

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HOLMESDALE INFANT SCHOOL**

Reigate

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 124988

Headteacher: Mr J Brown

Reporting inspector: Terry Elston  
20704

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 198734

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Holmesdale Infant School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Clark
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20704	Terry Elston	Registered inspector	Science, information and communication technology, physical education.	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19693	Sally Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19897	Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19142	Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	Children in the Foundation Stage, art and design, music.	
17826	June Punnett	Team inspector	English, design and technology, religious education, pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language.	

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</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>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>25</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a large infant school with 299 pupils on roll, serving an area where most of the housing is privately owned. There are 131 children in the Foundation Stage; 42 attend part-time in the Nursery, and 89 attend full-time in the three Reception classes. There are 141 girls and 115 boys, with Year 1 classes having almost twice as many girls as boys. Less than 12 per cent of pupils have special educational need, which is lower than normally found. Four pupils have statements of their special educational needs, which is broadly the same as the national figure. Fewer than two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than the national average. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, or have English as an additional language. During the last school year, nine pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 23 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This degree of mobility is not unusual. The attainment of pupils on entry is above average. The school has a franchised 'Beacon' status, and supports other schools in their teaching of information and communication technology.

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

This is a very good school where outstanding leadership and consistently good teaching ensure that pupils attain high standards in the national tests. The rich curriculum and very good quality of assessment contribute significantly to the standards of teaching and learning. Pupils behave well, and parents speak very highly of the school's provision. In view of these important strengths, and the very good management of the funds available, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards in the national tests are consistently well above average.
- Excellent leadership by the headteacher, who is very well supported by senior staff and governors, makes for a very successful school.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work; they love coming to school, and are very enthusiastic about all aspects of school life.
- The very good curriculum is enhanced by excellent extracurricular activities and links with the community which give pupils a very broad and interesting range of experiences.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress and personal development is very good, and accounts for the high standards of work and relationships in the school.
- Links with parents are very good, and make a very significant contribution to pupils' standards.

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

- The standards achieved by potentially high attaining pupils in writing.
- The punctuality with which pupils arrive at school.

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

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

The school has made very good improvements since it was last inspected in November 1997, and has addressed the key issues from that report very well. The finances are now in good shape, and the very good quality of the forward planning keeps moving the school forward. The curriculum and assessment procedures have improved significantly, and are now strengths of the school. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened, and they now support teachers well. All statutory requirements are now met. Standards in English, mathematics and science are higher than in the previous inspection, as are those in all subjects apart from religious education. The quality of leadership and teaching has improved, as has the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the support and guidance of pupils. The school is not complacent about its success, and is very well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A*	A	A	B
writing	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	B	A	C

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

These figures illustrate how effective this school is in promoting and maintaining high standards. In science, the teachers' assessments in 2001 showed that standards were above average. There is a pattern of gender differences that the school is addressing with some success. Few boys, for example, attain higher levels in writing in the national tests, but in mathematics, it is the girls who lag behind. All teachers, including the headteacher, now have performance management targets to raise the attainment of boys in writing and girls in mathematics. Although some differences remain, this inspection finds that the gap is narrowing. Children enter the Foundation Stage at above average levels of attainment for their age. They make good progress, and are on course to achieve above average levels of attainment in the Reception year in all areas of their development.

This inspection finds that, by Year 2, pupils' standards in English are well above average in speaking, listening and reading. Standards are above average in writing, but too few pupils attain the higher levels of which they are capable. In mathematics, pupils' standards are well above average. Their numeracy skills are very well developed because of the regular practice that teachers give them in numeracy lessons. Standards are also well above average in science and music. Standards are above average in all other subjects apart from religious education, where they are average. Standards are not as high in religious education because the quality of pupils' written work is not as good as in other subjects. All groups of pupils make good progress to achieve these standards. Those with special educational needs do well, and consistently achieve their targets. Higher attaining pupils generally make good progress, and attain high levels in reading and mathematics in the national tests. Gifted and talented pupils are supported and challenged very well, and attain very high standards, particularly in music and information and communication technology.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, and delight in their successes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Lessons take place in a calm and busy atmosphere, and pupils play happily together outside.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good, with many relishing the opportunities to take responsibility. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good, but too many pupils arrive late and miss the important start to the day.

Pupils' enthusiasm for work and the very good relationships explain why this is such a harmonious community, where all work hard and enjoy doing so.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good, and meets the needs of all groups of pupils. In more than nine out of ten lessons, the quality of teaching was good, and in more than one third of lessons, it was very good. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the teaching and learning of language, literacy and communication skills are very good, and children make very good progress in their speaking, reading and writing.

In Years 1 and 2, the good quality of teaching builds well on the foundations laid earlier. The effectiveness of the teaching can be judged by the high standards that pupils achieve by the time they leave. Teachers' planning is thorough, and pays good regard overall to the different levels of attainment in the class. Teachers in both year groups plan lessons as a team, and this works very well, making the best use of each other's expertise. Teachers' expectations are generally high, but in writing, higher attaining pupils are not always given tasks that make the best of their skills. The methods that teachers use work very well; they make lessons very interesting by including lots of practical activities, and this involves pupils very well in their own learning. Their direct teaching works well, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons, and promotes pupils' learning of the basic skills of reading and number effectively. The teaching of creative skills is very good, and leads to high standards in much of the music and art in the school. Teachers' careful planning means that pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and they are supported very well by skilled teaching assistants. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good, and they achieve very high standards in music and information and communication technology.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The very good curriculum is planned very well. It has a strong focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but manages to provide a rich variety of work in other subjects, including the creative arts. There is an excellent range of extracurricular activities to extend the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good, and pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator works closely with teachers to plan appropriate tasks for these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is good, and the few pupils involved make good progress in their use and understanding of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This provision is very good. The school does much to teach pupils about the importance of God in their lives, how to behave well and accept responsibility for their actions. There is a very good range of activities to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture, as well as that of other people in the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Pupils' personal development is monitored very effectively, and the very good assessment procedures help to raise the attainment of pupils of all abilities.

The very good, well-balanced curriculum and the effective monitoring of pupils' progress provide a very good foundation for pupils' learning and teachers' teaching. Parents are well-informed about the curriculum, and their



child's progress, and their links with the school are very strong. Excellent links with the local community add much to the quality of the curriculum.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is excellent, and is crucial to the school's success. The headteacher has very high expectations of all pupils and staff, and is very well supported by the assistant heads and senior teachers. He has a very clear understanding of how to raise standards of teaching and learning, and works very closely with the governors to achieve his aims.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is a very good governing body, which is keen to see the school do well, has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and works closely with the staff to raise standards. The Chair leads her team very well, and has a very good understanding of her role.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good, and an important reason why pupils do so well. All available data is analysed, and used very effectively to raise pupils' standards. Pupils' work and teachers' lessons are monitored well, and this explains why standards of both are improving all the time.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources very well. More pupils being attracted to the school have enabled the governors to make improvements in staffing and resources. The school applies the principles of best value well, evaluating the quality of its own provision very well, and making useful comparisons between the performance of this school and others.

The school's excellent accommodation and grounds do much to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The staff are well qualified, and improve their skills effectively by very good training. Overall, the supply and quality of learning resources are good, and support pupils' learning well.

#### 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>• The high quality of the headteacher's leadership.</li> <li>• The consistently good teaching.</li> <li>• The behaviour and maturity of pupils.</li> <li>• The richness of the curriculum.</li> <li>• The very good quality of the information about the school and their child's progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few feel that children are pushed too hard, and that the amount of homework is excessive.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive views, but feels that the expectations of pupils are appropriate, and the amount of homework is suitable for these pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Pupils do well in the national tests, and in 2001, their results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In science, the teachers' assessments showed that standards were above average. Over the past four years, standards have risen steadily. Compared with similar schools, the 2001 results were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. There is a pattern of gender differences that the school is addressing with some success. Few boys, for example, attain higher levels in writing in the national tests, but in mathematics, it is the girls who lag behind. All teachers, including the headteacher, now have performance management targets to raise the attainment of boys in writing and girls in mathematics. Although some differences remain, this inspection finds that the gap is narrowing.
2. Children enter the Foundation Stage at above average levels of attainment for their age. However, this year, the initial assessments of the children showed that a significant minority were below average in aspects of their language and communication skills. The children make good progress, and are on course to achieve above average levels of attainment In the Foundation Stage in all aspects of their development.
3. This inspection finds that, by Year 2, pupils' standards in English are well above average in speaking, listening and reading, and above average in writing. The difference is accounted for by the relatively few pupils who attain the higher levels in writing compared with other elements of English, mainly because of the lack of sufficient structured activities to develop the amount and quality of their work. Otherwise, the literacy lessons are going well, and provide a good structure for pupils' learning of basic skills. In mathematics, pupils' standards are well above average. Their numeracy skills are very well developed because of the regular practice that teachers give them in numeracy lessons. Standards are also well above average in science, where the good focus on experimental work has improved standards since last year's teachers' assessments, and in music, with pupils' singing being a particular strength. Standards are above average in all other subjects apart from religious education, where they are average. Standards are not as high in religious education because the quality of pupils' written work is not as good as in other subjects. Compared with standards in the previous inspection, pupils' attainment is higher in all subjects apart from religious education, where they remain similar. These improvements are the result of the better quality of teaching, and more skilled use of assessment to address any areas of weaknesses.
4. Pupils make good progress to achieve these standards. Those with special educational needs make good progress because teachers' planning ensures that they will understand the work, and their individual targets are challenging but achievable. Classroom assistants provide very good support in lessons to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities. In some lessons, including music and physical education, pupils with special educational needs are among the best in the class.
5. Higher attaining pupils make good progress. The school has done much to plan activities to challenge these pupils to do their best work. In 2001, the proportion who moved on to attain higher levels in the national tests was well above the national average in reading and above average in mathematics. In writing, this proportion was average. The very good provision for gifted and talented pupils ensures that they attain very high standards, especially in music and information and communication technology.

6. A very small percentage of pupils come from linguistic and minority ethnic backgrounds and all make good progress. The school formally analyses their attainment to establish if there are significant differences between their performance and that of other groups of pupils. This is effective in ensuring that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. The pupils have maintained their very good attitudes found at the time of the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage settle into school well and enjoy coming to school. They have very positive attitudes to their work and play and they are very well behaved. They are learning to interact very well with their teachers, and other adults in the school.

8. The parents say that their children love coming to school and pupils are very enthusiastic about many aspects of school life. In lessons, the pupils nearly always work with interest and enjoyment. This was seen in a Year 2 science lesson when the pupils investigated their physical differences and similarities, such as height and preferred foot for hopping. Working with a partner, they settled quickly to work. They carefully read the list of tasks and concentrated hard to make accurate measurements. They worked without close supervision, enthusiastically discussed their findings, and took pride in presenting their results. The pupils are very keen to take part in the excellent range of extracurricular activities. For example, the large choral speaking group performed A. A. Milne's 'The King's Breakfast' with obvious enjoyment, pride and maturity. The whole school community listened in silence, completely captivated by the group's accomplishment.

9. The pupils' behaviour is good and the parents are impressed by the pupils' good manners. The school operates as a happy and harmonious community and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The pupils know that adults who work in school expect good behaviour and the vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons. A few pupils chat when the teachers are talking and there is some silliness. This distracts other pupils. In lessons, pupils have learned to put up their hands to answer questions and do not call out. They behave sensibly during lunch and play well together in the playground. Parents and pupils say that incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare and there were no exclusions last year. The pupils are trustworthy and they show respect for their environment, particularly through the 'Eco-School' initiatives, such as the recycling compost bins and wormeries.

10. The pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Relationships throughout the school are particularly strong, and parents feel that their children are learning to respect each other. The pupils work well together in groups and support each other in lessons. They have very good relationships with adults working in the school, and know that they can turn to them for help. The pupils are polite and courteous to visitors, and talk to them with confidence. They are keen to take responsibility and enjoy helping around the school. Some pupils decided that they would like to organise a raffle for charity and wrote a letter to the headteacher. They had thought carefully about what they wanted to do and the resources they required.

11. The attendance of the pupils is good and the attendance levels are very similar to those at the time of the last inspection. The attendance rate of 94.7 per cent for 2000/01 was above the national average and there were no unauthorised absences. The pupils' good rate of attendance has a positive impact on their learning. Despite regular reminders from the school, a significant minority of parents are not bringing their children to school on time. These pupils are missing an important start to the school day.

12. Most pupils with special educational needs display positive attitudes and behaviour and enjoy their learning. They work well in groups, especially when supported by learning support assistants. The very few pupils with English as an additional language blend very well into groups and are fully included in all activities.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

13. The quality of teaching is good, and promotes pupils' learning well. In more than nine out of ten lessons, the quality of teaching was good, and in more than one third of lessons, it was very good. Parents feel strongly that the quality of teaching is good, and the figures show a significant improvement from the previous inspection when fewer lessons were very good, and some, unlike in this inspection, were unsatisfactory. The main improvements lie in the way that teachers focus more effectively on the learning of individual pupils, the pace of lessons and the way teachers now make the purpose of the lesson very clear to pupils.

14. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teaching and learning of language, literacy and communication skills are very good. The teachers and teaching assistants know the children well as individuals and are skilled at developing warm relationships. The teachers' planning is very good and is carefully matched to the 'stepping-stones' in the Early Learning Goals, which are the recommended targets for children in the Foundation Stage. For the most part, teachers provide these young children with sufficient opportunities to develop their independence, but where there are occasional shortcomings children are directed too much and lose the opportunity to learn how to think for themselves.

15. In Years 1 and 2, the good quality of teaching builds well on the foundations laid earlier. The effectiveness of the teaching can be judged by the high standards that pupils achieve by the time they leave. The teaching of creative arts is particularly good, and many pupils develop good skills in art and music as a result. Teachers' planning is thorough, and pays good regard overall to the different levels of attainment in the class. Teachers in both year groups plan lessons as a team, and this works very well, making the best use of each other's expertise. Teachers' expectations are generally high, but in writing, higher attaining pupils are not always given tasks that make the best of their skills, and too few achieve the high standards of which they are capable. Teachers show a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach, and all use resources well. The methods that teachers use work very well; they make lessons very interesting by including lots of practical activities, and this involves pupils very well in their own learning. In religious education, although teachers use a wide range of methods and resources to make the subject interesting to pupils, they do not provide enough opportunities for them to write down their thoughts, and this is why standards in religious education are not as high as in other subjects.

16. Teachers direct teaching works well, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons, and this promotes pupils' learning of the basic skills of reading and number effectively. Teachers start and end lessons very well by sharing with pupils the learning that is expected, and, at the end, discussing with them whether they have achieved what was expected. In this way, pupils develop a good understanding of their own progress, and the teacher has a clear picture of how well they have learned and which topics may need to be revisited. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is very good, which means that pupils learn quickly with few interruptions. These important strengths mean that lessons are full of learning, and pupils enjoy their work.

17. The strengths of the teaching were exemplified in a very good science lesson, where pupils were learning how exercise affects the body. The teacher's excellent planning made it clear what each group would learn, and ensured that the level of challenge was just right for all pupils. Her questioning worked very well because she tailored questions to different pupils' level of attainment, and this ensured that all groups were involved in learning. The teacher's first class direct teaching meant that pupils soon grasped the idea of how blood was pumped around the body, and the group work gave all

pupils challenging, yet achievable tasks. Pupils were soon learning important information and testing their hypotheses and, once they had the necessary data, logged the results on a laptop computer. By the end, all groups had made very good progress, and had completed an excellent experiment.

18. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is good, and provides clear guidance as to how pupils can improve. A few parents are concerned that their children have too much homework. This inspection finds that the level of homework is appropriate, and helps consolidate the work done in class without over-burdening pupils.

19. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The methods used are appropriate and enable pupils to learn well. Good expectations for work and behaviour have been established, to which pupils respond well. Teaching assistants work well with teachers, focusing on those pupils who require individual help either at the times when the whole class works together, or in group-work.

20. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is good because teachers clearly identify these pupils in their planning, and provide different levels of activities. For example, skilful questioning by Year 2 teachers extends the highest attaining pupils in literacy and numeracy by constantly asking pupils to justify their opinions.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

21. The school provides a rich curriculum for all the pupils, and it affords a very good preparation for junior school. Whilst there is a strong focus on English and mathematics, the school has done much to develop other areas of the curriculum, and provision for music and the arts is a significant strength. There are good opportunities for instrumental music tuition, and the school held a very successful 'Arts Week'. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations for pupils of this age. The school meets all statutory requirements for the subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education, which is also covered in other aspects of the curriculum, complies with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship, which is largely Christian in character. There are clear policies and schemes of work for all subjects. There is very good long and medium term planning of the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy lessons are working well, and ensure that pupils learn the basic skills of reading and number effectively. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills further in other subjects. For other subjects, planning is securely based on national guidelines, and is adapted well to meet the particular needs of the school and its resources. The teachers in each year group plan carefully together, and this ensures that pupils in each class cover the same work. The teachers make good use of homework to support the pupils' learning.

22. The quality and range of the learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are very good. The curriculum is planned very well to address the recommended areas of learning, with each area harmoniously blending to enrich every other area. A strong emphasis is placed on first-hand experiences of good quality. Well focused teaching, linked to literacy and numeracy, is carefully planned and introduced effectively to the children. There is a very good range of resources for indoor and outdoor activities to enhance children's learning. The inside and outside areas of the Nursery and the Reception classes are inviting and motivating areas for learning. In the Nursery, the children are able to move 'spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments' as required by the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. In the main, and always in the Early Years co-ordinator's class, children are provided with a very good balance between appropriate focused teaching and independent learning opportunities. Where there are occasional shortcomings, opportunities for children to choose for themselves are more limited, and they are too often directed to

activities rather than choose for themselves. This limits their independence to choose, experiment, explore creatively and initiate ideas of their own.

23. The school takes effective steps to ensure that all the pupils, regardless of ability or gender, have full and equal access to the curriculum and to extracurricular activities. A good policy outlines the responsibilities of the governing body, headteacher and class teachers in securing equality of access and opportunity. The school looks critically at variations in the achievement of different groups, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils. There are opportunities for the pupils to learn sign language, so that those with hearing impairment can join in the full range of activities. The school pays very good attention to the promotion of racial equality and respect for cultural diversity.

24. Curricular provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good, and the school takes great care to ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included. Pupils are well supported by classroom assistants in the majority of lessons. The targets set in individual plans help to focus pupils' development, and they make good progress towards them. The needs of the few pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well, and care is taken to follow the requirements set out in the provision. The policy for the new Code of Practice for special educational needs is in the process of being updated. The school is fully aware of the need to do this, and has plans to complete the process ready for next term.

25. The curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils is good because teachers plan and provide appropriate levels of activities for them. For example, talented musicians are given opportunities during lessons to work beyond the expectations for seven-year-olds, and the school provides excellent homework tasks for gifted pupils that require them to research topics and enter data on a laptop computer.

26. There is an excellent range of extracurricular activities. Most parents are rightly pleased with this provision. Over 80 pupils from Years 1 and 2 attend an after-school football club. Over 50 pupils in Year 2 participate in a gymnastics club. There are clubs for recorders, French and information and communication technology, and there is a lunchtime choir. The pupils have the opportunity to sample 'taster' sessions of sailing, rugby and dance. The teachers enrich learning further through a very wide range of school visits to places such as Painshill Park, Gatton Park, Gatwick Zoo, the National Gallery and local shops. They make very good use of the knowledge and expertise of visitors, such as community police, fire service, a book illustrator, mobile farm, theatre and puppet groups and local residents.

27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the school's provision for spiritual development was judged as good, and that of cultural development as satisfactory. The pupils are encouraged to appreciate and be involved with the creative arts throughout their time in the school. There is a great richness to the work that is displayed throughout the building. This school successfully encourages pupils to aspire to high levels of spiritual, moral, social, moral and cultural values.

28. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is enhanced through religious education and assemblies, where pupils learn about world religions and faiths. In assemblies, pupils enter to an atmosphere of calm created by well-chosen music. Although the focus is mainly Christian, the school plans well for the introduction at assemblies of other faiths and beliefs as well as aspects of personal social and health education and citizenship. In assemblies, the pupils sing well and take part in prayers. The time for reflection, however, is not always sufficiently emphasised. Pupils are encouraged to develop an appreciation of, and to wonder at, the natural world during science and art

lessons. In a science lesson, pupils from Year 2 were delighted when looking at old medicine bottles and, when learning from the teacher that the green ones formerly held poison, they all gasped in amazement. Pupils in another class expressed awe and wonder when realising how difficult it was to for children in other countries to write in Arabic.

29. The provision for pupil's moral development is founded on the high expectations that staff have of them, and is very good. All members of staff provide very good role models and are very consistent in the way they show respect for the pupils and adults. The school has a very positive approach to the management of behaviour and there are a variety of rewards for pupils and classes such as, 'Golden Celebrations'. A special postcard is sent to each recipient of an award, and makes pupils feel very special. Members of staff make the pupils aware of what is acceptable behaviour and help them to understand what is right and wrong. Moral issues are taught very well in class using whole class discussion times and assemblies. As a result, pupils are well behaved in and around the school.

30. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school has a caring ethos in which everyone is respected as an individual and supported very well. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well included in all activities. Older pupils are encouraged to support younger ones, and they operate a 'friendship system' at play times when they support those who may be feeling lonely. The personal, social and health education curriculum provides very good opportunities in class and assemblies to understand social issues, accept that others may hold different opinions and beliefs and to listen to others.

31. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. To enhance pupils' cultural development, the school draws on examples from many cultural traditions. As well as helping children experience their own local culture, the school celebrates the ethnic and cultural diversity of British life and the richness of life around the world. Through art, music, religious education, geography and history the pupils are given many opportunities to learn about the peoples, beliefs and places of the world. For example, pupils learned about the explorations of Mary Kingsley in Africa. There is provision through the curriculum to learn of the cultural and faith traditions of Britain's multicultural population. The local vicar and minister have visited the school to talk about religion and faith, and the pupils have visited the local parish church. They have made visits to locations near to the school and some further afield that have added to their cultural experiences. Assembly themes are planned well to reflect celebration and worship in a variety of faiths. There is a rich and varied range of art on display from different artists whose styles have been successfully emulated by the pupils. Visiting artists such as Serena de la Hay, who helped design willow sculptures for the woodland area, and the school's reading scheme book illustrator and Indian classical dancers have also enriched the pupils' experience. There are displays in the school of resources and musical instruments from around the world such as, a didgeridoo from Australia complementing aboriginal style paintings of the 'Dreamtime'.

32. The school makes excellent use of the community to enrich the pupils' learning. There are very close links with St Mark's Church and the local United Reformed Church. Clergy frequently lead assemblies in school, and the pupils celebrate festivals of the Christian calendar at St Mark's. Some extracurricular activities are led by staff from local companies. The school makes very effective use of local rugby and cricket coaches, along with students from the Sixth Form Centre, to raise standards in games. A local dance teacher works with pupils from Years 1 and 2. The school choir has participated in local music festivals. People on community service orders have constructed a very useful viewing platform in the woodland area, which allows the pupils to undertake traffic surveys of Reigate Hill. They have also constructed the school's pond.

33. There are very good links with the junior school and this helps pupils in Year 2 when they transfer at the age of seven. They have the opportunity of visiting the junior school before they transfer and staff from the junior school come and talk to them at Holmesdale. Staff from both schools joined in a recent training day on pupils' writing. The teachers make very good use of the junior school's museum to enrich learning in history. The school has an Internet link with schools in Romania, Latvia, Italy and Greece as part of the Comenius 1 European Project. This is of great benefit to the pupils as part of their learning in geography and in information and communication technology, and also in developing their awareness of cultural diversity within Europe.

34. There is very good provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, which is currently co-ordinated by the headteacher. The teachers ensure that there are many useful opportunities for the pupils to talk about issues which are important to them and in which they can develop confidence and self-esteem. The school has a clear policy on sex education. Issues of human growth and development are taught with due respect to the pupils' age and maturity. The teachers ensure that the pupils are aware that medicines are drugs that can be dangerous if not used carefully. The pupils learn that a balanced diet is a factor that contributes to a healthy body.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. The school has very good procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety.

36. The school is a very caring community. The parents particularly value the way in which staff, especially the headteacher, treat the pupils with respect. The pupils say that they would be able to talk to their teachers if they were upset. Other adults working in school including lunchtime assistants, office staff and teaching assistants also make valuable contributions in caring for pupils. This is a very inclusive school where all groups of pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum. Staff work closely with outside agencies to support pupils with particular difficulties, enabling them to participate as fully as possible in school life. The after school club provides useful care facilities for parents and carers.

37. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The staff know the pupils very well and parents are impressed with the detailed, helpful comments in the pupils' annual reports.

38. The school pays very good attention to health and safety. The health and safety policy is good and emphasises the importance of the pupils' welfare. Staff are vigilant of potential hazards and governors make regular checks of the premises. The caretaker has good systems in place for risk assessment and monitoring fire safety equipment. The school encourages pupils and their families to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, the school has set up 'walking buses' to encourage parents to leave their cars at home.

39. The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection and has drawn up a good policy. The Nursery teacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and carries out her duties effectively. Adults working in the school are aware of the school's procedures.

40. The arrangements for first aid are good and many of the staff have received basic training. Pupils who are ill or injured receive very good care and attention in a well-equipped medical area. The school records any significant injuries and keeps parents well informed about accidents.

41. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The registers are marked correctly. Attendance data are analysed and monitored by teachers and office staff who



follow up any unexplained absences. The school discourages holidays taken during term time and rewards good attendance. The school reminds parents about the importance of arriving at school on time, but a few families are often late.

42. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The school has adopted a clear behaviour policy and the expectations of good behaviour are consistently reinforced in lessons, at lunchtime and in assemblies. The 'Golden Rules' are displayed around the school and adults working in school are good role models. Sanctions are rarely needed. Rewards such as stickers are effective, and pupils enjoy receiving praise for good behaviour and effort when their names are entered in the 'Golden Book'. The school informs parents about their children's rewards by sending postcards home. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy. Parents say that rare incidents of anti-social behaviour are effectively 'nipped in the bud'.

43. Children in the Foundation Stage are cared for well and are very happy to come to school. They share good relationships with their teachers, teaching assistants and other adults in the school. Soon after children enter the Reception classes, they are assessed using a procedure designed specifically for this age range, followed up by very good regular assessments of the children throughout their Reception year. The evidence from these assessments provide a precise insight into the stage of development of each child, which enables the teachers to plan activities well to meet their needs.

44. The care and support given to pupils who have special educational needs is very good. This is a school that ensures that pupils of all abilities are very well included in all activities. Teachers make the initial identification of any pupils who may have special educational needs early in the their time in the school, and this is followed by accurate assessment, if necessary. All pupils are provided for well, including gifted pupils and those who require extra support but are not on the special educational needs register. Assessment and tracking procedures are very good, and the school uses any reports from outside agencies, such as the educational psychological service, to good effect.

45. There are very good procedures for assessing the pupils' progress, not only in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but also in other subjects. This is a big improvement from the previous inspection, when the assessment of pupils' progress in the non core subjects was weak. The assessment co-ordinator has developed a good policy for assessment and recording, which includes a timetable of formal assessments for each year group throughout the academic year. The teachers are careful to ensure that opportunities for assessment are included in their short term planning. There is a very good whole school collection of samples of pupils' work in the core subjects at agreed National Curriculum levels, validated by the Local Education Authority. This helps the teachers in the accuracy and consistency of their assessments. The teachers make very good use of the information gained from assessments, including careful analysis of the pupils' performance in national tests at age seven, in order to highlight areas of weakness and to plan the next steps in the pupils' learning. They also use this information very well to track the progress of different groups of pupils, for example by gender or academic ability. They set clear and achievable targets, in order to help the pupils make the best progress possible. Each pupil has a record book, which shows very clearly at which level he or she is working.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

46. The parents and carers have very positive views of the school. They recognise the school's many strengths and have confidence in the headteacher's leadership and management of the school. They are pleased that their children love coming to school. They are very impressed by the standards of behaviour and feel that the school encourages their children to become mature and responsible. The

parents value the way in which the school works closely with parents and feel that the staff are very approachable. They say that teaching is good and feel that the school keeps them fully informed about how their children are getting on. They feel that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress.

47. The school has very good links with its parents and carers. The parents value the 'open door' policy and teachers are always willing to talk to parents. The headteacher is in the playground at the start of the day, and this provides parents with good opportunities to talk with him on an informal basis. With the help of parents and pupils, the school is developing its website which has useful information for parents. The school is always striving to improve its links with parents. Following a recent survey of parents, a working party is analysing the results and suggesting improvements, for example in the timing of information to new parents.

48. The information which the school provides to parents is very good. New parents are well informed through a helpful 'welcome' pack' and tours of the school. The prospectus and governors' Annual Report are informative documents and are attractively illustrated with pupils' drawings. Regular newsletters inform parents of future events and celebrate the school's successes. The school invites parents to useful 'meet the teacher' sessions at the beginning of the school year. The school sends parents valuable information about the topics their children will be studying. Parents appreciate the beneficial open days and information evenings, for example, on science. Termly consultations with teachers provide parents with good opportunities to discuss their children's progress. The pupils' annual reports are good and form a helpful basis for discussion at the spring parents/teacher consultations. The reports give parents very clear information about how their children are getting on and how they need to improve their work in English. There is not always the same detailed information in mathematics.

49. The parents' involvement with the work of the school is very good. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and offer practical assistance which has a positive impact on many aspects of school life. The active parents' association raises considerable funds for the school equipment and has recently paid for a new adventure play area. It also sends parents an excellent newsletter with details of events and articles of general interest. All parents have signed the home-school agreement and attendance at events such as concerts is very good. A management committee of parents runs the successful after-school club.

50. The parents' contribution to their children's learning is very good and this has a positive impact on their children's progress. The school greatly values the help offered by parents. They provide support in the classrooms and help with visits. Parents assist with extra-curricular activities, and the school community particularly benefits from the professional expertise of the parents who run the lunchtime choir. Parents are very keen to support their children's learning and attendance at parent consultation evenings is very high. They help their children with work at home and listen to their children read.

51. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about the school's provision for their children. They know what targets are set, and that there is a part for them to play at home in the individual education plans. Parents attend annual reviews for those pupils who have statement of special educational need. Their views are sought and recorded for these reviews. Parents also become involved in termly reviews of pupils' individual targets, and they take an active part in the school's provision.

52. The school establishes very good relationships with parents before their children start school. Parents are invited to come to an evening meeting to meet the teachers before and shortly after their children start school to hear what their child will experience during his or her time in the Foundation

Stage. Parents are able to speak informally with teachers about their children, when they bring them to, or collect them from, school each day.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

53. The excellent quality of the leadership and management is central to the school's success. The headteacher has a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be, and communicates this effectively to the staff. This ensures that teachers have high expectations of pupils, who always strive to produce their best work. These important foundations account for the continued improvement of the school, and ensure that pupils make good progress. These strengths also account for the demand for the school's expertise in information and communication technology and Foundation Stage education from other schools and institutions. The headteacher works hard to develop very good relationships in the school, and this has created an excellent team spirit so that pupils and staff work effectively together with a common purpose. Parents feel strongly that the headteacher's leadership is a significant strength.

54. There is a well-established culture of self-evaluation here, and this is an important way in which all aspects of the school's work are improved. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance in the national tests, for example, has identified differences in the attainment of boys and girls, and the school's positive action is starting to have a good impact. A particularly helpful strategy was the questionnaire given to pupils about mathematics, and what they liked or disliked about the subject. Alongside this, all teachers have the monitoring of gender issues as a target in their performance management process. The school has used the local education authority effectively to evaluate these improvements, and set fresh targets.

55. The school's leadership has used these principles of self-evaluation very well to address the main issues from the previous inspection. The main priority was the budget deficit, and the headteacher and governing body did well to turn this into a reasonable surplus in three years by good planning and prudent spending. The roles of subject co-ordinators was strengthened by giving them the skills and time to monitor effectively, and they now provide very good support to teachers and are central to the school's forward planning cycle. The curriculum and assessment procedures were improved significantly, and they now are among the school's strengths. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work independently, and the performance management procedures are key reasons why the quality of teaching and learning is good. All statutory requirements are now met.

56. The headteacher, senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors, monitor teaching very effectively. Teachers are observed regularly, and are given useful feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers value this process because it is done constructively, and helps them teach better. The headteacher sees teachers' planning regularly, and makes helpful comments when necessary. As a result, the quality of planning is very thorough, and provides a good structure to lessons.

57. The headteacher works closely with the two assistant headteachers, and they share a common vision for the school's development. Importantly, the assistant headteachers set very good examples by their own teaching, and this gives them credibility when advising staff. They lead and manage very well, and have helped the school improve the quality of assessment and staff training.

58. The management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The co-ordinator for the Early Years has very good understanding of the needs of young children and a clear overview of the provision for them. The quality of relationships within the Foundation Stage department is very good, and all the adults form a very effective team. The indoor accommodation is

well organised with bright and stimulating displays. The outdoors area is easily accessible and there is a very good range of appropriate equipment. The Nursery has a very good covered area for outside play during inclement weather. There is a wide range of high quality learning resources, which support the children's learning for indoor and outside play very well.

59. The leadership and management of the special educational needs aspect of the school are good. The co-ordinator organises individual support, pupils' targets, and the deployment of assistants well. Legal requirements are met for those pupils who have statements of special educational needs. The organisation of the small groups who have specific learning difficulties is also good, and is helping those pupils to make good progress towards their targets. The chair of the governors' Individual Needs Committee gives the school good support.

60. The governors, well led by the knowledgeable Chair, are enthusiastic, and provide good very support to the staff. They have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and most visit the school often to monitor their areas of responsibility. They are keen to raise pupils' standards, and are enthusiastic about their monitoring responsibilities. They work closely with the staff and parents to form the School Improvement Plan, and this document provides a very good direction for the school's further development.

61. The school has done well to turn the finances around, and has done this without detracting from the quality of education offered to pupils. Particular developments in this financially difficult time included the strengthening of the force of teaching assistants. This has proved very good value for money, and they are a vital part of the teaching provision. The headteacher and governing body apply the principles of best value well. They compare the school's performance with similar schools, and this helps them set challenging targets. Fundraising provides a good source of funding, and is directed well into areas of need, including computers and resources. Significant savings have been achieved by the school employing its own maintenance contractors, and involving parents and staff in 'Eco' initiatives such as a paper recycling project. All 'stakeholders' are consulted, including pupils and parents when considering the forward direction of the school. The administration officer plays a key role in this process, ensuring that materials are bought at the best price, and keeping everyone well-informed about the state of the school's finances.

62. The school is well staffed with a good, well-qualified supply of teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers new to the school benefit from very good induction procedures, including valuable support from experienced mentors. The accommodation is excellent, and supports all areas of teaching and learning very well. The grounds are a rich source of learning, and are used very well to develop pupils' understanding of plants and animals.

63. The supply of learning resources is good, and supports pupils' learning well. The resources for science and physical education are very good, and they are good in all other subjects.

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

To maintain the very good rate of improvement, and raise standards still further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) **raise standards by higher attaining pupils in writing by providing more regular, structured tasks that require them to write in greater depth and at greater length;**  
(Paragraphs 3, 15, 86)
- (2) **Ensure that parents who bring their children to school do so at the proper time.** (Paragraph 11)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

Raise standards in religious education by providing more opportunities for pupils to write down their thoughts and findings. (Paragraphs 3, 15, 87, 139)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	65

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	16	30	5	0	0	0
Percentage	4	30	57	9	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]*

### *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)	21	257
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	5

*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	3	33

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

%
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#### **Unauthorised absence**

%
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School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	44	43	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	42	44
	Girls	42	43	42
	Total	83	85	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (94)	98 (96)	99 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	43	41
	Girls	43	42	43
	Total	84	85	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (99)	98 (93)	97 (97)
	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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	253
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Average class size	29

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

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	26
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***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	3

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	547297
Total expenditure	530687
Expenditure per pupil	1951
Balance brought forward from previous year	7744
Balance carried forward to next year	24354

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	153

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	35	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	39	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	35	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	63	35	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	39	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	39	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	39	9	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	63	37	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	39	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	32	8	4	4

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The well-organised day-to-day routines enable all children to feel happy, safe and secure, and to grow in confidence.

65. New children visit the school early in September. There is a staggered entry the following week, which enables the children to become accustomed to their new environment and to get to know their teachers and assistants well. Children who have their fifth birthday during the autumn term attend full time, while the younger children attend part-time. Children with birthdays during the Spring term attend full-time from January and the youngest children attend full-time from the start of the summer term. They are taught within a warm, caring, supportive environment where they feel safe and secure. Most of the children have attended either the school Nursery or a pre-school playgroup before starting in the Reception classes. The children enter the school with above average attainment for their age in most areas of learning. In the Reception year, the children make good progress and nearly all exceed the recommended targets in all areas of the curriculum.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

66. Standards are above average in this area of learning. The quality of teaching is good, and pupils make good progress. The children are encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve through praise, smiles and gestures. Their behaviour in and around the school is very good, with only a few disagreements. They work and play beside each other well. Children show a good understanding of classroom procedures, and most respond well to them. They are aware of the teachers' high expectations of them, and strive hard to meet them. When given the opportunity to choose activities for themselves, children do so in a sensible way and most sustain concentration very well for their age. Not all classes, however, provide enough of these opportunities, and these children develop their independence more slowly. The very good outside area has a wide range of stimulating resources which provide the children with opportunities to select independently, share and to take turns. They settle well to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and show a good ability to concentrate for an appropriate length of time. The children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately, and most undress and dress themselves independently before and after their physical development lessons.

67. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well in all areas of learning, and the planning is thorough. A strength of the teaching is the warm, caring relationships that adults develop with the children, which helps them to feel secure and to grow in confidence. The adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each of them with courtesy and respect to which they respond positively. The children enjoy the many moments of fun and time for reflection, which helps to strengthen the bond between them. Caring for small creatures and plants helps them to respect living things and to be aware of the wonders of the world. They are encouraged to develop a sense of empathy with the feelings of others through stories, such as *The Rainbow Fish* and religious stories from different faiths.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

68. The teaching and learning of communication, language and literacy skills are very good. The children make very good progress in this area of learning, including those who have special educational needs, as they are provided very well with appropriate in class support. All adults communicate very

well with the children in the Foundation Stage. They talk to the children individually, in groups and as a class to help all extend their vocabulary and start to use their language and communication skills for a range of purposes. All adults show the children that they value their efforts at communicating. The children enjoy listening to stories. In the Nursery, most children understand the concept that pictures carry meaning and use the illustrations well to extend their understanding of the story. In the Reception classes, the children are learning that spoken words and print have the same meaning and that, in the English culture, text is read from left to right. The acceptance of early attempts at writing is very good as this enables the children to be confident and to feel they are 'writers'. Children in the Nursery soon feel that they are writers, and show great pleasure when they make marks, or mix these with some recognisable letters. In the Reception classes, they are provided with many varied and exciting opportunities to write independently, such as writing to a friend and putting these letters in the wall pocket to be taken home at the end of the week, or in the 'Golden Box'. Children are very excited when they receive a letter back.

69. Most children have a good knowledge of initial letter sounds, and some know blends. Linking the phonic work with correct letter formation is good, as this helps to reinforce the children's understanding of both concepts. Most children are able to write their own name. Many Reception children are already writing plausible spellings, and sometimes correctly use capital letters and full stops, such as *The lyn was Runing in the Jugl*, which the child read as *The lion was running in the jungle*. They regularly take books home to practise their early reading skills. They are encouraged to have good listening skills and listen carefully to instructions.

70. Children are provided with a very good range of purposeful activities to develop their use of language for reading, writing, speaking and listening, whatever their stage of development. They are provided with very good, stimulating role-play areas. These are used well, sometimes with an adult involved to extend the children's vocabulary. The children are provided with paper and pencils for a range of activities, including when acting as the vet or receptionist, making an appointment or writing in the *explorer's diary*. The children have good pencil control. Learning support assistants and teaching assistants are used effectively with small groups when direct teaching is involved. They are well briefed, and assist the teachers in maintaining everyday assessments of individual children's progress. The programme of work is well structured. Classroom displays are rich in language clues intended to reinforce learning, and a good emphasis on language development is evident throughout the whole programme of work.

### **Mathematical development**

71. The teaching and learning of mathematical skills is good and, in the Reception year, nearly all children exceed the targets for mathematics. Teachers are helping the children to develop their mathematical understanding well. They provide a structured programme of stimulating and enjoyable practical learning experiences and make learning fun; this is good practice, and enables the children to make good progress. In the Nursery, these skills are practised regularly when singing nursery rhymes, number jingles and playing sorting and ordering games. They sort 'mini-beasts' by colour and shape. The children are learning to recognise and name common shapes such as square, triangle, rectangle and circle. In the Reception classes, the children have cut out colourful basic shapes which teachers have encouraged them to make into imaginative three-dimensional sculptures. Teachers extend the children's learning of shape work well by encouraging them to look for other shapes within the sculptures. Most children count numbers correctly to at least ten, and many are learning to have a good understanding of the value of numbers to 20 through relevant practical experiences. In one session, they enjoyed practical work with the teacher involving throwing a dice to know how many soft toy animals or little bears to put on or take off the play bus. This was followed by the children independently sticking a given number of paper pictures of little bears onto a colourful paper shape of a

toy double-decker bus, which had a flap to cover over the lower deck. The teacher extended the children's learning well by effective questioning; such as, *'how many bears have you put on the bus?'* She put the flap over the lower deck of the bus and then asked, *'how many are on the top deck?'* The children accurately counted these and said the number.

72. Children experience working with sand and water and fill and empty differently sized containers. They enjoy digging in the sand to find pairs of toy animals, which they match by shape, colour, size and record the pairs of numbers by using a large felt pen to write on an easel.

73. Teachers use every opportunity to extend the children's understanding and reinforcement of basic skills through practical experiences. They ensure that all adults in the Foundation Stage classes use correct mathematical vocabulary and provide many activities, which build upon the children's understanding at that time. Questions are used skilfully to encourage children to organise their thoughts and build on their understanding. The work is well planned, and tasks are appropriate.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. During the Foundation Stage the teachers effectively build on the children's general knowledge, and help them to learn more about the world around them. The teaching and learning are good, and children make good progress to reach higher standards than those found in most schools in the Reception year. Many practical activities are planned and organised well in order that the children can gain in their understanding. In the Nursery and the Reception classes, the children plant seeds in pots and learn what about the needs of plants by tending them. In the Nursery, children are caring for garden snails and two large African snails, which is enabling them to know more about these animals. The children enjoyed holding and learning about the life cycle and habitat of stick insects. One child took his stick insects proudly into the Nursery, and clearly explained what the stick insects require in order to live and about their natural habitat. Reception children explore the school's woodland area to try to find hidden soft toy animals. In one lesson, they had difficulty finding 'rabbits' or 'hedgehogs' hidden close to brown bark, which helped them make rapid progress in their understanding of how animals' natural colouring enables them to be camouflaged within their natural habitat. A good range of construction toys and materials are provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. They work together well using boxes and tape to make a home for a snake. Children use the computer mouse confidently to play matching games or to draw animals. They achieve well as they look at a large globe or atlas to discuss the different environments and which animals may be found there. They listen carefully to stories in the Bible. In the Reception classes, one of the children brought in a Qur'an and his prayer mat and spoke about the Muslim celebration of Eid.

75. Teachers provide a wide range of planned activities, most of which start with what the children already know, and this enables them to extend their understanding and knowledge of the world. There are good ranges of role-play resources to help reinforce their learning about the lives of different people.

### **Physical development**

76. The children are achieving above average attainment in their physical control. They enjoy their physical development lessons and confidently and safely climb and balance on the good quality apparatus. There is a very good range of equipment for the outdoors area, which enhances their physical development, mobility and awareness of space.

77. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide children with many opportunities to develop their hand control through the use of a wide range of mark-making tools, and cutting and gluing

activities. Most children have good pencil control and most form their letters correctly. They enjoy using construction kits. Most independently dress and undress themselves, but some need help with buttons and zips. Teachers give clear instructions during physical education lessons, and make a point of allowing children to demonstrate good examples of their work.

### **Creative development**

78. In this area, the quality of teaching and learning is good, and activities are well organised. The children make good progress in developing their creative skills, and nearly all exceed the nationally recommended levels of attainment in the Reception year. They enjoy a good range of practical activities, which enable them to experiment and to explore creatively and imaginatively. Teachers plan role-play activities carefully, and enable the children to play out imaginary situations well. They enjoy using appropriate resources and dressing up in the good range of clothes, which extends their imaginative play well. In the Nursery, children play imaginatively in the 'Creepy Crawly Castle' pretending to be Mummy Bear and Sister Bear. Most of the children's own paintings are mature for their age. They use clay well to make recognisable shapes of animals. The children enjoy their music lessons, and those in the Nursery and the Reception classes sing tunefully. They all enjoy creating their own compositions playing percussion musical instruments. In the Reception classes, children keep a steady beat when clapping and singing. They quietly and rhythmically move their hands imitating tiger's paws when singing *Tiger, Tiger*, and end with an explosive crescendo, creating a great sense of the tiger hunting its prey. The tuneful singing of *I hear thunder* as a two part round by all the Reception children together in the hall, showed that their singing is of an exceptionally high standard.

### **ENGLISH**

79. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is well above average in speaking, listening and reading, and above average in writing. In writing, although most pupils attain the national standard, few attain higher levels. Standards in reading have improved since the last inspection because of the school's enthusiastic approach to the National Literacy Strategy. Standards in writing are much the same, but the school has the improvement of writing as a main focus for development. The standard of boys' writing has lagged behind that of girls in recent years, but teachers have focused on providing more tasks to interest boys, and the difference is now less marked, especially in the Year 1 classes.

80. In last year's national tests, the school achieved well above average results in reading and writing compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average in both reading and writing. For pupils achieving the higher Level 3, the school's performance in reading was well above the national average. In writing, it was close to the national average.

81. Overall, pupils make good progress to achieve these standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive well-planned and effective support in classes and their progress is reviewed regularly. The 'literacy intervention programme' carried out by teaching assistants, is a key feature in promoting the development of pupils at risk of falling behind. Parents are effectively involved in the support of pupils with special educational needs when, following the headteacher's assessment of all pupils in Year 1, up to ten take part in the 'Forward Together' programme. This involves the school and home collaborating to work on pupils' specific difficulties, and does much to raise standards. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by the teachers' careful planning. They are fully included in lessons and make good progress as a result.

82. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average, and are a strong feature of pupils' attainment. Pupils enter the Reception classes with average levels of competence in spoken language, but make good progress as a result of teaching which is specifically planned to improve this aspect of their learning. The school intends to raise further the profile of speaking and listening during the literacy hour. In the best lessons, this already happens, and ensures that pupils develop their skills well. For example, 'yes, no' cards are well used by pupils when they read the teacher's 'silly' cards. Phrases such as, *Can a seal see the sea?* effectively reinforce pupils' understanding of the 'ee' and 'ea' spellings. During one of these five-minute sessions, there was a buzz of activity in the class, such as the enthusiasm and keenness of the pupils to participate.

83. In a Year 1 class, pupils listened with rapt attention as the teacher completed her own 'middle part' of her story written in the style of Maurice Sendak's 'Where the wild things are'. The teacher made clear links between 'real' and 'fantasy' worlds. Pupils contributed many good suggestions about punctuation, spellings and joining words. All knew where the full stops should go, and almost all pupils showed they could spell 'sea' accurately. In most classes, pupils listen very attentively to their teachers and to each other's contributions. Higher attaining pupils express their ideas and opinions confidently and fluently, often developing very good detail and depth of their answers. In a Year 2 class, when discussing how to set the scene for story writing, pupils suggested words such as, *'magnificent, gloomy, cold, dusty, knight, dungeons'* to create a castle setting. When listening to an explanation of the word 'jetty', one pupil related this very well to his own experiences by adding, *'there's a harbour in Spain where boats are tied up by the jetty.'* Teachers provide good role models when talking to pupils and other adults, and when reading aloud. The combination of music and words to create atmosphere during a reading of a story in a Year 1 class enchanted pupils, who entered fully into the atmosphere of the moment. This approach enhanced pupils' spiritual development well. Teaching assistants, who provide supportive questions during group work to develop their spoken language, provide valuable support to pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs to ensure they are included fully into all activities.

84. In Year 2 standards in reading are well above average. Teaching provides a thorough grounding in phonics, and pupils quickly learn how to work out the sounds of new words. Carefully planned lessons, particularly those that provide specific plans for teaching assistants and other helping adults, ensure that pupils learn basic reading skills well. During the literacy hour, pupils enjoy reading the shared text, and most do so confidently and clearly. The best teaching helped the majority of them to read expressively and vary their voices appropriately to match the character or mood of the story. Pupils show a very good understanding that words in italics, bold type or capital letters should be read with a particular emphasis. Most pupils choose their own books from within a 'colour coded' level of difficulty. They are taught a range of techniques for selecting appropriately, although many teachers select pupils' reading scheme books.

85. With non-fiction texts, good teaching ensures that older pupils understand the purpose of the contents page, chapter headings, index and glossary. Many pupils speak enthusiastically about their ability to find the meanings of words, although not all are secure about using a dictionary. Most pupils read aloud confidently. They relate illustrations to the text, predict what is likely to happen next in the story, and discuss and express opinions about what they have read. Classes have a weekly lesson in the library when they select books to take back to their classes. The library is positioned centrally in the school; it is inviting, and well organised. A range of good quality hardback books is extended each term, with generous funds from the Parents' Association. The library reflects well our multi-cultural world, and gives pupils good opportunities to learn about the lives of people such as, Nelson Mandela.

86. Teachers work hard to develop pupils' basic skills of writing, but provide too few opportunities for extended writing. This means that pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, and too

few potentially higher attaining pupils write to a sufficiently high standard. The school has begun to think carefully about ways to improve these opportunities, and whilst there are very good exemplars within the school, the practice is not consistent enough to have a real impact on standards.

87. Opportunities are provided for pupils to write for a range of purposes, although in religious education teachers ask too little of the amount and quality of written work. Some good examples were seen, however, such as when Year 2 pupils wrote independently to the headteacher, describing the items needed to raise money for the summer fete, and others used word processing computer programs to develop their punctuation and composing skills. Some of the best writing is in history, and one pupil wrote about the Great Fire of London: *'We dug a big hole to put our precious things in. In the street there was uproar'*.

88. Handwriting is effectively taught, although many pupils in Year 2 have yet to develop a good cursive hand. Many pupils are beginning to write with a consistent and joined style by the time they reach Year 2. At the time of the last inspection, it was found that the skills pupils used in handwriting sessions were not readily applied to all their written work. This remains the case. The co-ordinator is introducing a new approach to the teaching of handwriting, and this will be reviewed at the end of term.

89. The quality of teaching and learning observed was good overall, with some examples of very good and excellent teaching in Year 1. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom. These relationships create a positive atmosphere for learning and give pupils confidence to develop their skills and their understanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is evident in their confident management of the literacy hour and in their clear and interesting presentations interest and motivate pupils. Teaching assistants are well prepared and, in the best lessons seen, were active in working with the teacher and managing the pupils. Most lessons have a brisk, purposeful pace because they are well planned and pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn. Teachers use homework well to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.

90. The experienced and well-organised co-ordinator manages the subject very well. Although new to the school, she has undertaken an extensive review and evaluation of literacy teaching, and has put in place activities to raise standards further, including a useful audit and improvement of the library. The subject has a high priority within the school's improvement plan. Planning is good and is regularly monitored by senior staff, and assessment is effective and well used. Teachers use regular, detailed assessment of pupils' progress to plan the next steps in learning, and this is supplemented by marking which both compliments the pupils on their success, and gives clear direction for improvement. Teachers have a good knowledge of National Curriculum attainment levels that gives them a clear understanding of how well the pupils are achieving. The supply of learning resources is good. There is a good selection of book resources available in the classrooms, including a wide range of poetry books and play scripts. The selection of books for the fluent reader is more limited.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. In Year 2, standards in basic numeracy and in other areas of mathematics are well above average. This is an improvement on the above average standards of the previous inspection, and shows that the school has maintained the high standards of the 2001 national tests. Over the past three years, boys have outperformed girls, particularly at the higher levels in the national tests. This remains the case, but the differences are now less marked. The school has set effective strategies in place to address this issue, for example, by ensuring that girls have access to more practical apparatus, and this has raised standards overall. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who



are particularly talented, are making good progress. The pupils have positive attitudes towards work, and all are keen to do their best.

92. Year 2 pupils have a very good understanding of number patterns, including odd and even numbers, and they continue the patterns with good skill. They use quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten, and many can do this to 20 and beyond. Pupils apply these skills very well when solving mathematical problems. They use a wide variety of strategies for doing this, such as using doubles, 'near doubles' and by breaking numbers into manageable amounts. Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to round numbers to the nearest ten. Nearly all pupils have a very good understanding of simple fractions of whole numbers, and many are confident with more difficult fractions. They use the correct units of measurement when investigating the lengths, weights and capacities of different objects. Pupils tell simple times confidently on analogue and digital watches. They have a very good recognition of common two and three-dimensional shapes, and talk in an informed way about their properties. The pupils are very good at recording data graphically, for example, by using tally charts of the countries visited by pupils on holiday. They use their information and communication technology skills very effectively in producing accurate bar graphs of their favourite foods.

93. The pupils use their mathematical skills effectively in other subjects. As part of their work in geography, Year 1 pupils contribute to a class bar chart of recycled items at home. In science, pupils in Year 2 combine their skills in science, mathematics and information and communication technology very well to produce accurate bar graphs of food items in their kitchens and refrigerators.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The teachers use a variety of very effective strategies at the start of lessons to develop pupils' ability to make quick mental recall of number facts. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used a variety of flashcards very effectively, and this consolidated the pupils' understanding of mathematical symbols, and of how to subtract two-digit numbers using multiples of ten. She used a dice game very effectively to help learning further. The teacher emphasised correct mathematical vocabulary, such as 'take away, minus, subtract, less than', and this helped the pupils to apply their number skills in solving simple word problems. In another Year 2 lesson, the teacher used questioning very well in order to make the pupils think carefully, asking, '*Why is 32 not in the 5 sequence?*' and this helped them to learn the multiples of two, five and ten. In a lesson for Year 1 pupils, the teacher asked the pupils to explain their mental strategies, and this ensured that they gained a good understanding of adding ten and subtracting one when adding nine to various numbers. In another Year 1 lesson, the teacher used large flash cards very effectively in helping the pupils to count on and back in ones and tens and transferring this ability to work with money.

95. The teachers organise group work very well, matching tasks to the pupils' varying needs and providing a good challenge for higher attaining groups. They ensure that all the pupils are fully included in learning, and deploy classroom assistants and other adult helpers very effectively. They ensure that the pupils use their number skills well to solve real life problems, and this enhances their learning. This was the case in a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher asked the pupils to use their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes to plan the seating arrangements in a café. The teachers monitor progress very carefully and, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used some pupils' mistakes as effective teaching points. The teachers make the pupils check their answers by asking questions such as, '*are you sure?*' and this does much to help pupils to get the right answers. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher, helped by the teaching assistant and some parents, organised a very effective 'bring and buy' sale. Pupils used purses and real money to buy items from the 'shops' and this gave them a good understanding of how to use coins in everyday life and calculate change. The teachers

use summing up sessions very effectively to consolidate learning and to see where difficulties have arisen, asking questions such as, *'what have we learned today?'*

96. The teachers mark the pupils' written work regularly and positively, often making useful comments to help pupils improve such as, *I think you need to have another look at some of the numbers with three digits*. The teachers set regular homework tasks to extend or consolidate learning.

97. There is a clear subject policy document, and planning is soundly based on the National Numeracy Strategy, adapted by the Local Education Authority. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She has developed very good procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' progress, and the teachers assess pupils' attainment in mental and written mathematics every half term. The teachers use the information gained from assessments very well to plan the next steps in learning. They evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons very well, writing for example, *'some pupils are more comfortable with just one way of solving a sum, and they use this in most situations, regardless of suitability'*. This is very good practice, and explains why the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. There is a comprehensive whole school collection of pupils' work samples at agreed National Curriculum levels, and this is useful in ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the teachers' assessments. The co-ordinator monitors teaching effectively in order to ensure that practice meets planning, and to share example of the best teaching with all staff. There are good resources to support teaching and learning. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development, in allowing them to use their number skills in real life situations and in encouraging collaborative work whenever necessary.

## SCIENCE

98. Analysis of the teachers' assessments for seven year olds in 2001 shows that standards were well above the national average in science. This inspection shows that the school has maintained these high standards.

99. Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to conduct experiments, and this has helped raise standards since the previous inspection. Pupils' work on investigating how boats can be propelled by elastic bands is of a high quality in the way they predict the results, test their theories and record the findings. Pupils have a very good understanding of friction, and make very good investigations into how different materials affect the weight needed to drag a piece of wood across a surface. They have a very well developed idea of fair testing, as was shown when one pupil explained that, to test how strong materials were, the same person had to rub the cloth against a rough surface because, *'..some people rub harder than others'*. Pupils name the parts of a plant accurately, and, because teachers let them explore plants around the excellent school grounds, understand that they come in different shapes and sizes. They have a good knowledge of the main parts of the human body, and the effect that healthy and unhealthy foods have on our well-being. Pupils have a very good understanding of how materials can change, and their experiments on dissolving different substances show a well above average understanding of how salt, sand and sugar behave when immersed in water.

100. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and enables all groups of pupils to make good progress. Teachers' planning is thorough, and provides a good range of activities for higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. This is why nearly all pupils attain at least national standards by Year 2, and over one third attain higher levels. The school takes this further by identifying gifted young scientists and setting them challenges to complete at home. This is excellent practice, and these pupils produce some exceptional experimental work. Throughout the school, teachers have a good scientific knowledge, and this ensures that pupils learn basic scientific skills systematically from Year 1. Teachers are particularly good at explaining the meaning of scientific terms, and this give pupils a very good technical vocabulary. Teachers set the scene for the lesson

effectively by informing pupils of what they should have learned by the end, and this works very well. It enables pupils to focus on the task, and makes it easy to make accurate assessments of their progress towards these goals. Teachers make lessons interesting so that pupils enjoy learning, and concentrate very well. They make good use of computers to enhance pupils' learning, as was seen when a Year 2 teacher asked pupils to do various exercises, record the results on a computer database and produce a graph to illustrate their findings.

101. The subject is managed to a high standard by a very knowledgeable co-ordinator. She has raised standards of teaching and learning by regular, well focused monitoring of lessons and rigorous analysis of pupils' work. This is further enhanced by talking to pupils to assess their knowledge at first hand, and this provides a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. Assessment procedures are very good, and provide accurate information about pupils' attainment and progress. Learning resources for science are very good, and teachers make very good use of the school grounds, pond and woodland to study animals and their habitats. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development, for example, through the way pupils care for the animals they study.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

102. Pupils' work in art and design, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is above average. This is a good improvement to the standards reported in the school's previous inspection, because teachers now focus more on developing pupils' artistic skills.

103. The quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good progress. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of art and design, and this ensures that pupils learn the basic skills of drawing, designing and painting well. Pupils develop their observational drawing skills well, and many produce good quality sketches with suitable attention to line and detail. Teachers' high expectations mean that pupils move on quickly from basic art techniques, and refine their skills well as they progress through the school. They show increasing confidence in using various media and techniques. Teachers provide stimulating materials, which pupils enjoy experimenting with. This was observed in a good Year 2 lesson where pupils closely observed a wide range of coloured glass bottles, some of which were displayed well on a light box. Pupils used a range of good quality art materials, including pastels, paints and collage materials, to create a three-dimensional effect of the varying sizes and shapes of the bottles. Pupils have a good understanding of the styles of various artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Ansel Adams and Andy Goldsworthy, which helps to improve their own work.

104. A very good Year 2 lesson on 'floor patterns' illustrates some of the strengths of the teaching and learning in the school. This was the third lesson in a series of three, and during a recapitulate previous work on the abstract patterns on the soles of shoes, pupils spoke about 'side', 'perspective' and 'abstract art' in a very knowledgeable manner. They responded well to the teacher's high expectations of them. Her clear explanations helped pupils to appreciate why the quality of their artwork on the patterns on the soles of a variety of shoes was good. Their positive attitude makes them receptive to these new learning experiences. Previously, pupils had sketched floor patterns found around the school, and, in this lesson, used these sketches well to recreate their own abstract art floor patterns. They chose which patterns to draw and created novel designs. The teacher's innovative approach, very good subject knowledge and lively teaching engaged pupils' interest at all times. This enabled them to extend their learning well and achieve a high level of attainment in their artwork.

105. The co-ordinator for art is new to the role. She is enthusiastic and has a fresh approach to the subject. She has produced a good draft policy for the subject. The good scheme of work ensures the

progression of skills across the school. The co-ordinator gives informal advice to colleagues and monitors displays. Teachers create good relevant links with other subjects, for example, the colourful mosaic patterns inspired by the patterns that decorate the Arabic writing in the Qur'an, and Aboriginal style paintings using 'Dreamtime' figures and patterns. Resources are good. Pupils use information and communication technology appropriately to extend their art skills. Teachers use assessment effectively to plan artwork to extend the skills of every pupil, including gifted and talented pupils. Throughout the school, colourful displays enliven classrooms and communal areas. Visits to the National Gallery and visiting artists inspire pupils and enhance their learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. No teaching of design and technology was observed in Year 2 during the inspection because of time-tabling arrangements. However, with evidence drawn from actual examples and displays of work, discussions with staff and pupils, and a lesson seen in Year 1, the standard of achievement is judged to be above average. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be average. There is good evidence of work both in food technology and in using materials. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make good progress.

107. Pupils develop, plan and communicate ideas well, and work confidently with tools to make good quality products. In Year 1, for example, they planned the construction of a 'shoebox room'. They drew the materials they would need carefully, and wrote clear instructions for assembling them by completing a worksheet. Their evaluations of this work show that pupils found putting up the wallpaper to be the most difficult task. This work linked very well with their science work on materials. When making a box, pupils used their literacy skills well when describing the feelings of the box. One pupil wrote, *'My box has a heart of a blazing fire, and a lovely gold necklace'*. In one lesson, pupils were challenged to design and make a toy to cheer up a baby. After discussion, pupils make an exciting pop-up toy, showing good skills of cutting and sticking and building well on their previous experiences.

108. In Year 2, pupils achieve well when progressing to more challenging tasks, for example, making a fairground carousel from a range of materials, and including a spinning mechanism. The completed models demonstrated that they had used tools such as scissors very well to cut, shape and secure cardboard. Pupils are encouraged to relate their work in school to the world outside, and these experiences enhance pupils' cultural development well. When making puppets, pupils showed good sewing skills. Many puppets showed a good level of creativity, and the teacher extended the task well by requiring pupils to use them as characters in their own plays.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan in detail, and this ensures that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Elements of the good teaching include the way teachers use challenging questions to help pupils think carefully about their designs, and teachers' good subject knowledge.

110. The new subject co-ordinator gives very good support to staff, and has done much already to raise the subject's profile in the school. This has helped to raise standards since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are good, and help direct pupils on to the next stages in their learning. There is a good supply of learning resources, and the school has built up a wide range of materials for work in textiles, a shortcoming in the school's last inspection. The curriculum is enhanced by the 'focus' days held each term. A Bridge Day in the autumn term, the Fairground Day in the spring, and a Puppet Day in the summer. These enriching opportunities enable pupils to spend

time designing and making interesting models, and help to raise the standards of attainment in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

111. In Year 2, standards are above average. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were average. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. Presentation of work is generally very good. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The pupils have a good understanding of a map or plan as a view from above. They talk knowledgeably about features on local maps and on aerial photographs. On a walk around the neighbourhood, pupils make perceptive observations of different types of buildings, and have a good awareness of what they are used for. They achieve well as they locate pictures of some of these buildings on a local street map. In work based on the stories of Katie Morag, the pupils make good comparisons of life in Reigate with that on a Scottish island. They are able to draw their own interesting island maps, complete with symbols, a key and a compass rose.

112. The pupils have a good understanding of different climates throughout the world and of how they affect human life. They use their literacy skills very well to produce good booklets about hot and cold places, complete with contents and glossary. In work linked to the travels of the class bear to different parts of the world, the pupils know much about the basic geography of Scandinavia, the Alps and the United States. In work linked to the travels of famous explorers in history, the pupils are able to use atlases well to locate some of the regions in which these people travelled.

113. The pupils have a very good understanding of the way in which litter can pollute the environment. They know about the need for conservation and for the recycling of items such as paper and glass. Pupils use their skills in literacy and art well to produce good booklets about pollution, and create effective collage work to illustrate posters urging people to show concern for the environment. They take a questionnaire home to investigate recycling there, and they follow this up well by using their mathematical and information and communication technology skills very effectively to produce good booklets and bar charts to record their findings.

114. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the inspection, but an analysis of pupils' work and of teachers' planning indicates clearly that the quality of teaching and learning is good, and of a higher standard than was reported in the previous inspection. The teachers maintain a good balance between giving the pupils information and giving them the opportunity to find some things out for themselves. There is a good emphasis on developing the pupils' early mapping skills and this addresses an issue raised in the previous inspection report. The teachers frequently make useful links with other subjects, including information and communication technology; for example, pupils in Year 1 produced effective computer-generated town plans, and older pupils have emailed pupils in an Italian school. They use a floor robot skilfully to develop their use of correct directional language. The teachers focus appropriately on developing the pupils' ability to look carefully at features of the local environment, and to develop their speaking and listening skills as they discuss them.

115. Very good planning is based on national guidelines, and has been adapted well to meet the needs of the school. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She monitors teaching, in order to ensure that practice meets planning and to share good practice and offers colleagues help and advice as necessary. There are good resources to support teaching and learning and the coordinator intends to add to them. She has encouraged colleagues to use the school grounds as a valuable learning resource. There are very good procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' progress. The teachers record National Curriculum levels of attainment in individual pupil record books. They use information from assessment very well to plan the next steps in learning. This is a good improvement

from the previous inspection. The subject makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' personal development, in making them aware of their responsibilities in preserving the environment and in encouraging collaborative work when necessary.

## HISTORY

116. In Year 2, standards are above average, which is an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were average. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are particularly talented, are making good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. Boys and girls attain equally well. The pupils really enjoy their history lessons and are keen to learn and to do their best. They are eager to bring in items from home.

117. In Year 2, pupils have a thorough knowledge of the lives of many famous people of the past, such as Alexander Graham Bell, Grace Darling, Marco Polo and Captain Cook. They talk with good understanding about famous events in British history, such as the Gunpowder Plot and the Great Fire of London. They use their literacy skills very well to write accounts of the Great Fire in the form of imaginative diary extracts written by a soldier, maid, child or by Samuel Pepys himself. They write very effective acrostic poems about this event. The pupils compare holidays now and in the past with good skills, and they learn much from asking their parents or grandparents to fill in a questionnaire about their experiences in the past. They use their mathematical skills well to produce accurate bar charts of the means of transport by which people go on holiday nowadays. Pupils have a good understanding of how houses, schools, toys, harvest and transport have changed over time.

118. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and this improvement compared with the previous inspection explains why standards are higher. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher asked the pupils to close their eyes and to imagine Florence Nightingale as a young girl. This worked very well, and did much to set the scene for the pupils. One had been sufficiently motivated to find some information at home, saying proudly, *'My daddy says that one of the soldiers was called Lord Raglan'*. The teacher read a story about the Crimean War very expressively, and this helped the pupils to acquire a real feel for the life of that period. Her good questioning and enthusiastic response to pupils' answers encouraged one to ask, *'Did all men have to be in the war?'* The teacher made effective links with literacy by asking the pupils to write a letter home from Crimea in the form of a nurse or soldier. She explored the gender issue of male and female nurses and of soldiers very well, and this gave the pupils a very good idea of how things are different today. The teacher made very good use of role-play to enhance learning. Some pupils dressed up as soldiers or nurses and others asked them questions. This proved very effective, with the pupils asking some perceptive questions such as, *'How did you feel when you saw all the men lying on the hospital floor?'* This enabled the pupils to express feelings with: *'I was very sad when I could not help dying soldiers'* and *'I was very frightened when I went to war'*. In another lesson on the same topic, the teacher made effective links with geography and science, and this helped the pupils to use maps to see where wars had been fought, and to understand the dangers of germs. The pupils have a clear understanding of how modern hospitals are very different from those in Florence Nightingale's time.

119. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher ensured that they became familiar with relevant vocabulary, such as 'compare, contrast, plastic, metal and this enabled them to look at toy cars from different ages carefully, and to give good historical reasons why some were old and others new. The teacher matched group tasks well to the differing needs of four ability groups, and this allowed all the pupils to make good progress. The teachers ensure that all pupils are included in learning. They make good use of information and communication technology to enhance learning, as was illustrated well when they made 'virtual visits' on the Internet to find out what life was like for Nelson and his crew

on HMS Victory. The teachers ensure that there are opportunities for the pupils to find out information for themselves, and this is a good improvement from the previous inspection.

120. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Planning is soundly based on national guidelines, adapted well to meet the school's needs and resources. The co-ordinator monitors teaching well with a view to sharing good practice, and this has led to useful discussions on the importance of role play in history teaching. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress, and teachers record this data systematically in pupils' record books. The teachers use information gained from these assessments very well to plan the next steps in learning, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. There are good resources to support teaching and learning, and parents are very willing to send useful materials from home. The teachers have enhanced pupils' learning well by setting up a Year 1 toy museum, and by organising worthwhile visits to the junior school's history museum. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. In Year 2, standards in information and communication technology are above those found nationally, and all groups of pupils achieve well. This judgement shows a good improvement on the average standards reported in the school's previous inspection, and illustrates how standards have risen alongside the school's vigorous programme of staff training and update of computer resources. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and welcome the success that using word processing programs gives them when writing stories. Talented pupils do very well, because teachers set them demanding challenges. This is illustrated well by the project that had a small group designing their own web site.

122. Year 2 pupils use computers with confidence to organise, reorganise and edit text to ensure their writing is clear, well presented and free of errors. They type in text confidently, and use computers very naturally because of the regular practice that teachers give them. They use the spacebar appropriately to create spaces, the shift key to create capitals and the backspace key to make corrections. They have a very good awareness of how the Internet is useful to send and receive messages, and use the system very well to send messages to pupils in other countries. A significant move by the school to raise standards was to give pupils in Year 2 access to laptop computers. This has worked very well, both in terms of their work in lessons where they, for example, insert punctuation in text prepared by the teacher, or at home where they create graphs of the contents of the refrigerator. Pupils operate robot devices well, and compile a good list of instructions to direct a symbol on the computer screen.

123. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers introduce pupils to the required concepts and skills in a systematic way, and their explanations are clear and well-informed. As a result, pupils develop a good range of basic skills, and work purposefully at a rapid pace. Teachers use information and communication technology very well to extend pupils' learning in other curriculum areas, and this helps them understand how computers are useful in all aspects of their work. Particular strengths are evident in geography, where pupils learn about different directions in which to send their robot, and in science, as they use a computer attached to a microscope to investigate the structure of different materials.

124. Teachers show secure knowledge of the subject in their explanations and instructions, and this gives pupils confidence to ask questions and extend their learning further. Teachers have had the benefit of some very good recent training, and the co-ordinator has supplemented this with specific work on the school's own software.

125. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well, and all staff speak highly of how she has raised their confidence and improved their skills. The co-ordinator has introduced a good scheme of work, based on national guidelines, which addresses all the required elements of the curriculum. She monitors pupils' standards very well, and gives teachers good guidance following well-structured classroom observations. The school has developed a very good reputation for its information and communication technology work in the county, and provides training for other teachers. Not to be outdone, pupils demonstrated their web-designing skills at a national exhibition, and their presentation, in front of a large audience of adults was very well received. Assessment procedures are good, and give teachers a clear idea of pupils' attainment and progress.

## MUSIC

126. Pupils in Year 2 attain well above average standards for their age. Their singing is of an exceptionally high standard, including the singing of songs in two parts and as a round. They respond very well to differences in character and mood when listening to music. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well, and benefit from very good support in lessons. Pupils enjoy being members of the large school choir. They recently competed in the Leith Hill Music Festival and were highly commended by the adjudicator. The choir entered the Reigate and Redhill Music Festival and was awarded a merit. A small number of gifted and talented pupils can read musical notation sufficiently to play a musical instrument very well for their age.

127. During the inspection, the school's small ensemble of gifted and talented pupils from Years 1 and 2 took part in the group music-making competition for children under the age of eleven years in the Reigate and Redhill Music Festival. They arranged their own composition of an Afrikaans song 'When Hetty has a green dress on'. They accompanied their singing by playing a range of musical instruments, including a cello, violin, piano, xylophone, recorders and percussion instruments, and responded very well to the conductor. Although they were competing against older children, these gifted and talented pupils won the competition.

128. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. These findings are an improvement on the last inspection when the quality of teaching was good, and explain why standards have risen. Particularly rapid progress was seen in a Year 2 class when the teacher shared her aims for the pupils' learning with them and used excellent resources very productively to teach musical points. With this very good lead, pupils' own performance noticeably improved during the lesson. Many pupils volunteered to sing solos. They sang *Yellow Bird* tunefully, which most of them knew was from the Caribbean. Pupils listened attentively to a piece of Calypso music and voiced their ideas about it. They were able to clap while dancing rhythmically to the music. The teacher introduced a mini steel pan and, after some discussion, pupils were able to suggest that the largest steel drums would produce a deeper sound than the smaller drums. They clapped food names, such as 'carrots' and 'peas', showing good understanding of duration, dynamics and tempo. A few pupils know the correct musical notation of crochets and quavers. Pupils sang 'Frere Jacques' in two parts in French and English to a high standard, and they thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. Lively teaching captured the pupils' imagination and their learning was extended very well during the lesson.

129. The quality of learning is often enhanced because pupils are very well behaved, and are interested in their music lessons. They are enthusiastic and are eager to be chosen to take on responsibility. Younger ones particularly enjoy singing and joining in with class activities. Older ones show that they can use their initiative when working in groups. They take turns, help each other and listen attentively to their teachers. They applaud the skills of others and recognise the efforts made by those who are not so musical. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate what they see and hear, which helps to develop their speaking skills and enriches their musical vocabularies. This is particularly helpful



to pupils who have special educational needs, who are delighted with their success in this subject. All pupils are willing to accept the authority of a conductor whether it is the teacher or a fellow member of the class

130. The co-ordinator is a music specialist and provides very good support for staff. She became the co-ordinator for music last September, and teaches music to all Year 1 and 2 pupils. She also teaches pupils to play the recorder in the lunchtime recorder club. The music policy and the good scheme of work have recently been updated. The expertise of the staff is good as many are competent musicians. Regular assessments are linked to the National Curriculum targets for music. A parent leads the school choir, which performs in school concerts and takes part in local music festivals. The school held a very successful musical evening in February, when pupils sang and played musical instruments. Performing before an audience helps pupils to gain in confidence and enhances their learning. Music plays a very important part in the life of the school and in the celebration of various cultures and festivals. The high calibre music making in the school significantly enriches pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. Pupils' attainment in physical education is above average, and shows a good improvement on the average standards reported in the previous inspection. In gymnastics, they work energetically and safely, with a good idea of space. They show good skills when devising different ways to travel around the room, create small and large shapes with their bodies and make good progress as they link complex moves to form a fluid sequence. Pupils have a good awareness of the effects of exercise on the body, and talk knowledgeably about the increase in rate of their heartbeat. They make careful observations of the work of others, and improve their own performance as a result. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection, and explains why standards are higher. Pupils' dance skills are above average overall, but the progress of boys is sometimes hampered by their embarrassment at having to dance around the hall, especially when required to hold a girl's hand. Pupils' games skills are average. They run reasonably well, with sound control, and improve their technique with practice. Their ball skills are reasonable, but few catch small and large balls confidently.

132. Pupils are making good progress in developing their skills in physical education. They are keen to improve their work, and generally accept criticism well to achieve better standards. Pupils practise throwing and catching to develop their skills, and many show significant improvement in the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in physical education. They benefit from very good support in lessons, and enjoy the success that this element of the school's provision gives them.

133. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and is enhanced by the involvement of a qualified coach. Teachers plan lessons well, and use initial warm up sessions effectively. All the teachers dress appropriately for physical education. They demonstrate techniques clearly in order to improve the quality of pupils' performance, and they use pupils to demonstrate good practice. This ensures that pupils develop appropriate skills, and are able to refine their moves using the expertise of higher attaining pupils. The teachers use praise and encouragement well, and this persuades pupils to attempt challenging tasks. In one lesson, for example, pupils were learning how to hit a ball with a cricket bat, and when a few were struggling through poor co-ordination, the instructor's constant praise and urging enabled them to progress sufficiently well to hit the ball well by the end. Teachers sometimes link physical education with other subjects, and this works well. In one very good lesson, Year 1 pupils followed up work in literacy on robots and in science on metals by creating a dance, acting as mechanical figures. By careful use of percussion music, the teacher enabled the pupils to create exciting movements, and all made very good progress.

134. The co-ordinator for physical education has a very good grasp of how to raise standards in the subject, and has made a start at monitoring other teachers' lessons. She has re-written the scheme of work, and this provides a good basis for teachers' planning. The co-ordinator has introduced the wearing of tracksuits for pupils, and this has meant that pupils can do physical education activities outside in winter. The subject has very good resources, with plentiful apparatus and equipment. The hall provides a very good area for gymnastics, and the playing field is large and well maintained. Pupils' skills benefit from an excellent variety of extracurricular sessions, including 'taster' sessions for sailing and cricket and football and rugby training with qualified coaches. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by Indian dancers demonstrating their skills, and by a ballet teacher providing a 'taster' session.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. In Year 2, standards in religious education meet those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is a similar judgement to that of the last report. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have a reasonable knowledge of several world religions, and express their feelings well about happy and sad memories, especially when a certain story reminds them. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

136. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan lessons well, and include a good range of topics covering many different religions. A good feature of teaching is the way teachers make the subject interesting, and involve pupils in their own learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher played classical music as a background for the telling of the story of *The Giving Tree*. Pupils remembered well that at Easter, Jesus gave everything he had for others. Pupils sang *Now Jesus said we must love one another* with great enthusiasm, showing a mature reverence for the words, and a good understanding of Christianity.

137. When discussing the ways that pupils can show love and care for each other, they suggest ideas such as, '*looking after my cats, caring for living animals, helping people not as fortunate as me and looking after my baby*'. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about raising money to help others such as on 'Red Nose Day'. These relevant experiences enhance provision. The ideas about sharing and caring are reinforced well during assembly times. This was illustrated well when pupils heard a story about a 'Rainbow Fish' who didn't want to share his shiny scales, and this helped them understand important issues about friendship and fairness.

138. Teachers also plan well when providing material about world faiths. For example, in Year 2, they have learnt about festivals concerned with light, such as Divali and Advent, and studied the idea of Hanukkah. They have a sound knowledge of the story behind this Jewish festival, about the key figures, and that '*It lasts for eight days. It is a very happy time*'. When studying the Ten Commandments, teachers ensured that the topic had direct relevance to pupils' lives in school and in the wider world, and resulted in each class formulating 'Rules for Living'. Pupils' suggestions such as, 'do not kill people', 'do not drop litter', 'take care of your family', 'speak kindly to your friends', 'do not hurt people' and 'do not steal' demonstrated their depth of understanding about the need for order in the world.

139. Teachers provide interesting stories and activities to maintain pupils' interest in religious education. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. They show positive attitudes towards the subject. At Harvest time, pupils write their own prayers such as, '*Thank you God for all your gifts, for all the things we eat*'. As part of a history topic, pupils wrote very sensitive prayers,

displayed on large poppy heads. There is little written evidence to show the level of work covered, and teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to record their thoughts about what they have learned.

140. The subject is well led, in a temporary capacity by the headteacher. Much thought has been given to the way forward once the locally Agreed Syllabus and schemes of work are published in September. The school is investigating some of the new units of work. Resources are satisfactory, and are being slowly built up to support work in these units. The school make very good use of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' learning. They visit a local church, especially at Harvest time, and make other visits when appropriate to a class topic. The local vicar and United Reform minister visit twice termly to take assemblies.

141. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about the beliefs and practices of some world religions, and they understand about some of the stories and special people connected with them.