

INSPECTION REPORT

THE OAKTREE SCHOOL

Woking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125032

Headteacher: Mrs Sally Leach

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Gosling
22453

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 September 2000

Inspection number: 225320

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:	Gorsewood Road St Johns Woking Surrey
Postcode:	GU21 1UT
Telephone number:	01483 474981
Fax number:	01483 797953
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Heather Hadley
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian Gosling 22453	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information technology; Geography; History; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils taught?
Josephine Philbey 9405	<i>Lay inspector</i>		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?
Kevin Hodge 18466	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Design and technology; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	How well is the school led and managed?
Michael Raven 3961	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Religious education; Music; Physical education; Children under five.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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	
 HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	 10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
 HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	 13
 HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	 14
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	 16
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	 17
 HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	 18
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 20
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 22
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	 26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Oaktree School is an infant school that is about the same size as most primary schools. There are 230 pupils, of whom 124 are boys and 106 are girls. (Forty-nine aged children under five were attending part-time at the time of the inspection.) A few pupils come from minority ethnic groups and 12 pupils are eligible for free school meals, this is below the national average. Twenty-three per cent have special educational needs, which is a little above the national average, and five per cent have Statements of special educational need, which is also above the national average. The school's detailed records show that when children enter the school, their attainment is broadly in line with the average for the county. The school is currently going through a period of change. The Acorn Centre is being built and is designed to improve the educational provision for pupils. Furthermore, half of the classroom teachers have joined the school this year following the promotion of senior teachers to other schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Oaktree School is a very effective school. The very good leadership and good quality of education leads to very high standards. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science and good in all other subjects.
- Pupils' are enthusiastic, work hard in lessons and have very good attitudes to school.
- Pupils are very well behaved and relationships in the school are very good.
- Attendance is well above the national average.
- Teaching is good and teachers plan effectively to meet all pupils' learning needs.
- There is a very good provision for gifted and talented pupils as well as those with special educational needs and this ensures that all pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher, who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very effective leadership which promotes a high quality of education.
- There are very effective systems for subject co-ordinators to lead and develop their curriculum areas.
- Governors know the school well. They have a clear understanding of what the school does well and of the priorities for development.
- The school cares for its pupils very well.
- The school's partnership with parents is very effective and parents make a good contribution to their children's education.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- At the time of the inspection, there was no suitable library facility outside of the classrooms. The Acorn Centre is currently being built to remedy this situation.
- The range of learning opportunities outside the classroom, including outside visits and visitors to the school, is limited.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The Oaktree School was last inspected in December 1996. Since then, the school has made impressive improvements in almost all areas of its educational provision.

Standards of pupils' attainment have improved greatly in English and mathematics. Standards have also improved in science, information and communications technology, art, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. This has been achieved by a systematic approach to ensuring that pupils are taught the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively and the school has been awarded both the Basic Skills quality mark and the High Sheriff's Award for high achievement in mathematics. The quality of teaching, the procedures by which the school cares for its pupils and the quality of the leadership and management of the school have all improved. The school has maintained high standards in the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and in its partnership with parents. The commitment to the people who work in the school is shown in the school's award of the Investors in People standard.

The school has shown rigour and commitment in its approach to the issues for development in the last inspection report. There has been a detailed review of planning in all curriculum areas to ensure a clear progression in pupils' learning. The assessment of pupils' learning is now meticulous, both in termly assessments and in teachers' daily assessments, and this is used well to inform teachers' planning so that all pupils are working at an appropriate level of difficulty in lessons. The length of the school day has been increased in line with recommendations and the school's spending patterns have been reviewed.

The school has already begun its next stage of improvement in the building of the new Acorn Centre that is designed to provide superior library and computer facilities. This is central to the school's commitment to developing the opportunities for pupils to become independent learners.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	C	A	A	B
writing	C	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A

Key

very good A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Standards are well above the national average in English and very high in mathematics. (A* indicates that pupils' attainment is in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally.) These high standards have been maintained in the national tests in 2000. Standards are very good in science and good in all other subjects. Pupils' attainment is rising above the national trend in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school has set challenging targets for pupils attainment and is well placed to achieve them. It carefully tracks the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils, and sets individual targets that ensure all pupils achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and very keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils listen and concentrate well in lessons. They are polite, courteous and respectful.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to each other in class and the playground. They are independent and responsible.
Attendance	Very good. It is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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 both for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1. Four of the eight class teachers have joined the school this year and are becoming familiar with the school's procedures and well-developed practices. Nevertheless, 85 per cent of lessons seen were good or better. Almost three out of ten lessons were very good in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and no lessons were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy was similarly good, with almost one third of lessons seen being very good.

Pupils' learning is carefully assessed and teachers use this information well in planning the next lesson so that activities with are organised to meet the needs of all pupils. This careful planning is directly related to the high standards that the pupils achieve. Classroom assistants and the many parent helpers are well informed by teachers and they make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils respond very well to the careful planning of teachers. Lessons are enjoyable and challenging. Relationships are very good and pupils work well together, showing a good deal of enthusiasm and commitment to their tasks.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school has made a positive start to the new National Curriculum and it offers its pupils a wide range of stimulating activities. However, there are few learning opportunities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school identifies learning difficulties early and makes good provision for these pupils with the result that virtually all pupils achieve the expected standards by the time they leave the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. These pupils have made very good progress and have attained the standards expected of them in English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. As soon as they start school, children are given many opportunities to learn to work and play together. The school's provision for moral and social development is good and it makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school effectively monitors pupils' academic and personal development throughout the school.

The school works very well in partnership with parents, and parents make a positive contribution to their children's learning at school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has led the school through a successful programme of improvement since the last inspection that has resulted in high achievement by pupils. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators manage their subjects well and take an important role in monitoring performance and setting targets for improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors work hard to maintain a clear understanding of what works well in the school and to ensure that they are well informed about what could be better.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school rigorously evaluates all areas of its work in order to maintain high standards and identify areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school plans carefully and spends its money wisely. It applies the principles of best value well.

The school's staffing and accommodation are suitable. Careful planning has ensured that current building works for the Acorn Centre have caused minimal disruption to the pupils' education. Learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The progress their children make.• Behaviour in the school is good.• The good quality of the teaching.• The school is approachable.• The high achievement of the pupils.• The close links with parents.• The leadership and management of the school.• Their children become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities the school provides outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. They agree that the range of activities outside lessons, including outside visits and visitors to the school, is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the time of the inspection, the children had only been in school for a few weeks and, of 80 children in the Foundation Stage, 49 were attending part-time. As the school's detailed records show, children enter the reception classes at the age of four with attainment that is close to the county average. They make good progress during the Foundation Stage and all are well on course to meet the Early Learning Goals¹ by the time they enter Year 1 and make a start on the National Curriculum.

2. Pupils' attainment² in the national tests in 1999 was well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. Very high means that pupils' attainment was in the top 5 per cent of schools in the country. In comparison to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' attainment was above the average in reading and writing, and well above the average in mathematics.

3. In 1999, almost all pupils attained the expected Level 2³ in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils who attained Level 2 or above was well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher, Level 3 was well above the national average in reading and mathematics and close to the national average in writing.

4. In science, teacher assessments in 1999 show that all pupils attained the expected Level 2, which is very high, both compared to the national average and to the average of similar schools. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Teacher assessments in reading and mathematics closely matched the test results, although teacher assessments for writing at Level 3 were a little above the test results.

¹ On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development, and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1 when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

² On pupils' attainment: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the National Curriculum levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

³ On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

This is not a significant difference.

5. Inspection judgements are that pupils' attainment is well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. This represents a significant improvement in English and mathematics. The school is maintaining high standards and, in reading, writing and mathematics, the trend of pupils' results is rising higher than the national trend. The school has set appropriate targets that are clearly focused on maintaining these high standards. There has been public acknowledgement of the work of the school in attaining high standards in the award of the Basic Skills quality mark and the High Sheriff's award for its high achievements in mathematics.

6. A significant influence on these high standards is the detailed methods the school uses to track the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils. Teachers skilfully use this information, and their own daily assessments, to set tasks that match the learning needs of all pupils and this ensures that all pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and individual education plans are well written with clear and specific learning objectives to support their work in class. The school maintains a register of gifted and talented pupils; their progress is monitored closely through termly assessments in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. A careful analysis of their work is made if they fail to maintain the expected high standards. All pupils agree targets for reading, writing and mathematics with their teacher. These are kept on their tables and, as new targets replace those that have been attained, they provide a record of pupils' achievements.

7. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. This contrasts favourably with the national picture, where girls tend to do better than boys, and again reflects the school's success in setting tasks that are matched to individual pupils' learning needs.

8. Standards in literacy are very good. Pupils use a variety of skills, such as phonics and picture clues, to read a range of texts confidently. They read enthusiastically and express preferences for different kinds of books, such as adventure and mystery stories, and favourite authors like Dick King-Smith and Roald Dahl. They write imaginatively in well-constructed stories about a magic suitcase and an alien spaceship that visits earth. Spelling and punctuation are generally accurate and they write in a clear, neat and cursive style of handwriting. Pupils' literacy skills are used well in other subjects. For example, pupils write up their experiments in science. Books on transport are used in literacy sessions to develop reading skills as well as enhance their historical understanding.

9. Standards in numeracy are very good. Pupils have a secure understanding of the number system and many pupils confidently add and subtract numbers to 20. They halve and double numbers to 20 with confidence and they solve number problems well, creating a mathematical question from number stories. For example, they create $5-2=?$ from 'I had five cakes and ate 2. How many were left?' Numeracy skills are developed in other subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, they measure carefully in design and technology, and they collect data to create graphs of the transport used to get to school in geography.

10. Standards in science are very good. Pupils are aware of different materials and know that some materials, such as leather and plastic, are more waterproof than others such as paper. They construct simple electric circuits and check them when they do not work. They know about the life

cycles of the frog and the butterfly and understand the importance of exercise to healthy living.

11. Standards are above national expectations in all other subjects, although there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in music. This represents an impressive improvement since the last inspection in all subjects except physical education, in which good standards have been maintained, and music for which there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement. In information and communications technology, pupils draw their own pictures and incorporate them into their writing. They are able to change the size and style of text to suit their purpose. Pupils develop good painting and printing skills in art and know about famous painters, such as Van Gogh and Seurat. In design and technology, they carefully design and then make a caterpillar with moving jaws, which they evaluate when it is finished. Pupils understand, in history, that things change over time and recognise differences in old and new toys, such as the use of plastics. They draw maps using appropriate symbols in geography and they understand differences in contrasting environments, such as the North Pole and a jungle. In music, they describe sounds accurately and have opportunities to play a range of instruments. In physical education, pupils use music well to express their own ideas and feelings and in religious education they learn about a variety of religions, including Christianity and Judaism.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their learning. The school has successfully developed good work habits in the pupils and they arrive at school expecting to work. This makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve and reflects the findings of the previous report. Pupils want to achieve well and listen carefully to instructions given by their teachers. They are eager to contribute to discussions and to answer questions posed in lessons or during assemblies. An example of their enthusiasm was seen in an upper school assembly, when pupils were asked to describe a desired achievement and how they could try harder. Pupils sustain their concentration and often work well unsupervised. When working in small groups, they help each other and carry out their tasks conscientiously. Pupils are cheerful, friendly and polite and are pleased to show and discuss the results of their efforts with visitors. Parents are pleased with the attitudes and values their children learn at school.

13. The behaviour of pupils is very good. They behave well in the classroom and move around the school building in a very orderly way. In the dining room at lunchtime, the atmosphere is congenial and characterised by courtesy and good manners. Pupils play happily together and enjoy each other's company particularly when playing on the trim trail and rubber tyres in the playground. No harassment or bullying was observed during the inspection and there have been no exclusions over recent years.

14. Throughout the school, pupils form good relationships with each other, with teachers and other adults. They take turns and share resources well. When given the opportunity, pupils work effectively both individually and collaboratively. On many occasions, pupils were seen working in groups or pairs where they discussed their tasks sensibly. An example of this was in a design and technology lesson in Year 2 where pupils were discussing the different ways that they could draw a repeated pattern. Pupils have a clear sense of responsibility, which is demonstrated in the way they

tidy tables, return registers to the office and help their teachers.

15. Attendance at the school is very good and well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good both for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1. Four of the eight class teachers have joined the school this year and are becoming familiar with the school's procedures and well-developed practices. Nevertheless, 85 per cent of lessons seen were good or better and no lessons were unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, seven out of ten lessons were good or better and, in Key Stage 1, nine out of ten lessons were good or better. Almost three out of ten lessons were very good in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

17. Pupils' learning is carefully assessed and teachers make daily assessments noting pupils' learning in each lesson as well as those pupils that need more work on a particular aspect. They use this information well in planning the next lesson so that activities with various levels of difficulty are organised to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. This has a significant effect on the high standards achieved by the pupils.

18. Relationships are good throughout the school and teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' achievements and behaviour. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure a stimulating pace and resources are prepared meticulously to avoid unnecessary distractions. In particular, classroom assistants are well informed about the purposes of the lesson and the methods to be used and, consequently, they support teachers well. This practice is extended to the many parents and grandparents who assist in the classroom and who make a significant contribution to pupils' good learning.

19. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. However, when teaching was not of the same high quality as most lessons, the rate of pupils' learning was not as high. This was often because explanations were not sufficiently clear and pupils were unable to concentrate fully on their tasks; unsure of what was expected of them and unable to continue without the guidance of the teacher.

20. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is good. These children had only been in the school for a few weeks at the time of the inspection, and the teachers integrated them into school routines, skilfully, calmly and effectively. Teachers have a good understanding of the recently introduced Foundation Stage and plan lessons carefully taking account of the small steps by which children of this age learn. They give appropriate emphasis to the development of personal, social and emotional development and to language, literacy and communication, and mathematics.

21. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and there has been an enthusiastic and successful adoption of the National Strategies for both. Teachers are very competent in the

technicalities of teaching phonics and the basic skills of number. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is incorporated well into other lessons. For example, a history topic on transport is combined with reading by using a book on transport in a literacy session. In geography, pupils collect data on the transport pupils use to get to school. They create a graph and interpret it correctly. The quality of teaching was good in all other subjects in which it was possible to make a secure judgement.

22. Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn in the lesson and they ensure that pupils are clear about these objectives. Teachers make good use of the characters 'Wilf' and 'Tib' in all subjects to make this part of the lesson fun and effective. 'Wilf' is used to complete the statement, 'What am I looking for...?', whilst 'Tib' identifies the reason for the learning intention of the lesson by completing, 'This is because...'. This ensures that pupils fully understand the reason for the lesson and can evaluate their own learning at the end of it. Pupils complete the sentences in their own words. Consequently, they know what they have to learn and how they are to learn it. Additionally, all pupils have their targets for reading, writing and mathematics, as well as a general target for their learning, in front of them on the table in all lessons. They respond with a good deal of effort to their tasks and they concentrate for long periods, showing enthusiasm and a commitment to their work. There is a very good climate for learning in all classes and pupils are aware of the need not to disturb others. They work well together and share resources sensibly.

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

23. The school offers a curriculum that is suitably broad and balanced, and meets all statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Following helpful consultation with parents, the governors have adopted an appropriate policy for sex and drugs education. At the parents' suggestion, these are taught under the heading of health education. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been adopted by the school, and these strategies are used very well to raise standards in the basic subjects. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and all are assured equality of access and opportunity. In particular, pupils with special educational needs are given good access to the full curriculum and they are helped to make very good progress in their learning. This is because the very good use of assessment information relating to these pupils enables teachers to modify tasks to closely match their needs and give them the support they need to learn very well. The school complies fully with the special educational needs Code of Practice⁴.

24. There are too few extra-curricular activities to extend pupils' experience. There are some clubs run after school, and these include some sport. However, the school runs none of these: all are provided by paid outside agencies. In addition, there are few visits out of school to enrich pupils' experience and enhance the curriculum. There is an annual visit to Portsmouth for pupils in

⁴ On SEN Code Of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

Year 2 and this contributes effectively to pupils' learning in a

number of ways. For example, in design and technology as they look at the cranes. Pupils visit the local library, and there are plans for a storyteller to visit the school. Overall, however, there are not enough visits out of school, or visitors into school to extend the curriculum.

25. There are satisfactory links with the local community and these make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. For example, many parents help in school, particularly successfully with those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils take harvest gifts to the local homeless. They sing carols in the town and attend the Woking Carnival in summer. There are few links with local business, although the school has recently received an anonymous donation to its funds from one such source. Relationships with partner institutions are good. There are good links with both the feeder playgroup and the junior school that shares the same site. In particular, members of staff visit the playgroup before children transfer to school. They discuss children's needs, especially those that may have special educational needs. There are good curricular links with the junior school. Subject co-ordinators meet to discuss their subjects. Training for staff in information and communications technology is planned jointly for the two schools. There are links with local colleges and nursery nursing students do some of their training in the school.

26. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and reflects the findings of the previous inspection report.

27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is enhanced through carefully planned collective worship that introduces pupils to the idea of thoughtful reflection and also through religious education and 'circle time'⁵. Time is given in assemblies for quiet reflection and the calm atmosphere and themes are conducive to the development of spiritual values. There are good links with the local church and the vicar is a regular visitor to the school. Throughout the day, teachers seek to raise pupils' self-esteem in lessons and the high quality of the displays shows that they value the pupils' work.

28. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and well incorporated into the daily routine of the school. Class rules are displayed in each classroom and set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Planned themes for assemblies such as 'rules for living' and 'promises' help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. All adults working in the school present good models of fairness, tolerance, kindness and good humour.

29. Provision for pupils' social development is good. In lessons, there are many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or groups. They are encouraged to help their teachers and they do this willingly, acting as monitors, tidying classrooms and returning registers to the office. During the inspection, a Year 2 class was gently reminded by their teacher to think about kindness and consideration to others. This same class was also encouraged to remember, with the aid of a chart, when it was acceptable to talk together or just work quietly. The provision for pupil's social development is enhanced through school performances, interviewing grandparents about the past and sending harvest gifts to the homeless.

⁵ On 'Circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

30. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of their own culture through visits to their local church, the library and by taking part in the Woking Carnival. They have sufficient opportunities to learn about other cultures, and books about other cultures are used well to support this provision. Pupils learn about Islam and Judaism and attractive displays are exhibited around the school. Pupils from other countries are encouraged to talk about the contrasting way of life. Pupils listen to music from different cultures and study famous people, such as Mary Seacole and her role as a nurse in the Crimea.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are very good overall and this has improved since the last inspection. The school recently achieved the Surrey Health Promoting Schools Award. The designated member of staff responsible for child protection has been fully trained and ensures all members of staff are aware of child protection issues. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety and great care is taken to ensure the medical well being of the pupils who know they will be well looked after should they feel unwell. Lunchtime supervisors are caring and supportive. They initiate playground games, manage them effectively and efficiently, whilst keeping a watchful eye on the pupils. Two governors, who are selected from the General Purposes committee, are responsible for monitoring safety and security and they carry out risk assessments regularly.

32. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. Pupils are involved in writing their own class rules. Teachers constantly praise pupils if they are well behaved in lessons and this works well. Pupils take pleasure in receiving stickers and smiley faces for good behaviour. There are appropriate procedures in place to deal with poor behaviour and parents are contacted when necessary. Parents and pupils are in agreement that bullying is not an issue but, should a problem arise, they are confident it would be dealt with effectively.

33. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Circle time is regularly planned into the curriculum, giving pupils the opportunity to express their feelings and attitudes to others. Teachers in the reception classes monitor their pupil's development formally; throughout the rest of the school a less formal manner is adopted.

34. There are satisfactory procedures in place for the monitoring of attendance, absence and punctuality. Parents are asked to advise the school on the morning of their child's absence. Registration takes place before both morning and afternoon sessions and class teachers record attendance correctly. It is the responsibility of class teachers, the school secretary and the headteacher to monitor unauthorised absences. The school is about to change to using a computerised registration system to provide more rigorous monitoring of attendance and unauthorised absence.

35. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance have improved significantly since the last inspection and they are now very good. Teachers make very good use of the information they gather to guide them in their planning. This effective use of assessment information has a clear impact on raising standards, and contributes positively to the high standards found by the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven. Teachers' plans appropriately identify suitable assessment opportunities in lessons. Plans identify clear objectives for lessons, which are helpfully shared with pupils. These lesson objectives form the basis of assessment, so teachers can tell how far their intentions have been met, and whether any modification or further clarification is needed, either for individuals or for the class as a whole. This procedure is helpfully followed in all subjects. In physical education, at the Foundation Stage, some excellent use is made of lesson observations by support staff. They identify attainment and further learning needs. As a result of careful assessment of attainment and needs, pupils are set individual targets in English and mathematics. They keep a record of these targets themselves, to remind them of what they should be aiming to achieve. Progress towards these targets is evaluated regularly. Pupils are rewarded when they have reached their targets and new targets are set. There are formal assessments of pupils' progress each term and teachers assess and evaluate the levels pupils have reached using National Curriculum criteria. In this way, pupils' progress is continuously tracked as they move through the school, using the assessment of their achievements on entry to school as the starting point.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school's partnership with parents is very good. The school recognises that home-school liaison is very important and great efforts have been made to maintain and develop links. Parents are very supportive of this popular school. They appreciate the commitment of the headteacher and the staff and what the school seeks to achieve for their children. The sole area of concern for some parents is the range of activities outside lessons.

37. The quality of information to parents is good overall. The school has worked hard to ensure that parents are kept well informed on school activities and on what their children are learning in the classrooms. New parents to the school are given the opportunity to see the school during the working day, attend an information evening and receive an induction pack. The school's prospectus, parents' handbook and Governors' Annual Report to Parents are clearly written and easy to read. Parents are most appreciative of the fortnightly newsletters that keep them in touch with school activities and events. Curriculum plans for the term are displayed in all classrooms on a notice board for parents and also taken home by the pupils. Parents have had the opportunity to attend meetings to learn about the literacy hour and numeracy project.

38. Parents attend consultation evenings in the autumn and summer to hear about their children's progress. Target sheets are sent home for parents to see. At the parents' meeting with inspectors, some parents indicated that the annual reports of pupil's progress did not inform them sufficiently of their children's progress. Although the school provides much information to parents on pupil's work in school, the annual reports do not always provide clear information of pupil's progress in all subjects.

39. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and they complete a home/school agreement. Their opinions are sought on various school issues through questionnaires. Each month, parents are invited into the classrooms so that their children can show them their work and how they are progressing. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home with reading and spellings and the pupils' reading diaries provide a valuable source of communication between teachers and parents. The school values the help of the many parents, grandparents and volunteers who help with classroom activities and outside trips. Individual parents have made curtains, created playground markings, helped in the gardens and provided furniture. There is a Parents' Association that is supported by parents of both The Oaktree and Hermitage Schools. The Association is primarily for fundraising, and the dedicated committee members spend much time and effort in organising activities to provide the two schools with funds for much needed resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher is very effective in giving educational direction, planning priorities carefully and in raising the standards that pupils attain. The quality of leadership provided by the senior management team, co-ordinators and the governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection.

41. The headteacher provides very strong and enthusiastic leadership to staff, governors and pupils. She has led an effective programme of school improvement that has been very successful in addressing the key issues from the last inspection report. The rate of improvement is impressive. There is an appropriate focus upon the standards pupils attain and the school has been very conscientious in developing a plan of step by step actions to raise the quality of education provided in the school. The headteacher has been effective in developing key areas such as monitoring the quality of teaching, developing the role of co-ordinators and monitoring the progress of pupils. This has been particularly successful in the development of co-ordinators roles. New members of staff to school and newly qualified teachers follow an effective induction. Regular meetings are held with them to identify difficulties and support their teaching. The newly qualified teacher has an assigned mentor and there is a good, planned induction programme.

42. The headteacher provides a clear lead in promoting pupils' good behaviour and positive attitude to school life. All members of staff have clear roles, and the deputy headteacher is effective in her new role, providing support for the school's 'reading recovery' programme. In addition, she ably supports the new members of staff. The senior management team is not at full strength currently, due to the departure of some senior teachers, but there are plans to appoint additional members this term as responsibilities are allocated. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored teaching on a regular basis and this has led to improvements in teaching. The school holds several significant, external awards such as 'Investors in People' and 'Basic skills' quality marks, and the High Sheriff's Award for its mathematical achievements. These recognise the school's commitment to staff training development, as well as the promotion of standards of literacy and numeracy, and have

helped to raise the profile of the school in these important areas. The school is very successful in meeting its stated aims, particularly in providing a happy, stimulating, learning environment, raising standards and ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.

43. The school maintains a very positive ethos for learning and monitors pupils' achievements carefully. The results of the national tests are analysed in detail to identify any emerging trends in performance. Pupils' progress is tracked meticulously and special attention is paid to pupils with special educational needs and those identified on the register of gifted and talented pupils. Swift action is taken when pupils do not meet their specific targets or when they fail to maintain the progress expected of them. This has a significant impact on the high standards pupils attain.

44. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is very effective. A regular 'curriculum focus' week is held in school which raises the profile of each subject in turn and helps monitor progress. Co-ordinators monitor planning in their subjects each term and produce action points for development that is provided for staff and governors. The co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science observe lessons in these subjects following appropriate training. They provide feedback to their colleagues and the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching are agreed. These co-ordinators also give demonstration lessons to their colleagues. Although the school has had to reallocate some existing responsibilities as some teachers have left the school, new members of staff are given appropriate training before taking full responsibility for managing a subject. The well-established procedures for developing and assessing the progress of subjects are good and provide clear information about how subjects should be managed.

45. The governing body is well informed on both day to day and longer-term issues and governors are very effective in supporting the staff. The Chair of Governors meets with the headteacher regularly and a very good working relationship is built upon mutual respect and understanding. This promotes effective communication between the school and the governors. There are various committees, such as finance and curriculum, which support the school, closely and effectively and oversee the work of the school in key areas. For example, governors who are linked with curriculum subjects regularly come in to school to see how the subject is taught. In mathematics for example, there is a clear focus for the visit by the governor responsible and a yearly plan has been developed. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is very supportive and uses her own professional expertise to help oversee and report upon the work in the school. These arrangements allow the governing body to gain the information necessary to inform their planning, monitor the schools' progress and exercise their statutory responsibilities very effectively.

46. The school has clear and very helpful ways of deciding its priorities and future direction. The school development plan is very clear, identifies key areas for development and is a central document for school improvement. As one member of staff said, 'It's our Bible for knowing where we are going'. It involves an effective range of people in its planning and development. In January each year the current plan is reviewed and the staff, parents and governors discuss possible priorities at an 'open evening'. These priorities are then assessed and form the basis of future planning. Additional information is received from questionnaires, which the school circulates to parents. These findings form the basis of

priorities, are appropriate and take account of both school and national developments, such as the

introduction of performance management. The school is well placed to implement a programme of performance management. It has adopted a suitable policy for performance management that supports individual staff development targets and the effective procedures the school already has in place.

47. The school plans its expenditure carefully and spends wisely. The headteacher and administrative officer prepare a draft budget annually, based on the priorities of the school improvement plan. The finance committee of governors considers the draft budget in detail and makes recommendations to the full governing body. Once the budget has been approved, the finance committee carries out regular monitoring through termly statements and keeps the full governing body informed of progress. Care is taken to maintain a suitable budget underspend each year as a contingency fund. The latest audit report on the school's finances was carried out in January 1999, and the two minor points for improvements that it identified have been dealt with successfully.

48. The school takes care to apply the principles of best value when obtaining goods and services. At least two quotations are obtained before orders are authorised. For example, the building works and information technology equipment ordered for the new Acorn Centre were the subject of competitive tendering. The Acorn Centre, for which building works were being carried at the time of the inspection, is planned to provide excellent library and information technology facilities. This is an impressive and large-scale undertaking for the school that has been subject to meticulous and careful planning. A detailed business plan has been produced and the governing body has carefully considered all aspects of the plan, including possible difficulties. This enables the governing body to monitor all aspects of the provision and development of the centre with a clear focus on ensuring the best possible educational provision for the pupils at the school. Governors have a good range of personal expertise that they bring to bear when evaluating tenders, for example in building and information technology.

49. Day-to-day finances are managed well. The school administration officer is very efficient and effective and, along with the school secretary, she provides a welcoming reception for parents and visitors alike. Governors have carefully identified grants allocated for specific educational purposes, such as that for pupils with special educational needs and the standards fund and these monies are spent appropriately to support pupils' learning.

50. The school has a satisfactory level of staffing to meet the needs of the school. The classroom assistants provide valuable support within classes, and particularly for individual pupils with special educational needs. A national pilot programme for the early diagnosis of pupils' difficulties is being introduced in the school. This is a good example of how teaching and non-teaching staff are learning and working together to improve pupils' achievements. The teacher with responsibility for special educational needs manages the arrangements very well.

51. The school has adequate accommodation, with large classrooms, shared areas and playgrounds as well as the use of the playing field. These are generally used effectively, although the building works are making movement around the school more difficult. This is being managed effectively however, and the disruption is minimised. There is a hall that is used appropriately for physical education lessons and assemblies, with a smaller adjacent hall for lunches. Spacious

classrooms, together with corridors, are used well to display pupils' work. There is space to support a range of suitable activities, such as reading. Library books are currently stored in the hall as a temporary arrangement. The books are not displayed well or easily accessible to pupils, which is unsatisfactory. The 'Acorn Centre', which is to open this term, has been designed to provide very effective library facility along with a computer suite. The range of resources is generally good throughout the school and there are no significant shortfalls. They are used effectively in nearly all subject areas, with the exception of the library resources. The caretaker and cleaning staff work hard to ensure the school is well maintained and the standard of cleanliness is high.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. The school has been successful in attaining and then maintaining high standards since the last inspection. Nevertheless, the school remains committed to continual improvement. In this respect, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- With the establishment of the Acorn Centre, improve pupils' library skills and develop opportunities for independent learning;
(*Paragraphs: 51, 63, 92.*)
- Improve the range of opportunities to enrich pupils' learning by, for example, increasing the number of outside visits and visitors to the school.
(*Paragraphs: 24, 36.*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	27.5	57.5	15	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	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	206
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
---------------------------	-----

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
	1999	36	40	76

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	36	36	36
	Girls	39	39	40
	Total	75	75	76
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	99 (98)	99 (99)	100 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	36	36	36
	Girls	39	39	40
	Total	75	75	76
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	99 (97)	99 (99)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	142
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)	8.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.4
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff:**YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	------------------

	£
Total income	408693.00
Total expenditure	416120.00
Expenditure per pupil	1818.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	31424.00
Balance carried forward to next year	23997.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	231
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62.9	34.8	2.2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56.2	34.8	2.2	0	6.7
Behaviour in the school is good.	58.4	39.3	0	0	2.2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28.1	53.9	6.7	0	11.2
The teaching is good.	66.3	29.2	0	0	4.5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50.6	36	7.9	0	5.6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65.2	30.3	2.2	0	2.2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70.8	24.7	1.1	0	3.4
The school works closely with parents.	50.6	44.9	3.4	0	1.1
The school is well led and managed.	67.4	29.2	2.2	0	1.1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56.2	37.1	0	0	6.7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22.5	46.1	18	0	13.5

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

53. Children enter the school in September of the year in which they are five. Most children begin part-time before they attend full-time the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, the children had only been in school for a few weeks and, of 80 children in the Foundation Stage, 49 were attending part-time. As the school's detailed records show, children enter the reception classes at the age of four with attainment that is close to the county average. Children make good progress during the Foundation Stage and all are well on course to meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 and make a start on the National Curriculum.

54. Pupils' good progress is promoted by good teaching. This is characterised by good planning which identifies clear and appropriate purposes for lessons. Teachers have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. In particular, teachers are skilled in integrating new children into school and inducting them in school routines. They give good emphasis to the development of personal, social and emotional development, to language, literacy and communication, and to mathematics.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Personal, social and emotional development is fostered well. Children develop self-confidence as they try out new activities. For example, as they come into school in the morning, they choose freely and with confidence from a range of appropriate activities such as construction, looking at books and playing in the sand. They are given many good opportunities to gain confidence at speaking in a group, such as the 'show and tell' sessions at the end of the morning. Teachers and members of the support staff are skilled at helping children feel at ease in the school environment. They promote good relationships through giving the children many good opportunities to work and play together co-operatively as they learn to share equipment. There are good opportunities for the children to develop independence as they take off their shoes, socks and jumpers for physical education and as they take themselves to the toilet and wash their hands.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Communication, language and literacy are promoted well. Children learn to recognise their own name on a name card, which they wear. They choose their own name from all those in the class and place their name card on a board to indicate which activity they have chosen first thing in the morning. They learn to recognise some of the names of other children in the class as they sort through the name cards looking for their own. They are given good opportunities to enjoy books. By the time they are five all the children are familiar with books. They know that print carries meaning, that we read from left to right in

English and from the top of the page to the bottom. They learn the sounds and names of letters using a good phonics scheme. They look at how letters are formed and they practise writing letters on a white board. They have their own books of sounds and when they have learned a new sound they stick it into their book. By the age of five the children write their own name and many can write a good number of other words independently.

Mathematical development

57. Mathematical development is promoted well. The children use numbers as labels and for counting. For example, they hold up the numbers as they sing number rhymes, such as 'five in the bed'; one, two, three, four, five and so on. They say the names of the numbers that they hold up, and write them in their books. Children are encouraged to go on a number hunt in the classroom. They draw round different shapes, such as circles, squares and triangles. They walk these shapes in physical education lessons and trace them in the sand. As they play in the sand with many different containers, the children start to gain an understanding of capacity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well. They have many good opportunities to explore and investigate, with the wide range of construction toys, for example. They use scissors to make products they have designed on paper, such as shape mobiles, which connects well with their work in mathematics. They design and make simple bookmarks, cutting paper carefully to create a fringed edge. They learn about time. For example, when they tell their news, teachers ask them about when they did something or how long they have had a particular toy. Stories from a wide range of different cultures are read and this helps the children develop their understanding of some of the customs and beliefs of cultures other than their own. For example, they listen to 'Handa's Surprise', from the Caribbean.

Physical development

59. Physical development is promoted well. There are many good, planned opportunities for indoor and outdoor physical activity. In the hall, the children develop a good sense of space and come to understand the need to work safely in a space of their own. They learn about and discuss the effect that exercise has on their body, such as getting warm and out of breath. Outside, the children use a wide range of small and large play equipment. There are also good written signs to suggest to them what they might do. Small muscle development and control are promoted well as children use tools such as scissors and construction apparatus.

Creative development

60. Creative development is fostered well. The children have many good opportunities to explore colour, texture and sound. They use the tuned instruments and practise making loud and soft sounds, trying out shaking, tapping, striking and banging actions. They enjoy 'conducting' the music. They are encouraged to use and develop their imagination as, for example, they print and paint in the style of established artists.

ENGLISH

61. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils, results for reading and writing were well above the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. These impressive standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and the trend of pupils' attainment over the years 1996-1999 shows consistent improvement. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher level, Level 3 in reading was well above the national average and in writing, it was close to the national average. The evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils attain very high standards in all areas of their work.

62. By the time they are seven, pupils attain very good standards in their speaking and listening skills. During introductions by teachers, pupils listen attentively and are ready to answer questions. This helps them to make good progress during the rest of the lesson as they have a clear understanding of what they have to do and can carry out their tasks quickly. Pupils also listen to each other well. There were many good examples of this happening, such as when pupils in Year 2 listened very carefully to another pupil's experience of swimming lessons. In a Year 1 class, pupils listened for extended periods while discussing the best words to fit into a sentence. This was then followed by listening to a story about Owls. Pupils also listen very well during group work when they discuss ideas, usually helping each other to complete their work or discussion topic. Very good speaking skills complement pupils' listening abilities. They speak very clearly and confidently, both during lessons and in larger gatherings such as assemblies. Pupils speak to visitors very enthusiastically and explain their interests and tasks. This is particularly evident at the beginning and end of lessons when pupils answer the teachers' questions and share what they have found out with the class. Several classes were studying 'connectives'. Pupils are very able at identifying connectives such as 'therefore' and pronouncing them clearly. In an assembly, pupils spoke very clearly and confidently about work they had completed in class.

63. Standards in reading are very good. Pupils are taught basic skills systematically and well: how sounds and letters relate, for example. This helps them to make good progress when tackling new texts or unfamiliar words. They are very confident in 'sounding out' words or looking for words within words such as tent in content. Older pupils approach a range of texts confidently, both from their own reading books and from texts given them by the teacher. They use a range of approaches to read a story accurately. For example, they use the pictures in a book on owls to help them understand the context of the story. Pupils talk about their reading with enthusiasm, and they regularly take books home. A reading diary helps to

keep accurate records and comments by both parents and teachers help motivate pupils' interest. Many pupils express their favourite type of books such as adventure or mystery books and favourite authors such as Dick King-Smith and Roald Dahl. Pupils' library knowledge is less developed and, although pupils generally know that information books are in the library, they are less sure about how to find out about specific topics.

64. Standards in writing are very good by the time pupils are seven. Although few lessons were seen where creative writing was the focus, evidence from pupils' books, past work and work on display shows the high level they attain. Pupils make rapid progress in developing their skills in writing for different purposes, including stories, poems and accounts. Past work, relating a school trip, was a good example of writing an extended piece of work where accurate use is made of spelling and grammar. Pupils' imaginative style of writing is used very well in writing about a magic suitcase. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were encouraged to develop very good creative writing skills, from the initial thoughts collected as a class, to individual ideas. These were then applied well to writing about what might happen if an alien space ship visited earth. Pupils use their understanding about the setting of a story to good effect, and good teaching helps to make this clear for pupils. Stories are well constructed, with some older pupils using paragraphs. Spelling and punctuation are generally accurate and consistently good. Pupils are aware of their weaknesses and explain how they use dictionaries to help them spell correctly. The quality of pupils' handwriting improves as they move through the school, so that by the time they leave, they consistently write in a clear, neat and cursive style. Pupils' work is displayed well and displays highlight high standards.

65. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress both in lessons and through the key stage. Pupils with English as an additional language have also made very good progress and all of these pupils have attained the standards expected of them nationally. Teachers make good use of individual education plans and pupils are supported very well with activities clearly matched to their ability. The good use of classroom assistants to support specific pupils, particularly those pupils with statements of special educational need, further enhances this provision.

66. There are good examples of pupils' literacy skills being used in other subjects. For example, pupils write up their experiments in science and books on transport are used in literacy sessions to develop their reading as well as enhance their historical understanding. Pupils read instructions and worksheets effectively, and contribute well when speaking about different sounds in a music lesson for Years 1 and 2.

67. Teaching is good overall and very good in three out of ten lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and teaching was consistently better than satisfactory, being good or better throughout the school. Lessons were well planned and the purpose of them all was clear. The purpose of a particularly activity is always shared with the pupils in a novel way, using 'Wilf' and 'Tib' cartoon characters to make this part of the lesson fun. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. For example, in a lesson with Year 1 pupils where teaching was very good, pupils were trying to think of a particular word (nocturnal) to describe animals, such as owls, that come out at night. Several wrong attempts were made but, with further time and skilful probing by the teacher, the word was identified. Group work is planned impressively. This allows pupils to make good progress because the work set for them is well matched to their ability. Additional challenge is provided for more able pupils in writing. This has a significant impact upon their learning by increasing their use of

vocabulary and their enjoyment of writing. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress on a day-to-day basis and pupils are given individual targets that are usefully kept on their tables. Teachers manage their pupils well. Lessons have a sense of fun as well as maintaining a good working atmosphere as teachers extend pupils' learning through inventive strategies. In Year 1 for example, the use of a rabbit hand puppet maintains pupils' interest for a significant length of time. In Year 2, the teacher's enthusiasm about the landing of an alien spacecraft, clearly enthused the pupils to write about this topic.

68. Very good relationships exist throughout the school and this is evident in lessons. Pupils listen very attentively, and rarely become disruptive or disinterested. The teachers ensure that the pace of lesson is maintained well by changing activities, or the focus of class discussions. This increases the motivation of pupils who settle quickly to work. The amount of work produced is good, even when pupils have a comparatively short time to record their thoughts and ideas. Pupils' work is marked effectively and teachers suggest areas for improvement. This is successful and pupils' work shows that this leads to clear improvements through the year. Classrooms are well organised with book corners containing fiction books and books from the reading scheme. Additional resources are well organised for easy retrieval by pupils and helpers. Library resources are less well used as they are temporarily located in the school hall.

69. The subject is co-ordinated well by the deputy headteacher, who is also now responsible for the school's 'reading recovery' programme. The planning of each term's work is organised well and is clearly matched to both the interests and abilities of pupils. The identification of writing as an area for further improvement is appropriate and the additional support given to more able pupils is having a positive effect upon their achievement. The framework for the National Literacy strategy has been adapted appropriately for the needs of the school. Class observations and attendance at team meetings regularly monitor the effects of this where future work is planned. The results of national tests are analysed effectively and areas for development such as writing are incorporated into the school's improvement plan.

MATHEMATICS

70. Standards in mathematics are well above the national average and this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has received the High Sheriff's Award for achievement in mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1 places the school among the top three in Surrey.

71. In the national assessment tests in 1999, pupils' attainment was very high. This places the school in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' attainment was well above the average. All pupils attained the expected, Level 2, which was very high in comparison to the national average and the average of similar schools. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher, Level 3 was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. The trend of results for the period 1996 – 1999 is rising above the national trend. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.

72. By the time they are seven, pupils develop a very secure understanding of the number system. They have a good understanding of place value to 1000, which they attain through the practice of partitioning. For example, they write numbers such as 526 as $500+20+6$. Many pupils add and subtract numbers up to 20. They recognise number patterns such as odd and even numbers and they are developing the ability to use multiplication tables by counting on and back in tens and fives. They halve and double numbers up to 20 confidently. Teachers carefully develop this high level of competence through much practical work and problem solving. For example, they create $5-2=?$ from 'I had five cakes and ate 2. How many were left?' Pupils also recognise this as a subtraction problem. They are familiar with many common two-dimensional shapes and measure objects in the classroom using standard measures and non-standard ones, such as their fingers and feet. They collect data on such criteria as their favourite food or pets and create graphs that they interpret accurately.

73. Standards of numeracy are very good. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy enthusiastically and well. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully, both through the results of national tests and teachers' daily assessments. This ensures that pupils are set tasks that match their needs and that they make the best progress possible. Numeracy skills are developed in other subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, they measure carefully in design and technology, and they create graphs of the transport used to get to school in geography.

74. The quality of teaching is good overall. In half of the lessons observed, it was very good. Teachers plan lessons very well and have high expectations of pupils. They plan tasks that build progressively on previous learning. They use assessment carefully to ensure that all pupils are provided with the right amount of challenge to enable them to make the best progress. Pupils of different abilities are provided with tasks of varying difficulty that are explained carefully and clearly to them. Consequently, pupils are engrossed in their tasks and they maintain concentration for long periods. Many do not like to be distracted. For example, one pupil in a group being asked by an inspector about the work they were doing said, 'Excuse me, but you're not here to stop us doing our work you know.' How right he was, and how apologetic the inspector was. It should be clear from this that there is a positive atmosphere for work in the classrooms. Teachers maintain very good relationships that, along with the appropriate and stimulating tasks, create an enthusiasm for learning that is apparent in lessons and are directly related to the high standards the pupils achieve.

SCIENCE

75. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven, standards in science are well above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection and it is reflected in the 1999 teacher assessment results.

76. The oldest pupils learn about some of the properties of materials. They learn that materials have a variety of different uses and that certain properties of materials fit them for their purposes. They know, for example, that leather and plastic are used in the manufacture of skating boots, and why these materials are better suited than some others, such as paper or glass. Their understanding of why certain materials are used exceeds expectations for their age. Pupils learn about electrical

circuits. They make a simple circuit, using cable, batteries and a motor and then draw it. Their work on testing why a circuit does not work, as certain components are removed, exceeds expectations for pupils of this age. They learn about the life cycle of a frog, from frogspawn through the tadpole stage to maturity. They also know about the life cycle of a butterfly. There is good work on healthy living. Pupils know about some healthy and unhealthy foods. They understand the importance of exercise and that skipping and running, for example, can be beneficial. They know which foods are good for the teeth and which ones are bad. In some good work on life and living processes, pupils learn to recognise the main parts of a plant. They recognise and can accurately label the petals, leaves and stem. They know about some of the characteristics of living things, such as eating, drinking, breathing and growth. They learn about different forces. They know that both pushing and pulling are involved as you play with a ball.

77. All pupils are helped to have full access to the science curriculum, and study all the work covered. Pupils who find learning more difficult have tasks which are matched well to their particular needs. For example, in Year 2 lessons on materials and their properties, less able pupils undertook a related but simpler task than that done by most of the class. Quicker learners are given extension tasks to challenge them appropriately.

78. The teaching of science is good and it contributes positively to the good progress that pupils make in their learning. Teachers take care to identify clear and appropriate purposes for lessons in their planning. They take great care to explain the purpose of lessons to pupils. For example they use the cartoon character 'Wilf' to spell out at the start of lesson, 'What I am looking for is...?' and the character 'Tib' to complete 'This is because.....' This helps pupils to have good understanding of their own learning. Good order is maintained in classes and this enables pupils to concentrate well and work hard, so promoting good learning. Teaching is enhanced by good support from classroom assistants and the many parent volunteers. Adults make helpful interventions as pupils work and this helps them learn well, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers make very good use of assessment information to help them plan their lessons. This helps them match tasks well to pupils' needs. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of science that enables them to explain things clearly and so promote good learning. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson on materials and their properties and a Year 1 lesson on floating and sinking.

ART

79. Few lessons were observed or planned during the inspection week. However, evidence from past work and current displays, indicates that pupils' standards of attainment exceed those expected nationally by the time they reach the age of seven. This represents an improvement since the last inspection where standards were judged to be broadly similar to those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language make very good progress throughout the school and attain well.

80. Pupils in all year groups have well developed skills in painting and printing, and they know about famous artists such as Van Gogh and Seurat. In one class, pupils study the work of Cézanne and paint pictures imitating his style. This is successful and the results are good. In Year 1, pupils paint in the manner of Van Gogh and their paintings of sunflowers give a

real flavour of his particular style. Examples of finer detail were seen in a Year 2 class where pupils show a high degree of skill in using pencils to sketch shells. The finished results are enhanced with subtle shading and in using putty rubbers to correct their drawings. Pupils' work is displayed to good effect around the school; particularly artwork using a 'pointillist' style and Year 1 work where pupils had used pastels effectively to create pictures of daffodils.

81. Teaching and pupils' learning is good throughout the school. A wide range of artwork is planned and teachers are good at encouraging pupils to express their ideas. They have high expectations and praise pupils for their achievements. This allows pupils to experiment and not be afraid of making mistakes. The calm atmosphere created within the class aids concentration and pupils work together well in groups. Pupils have good attitudes. They are careful in carrying out their work and are aware of how it can be improved. Consequently, pupils make good progress and attain high standards. Resources are good in the subject and the wide range of styles and techniques are supported well with appropriate equipment. The revised National Curriculum from September has been incorporated effectively in to the long-term plans for the subject and provides a suitable range of activities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Standards in design and technology have risen since the last inspection but now, by the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven, they exceed national expectations. None of the weaknesses noted at the last inspection are now evident. It was possible to see only two lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Judgements are made on the evidence of these two lessons and on a careful examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning.

83. Pupils in Year 1 make a moving mechanism, such as a caterpillar with moving jaws inspired by the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Their highly effective finished products were examined after the lesson. The lesson was based well on work done in previous lessons. Very effective use is made of parent helpers to promote pupils' learning. For example, they help pupils to make holes in their card using a sharp, pointed instrument. Pupils designed their product carefully before making it and carried out a careful evaluation of the finished product at the end of the lesson. Both their designs and products exceed expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 2 produce work of a good standard on designing Joseph's multi-coloured coat in connection with a Bible story they had read. By the end of the lesson, they knew that fabrics could be patterned in different ways, for example using a repeated pattern. Their attainment exceeds expectations for their age. The oldest pupils also design and make shadow puppets. They evaluate their product, for instance considering the suitability of the fabrics used. In food technology they make bread. They design and make paddle boats and evaluate why they do or do not work. They also design and make greetings cards and there has been some good work on designing and making their own percussion instruments.

84. The teaching of design and technology is good and this contributes well to the good progress which pupils make in their learning. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and so are able to explain things clearly and help pupils understand. This was very clearly evident, for example, in a Year 1 lesson on designing and making a moving mechanism. Teachers manage classes well, and this means that pupils behave well and concentrate. They intervene well in order to help pupils learn and are supported well by parent helpers.

HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

85. History and geography are taught in alternately. Consequently, no history lessons took place during the inspection and it was only possible to observe one lesson in geography. It is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement of the quality of teaching in these subjects. However, a careful scrutiny of pupils' work along with teachers' planning and talking to pupils shows that standards exceed national expectations in both history and geography. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

86. In history, pupils develop a good understanding of things changing over time by comparing items from the past and the present. For example, they look closely at past and present toys and note how they have changed. They identify changes in the materials used and note that leather, wood and metal were used to make toys in the past, whereas new toys are generally made from plastic. They look at pictures of houses in the past and present and note changes in sanitation and heating. This work is supported by good use of the school's increasing collection of artefacts that allows pupils to study first-hand evidence of historical change. Pupils study famous people from the past but also the similar work of people from ethnic minorities that receive less acclaim. For example, they are familiar with the work of Florence Nightingale, and the less well-known Mary Seacole. Literacy strategies are combined with history by using books on transport in reading development sessions.

87. In geography, pupils develop an understanding of their own environment and contrast it with others. They draw maps of their route to school, making a note of the things they see and considering how this can be represented easily on a map. They use this information to map their walk to the library and to create a map of a theme park using symbols to represent different rides and places. They are becoming familiar with official ordnance survey mapping conventions, such as the symbols for telephone, church and forest. They increase their knowledge of their environment by looking at houses and writing their own descriptions of estate agents' photographs. They begin to contrast and compare different environments, such as the North Pole and the jungle, by thinking about differences in weather, landscape and animals. This understanding is used to consider the differences between living in Woking and on a small island and, later, they research the things they might expect to see in an African country, like the Gambia. Numeracy and information technology are combined well with geography. For example, pupils create a tally chart of the methods of transport they use to get to school. They use a computer program to create a graph, which they print and they are encouraged to interpret these graphs by considering which are the most common forms of transport.

88. In the one lesson observed, the teaching was very good and pupils showed a great commitment to their learning. The planning for the lesson was very good with various activities organised with different levels of difficulty to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities. The teacher used flashcards of ordnance survey symbols effectively to develop pupils' knowledge of map-making conventions. The lesson maintained a lively pace and parent helpers were well informed of the purpose of the lesson, which enabled them to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships are very good and the teacher has high expectations of the pupils. Consequently, pupils' learning and behaviour are very good. They understand what they are doing in the lesson and they work well, with great concentration.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

89. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Consequently, it is not possible to make a secure judgement of the quality of teaching. However, additional evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking to pupils shows that standards often exceed national expectations. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

90. The very youngest children develop an understanding of the way information technology is used in our everyday lives. They realise that many devices, such as televisions and video recorders, respond to signals. During the inspection, these children used 'traffic lights' in an activity that also focused on road safety. All pupils, including the children under five, have access to computers in school. By the time they leave the school, they develop a good range of skills including effective control of the keyboard and mouse, and an ability to save and print their work. Pupils know how to change the size and style of text fonts to achieve different effects. They use a drawing program and skilfully use the various tools, such as pencil, brush, eraser and fill. They begin to write brief paragraphs, as when describing 'Biff's' visit to the seaside. Pupils are able to combine their own computer drawings with text to enhance their work. Although they were not in use during the inspection, the school is equipped with programmable toys and 'floor turtles'. Teachers' planning shows that, in the spring term, these are used to develop the skills of control technology.

91. In the lesson observed, the teacher demonstrated a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and good familiarity with the program being used. (The extent to which all teachers use information technology to assist them with their professional duties suggest that they are all competent in the use of information technology.) The teacher used her assessment from previous activities to ensure that all pupils were working at an appropriate level at the computer. Instructions were clear and the planning for the lesson skilfully built upon pupils' previous learning by giving them experience of a new drawing tool. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour were high and this established a climate in which they concentrated well, shared the resources and their ideas sensibly, and behaved very well. The lesson was organised as a 'carousel' incorporating a number of subjects. Pupils were, therefore, expected to work independently and they did this responsibly, sustaining their attention on the task throughout the lesson. However, the necessity for them to work without the guidance of the teacher led to them making less progress than they would have done with greater guidance. For example, one pupil made a mistake while using the 'fill' tool and, although he was familiar with the 'eraser' tool, which was not much help here, he deleted his work to start

again. When guidance was available, he was shown the 'undo' tool. The school is aware of these difficulties in the teaching of information and communications technology, and the provision of the Acorn Centre is designed, in part, to overcome these difficulties through the establishment of a suite of computers.

92. At the time of the inspection, there were suitable numbers of computers in each classroom. However, some of these computers are out-of-date and too many computers either have only a black and white printer or the printer is not working. This limits teachers' ability to consolidate pupils' learning and restricts the opportunities for pupils to work independently. However, improvements to the resources for the subject are carefully planned with the establishment of the Acorn Centre.

MUSIC

93. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and, as is usual for this subject, there was little pupils' work available for scrutiny. It is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and the standards attained by pupils in music.

94. Pupils listen appropriately to a range of sounds that different percussion sounds make. They correctly name a 'rain' stick, wood block and tambour. Pupils use these effectively and handle them with care. They describe the sounds they make accurately and use a range of ways to play them. In assemblies, pupils sing clearly and confidently, and are enthusiastic. Discussion with pupils indicates that they have appropriate opportunities to improve their learning.

95. In the lesson observed, pupils were given appropriate time to play different instruments and to experiment with different sounds. The organisation of the class was effective in creating a good atmosphere for learning and giving pupils confidence to play their chosen instruments. Resources are satisfactory and enable pupils to have a chance to play an instrument and improve their skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. Standards in physical education have improved since the last inspection and they now exceed national expectations by the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven. It was not possible to see any games lessons during the inspection, but gymnastics and dance were observed and the scrutiny of planning shows that teachers' plan for all elements of the physical education curriculum.

97. In gymnastics lessons, the youngest children in reception learn about the effect of exercise on the body. As they get ready for physical education there are good opportunities for them to develop personal independence: they take off their own shoes, socks and jumpers. Lessons start with a good safe warm-up. The children work with good body control for their age and a good appreciation of the need for safety. They know about the need for space and not working too close to others. They are able to run with small and large steps, on tiptoe and with their knees held high. By the time they are in Year 1, pupils follow instructions carefully and hop and walk around the hall changing directions as the teacher claps her hands. They learn what a sequence of movements is and they go on to develop their own movement sequence that sometimes involves travelling using a

rolling movement. They improve their sequences in response to the teacher's questioning. By the time they are aged seven, pupils make good, safe use of space and they use music and movement well to express their own ideas and feelings. For example, they express apprehension and excitement as they make their way to the 'haunted house', explore it and then 'escape'.

98. The teaching of physical education is good. Lessons are well planned with clear, identified purposes. Good use is made of time, encouraging pupils to work hard and stay on task well. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and so are able to explain things clearly and give good demonstrations. Good use is made of praise to reinforce good behaviour and this encourages pupils well. Teachers encourage pupils to demonstrate their work to the others, and this has the effect of motivating pupils well and spurring them on to improve their own performance. In the best lessons, very good use is made of support staff to observe and make careful notes of pupils' attainment and progress. This is very effective in helping teachers plan future lessons to meet pupils' needs. There has been appropriate training for staff, particularly in dance, and lesson observations have helped to improve the quality of teaching and so raise standards since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven, standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection. It was possible to see only two lessons during the inspection and it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. Judgements made are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking to pupils.

100. In Year 1, pupils learn about special people. They think about people who are special to them, and why they themselves are special. They learn about some of the customs and practices of Judaism. They know, for example, that the Shabbat is a holy day, when families celebrate by sharing a family meal. They learn about the rabbi and his or her special place in the Jewish community. They know that the rabbi is principally a teacher. Pupils learn about some aspects of Christianity. They know, for example, that a church is a place of worship for Christians and they can identify some of the features found in churches, such as the font, the chalice and the Bible. They know about the stained glass windows found in many churches and that these depict Biblical and other Christian scenes. By the time they are aged seven, pupils know more about Christianity. They learn about rosary beads and the significance of the symbol of the cross to Christians. They extend their knowledge of Judaism, learning about the Torah. The oldest pupils learn what a miracle is and some of the miracles of Jesus, for example when He stilled the storm on the lake.

101. The teaching of religious education was good in the lessons seen and good teaching is also reflected in pupils' books. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and so can promote pupils' developing understanding well. Some good use is made of drama to help pupils understand and remember. For instance, they act out with great enjoyment the story of Jesus stilling the storm. Lessons are well paced: good use is made of time and pupils' motivation and interest are maintained well.