

INSPECTION REPORT

HORSELL VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

WOKING, SURREY

LEA area: SURREY

Unique reference number: 125080

Headteacher: PATRICIA DENISON

Reporting inspector: Jane Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 18th – 19th September 2000

Inspection number: 224713

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Hill Horsell Woking Surrey
Postcode:	GU21 4QQ
Telephone number:	01483 714804
Fax number:	01483 769 670
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	T Graham
Date of previous inspection:	23rd September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
R J Schaffer	23698	Registered inspector
J Buncher	12708	Lay inspector
S Matthews	13122	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport

SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	10
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a community school of average size for children aged from four to seven. Ninety one per cent of the children are of white United Kingdom heritage. The remaining nine per cent come from a number of other ethnic groups and most speak English as an additional language. Three per cent of pupils are at an early stage in learning English. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs with one per cent having statements of need.

The majority have needs related to moderate learning difficulties, but a few have emotional and behavioural problems. The school has fewer pupils identified with special educational needs than most primary schools but the percentage of those with significant need is average. Nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school achieves high standards in a great deal of its work. In the reception classes, a carefully structured but stimulating curriculum builds very effectively on what children knew before they started school. Children settle quickly and become happy and confident learners and this continues throughout their time in school. The headteacher sets high standards. Governors, staff and parents work hard as a team to realise the school's aim to develop children who are self-confident and secure in the knowledge of their own achievements. Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science are good and in information technology they are exceptional. Although the school's income is above average, its work represents good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve high standards of work in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of the environment, the planning and the teaching in the youngest classes is very good.
- Pupils in all classes achieve an exceptional standard of knowledge and skill in the use of information technology.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is communicated very well to all staff, and leadership is effective because it is securely based upon an honest evaluation of the school's work by all staff with management responsibilities.
- There is a vibrant curriculum that supports pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
- Music and song are used in an unusual but effective way to increase pupils' listening skills and promote their concentration and confidence.

What could be improved

- Making sure that activities and resources are as well matched as possible to the very wide range of pupils' attainment, and that the time of support staff during whole class teaching sessions is used as efficiently as possible.
- Strategies for including pupils with challenging behaviour in all activities.
- Some aspects of the planning for pupils with special educational needs.
- The identification and assessment of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in September 1996. The quality of teaching has improved, as have the school's results in national tests. Currently pupils' standard of work in English, mathematics and science is higher than at the time of the last inspection. There has been a very marked improvement in the standard of pupils' work in information technology. The headteacher and governors addressed all the matters identified at the last inspection with determination through a clear action plan. The management of resources is now very cost effective. There is a good system for supporting teachers in the early stages of their career. Planning to meet the needs of the most able pupils is done well. There is structure in the reading programme for less able pupils. Assessment procedures are now good. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their cultural awareness, the teachers' skills and confidence in music and design and technology are much improved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	A	A*	A	B

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

In the three years shown above, the school's results improved faster than the national rate and in 1998 the grade for mathematics was in the highest 5 per cent of schools. However, the test results at the end of Year 2000 were not so high. Although many achieved the higher level in reading, writing and mathematics, those of lower and average attainment did not do as well as in previous years. There were a number of reasons for this, one being that there were more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. There was a new team of teachers in Year 2 and some mistakes in planning were made which the school is working hard to put right. Pupils in the current Year 2 classes are achieving a high standard of work, particularly in writing and information technology. Some of the pupils of higher attainment have already achieved the expectations for the end of the year. Some pupils of lower attainment in Year 2 are not achieving as high a standard as they should in using letter sounds. Pupils' achievements are good in Years 1 and 2 and in the reception classes they are very good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in what is happening in their school, for example they discuss questions asked in assembly and point out things which interest them on the corridors. They are generally keen to listen to teachers and start their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils play well together and in most classes behaviour is good, but on a few occasions some pupils become inattentive during whole class teaching time.
Personal development and relationships	The quality of relationships in every class is very good. In response to the opportunities given to them, pupils show initiative and take responsibility exceptionally well.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils like coming to school and unauthorized absences are very few.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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 was satisfactory or better in all lessons. It was very good or better in 34 per cent of lessons. Teachers are knowledgeable about the different ways children learn and they use their knowledge very well to provide good learning experiences. Knowledge of how to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the use of computers is also very good. The quality of teaching in English is very good and in mathematics it is good. Support staff in the reception classes make a significant contribution to children's learning. In Years 1 and 2 support staff are effective when working with small groups but during whole class sessions are not always used to the best advantage. Teachers provide work at different levels of difficulty but because there is such a wide range of attainment, some activities and resources do not meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers build very good relationships with pupils and pupils respond by trying hard to achieve. All pupils, including those with special education needs and those who speak English as an additional language learn at a good rate.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is exciting and very relevant to the needs of all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups. Developing pupils' literacy skills through all subjects is a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Support is well targeted and pupils are supported effectively both in class and on the few occasions they are withdrawn from class. Pupils have individual or group plans which are of good quality but sometimes these are not checked as frequently as they should be against their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school does not have the benefit of specialised advice for teaching bilingual pupils. Work is well planned to support their learning. However, a system of assessment specific to these pupils' needs is not used.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school develops pupils' independence beyond what is usual for children of this age. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to think, question and wonder about the nature of the world and religious issues and a strong sense of community is engendered. Through music, art and literature pupils are introduced to and learn much about the cultures of the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science are very good. The school has devised some excellent systems for raising pupils' self esteem and recording their personal development. Occasionally the management of pupils with inappropriate behaviour is not done well.

The school has a good partnership with parents. They are welcomed into school and many help within classes. There are good opportunities for parents to share in their child's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Committed to the development of children's learning and their well being. The headteacher communicates her expectations to staff very well. Despite many members of the management team being new to the school there is good team work based on honest evaluation of strengths and weaknesses.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The chair of governors leads a relatively inexperienced governing body effectively. He knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well and asks relevant questions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is a comprehensive system for tracking pupils' progress. Pupils' achievements are recorded and checked carefully. School developments are monitored well. The use of computer programs to track the progress of pupils with special education needs would improve efficiency.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes very efficient use of accommodation and resources, but the time of some support staff could be used more efficiently. The school has made a good start to the process of self-evaluation and understands the principles of best value 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"> • Their child enjoys school. • The values and attitudes promoted by the school. • The teaching is good. • Their child is making good progress. • The school is helping their child to become more mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided after school. • The amount of homework set. • The school's involvement with parents. • Some parents of pupils in the Year 2 class who have now left the school said that their child's results in the national tests were not as good as they had hoped.

The inspection team agreed with the positive comments made by parents. Inspectors felt it was inappropriate to expect a range of activities after school for pupils aged under seven. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities which children can take up in the lunch hour, including gardening in the spring and summer and musical and dramatic activities. The outside play area has very good equipment to develop pupils' physical skills and it is used well at playtimes. However, some parents would like to see more competitive games and the school is happy to discuss this in the parents' forum. The amount of homework set is similar to other schools and is adequate. The school has a good number of ways in which parents can be involved. It is exceptional for a school to be open once a week for parents to look around classrooms and this should give parents a good opportunity to become involved in their child's learning. The inspectors agree that the school's results for the Year 2000 were lower than usual and that the attainment of some pupils was not as high as in previous years. However, the school has identified mistakes in planning and is taking steps to put matters right, and current work indicates this has been successful.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils achieve high standards of work in English, mathematics and science.

- 1 In English, mathematics and science at the start of the Autumn term some higher attaining pupils are already at the standard expected for the end of this year and many other pupils, including those of average attainment, are well on the way to that level in some aspects of their work. Some of the pupils in the lowest attainment groups have achieved some of the expectations for pupils at the end of Year 1, whilst just a very small proportion have fallen below this level.
- 2 In the three years prior to the Year 2000 the school achieved results well above the national average in the national tests for seven year olds. The results for this year's tests were not so high. Although many achieved the higher level in reading, writing and mathematics, those of lower and average attainment did not achieve as well as in previous years. Three pupils achieved the level in reading normally expected of eleven year olds. The reasons for lower results at the end of this year were numerous. Firstly, there were more pupils than usual with special educational needs in this cohort. More pupils were in the younger age range and more appeared to need extra time to develop their skills and to become mature. The national tests were set at an earlier date than usual, very shortly after the Easter holiday, and this presented a particularly difficult challenge for younger or less mature pupils. By the end of the summer term many pupils had achieved a much higher standard of work than is reflected in their results in the national tests, indicating that had they taken the tests at a later date results would have been higher. However the dip in results for this year also reflects the fact that there was a new team of teachers in Year 2, and a new member of staff in a key management position. Some mistakes in planning were made and in the methods of teaching. The school is working very hard to put these right and current work indicates that they have been successful.
- 3 The pupils in Year 2 achieve a standard well above expectations in reading. The most able pupils are able to read books which are at an appropriate level for pupils in Years 3 and 4. They read fluently, and with expression, showing good awareness of the way that punctuation alters how we read. Pupils of average attainment read less fluently but can describe in detail the character and plot of the stories that they read. One pupil showed understanding and sympathy for a girl who had been imprisoned and given the impossible task of spinning straw into gold, by explaining that she might be thinking of escaping, although this was not explicit in the text. Many are able to explain how changing one word in a sentence alters the meaning. For example, in a lesson on words used to join two simple sentences to make a more complex one, most pupils were able to say that using the word 'but' meant that a further explanation or reason was going to come in the second part of the sentence, whilst this was not so with the word 'and'. Higher attaining pupils could explain that the use of 'meanwhile' to connect two parts of a sentence meant that the writer was going to tell them about something happening at the same time as an event in the first section of the sentence. Lower attaining pupils recognise a good number of words by sight and read texts appropriate for their level of attainment with good fluency. They are good at explaining meaning and using context and meaning to help them read an unknown word, but they are not as good as they should be at using letter sounds to help them read. Some pupils who speak English as an additional language are at an advanced stage of English acquisition and read at the same standard as their peers, some achieving the highest level. A few are at an early stage of English acquisition. They are given

good support by reading individually or in pairs to support teachers and assistants who are skilful at developing the pupils' understanding of the meaning through questions about the text and pictures. However, these pupils have also not acquired a good understanding of how to use letter sounds to help them read.

- 4 Pupils throughout the school write with enjoyment and enthusiasm and this is because all pupils see themselves as writers. Pupils are encouraged to use writing to communicate their ideas, and they are encouraged to read each other's writing, and to appreciate the work of writers. Pupils' written work is very visible in all classrooms, on the corridors and in public places such as the hall. A good example of small pieces of writing being given great value and prominence was in the hall display to be used as a focus for assemblies, of single sentences asking the question why. Pupils wrote thoughtfully; 'How did the sun meet the sky?' 'Why did God get to be born?' 'Why do people fight?' By the end of Year 2 many pupils write at some length, often filling a full page and sometimes several pages. Punctuation is used well. Higher attaining pupils spell a good range of words accurately and nearly all pupils can make a good approximation to the spelling of common but irregular words. However, some pupils are not as secure in their knowledge of how to blend two letter sounds at the beginning of a word as one would expect at this age and this would contribute to lower results in the national tests for spelling. Nearly all pupils achieve a good formation of letter shapes and the majority is able to join accurately.
- 5 The great strength of the writing produced by pupils of all levels of attainment is in the content of what is written. All pupils show a good understanding of the fact that we write for different purposes, and they use writing tools, pencils, pen or word processor with confidence. For example, a higher attaining pupil in Year 2 writes a 'biography' of H.G. Wells. It has elements of what one would expect in a biography, including a reference to one of his most famous works, "He wrote many stories and one of them caused all that havok" (sic). Pupils in Year 1 and 2 write stories that are imaginative and lively. A spirited retelling of the story of the Sleeping Beauty describes how Princess Rosa met a prince named Philip who took her to a party in the woods with the woodland animals. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write letters, book reviews, descriptions and accounts and all contain aspects specific to the form of writing chosen.
- 6 Current attainment in Year 2 in mathematics is well above the national expectation for pupils at this time of the year. The majority of pupils know most of the addition and subtraction facts to 10. A good number of higher attaining pupils know addition and subtraction facts to 20. Some pupils can use their knowledge of addition and subtraction facts to 10 to help them work out addition and subtraction to 20. A few can use them when working with numbers up to 30. However a very few with lower attainment have difficulty understanding that there are several ways to calculate to a given number. Nearly all pupils make a good attempt at explaining how they have arrived at a calculation and they are aware that it is a good idea to check an answer by using another method or apparatus such as a number square or a number line. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' understanding of the place value of each digit in a number and the majority of pupils are nearly at the level expected for the end of Year 2 in their understanding of place value. Because of the early time of the year, it was not possible to make a judgement during the inspection on pupils' attainment in shape, space, measures and handling data.

- 7 Attainment in science is well above expectations. Pupils record science work from an early age and this is developed as they move through the school, so that by the time they are in Year 2, pupils have a good understanding that recording findings is an important aspect of the scientific process. Knowledge of other processes such as careful observation, collecting data, finding out information from texts and posing questions is also developed well. Pupils' knowledge of living things, the properties of materials and physical processes is above what is generally expected of pupils of their age and their ability to record their findings is much higher than usually seen. For example, pupils' individual, labelled diagrammatic drawings clearly show that they understand that the hot steam from a kettle will cool and condense when it touches the glass of the window. Their drawings and writings record a good understanding of the needs of a range of plant and animal life. Pupils achieve a high standard in science because they are given good opportunities to learn from first hand experiences and careful planning ensures that knowledge and understanding is systematically acquired.

The quality of the environment, the planning and the teaching in the youngest classes is very good.

- 8 There are three reception classes which together form the newly named foundation stage for children aged three to the end of the reception year. Planning clearly reflects the guidance introduced for this September by the government. The school was planning to the six areas of learning, which formed the basis of previous national guidance successfully and had little difficulty in incorporating elements from the new guidance. For example, learning through play, both inside and outside, is planned in many imaginative ways so that children can extend their learning through their own initiatives.
- 9 Teachers and learning assistants work together very well as a team with everyone clear as to their particular roles and responsibilities each day. There is good liaison with playgroups or nursery schools which the children have previously attended. The teachers value parents' contribution and from the very start involve them as much as possible in the new experiences children meet at school. The whiteboards outside each classroom are in constant use but the main reason for good communications is that the teachers and class assistants are always friendly and ready to talk when necessary.
- 10 At this early stage of the year the work of assessing children's knowledge and skills was the main objective for teachers. This was undertaken very skilfully and accurately so that the school has a solid basis for understanding children's needs and planning future work. Parents contribute and are informed of their child's assessment results. Early assessment helps plan for the needs of all pupils, including those of very high attainment, those who have disabilities or special needs and those who come from different ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. However the school does not have any assessment procedures to help identify the specific phase of learning English for children who speak English as an additional language.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 11 Most children joining the reception classes are above average in many aspects of this area of learning. Many are already quietly confident and come to school with a positive disposition to learn. At this early stage of the term, teachers' planning appropriately reflected the importance of this area of the curriculum so that children could settle quickly, and a strong basis for future learning would be achieved.

- 12 Teaching is very good. Teachers are welcoming and gentle but nevertheless have high expectations and although the children have only been in school a short while, planning shows expectations for developing and extending learning further right from the start. Whole class teaching sessions, such as sharing a big book or singing, provide good opportunities for teachers to develop children's respect for themselves and each other, as they listen, concentrate and participate. In one class the children enjoyed a song and actions about a spider. Some knew the song, others were encouraged skilfully by the teacher to join in with whatever they did know. All began to learn to value each other's efforts and to trust the whole group. In these sessions when pupils sit around the teacher in a circle, teachers clearly foster feelings of competence and self-confidence.
- 13 The well planned outside area, and the play areas in the classrooms, which at present represent a doctor's surgery provide children with good opportunities to make decisions and to negotiate with each other in their play. For example, who is to be the doctor and who the receptionist ?
- 14 Both teachers and class assistants show a very good understanding of how to join in play when necessary, or perhaps just to ask a pertinent question. Appropriately teachers spend time showing children how to tidy away and making clear expectations in the use of equipment. Resources, displays and class furniture have all been selected carefully to help children feel at home and valued. There are books, pictures and play equipment which reflect the culture and religion of the children from different ethnic backgrounds and clearly all feel welcomed and happy. Pictures that the children had painted the previous day were already mounted and displayed in the classroom, giving delight to those who could see their work and encouraging others who had not yet tackled that activity to have a try.

Communicating, language and literacy

- 15 When starting in reception, children have above average attainment in communicating. The majority can talk to adults and each other using simple sentences. However, there are a few children who are at an early stage of language learning and have limited talk. Children's work from last year, and teachers' assessments of their reading, show that by the end of the year children have made good progress, building on their early knowledge and many have exceeded the goals for this stage. They were able to write recognisable letters which were correctly formed and many write simple sentences to tell a story. They have a very good knowledge of stories and understanding of story conventions. For example, after hearing the story of the "Three Little Pigs and the Wolf ", children of higher attainment wrote a short letter (using some words they had spelt themselves and some provided by the teacher) pretending to be the wolf writing to the pigs. This was work that would be expected by the end of Year 1.
- 16 Only a small amount of direct teaching was seen during the inspection. However, it is clear that teaching is good and aspects of provision and teachers' planning indicates that it is often very good. Teachers plan well to extend talk through play and structured activities. For example, talking through the different stages of mixing paint for the self-portraits the children were painting. During a big book session, the teacher used the children's interest in the story and pictures well to ask the kind of questions that help children to respond with their own explanation or description. Classrooms have examples of writing, instructions, captions and opportunities for pupils to write independently. For example writing a 'prescription' in the doctor's surgery. Book areas are comfortable and attractive. The music session provided a good opportunity for pupils to begin to learn about and to enjoy the stimulation of rhyme.

**Mathematical Development; Knowledge and Understanding of the World;
Physical Development and Creative development**

- 17 There is a wide spread of attainment in mathematics when children start in reception. Some have learnt to count at home and have developed confidence in naming numbers up to ten. However there are others at a much earlier stage. By the end of the reception year nearly all children have reached the early learning goals for all aspects of mathematics and those of higher attainment have gone well beyond. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about children's knowledge and understanding of the world or their creative and physical development at the end of the foundation stage.
- 18 No direct teaching was seen in these areas during the inspection. Teachers' planning and children's previous work show a good balance of learning opportunities which allow children to develop their knowledge and confidence in all the above areas through play and through structured activities. For example, learning number rhymes and songs and singing from 1 to 20 are planned for each day. Throughout, teachers' planning indicates that there are good opportunities for sorting and counting, adding and taking away, all linked to the activities and interests being developed in other areas of the curriculum. The outside classroom provides lots of opportunities to count both up and down, using stepping stones, ladders and embedded tyres. The topic and science work on 'myself' is planned to provide the opportunity to measure their own height and to talk about comparisons in terms of 'longest', 'tallest and shortest'. The outside play area is used very well to provide pupils with opportunities to develop physical control of their bodies. Children were painting a picture of themselves. They were working one to one with an assistant who talked to them about the size and shape of a body, whilst they looked directly at themselves in a mirror. They start to learn to mix paint for themselves, a process which is taught in a very structured way. At the beginning they concentrate on the colour effects and not the consistency, as they are given liquid paint. Later in the year they progress to mixing powder paint, a process which allows a great deal of discussion and experimentation to take place.

Pupils in all classes achieve an exceptional standard of knowledge and skill in the use of information technology.

- 19 The children in the reception classes use computers with confidence and develop control of the mouse and knowledge of the keyboard well beyond what is generally expected of children of this age. Teachers plan the use of computers as an integrated part of the learning environment and children are given as many opportunities as possible to use them in different ways.
- 20 In Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to make very good progress in information technology. They use computers frequently, so that by the time they are seven all pupils are at a higher standard than is usual for their age and many are able to produce the quality of work expected of pupils aged eleven. Pupils are taught to use correct terminology, for example they can click on an 'icon' and can explain why a 'password' may be needed when working on-line. By the end of Year 1 higher attaining pupils can explain and use word processing operations such as highlighting and can make choices about the type of font and size of texts. By the time they are seven, pupils can use different programs to produce pictures, some of which show a high level of skill in mouse control and in using the different functions to "paint" using a graphics program.

- 21 Pupils have learnt about the way that information is stored on a CD ROM and have had the opportunity of comparing finding information through computers to using books. Some pupils can send messages using e-mail with the support of adults. Parents have become involved and send messages home using e-mail. This level of understanding of how to use information to communicate and to organize ideas is well above what is usually expected of pupils of this age.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is communicated very well to all staff, and leadership is effective because it is securely based on an honest evaluation of the school's work by all staff with management responsibilities.

- 22 The headteacher has led the school for a number of years and was well established at the time of the last inspection. Whilst appreciating the talents and differing qualities of the staff, she nevertheless clearly puts the learning and welfare of the children at the heart of the school. Her aims and high expectations are communicated well to all staff. She has developed a management structure relying on staff working together as year group teams under a team leader and subject managers. This system has been developed well. The headteacher carefully monitors the work of the teams and together with the governors accurately assesses strengths and weaknesses which need to be addressed. There are good systems for checking the rate of pupils' progress throughout the school.
- 23 The school has been successful for a number of years and this has led to an unexpected challenge. Staff have been promoted or moved on to pursue their own interests, and in consequence the school has had to incorporate an increasing number of new teachers into the school community. No member of the senior management team has been on the staff for more than a year and most of the staff have only been at the school less than three years. These circumstances make school management difficult and put pressure on school systems. For example the aims of the school have to be shared and explained several times, policies revisited and new teams established, all of which can detract from developments which had been previously planned. The headteacher is very supportive and encouraging to new staff. There are good systems in place to make sure that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities both in the classroom and as a subject manager. Good relationships are established quickly, enabling teams to share good practice and to be honest in the evaluation and assessment of their own efforts. The team in reception year has been together the longest and is very well established and this is reflected in the good quality of work in that team, despite a new member joining this year. The Year 2 team has had some difficulties because the pupils' results in national tests were not as high as usual at the end of last year. Because of the effective support of the headteacher the team are currently working well to put things right. For example, assessments have identified that some pupils of lower attainment do not reach a sufficiently high level of knowledge about letter sounds in Year 1 to take advantage of the Year 2 work in literacy, and so planning is being modified.

- 24 The headteacher has developed a good and open relationship with the governors and this supports the school well, although many of the governors are new to the role. The chair of governors has had several years experience and supports new governors well. He has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and works effectively with the headteacher to ensure that there is efficient management of the school's resources. The school has made a good start to the process of applying the principles of best value. Each year the parent body receives a questionnaire on school provision that helps the school assess its effectiveness. Parents respond well to these questionnaires and their responses are analysed carefully and considered. There is also an opportunity for parents to contribute to discussions on school developments or proposed changes when the school improvement plan is reviewed. The local authority's recommendations with regard to principles of best value are adhered to well. The school has good resources because there has been careful, well monitored financial planning, with prioritised needs and established practices for judging best value.
- 25 Areas of the accommodation in the interesting, but outdated school building have been systematically improved. Many areas are used efficiently, for example the outside play area has been so well developed it now comprises an effective outdoor classroom with opportunities for developing physical skills and learning in subjects such as mathematics and science. There are areas of the school that provide a quality of accommodation which is not usually found in schools. For example, the good quality bookcases in the very attractive library area provide a background for quiet study which would not be out of place in a college and to which pupils respond very positively. Displays are of very good quality, they value pupils' work and encourage their curiosity. The mezzanine floor was added to classrooms to improve the sound and they were effective. However, sometimes a group of pupils use the upstairs space without an adult continuously present and this is not advisable. The school has appropriate plans to demolish the outside temporary classroom which does not have toilet facilities. Despite the need for this to be done to improve the welfare of pupils, the plans are very much in the future because there is no financial support available from elsewhere.

There is a vibrant curriculum which supports pupils', spiritual, social and cultural development very well.

- 26 Teachers' lesson planning benefits from a well-devised and rich whole school curriculum plan. Separate subjects are taught effectively within a topic approach and this makes them relevant to pupils' interests and level of understanding, including those pupils with special education needs and those from minority ethnic groups. Each subject has a co-ordinator and the school has made a good start in incorporating the requirements of the National Curriculum that was introduced in September 2000. The reception classes' planning reflects the requirements of the Early Learning Goals also introduced in September 2000.

- 27 The national strategies are the starting point for the planning for literacy and numeracy. Teachers plan with pupils' needs and interests in mind and link these to the literacy strategy requirements. For example, at the start of the autumn term the pupils, having just moved into their new classes, are interested in their class name. In Year 2, all classes are named after different kinds of owls. The school invited a worker from the owl sanctuary to speak to the pupils about owls and their habitats. Classroom displays, factual books and photographs developed interests further. Pupils made owl drawings and large eye-catching pictures in pastel. The teachers chose, as a text for study in the literacy hour, a story about a young owl who was afraid of the dark and the activities planned for individual work were nearly all based on the text. This kind of approach makes the teaching of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary much more relevant than when a text unrelated to other learning is chosen. Writing and reading are developed very well across the curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities to write and are encouraged to write in all subjects from the youngest classes and this is a strength of school planning. However, there are fewer occasions when teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use numeracy in other subjects. The school has plans to address this through the new curriculum planning.
- 28 All schemes of work incorporate planning for pupils' personal development. For example, subject schemes of work identify ways to develop pupils' understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of the world. Planning is included which values people from all cultures and those people with disabilities. Assemblies and religious education are used well to develop pupils' understanding of spirituality, always starting with the pupils' own experience and then leading them on to think of others, or wider aspect of religion. For example, in one class the teacher asked pupils to think about a place which was 'special' to them. She started the discussion by sharing with them a place she thought of as special herself. All the children thought of somewhere special to themselves when they followed the teachers' instruction to close their eyes and imagine. As a newly formed group the class learnt to trust each other and their teacher, a good beginning to work that could lead them to understand the 'special' or spiritual significance of places of worship.
- 29 Social awareness is developed through good opportunities to work in pairs and groups in lesson time. Play times and lunch times are seen as social occasions. At the start of the autumn term the older pupils are encouraged to take care of a younger child who has just started in the reception class. Careful planning results in pupils developing a strong sense of community through a class identity. This is linked to the animal names and the care teachers take to make sure that at the end of the year pupils are looking forward to their new class, knowing the name of the class and their teacher. The writing of the pupils who have now left the school indicates how much they felt part of a particular class group. Visits to the local area including the church, the common and village help pupils to identify with the local community. Assemblies, school traditions, such as planting bulbs in spring-time, and the many activities involving parents all establish a strong feeling of a school community.

- 30 An appreciation of their own culture and the culture of others is developed very well. For example, pupils are taught about the historical significance of H.G. Wells, who lived in the locality. Pupils appreciate a wide range of music. Teachers often play taped music when there is an appropriate opportunity and pupils listen with greater awareness than is usual at this age. Books are well displayed and it is clear that pupils value them and have learnt a great deal about authors and writers. They produce drawings, pictures and pieces of three-dimensional work in a wide range of media, often to a standard well above expectations for this age. They are taught from reception to mix paint and their use of paint and colour is better than is generally expected of pupils of this age.
- 31 There are no after-school clubs. However this is usual in most schools, for pupils under the age of seven, and there are a lot of visitors and outside visits which promote interest in the curriculum. The school has an award-winning garden and during the spring and summer months pupils can work in the garden at lunchtime. There are opportunities to play music and to join in school productions. Visits are numerous, for example to the National Gallery, to Kew Gardens and to a mosque. The school has buried a time capsule to mark the Millennium.

Music and song are used in an unusual but effective way to increase pupils' listening skills and promote their concentration and confidence.

- 32 A decision was taken by the governors for the school to take part in a project introduced by "The Voices Foundation". The school's participation in the project began in September of last year, although teachers had been receiving training before that time. The training and cost of introducing and maintaining the project is shared between the school and the Foundation and this represents good value for money.
- 33 The method of teaching music advocated by "The Voices Foundation" puts unaccompanied singing to the forefront of learning in music. This follows a long tradition of teaching unaccompanied singing to children in Europe. There is also an element that relates to the development of listening skills, concentration and pupils' confidence and self-esteem. During short sessions of either 20 minutes duration or two separate sessions of 10 minutes pupils are taught daily to listen to and respond to simple melody lines, sometimes in the form of a repetitive phrase, sometimes as a question and answer. For example the teacher may sing "What is your name?" and the pupil will sing back "My name is ..." In the same way a rhythm is passed back and forth. Pupils gain confidence quickly and soon can sing to the whole group standing in the centre of the circle. Songs that are fun are introduced and enjoyed by all. It is clear that pupils' awareness of pitch, tone, dynamics and rhythm is greatly increased and that they listen with care. All participate and the self-esteem of some pupils who do not find success easily in other subjects is improved.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Making sure that activities and resources are as well matched as possible to the very wide range of pupils' attainment, and that the time of support staff during whole class teaching sessions is used as efficiently as possible.

- 34 The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, planning and pupils' learning is very well established in the school. However, many of the teachers, including those in the senior management team, are new to the school and this has placed a great deal of pressure on the systems for checking that pupils are making the progress expected of them. With the previous well-established staff teams the school had taken confident strides forward and had begun to look at aspects of learning not generally considered in all other schools. These initiatives were good but can only be fully successful if all teachers are able to identify and provide activities and resources which move pupils of all levels of attainment and maturity forward to the next stage of their learning.
- 35 The school has good assessment procedures and all teachers use these to plan lessons. There is a very wide spread of attainment in all classes which becomes even greater in Year 2 because many pupils have developed a maturity and confidence not normally found in six year olds. This means that teachers in Year 2 need to plan activities with a greater amount of variation to match pupils' learning needs than is usual. All lessons in Year 2 took into account different levels of pupils' knowledge and skill. In whole class sessions of mental calculations the teachers skilfully provided ways for pupils who knew number bonds to 10 to respond whilst those who could calculate to 20 were also challenged. The whole class sessions in literacy also provided opportunities for learning for those whose reading was average and those whose reading was above average. However, although the pupils with below average reading could also participate, questions were often too challenging for them. During the session support teachers and assistants were not able to contribute. Better planning would have used these adults either to support those needing help to behave or learn, or to provide a similar session for part of the class so that objectives could be well matched to the needs of the group.
- 36 The independent activities during literacy and numeracy were planned to at least three levels of difficulty. Teachers often had good strategies to develop learning using the same activity but with one element which increased in difficulty. For example, in a good literacy lesson on using words which connect simple sentences the teacher provided a list of words for pupils to use, starting in the lowest attaining group with the word 'and', then increasing in difficulty to words such as 'meanwhile' and 'however'. The resources used by the pupils in the lowest attaining group were satisfactory but not very interesting and they limited all the pupils in the group to progressing at the same rate. The resources could have been developed so that within the group there were possibilities for some to progress at a faster rate than others. The school teaches a method of handwriting that develops pupils' knowledge of spelling at the same time. This good method uses all the senses of touch, vision and sound and is well known as 'look, write, say. However, during handwriting sessions some teachers left out the oral aspect and to some extent the aspect of touch and body movement, which would limit the progress of those pupils who respond to learning from sound and movement. In a mathematics class, pupils working with numbers up to 30 but needing a number line to support their calculations found that the class number line only went as far as 20. In a whole class teaching session on adding on a ten, pupils were not given the opportunity to see a 100 square, which would have helped those of lower attainment follow the thinking of those who were answering successfully. These small slip-ups, that nevertheless cause a slowing of pupils' rate of working, occur when planning is not sufficiently focused on the range of attainment within the class.

- 37 More significantly, planning in Year 2 in 1999 did not sufficiently identify work for those pupils who had not attained a high enough level in their knowledge of letter sounds by the end of Year 1. Teachers did not plan from the Year 1 or reception programme of work for those pupils who had not achieved competency in word building using initial letter blends and simple three or four letter words. Consequently some of these pupils struggled with the Year 2 spelling when they really needed revision of spellings from Year 1. Pupils who are less able readers in Year 2 have special support for individual reading and the school now recognises that it will need to review some aspects of planning for word building and spelling for pupils of lower attainment so as to improve their knowledge of letter sounds.

Strategies for including pupils with challenging behaviour in all activities.

- 38 There are not many pupils on the register for special educational needs with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Behaviour in the school is generally good and in many classes it is very good. Teachers give pupils the proper understanding of right from wrong. The behaviour policy appropriately emphasises the need to encourage pupils as much as possible by giving praise and rewarding good behaviour and teachers implement the policy well.
- 39 Most pupils behave well for the sake of it rather than for reward. Occasionally, however those pupils whose behaviour is a little challenging are not given a firm enough understanding of how they are expected to behave, consequently they take advantage. Improved strategies for dealing with the small number of pupils with challenging behaviour would mean that they would rarely miss or be excluded from an activity. For example, in some classes pupils go for a drink or to the toilet during a whole class teaching session without the consent of the teacher. This sometimes results in them missing an important part of the lesson. Sometimes praise is given to pupils whose behaviour has not warranted it and this strategy is not beneficial as some pupils see this as a lowering of expectations. On one occasion a pupil was not included in an assembly because he was considered to have behaviour difficulties, even though in the lesson prior to assembly he had not behaved badly. In this instance, he was not given the opportunity to respond to high expectations.

Some aspects of the planning for pupils with special educational needs.

- 40 Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and their needs are carefully assessed. Group education plans or individual plans are drawn up for each pupil as appropriate. They are of satisfactory quality and are specific to the needs of each pupil. However, they are only reviewed at the end of each half term when the class teachers meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator, (the headteacher), to discuss pupils' progress. The school has a system of setting targets in English and mathematics for all pupils and this ensures that the pupils with special educational needs have a short term target to work to, but the two systems need to be more closely aligned in order for there to be a clearer view of how well pupils are progressing on a week-by-week basis.

- 41 There is a school register of pupils with special educational needs and records are kept of review meetings for those pupils with statements. Governors are kept informed of the progress of pupils with special needs. The school has plans to use information technology to keep track of pupils' progress on the register but currently there is no recording system to show clearly how long pupils have been on the different stages without checking each pupil's individual file. This makes it difficult for governors and the school's management team to judge the success of the support for these pupils.

The identification and assessment of pupils who speak as an additional language.

- 42 The school receives no support from the local education authority for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The majority is at an advanced stage of English acquisition and many speak English at home as well as the language of their family's origin. However there are a small number of pupils at an early stage of English acquisition. The school has no assessment methods that would help identify their knowledge of English as opposed to their attainment in reading and writing or general ability. The process of language development does not necessarily follow a straight line of progress and so it is important to have an assessment procedure that can identify different elements. Support teachers, assistants and class teachers are all aware of the need to consider the fact that pupils at an early stage of English acquisition need extra support to make meaning clear, for example using pictures. During reading sessions pictures and the language pupils already know are used to full advantage to help pupils understand and speak English. However with more specific assessment methods pupils' progress could be more easily checked.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER ?

- 43 The governing body and senior management team of the school should seek to:
- continue to monitor and evaluate the match of work and resources to the needs of pupils so as to help all teachers develop the best strategies and resources, and ensure that support staff are used during whole class teaching sessions as effectively as possible. (*Paragraph 38*).
 - review the strategies the school has in place so as to ensure that pupils with challenging behaviour are included in all activities as far as possible. (*Paragraph 41*)
 - improve the system for checking the progress of pupils with special educational needs and the overview of provision. (*Paragraph 42*).
 - improve the identification and assessment procedures for pupils who speak English as an additional language. (*Paragraph 44*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7%	27%	40%	27%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		258
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		37

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

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	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.6
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	99	38	50	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	36	37
	Girls	49	50	47
	Total	83	86	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	98 (92)	95 (97)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	37	38
	Girls	50	49	50
	Total	86	86	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	98 (98)	100 (95)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (81)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	154
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

Financial information

Financial year	1999
----------------	------

	£
Total income	429,662
Total expenditure	425,995
Expenditure per pupil	1,746
Balance brought forward from previous year	0

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	164
Number of questionnaires returned	163

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	40	6	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	54	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	43	20	1	6
The teaching is good.	53	38	4	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	42	18	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	39	9	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	45	4	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	44	18	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	48	37	5	4	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	49	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	28	31	10	10