaining pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly in their writing. Their spelling is not always accurate, but it follows sound patterns and can be understood by the reader, for example 'barf' for 'bath'. Lower-attaining pupils are not yet joining their handwriting and find it difficult to form a regular consistent size in their letter formation, but there are signs of improvement as they develop through the school year. Full stops are not always used regularly in the work of pupils at this particular level.
5. In mathematics, standards are high in the Year 2 classes. Higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of place value in the addition of hundreds, tens and units. They use counting on methods systematically to give change from a £5 note when buying an article from a shop costing £1.69. Simple calculations and division are completed successfully, such as 100 shared by 5. Average-attaining pupils measure accurately, using a ruler marked in centimetres. They recognise odd and even numbers and find pairs of numbers that make 20 confidently. They are less confident when telling the time. They understood 'o'clock', 'half past' and 'quarter past' but do not fully understand how to represent quarter to the hour on an analogue clock. Lower-attaining pupils have a sound understanding of number bonds to 10 and use a number line effectively to calculate subtraction from numbers less than 20, for example 15 minus 2. They do not fully understand division, but, by using a practical approach and matching items to people, they arrive at the correct answer.
6. In science, pupils in Year 2 generally reach high standards. Most pupils can group materials according to their properties. They know that heat changes some materials; chocolate being a good example. The higher-attaining pupils use their library skills well to research information on given materials and copy down relevant information. Many pupils are predicting and hypothesising using the good levels of knowledge they have gained.
7. There are very good systems in place for monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils' performance is tracked throughout the school with a series of assessment tasks, which monitor and evaluate levels of progress. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and areas that require improvement are pinpointed and subsequent planning attempts to address those areas of weakness. Subject managers keep a 'close eye' on developments in their own subject areas by reviewing provision and by checking that overall standards are high enough. Literacy and numeracy skills are used very effectively across other subjects. Good examples in literacy are to be found in empathetic writing. Pupils write as witnesses experiencing the Great Fire of London and the Jewish exodus from Egypt. Similarly, in geography, pupils locate significant features on a map of a fictitious island using grid reference techniques. All of these positive features make an effective contribution to raising pupils' standards and increasing their rate of progress.

The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject managers is excellent and they promote high standards throughout the school.

8. The headteacher gives the school excellent leadership. She was appointed just three weeks before the start of the last inspection in September 1997. Since that time the school has improved significantly in almost all aspects of its life. She has been the guiding light behind this very good level of improvement. The school is now judged to be very effective. Ninety-four per cent of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that the school is well led and managed. One, well-informed parent submitted a comment on a returned questionnaire, remarking that the headteacher had 'vision and the ability to lead and motivate staff'.
9. There is a shared purpose in the school where pupils and adults feel valued. The headteacher has fostered a sense of co-operation and support within the school community. The desire to raise pupils' achievements is at the forefront of the school philosophy. The good standards of attainment

in 1997 have been built upon and transformed into very good standards in 2001. This was recognised by the Department for Education and Skills by an achievement award.

10. Teaching standards have improved because there are very effective monitoring systems now in place and positive encouragement and advice is given to staff by the headteacher. The school analyses its own performance well; it is self-critical and acts upon the findings of its own analysis to effect school improvement. This is a caring school. Pupils with special educational needs or difficulties at home are not overlooked. The headteacher is approachable and sympathetic to their circumstances and gives her time to solving pupils' personal problems.
11. Very good routines have been established and well-documented policies are based on existing practices and understood clearly by the school community. The headteacher applies a collegiate approach and consults widely with staff, parents and governors, ensuring that she has everyone's support before embarking on new initiatives. Her commitment to high expectations are mirrored in the work of the staff and they are encouraged to develop their professional expertise through training. The school does not stagnate, but challenges itself to improve under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher.
12. The deputy headteacher has just returned to school after a period of absence for maternity leave. Her role has changed and she is no longer classroom based and now monitors standards. However, she has returned to her previous management responsibilities of co-ordinator for special educational needs and whole school assessment. Her work in these areas is of a very high standard. She advises and liaises with the staff, pulling together all the various threads so that there is a consistent, whole-school approach. There are clear policies and procedures, which are extremely well documented. The progress that pupils with special educational needs make is very good and this is largely due to the leadership and management of the deputy headteacher. She has developed very good assessment procedures, which are comprehensive and cover all subjects. This allows teachers to monitor pupils' progress accurately and gives guidance on what should be achieved next through setting short-term targets. This is proving very successful in enabling pupils to make good progress through the school.
13. The headteacher delegates responsibilities very effectively and nowhere is this demonstrated better than in the leadership and management of subjects. There are managers for all subjects and they have a clear, well-defined role, knowing exactly how they should develop and monitor their subject. Their contribution to school development is very effective. They analyse the quality of pupils' learning through reviewing work, by visiting classes and working alongside colleagues. They give advice in staff meetings, monitor and set their own budgets, keep records and samples of work and undertake professional training to improve their own subject knowledge. The thorough analysis of a wealth of information enables them to set out an action plan for further development, which becomes an integral part of the school improvement plan.
14. An excellent example of the success of this system is illustrated in the work of the English manager. As the result of her analysis of the National Curriculum tests results, weaknesses were located in boys' performance, the quality of handwriting, and the use of exciting vocabulary in extended writing, particularly by the higher-attaining pupils. Action was taken to promote more interesting literature for boys, to develop a cursive style of handwriting and to give more of a focus to cultivating a creative style in writing. These strategies are proving successful, as shown by the remarks of a pupil in Year 2. When an adult asked an average-attaining pupil how she was going to begin her story, she smiled knowingly and said, 'Well, I am not going to begin with "Once upon a time"'.

The very good provision for pupil's personal development has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships in school.

15. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents overwhelmingly believe that their children like school. This is not surprising as the school provides a stimulating and interesting environment. In the reception classrooms there are good quality resources and well designed classroom areas for children to interact and develop their academic and social skills. Staff and adult helpers are good

role models for children because they treat them respectfully and encourage them to share. At the end of sessions there is an expectation that children will tidy up and put equipment away. There are well-planned opportunities in lessons for pupils' personal development. Teachers highlight a specific area that they plan to cover, and develop a sense of interest and excitement amongst pupils. An example of this was seen during science lesson in Year 1 when the teacher provided practical activities, such as moving a marble around a maze. These strategies have gradually been embedded into lessons.

16. The school's positive behaviour management strategy is clearly put into practice as pupils' behaviour in the classrooms and in the playground is very good. Pupils move about the school sensibly, without disturbing others who are working in the classrooms. They hold open doors politely, without being directed by teachers, in order to speed up the passage of pupils on the way to assembly. In lessons they collaborate well. In a Year 2 lesson, for instance, groups of pupils gathered together and discussed maturely a hypothetical situation regarding the likely outcome of building a refuse site on an existing playing field. Even though the activity was noisy, when asked to listen by the teacher they stopped almost immediately and contributed worthwhile arguments for and against the proposal.
17. There is a strong Christian ethos evident in the life of the school. Pupils say prayers and reflect on their own lives. Daily acts of collective worship are used effectively to support the school's caring philosophy and to promote high moral standards and social and cultural development.
18. Lunchtime supervisors have clear guidance on how pupils should be managed at lunchtime and this results in very good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils say that there is no real bullying in school but just a few naughty children. They know what to do if others hurt them at playtime or lunchtime. The school sensitively provides an area for children to make new friends, known as the 'Buddy Bus Stop'.
19. Although pupils who attend the school do not regularly meet children and adults from ethnic minority backgrounds the school is careful to present positive images of people from non-European cultures through its literature and religious education.
20. Pupils use their initiative well and take on responsibilities readily because the school provides good opportunities. Lunchtime supervisors are supported by the play patrol, a band of sensible lunchtime pupils who help in the dining area. Pupils act as monitors for distributing milk, delivering registers, picking up litter, and as 'buddies' to help younger pupils who are unaccustomed to their new surroundings.

The strong team work and commitment of all the staff to school improvement has created a high quality learning environment in which pupils mature and raise their achievement levels.

21. The school motto, 'Together we can. Together we do', exemplifies the evident team spirit. The very good levels of improvement since the last inspection have been achieved because the school community works well together for the benefit of the pupils. The teaching staff work well together. They plan lessons in year groups, share good practice when working alongside each other and, either undertake in-service training together, or report back to the whole staff after individual off-site training sessions. They work hard and their efforts are channelled well towards whole-school improvement, because targets are clearly identified from detailed whole-school analysis. They have very good relationships with pupils and use praise well to promote self-esteem and give encouragement to succeed. There is a good degree of consistency in approach, such as comments on the marking of pupils' work, which shows that the staff have agreed the systems in place.
22. Teaching assistants play a very valuable part in raising pupils' achievement and contribute positively to the school's caring philosophy. They are well trained and briefed thoroughly by teachers, knowing exactly what their role is to be in lessons. During teachers' descriptions and explanations at the start of lessons they sit amongst pupils, helping to keep pupils focused and quietly conversing with small groups to add further understanding to the teachers' introductions. In

group work, they are patient and understanding but ensure pupils keep working on the task provided. They are skilful when working with pupils who have special educational needs, using suitable learning resources, which reinforce their knowledge and understanding. This is demonstrated well in the Early Learning Group, where stimulating activities are planned. Teaching assistants also use their initiative well when teachers are occupied. A good example was witnessed when a weeping child entered the classroom at the start of the school day. The classroom assistant took charge, sat the child on her knee and soothingly talked to her about her problems. The child was re-integrated into the lesson without fuss or disruption. In reception classes one teaching assistant has developed a specialist knowledge of children's role play. During the inspection small groups of children dressed as the characters from Goldilocks and the Three Bears, played out their roles, using appropriate language to describe their actions. This makes a valuable contribution to the development of children's creative and language and literacy skills.

23. Dinner supervisors and kitchen staff form good relationships with pupils. They treat them with respect; smiles are exchanged and pupils are encouraged to be independent at lunchtime. There is a calm atmosphere in the dining area and playground. Supervisors are quick to solve minor problems or treat injuries. Their work is valued by teaching staff and many supervisors work in other capacities in the school, which strengthens the family atmosphere.
24. The first point of school contact for parents and visitors is the reception area of the office; in effect setting the tone for the school ethos. One parent at the pre-inspection meeting for parents declared 'It's the friendliest place in Ringwood'. As well as being efficient, office staff are thoughtful and make people welcome. They allow teachers to concentrate on their main role and support them with good administrative systems.
25. The school is well maintained and attractively decorated. The cleaning staff take a pride in their work and ensure that the building is clean and tidy. The library area is a real asset to the school. It is well stocked with a good range of books and extremely well managed by the librarian. She works alongside teachers, building up pupils' library skills and helping with independent research. Portfolios of previous topic work completed by pupils show the good quality of research work taking place in school.
26. The headteacher epitomises the school team spirit. Within the space of a day, she can be the senior manager who shapes the school direction when meeting with governors, or an additional support to the dinner supervisors, by collecting plates, or be in the mode of a social worker trying to sort out a family problem. The school gained an 'Investors in People Award' in June 2000 in recognition of the commitment to improving staff development. This process has helped staff to build a very strong team spirit.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The use of time within the school day, and opportunities for the teaching and learning of history and geography in Key Stage 1⁵ to take place on a more frequent basis.

27. The time allocated to the school day is similar to that of most other infant schools, starting at ten minutes to nine in the morning and finishing at quarter past three in the afternoon. There are the usual breaks for playtimes in the morning and afternoon and a lunch break of one hour ten minutes. However, according to the teachers' timetables, the time allocated for Acts of Collective Worship, through school and class assemblies, is somewhat more than the 15-20 minutes usually seen in schools, and, although this is very valuable in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, it does not contribute to taught curriculum time. According to the teachers' timetables, the final session of the school day, lasting 40 minutes, is set aside for this purpose from Monday to Thursday, and a regular slot of 30 minutes is allocated each Friday morning. Within the 40-minute sessions, however, pupils spend some time moving to and from the school hall, and around ten minutes is available at the end of the day, which is not always used to the best effect. Although a

⁵ Key Stage 1 caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

small loss of time appears insignificant on a daily basis, over a period of a term it accumulates to a sizeable amount of lost teaching and learning time for pupils. This means, in effect, that the school does not meet the nationally recommended level of minimum taught time of 21 hours per week.

28. After each morning break, pupils in each class receive a carton of milk. Teachers use this time in different ways. Many of the staff use it profitably to develop pupils' interest in a range of topics. In a reception class, for instance, whilst pupils were drinking milk, the teacher asked a child to show a caterpillar, brought from the garden at home in a container, to other children seated in a circle. Whilst this was happening, another child held up photographs of a visit to Finland and spoke about his encounter with Father Christmas. Both these activities enlarged the children's understanding and knowledge of the world and ensured that school time was efficiently used. However, in some classes 'milk time' is viewed by teachers as more of an unplanned social occasion, which involves speaking and listening activities, but lacks a defined focus and sense of urgency. Time within the school day is an important resource and should be earmarked for specific learning activities which increases pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
29. Teachers devise their own timetables and fit subjects into time slots within the week. The school places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the bulk of school time is given over to these important subjects. The time is generally used well. Lessons move along at a good pace and good teaching ensures that pupils reach well above average standards in these areas. However, the time spent on different subjects does vary. For instance, the time spent per week on art and design and design and technology in Key Stage 1 varies by as much as 25 minutes within each age group. This inequitable allocation of time is due to the differing lengths of sessions within the school day. It is difficult for teachers to overcome these problems because periods can be as long as one hour and fifteen minutes whilst others may be as short as 30 minutes, so that it becomes difficult for them to find an accurate balance. Sessions of more equal length would enable the school to present a better balance across its curriculum provision in subjects other than literacy and numeracy.
30. The curriculum is planned well. Each subject or area of learning has specific learning objectives built into planning so that the knowledge, understanding and skills elements of learning are taught properly and pupils achieve the prescribed objectives. All subjects or areas of learning in the Foundation Stage are taught weekly, which is effective in building up children's skills. However, history and geography in Key Stage 1 are the exception. They are bracketed together under the heading of humanities, allocated an appropriate time on the timetable and taught alternately over the period of a half term or term. The result is that pupils are not taught history and geography on a frequent basis. In one extreme example some pupils in Key Stage 1 will have learning experiences in geography in the Spring term, which finishes at the end of March, then will not receive any formal geography teaching again until the beginning of the following November. This long gap of time means that the important skills in geography are not built up systematically and consolidated frequently enough.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. Inspectors recognise the very good level of improvement that the school has made since the last inspection, but to improve standards in the school further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - Re-examine the organisation of the school day in order to make better use of the time available for teaching and learning, and give pupils in Key Stage 1 more frequent opportunities to develop their skills in history and geography. (*Paragraphs 27 – 30*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	4	8	4	0	0	0
Percentage	11	22	44	22	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 five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	9	254
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18	74

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.4

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	39	47	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	39	38
	Girls	46	47	47
	Total	82	86	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	100 (97)	99 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	38	39
	Girls	47	47	47
	Total	85	85	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	99 (96)	99 (100)	100 (99)
	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	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	175
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	261.68

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	51.25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	3.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	599,275
Total expenditure	566,624
Expenditure per pupil	2,068
Balance brought forward from previous year	70,071
Balance carried forward to next year	102,722

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
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)	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	243
Number of questionnaires returned	50
Percentage of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	66	26	2	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	38	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	54	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	68	26	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	36	16	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	14	4	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	22	10	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	72	22	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	28	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	32	16	6	10